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NEAR EAST/SOUTH ASIA REPORT

No. 2797

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MOVE TO SUBSTITUTE ARAB WORKERS FOR ASIANS

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic No 173, 4-10 Jun 83 p 45

[Text] The substantial drop in the revenues of the Gulf oil states has had an impact on the level of government spending in these states. Qatar has announced a 20 percent cut in general spending under its new budget. Bahrain has halted the implementation of new projects as have some of the other Gulf states, which have begun to plan for a phase of constrained development expenditures.

These indicators point to the probability of a reduction in the numbers of foreign workers in the Gulf, which grew sharply and continuously during the oil boom of the 1970's. This probability has caused many of the labor exporting states to fear a recurrence of the Nigerians' expulsion of Ghanaian workers from their territory in one or more of the states of the Middle East.

But what is the current status of foreign labor in the Gulf states?

The participation of native manpower remains relatively limited in certain work sectors in the Gulf states. According to the latest censuses, which were conducted in most of these states between 1975 and 1976, the seven oil states that constitute the chief importers of foreign labor have a combined population of 8.3 million of which 2.3 million, or 39.8 percent, is foreign. There were 1.8 million native workers in these states as opposed to 1.7 million foreign workers. In other words, foreign workers represented 48.6 percent of the total. These foreign workers included 1.2 million Arabs, who thus represented 70.6 percent of all foreign workers in the Arab oil states.

Despite the large percentage of Arab labor in the oil states, the available statistics on the overall status of labor point to the growing role of Asians in the Gulf area in particular. This suggests a general tendency toward a preference for these workers over others--at least during the oil boom of the 1970's. This raises a natural question about the reasons for the Arabs' acceptance of Asian labor to this degree.

The basic attractiveness of Asian workers in the 1970's lay in the way in which they were recruited and hired. The companies responsible for the projects in the Gulf area brought these workers from their countries

themselves and set up work camps for the workers to live in. These companies demonstrated speed and accuracy in implementing the projects and adhering to the completion schedules, which helped them to expand. In addition, the wages of these workers were much lower than the wages of Arab workers.

This practical method of hiring convinced oil states to apply the so-called "turnkey project" system, in which the contractor pledges to hire the required number of workers and citizens provided that they live in isolated camps during the completion of the project and then return to their countries after the implementation of the project. The second reason for the attractiveness of Asian workers lies in their skill in the use of modern technology, which allows construction projects to be implemented in a shorter time and at a lower cost.

However, a full decade of growth in the Asian labor force has begun to reveal more and more the long-range negative effects of this labor force on the demographic and social composition of the Gulf area. In this regard, a recent report of the organization ECWA (Economic Committee of Western Asia) revealed that a population change has begun to occur at the expense of the Arabs, including both the native Arab population and non-native Arab workers. In states such as Qatar, some three-fourths of the population is now foreign; and while Arab citizens form the majority of foreigners in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Libya, Asians make up the majority in Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the UAE.

Arab Labor

It is clear that future trends in domestic investments in the Arab oil states point to a reduction in the size of these investments. However, they will not be completely cut off or even reduced sharply. Therefore, the need to utilize foreign labor still exists. However, the question now being posed in light of the current composition of foreign labor in the Gulf is this: What type of labor will these states need and what nationality should this labor be?

Despite the growth in the concentration of Asians in the Gulf area, some observers believe that replacing Asians with Arab workers could create political and social pressures which the area states feel they do not need. This is because the Arab workers demand special treatment while the Asian worker asks for nothing more than his daily sustenance in the work camp.

In the second place, the replacement of Asian labor with Arab labor requires a prior study of the Arab labor surplus and the ability of this surplus to do the jobs that must be undertaken in the oil states. This means that there must be ample statistics and data concerning economic activities so that the labor required in specific sectors can be identified and training in the labor exporting Arab states can then be directed toward these occupations.

Practically speaking, there is no fully complete study of surplus Arab labor that can be exported to the oil states. However, scattered statistics indicated that Jordan, for example, exported approximately 40 percent of its

total labor force in 1975. North Yemen exports around one-fourth of its total labor force. In addition, it is expected that the number of Egyptians and Sudanese working abroad will increase by two or three times, although Egypt's and Sudan's shares of the total Arab labor force working abroad will remain relatively small at around 5 percent for Egypt and 2 percent for Sudan.

In spite of the small size of these percentages, all studies indicate that Egypt is one of the largest exporters of labor to the Arab oil states. Varying official estimates of the numbers of Egyptians working in the Arab states range from 1.6 million to 2.96 million. This disparity in the estimates is due to the lack of control over the emigration of workers and the failure to register their professions in the Egyptian consulates abroad.

In some Gulf states, the prevailing opinion is that the decline in oil prices is a historic "opportunity" to get rid of Asian labor and replace it with Arab labor. In actuality the conference of GCC ministers of labor adopted a resolution calling for the gradual dismissal of Asian labor and the utilization of Arab labor instead--in particular Egyptian labor.

The shift in the Gulf toward Arab labor is the result of several factors. One of these is the fact that the employer must evaluate the costs of hiring labor in economic terms, including both the worker's wages and the costs of travel at the start and end of the contract period. Clearly, the cost of travel from Arab countries such as Egypt, Yemen, and Jordan is much less than the cost of travel from the Philippines or South Korea. In addition, the Arab worker does not usually bring with him certain undesirable social customs such as those practiced by the Koreans and Indians, for example.

The trend toward stronger emphasis on selecting acceptable worker nationalities which has begun to emerge among labor exporters in the oil states means that under the worst of circumstances, the number of Arab workers in these states will remain constant. In fact, this number may increase somewhat with the continued replacement of Asian workers with Arab workers as Asians retire or return to their countries. However, the failure to develop Arab labor skills could mean that every time a new post opens, it may be given to an Asian worker or an immigrant from the Far East.

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CSO: 4404/434

REPORT EXAMINES ARAB ECONOMIES

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic No 172, 28 May 83-Jun 83 p 45

[Article: "Revenue of the Arab States for 1981 Totaled \$378 Billion"]

[Text] The combined 1982 Arab economic report issued recently was cause for a certain amount of dissatisfaction with many economic aspects of the Arab world. Particularly disconcerting were the absolute dependence of the Arab countries on the exportation of raw materials, the conditions in industry in general, and the food gap, which is growing larger every year.

The report, prepared by General Secretariat of the Arab League, the Arab Monetary Fund, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, and OAPEC, reported that the gross domestic product of the Arab countries rose from \$149.7 billion in 1975 to approximately \$384 billion in 1980 and is estimated at \$378 billion for 1981. This is an average rate of growth (in current dollars) of 20.7 percent for the period from 1975 to 1980. It should be noted that the gross domestic product fell by 1.6 percent from 1980 to 1981 due to the drop in exports of oil and raw minerals, the output of the extraction industries.

The report divides the Arab states into four groups. The first group is made up of the semi-oil countries, which consist of Iraq and Algeria. The second is the oil group, consisting of Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, and Libya. The third group consists of the developing Arab states, made up of Jordan, Bahrain, Tunisia, Oman, Lebanon, Egypt, and Morocco. The fourth group consists of the less developed Arab states, which include Sudan, Somalia, Mauritania, North Yemen, South Yemen, and Djibouti.

From 1975 to 1980, the first group achieved an average rate of growth of 23.6 percent in current dollars and 12 percent in real dollars. From 1980 to 1981, its national product dropped 34.4 percent in real dollars.

The second group achieved an average annual rate of growth in its domestic product of 22.6 percent in current dollars from 1975 to 1980. This amounted to 12.5 percent in real dollars. Its national product fell by 1.1 percent in 1981.

The third group achieved an average annual growth rate of 15.1 percent in current dollars and 4.6 percent in real dollars during the same period.

However, this growth turned into a 7.7 percent decline in the national product from 1980 to 1981.

The fourth group achieved an average annual rate of growth of 15.1 percent in current dollars between 1975 and 1980 and a 0.5 percent reduction in real dollars. Its real product fell by 3.9 percent from 1980 to 1981.

In this connection, the report says that the structure of the domestic product in the Arab states is characterized by domination of the primary activity sectors--namely, agriculture and the extraction industries--in the composition of the gross domestic product and the general structure of the Arab economy. The primary sectors represented approximately 53.6 percent of the total domestic product in 1981 as opposed to 55 percent in 1975. This percentage is particularly high in the oil states, amounting to 85 percent in the first group and 98 percent in the second group. Among the developing Arab countries, the share of the primary sectors in the domestic product rose by 19.7 percent from 1975 to 1981. Agriculture's share of the domestic product in the fourth group was 97 percent. The agricultural sector in this group grew 11.7 percent from 1975 to 1980 and 5.6 percent from 1980 to 1981.

The report calls on the Arab governments to revise the economic structures and remedy the obvious defects in these structures, particularly in the non-oil countries. With regard to the oil states, the diversification of sources of income has become an urgent requirement at this point in time to achieve balance in their economic structures, on the one hand, and as a precaution against the time when the role of the extraction industries diminishes because of the depletion of oil.

In the area of agriculture, the report indicated that the 1981 season was merely average, while the production of grains in the Arab group declined from 27.1 to 24.5 million tons, or 10 percent. In addition, vegetable yields declined by 15 percent and oil yields fell 6 percent due to a drop in olive production. Most of this decline is attributable to the drop in the production. Most of this decline is attributable to the drop in the production of agricultural yields in the North African Arab states.

However, rice, sugar cane, oil, fruit, and vegetable crops; cattle products including red meat and milk; and poultry products increased by various percentages.

The report noted with extreme concern the 26 percent rise in the cost of the Arab countries' food imports while the agricultural exports of the Arab world were declining. In 1970, the food bill of the Arab states totaled \$2.1 billion but had risen to \$15.6 billion in 1979 and \$19.6 billion by 1980. The Arab states imported some 22.5 million tons of grain at a cost of around \$5.25 billion.

The report points to the large and steadily increasing imbalance between exports and imports. The relationship between exports and imports was nearly in balance in 1970 when Arab agricultural exports totaled \$1.7 billion in imports. In 1980, however, exports totaled \$3.3 billion, which represented only 17 percent of the Arabs; imports of agricultural food products.

The Real Dangers

The report stresses the necessity of heeding the real hidden dangers in the Arabs' ever increasing dependence on foreign countries to ensure their food supplies, noting that the growth rate in the cost of importing major food products has reached 51 percent.

With regard to Arab industry, the report says that while the Arab world underwent an industrial awakening in the latter half of the 1970's, industry still plays a secondary role in the economy of the Arab states. The extraction industries occupy first place, centered around the production of oil, gas, phosphates (30 million tons a year), and iron (14.4 million tons). The exploration for and discovery of nonprecious metals have been slow and halting and most produced quantities have been exported as ores.

The yield derived from Arab conversion industries in 1981 is estimated at \$26.6 billion compared to \$25.9 billion in 1980 and \$11.4 billion in 1975. These figures indicate the weakness of the economic role of the Arab conversion industry as a whole. The Arab per capita share of the yield of the conversion industries in the Arab world was approximately \$153.30 in 1980 and around \$150.00 in 1981--an extremely low level.

The report states that the main characteristics of the Arab conversion industries are their low productivity, the fact that they are a substitute for importation and are dedicated to meeting domestic consumer needs, and their total dependence on imported machinery, equipment, technology, and engineering consulting services. Other characteristics are the symptoms resulting from the weakness of the domestic market, the low level of administrative efficiency, the lack of innovation, and the lack of sufficient studies aimed at selecting the appropriate industries and technologies.

There were 11.2 million workers in the industrial sector in 1981, including 7.8 million in the conversion industries and 3.4 million in the extraction industries.

Investments in industry from 1976 to 1980 totaled an estimated 22 percent of the total of \$364 billion invested in Arab development plans.

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PROSPECTS FOR GULF STOCK EXCHANGE DISCUSSED

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic No 173, 4-10 Jun 83 p 46

[Article: "Following the Proliferation of Stock Exchanges in the Gulf, Will a United Gulf Stock Exchange Be Created?"]

[Text] There is a fear in Bahraini financial circles that the "Sug al-Manakh" phenomenon may tend to recur in the financial markets surrounding Kuwait, although in a less severe form. The main reason for this fear is the crisis that has overwhelmed the Bahraini stock market since the beginning of this year. Specifically, this crisis began in March when the prices of the stocks of Bahraini companies began a sharp decline of some 40 to 50 percent of their recorded prices as of the end of 1982.

Financial circles in Bahrain believe that the foremost factor in the crisis was the collapse of the Kuwaiti "Sug al-Manakh" which caused the prices of local company stocks to slide. This slide came about as the local investor involved in transactions with investors in Kuwait rushed to sell local stocks in his possession with the aim of making up for his losses or meeting his financial obligations to the banks or to traders in the local market.

In addition to this factor, a strong relationship has developed between the local stock market in Bahrain and the securities market in Kuwait due to strong initiatives on the part of Kuwaiti investors to establish joint-stock companies (exempt) in Bahrain. However, this relationship has led in turn to the transmission of all the negative aspects of the "Sug al-Manakh" to the Bahraini market. These negative aspects include overestimation of prices and credit selling.

The interaction of these negative aspects made the restoration of confidence to the trading market a necessary and urgent measure. The decision to establish a local financial market and the drafting of a set of regulations for the proposed stock exchange are considered the first steps toward this goal.

In al-Manamah, a committee was formed within Bahrain's Ministry of Commerce and was charged with drafting an integrated draft law for the establishment of a local stock exchange. This will be done in cooperation with experts from the International Bank. The draft law will then be submitted to the responsible authorities for approval.

The news of the formation of the committee raised question concerning the companies that will be allowed to circulate their stocks and the fate of the stocks of Gulf companies that have established a base--however limited--among trading circles.

Sources in the Bahraini Ministry of Commerce indicated a preference toward permitting the circulation of stocks of local companies and refining (offshore) companies registered in Bahrain as a first step. With regard to stocks of Gulf companies, permission for the circulation of these stocks was made subject to the results of the ministry's evaluation of the financial status of these companies.

It is true that this arrangement could open the door to the development of a market parallel to the official stock exchange in which stocks of those companies not allowed to offer their stocks in the official exchange are traded. But in spite of this, the ministry is determined to prevent the development of a parallel market and to apply the stock exchange regulations to all the companies whose stocks are circulated in Bahrain. In this context, the Bahraini Ministry of Commerce is determined not to permit those companies whose financial positions are shown to be unsound to circulate their stocks either within the stock exchange or outside of it.

There are in Bahrain an estimated 23 registered companies whose shares are offered for general subscription. These companies are distributed among various service sectors including banking, insurance and light industry. There are an additional 13 refining companies (offshore) established with joint Gulf capital, as well as a similar number of small closed companies. These companies will represent the nucleus of the proposed stock exchange, which can develop in the future to include other companies registered in the states of the area.

The expansion of the base of the Bahraini stock exchange also raises the issue of the circulation of the stocks of closed companies whose stocks cannot now be circulated under Bahrain's current company law as well as the circulation of stocks of Gulf companies registered in Bahrain or in some of the other area states.

The initial official position shows relative flexibility toward allowing the circulation of stocks of closed companies in the future. The matter of the circulation of stocks of Gulf companies has been tied to the completion of the pertinent regulations now being drafted by the ministry. It is worth mentioning that the administration of commerce and the affairs of companies in the Ministry of Commerce began early this year with the preparation of combined lists of the prices of stocks of local and Gulf companies and the number of shares in circulation for distribution to the local papers in an effort to regulate the trading market. An administrative organization that maintains contact with brokers on a daily basis is responsible for the preparation of these lists.

There are some 25 brokerage houses in the Bahraini stock market. A law issued toward the end of last year prohibited brokers from combining the profession of broker with government employment.

Bahrain's financial circles now concede the importance of a local stock exchange to the goals of spreading investment consciousness in trading circles and regulating speculation in stocks. However, these circles have begun to question the benefit of the existence of local stock exchanges in light of the existing interlocking--in practical terms--of the interests of a broad segment of the citizenry of the GCC states. They are beginning to wonder if it would not be better to establish a single Gulf exchange, particularly since the trend toward coordination and integration among the six states is growing stronger in a variety of economic and social fields.

The Bahraini Ministry of Commerce believes that the existence of a local stock exchange is not incompatible with the establishment of a Gulf exchange in the future, especially since the basic aim of such an exchange is to regulate the domestic market and protect the rights of traders in the market. However, the existence of a Gulf stock exchange is not possible until legislative obstacles have been removed. There are differences in the laws for the establishment of companies now in effect in the GCC states, which necessitates the creation of a standardized version of these laws before thought can be given to uniting the Gulf exchanges.

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GULF STATES COORDINATE PORT ACTIVITIES

Muscat 'UMAN in Arabic 13 Jun 83 p 3

[Interview with Dr Fayiz Ibrahim Badr, chief of the Public Port Authority in Saudi Arabia, by 'Abdallah al-'Ulyan: "The Sultanate Has Achieved Great Things in Various Areas; Exchange of Expertise and Information Between the Ports of Saudi Arabia and Oman; Complete Coordination Among the GCC Nations' Ports" date and place not specified]

[Text] Dr Fayiz Ibrahim Badr, chief of the Public Port Authority in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, concluded his visit to this country last Thursday. The visit was at the invitation of Salim ibn Nasir Bu Sa'idi, the minister of communications. The visit lasted 3 days, during which he had the honor to meet with Sultan Qabus Ibn Sa'id. He also conducted discussions with Salim ibn Nasir Bu Sa'idi, which dealt with support of mutual cooperation between the two sister countries, especially in port affairs. His Excellency, and his accompanying delegation, also visited the port of Qabus and the port of Raysut.

They all expressed their astonishment at the progress they saw in the work methods and modern equipment, assisting the rapid ship loading and unloading operations in the two ports. Before Dr Fayiz Ibrahim Badr had concluded his visit to the Sultanate, we interviewed him in order to learn his impressions after visiting the Sultanate, and the possible steps he has taken to combat the oil spill in the Gulf from the Iranian Neyruz oilfields, as well as the developments that Saudi Arabia has achieved with regard to ports and the result of the fruitful cooperation among the nations of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] with respect to the ports in these nations.

[Question] You had the honor to meet with Sultan Qabus. What was your impression of this meeting?

[Answer] It was an honor to meet with Sultan Qabus Ibn Sa'id. His Excellency Salim ibn Nasir Bu Sa'idi, the minister of communications, presented me to his majesty, and I gave him my impressions and those of the Saudi delegation accompanying me on this visit concerning the great accomplishments that Oman has achieved in a very short time. I mentioned to his majesty that even compared with the great achievements of Saudi Arabia during recent years, the accomplishments that I have

seen in Oman are glorious. His majesty bade me convey his greetings and best wishes to his majesty King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz the King of Saudi Arabia, and Crown Prince 'Abdullah ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz.

[Question] What was the nature of the discussions that you had with Minister of Communications Salim ibn Nasir Bu Sa'idi and the officials in the ministry?

[Answer] The discussions that went on between the Saudi delegation and our brothers in the Omani Ministry of Communications concentrated basically on opening areas of cooperation and exchanging expertise between Saudi ports on the one hand and Omani ports on the other. These areas of cooperation include the exchange of information in both countries, especially as regards harbor systems and operations.

[Question] What has been done concerning the spread of oil in the Gulf harbors, as a result of the Iranian oilfield spillage, and what are the methods to combat this?

[Answer] Steps have been studied, especially concerning combatting pollution in Gulf waters. We have agreed on specific steps to be taken as well concerning Gulf pollution from the Iranian oil wells currently pouring out of Iranian oil fields.

We have addressed Sultan Qabus on this very point and have given his majesty a picture of the possibilities of cooperation between Saudi Arabia and Oman with regard to fighting pollution.

[Question] With regard to the development that has rapidly occurred in Saudi Arabia in recent years in terms of modern, technological methods, what do you see as the extent of this growth in the future?

[Answer] In fact, Saudi ports, like the other Arab ports of the GCC nations, have made very great strides from the technological aspect and in terms of being completely prepared for all types of presently known sea transportation and whatever will be developed in the future.

Saudi ports are considered some of the most productive ports in the world. I am not revealing any secret by saying that the productivity of one pier in Saudi ports is considered higher than the productivity of one pier in many of the European ports. This is due to the fact that Saudi Arabia was anxious to modernize its available ports, while some European ports have not yet been able to do this, due to financial or labor union reasons. For example, Saudi Arabia operates its sea ports on a 24-hour basis. Any ship that arrives in Saudi Arabia at any time can be docked and unloaded. At the same time, Saudi ports are tied into a computer network. The use of the computer facilitates Saudi port operations a great deal. There is also a navigational guidance system in Saudi ports that is considered the first of its kind in the [Red] Sea and the Arab Gulf. Saudi ports are not limited to commercial ports, since industrial

ports are also found in the kingdom. The most important is the King Fahd industrial port on the Gulf. The capacity of this port is 50 million tons a year and is considered one of the glories of the Arab Gulf. Construction of this port costs about \$2 billion, and it is basically designated to serve the petrochemical plants that are currently being built in the Jubayl industrial area. On the other hand, one must refer to the fact that the ports in Saudi Arabia have established rules and regulations, only on the basis of which can ships coming to the kingdom be loaded. Saudi Arabia will not accept ships that are more than 15 years old, unless ships of that age have certificates attesting to their navigational suitability and their capability of sailing once again from the Saudi ports to their final destination. At the same time, all goods coming to the kingdom must be containerized, with specific weight averages that cannot be exceeded.

With regard to the goods shipped in containers, they must comply with specific demands and conditions, before being shipped to Saudi Arabia, or else the kingdom, in all its ports on the Red Sea and the Gulf, will refuse to accept these goods, or unload them after imposing large financial fines on these ships that did not comply with the rules and regulations.

[Question] What are the reflections of the fruitful cooperation among the GCC nations on the ports in those nations?

[Answer] The fact is that there are periodic meetings under the aegis of the Secretariat General of the GCC nations in the Arab Gulf states. These committees carry out complete coordination among the ports of these nations, whether from the technical point of view or the human or operational aspects. Moreover, there is a plan to take advantage of surplus capacity in any of the GCC states, if another state has need of this capacity. There are many areas of cooperation, which are being looked into and for which the necessary measures are being adopted and implemented in the GCC Secretariat General. The achievements so far are considered glorious by all members of the GCC.

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CSO: 4404/465

ARMENIAN AFFAIRS

ARMENIAN SECOND CONGRESS TO BE CONVENED IN SWITZERLAND

Istanbul JAMANAK in Armenian 23 Jun 83 p 1

[Text] Washington (Mediterranean News Agency)--The Armenian Congress has announced that it will hold its second National Congress in Switzerland. Armenian organizations from America, the Middle East and Europe are expected to participate in the congress which will be held in the city of Gstaad.

James Kurnuzian, one of the organizers of the congress, said that the congress, which will be held in Hotel Beau Rivage in Gstaad, will be an opportunity for all Armenians around the world to unite under a single goal and noted that the primary purpose of the congress is to promote the ideal of the Armenians returning to their homeland.

Armenian organizations in America announced that the congress will review the following issues:

1. To determine and endorse a political guideline.
2. To determine the goals of various Armenian organizations.
3. To determine the structure and the constitution of the Armenian Congress.
4. To seek and pursue means which can support the congress.

As is known, the first Armenian National Congress was held from 3 to 6 September 1979 in Paris. That year, 500 people participated in the congress.

Meanwhile, according to information obtained from the Mediterranean News Agency, the Armenian National Committee, which is based in Boston, sent a memorandum on 28 May to the economic summit held in Williamsburg among the heads of developed nations.

The memorandum sent to the government heads of the United States, Canada, France, Italy, West Germany, Japan and the United Kingdom who were participating in the summit demanded that Armenian rights specified by the Treaty of Sevres be observed.

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DAILY RESPONDS TO TURKISH ENVOY'S LETTER ON ARMENIAN CAUSE

Beirut ZARTONK in Armenian 14 Jun 83 p 2

[Article by Ara Kalayjian: "What Does Ambassador Sukru Elekdag Want?"]

[Text] The Turkish Ambassador in Washington, Sukru Elekdag, is once again at work. It seems to us that during the months of March and April Elekdag accepts no official appointments and refrains from any government or diplomatic work because he has a single mission: to sit at his desk and to write letters to everyone to counteract the unfavorable situation to be created for Turkey by the commemoration of the Armenian genocide.

This year, Elekdag had the audacity to write threatening letters to members of the U.S. Congress, exhorting them to refrain from making pro-Armenian statements and noting, with a mentality that befits the Turk, that "such statements are extensively reported in the Turkish press." The representative of a military dictatorship thus threatened the democratically elected representatives of this country of freedom.

Elekdag also wrote a second letter, this time attacking NEW YORK TIMES editorialist Karl E. Meyer who "had dared" to give an historical account of the Armenian genocide and to draw parallels between the Armenian genocide and the Jewish Holocaust in an article entitled "Armenian remembrance, Turkish forgetfulness."

Needless to say, Ambassador Elekdag's letter is full of well-known denials, rejections and shameless distortions of historical facts and documents.

From the very first paragraph, Elekdag turns the Great Genocide into a case of agitation caused by "Armenian terrorists" and tries to dismiss the entire genocide as a "complex tragedy as a result of which Armenian as well as Turkish lives perished." According to the ambassador, in 1915, when Turkey was fighting on "five fronts", it had to confront an "armed rebellion by the Armenians." The ambassador says: "The Armenian rebels wanted to establish an Armenian state in a region where the majority of the population was Turkish. The enmity that emerged as a result of this situation--a civil war within a world war--combined with famine and epidemics caused heavy losses to all sides involved."

By saying "armed rebellion", Elekdag has in mind the defense of Van in April 1915. This was an act of self-defense, which the Armenians of that city and its

environs were forced undertake in order to defend themselves against the extermination operation started by Cevdet, the governor of Van. Whereas the uprooting and massacres of Armenians that had begun that same month across Turkey had been carefully and meticulously planned by the central government months before that date, for the past six decades, Turkey, with its governments, academicians, historians, diplomats and journalists, has shown that single act of self-defense as the primary and sole reason for the Armenian "deportations." The defense of Van, as the name implies, was a struggle of life and death and a last desperate attempt not to fall prey to the criminal machinations of the Turk.

/But let us suppose for a moment--only hypothetically--that the Armenians did rebel in Van./

Like any country fighting a war on "five fronts", Turkey would be forced to suppress the "rebellion" as quickly as possible for its own security. It would then either have to arrest or execute the rebels or have to send all those arrested and all suspects into exile--since not all the people of the region had rebelled.

/But let us suppose for a moment--only hypothetically--that the entire population of Van rebelled./

Turkey would have the option of killing or exiling the entire population of Van.

But Van was only a small part of Western Armenia, and therefore its /hypothetical rebellion/ would only be a local problem and should be handled as such.

Turkey, however, did not give the slightest consideration to this course of action mainly because there was no "rebellion" of Van and because the Armenians were not involved in any "fifth column" sabotaging and spying activities.

On the contrary, Turkey began large-scale massacres and deportations in April 1915.

If the Armenian population of Van was a threat to Turkey's security, then why was Father Gomidas who was busy forming choirs in Istanbul during those days exiled to Cankiri? Why were innocent clergymen exiled? What threat did writers and poets like Taniel Varujan, Siamanto and Rupen Sevag in Istanbul present to Turkey's war effort? How could the Armenian population of cities in central Turkey endanger the security of that country in their struggle to make a living when they were disproportionately removed from all the "five fronts"?

If the official measure taken was deportation, then how can one explain the killing of 1.5 million Armenians? How can one explain Der Zor, Islahiye, Pozanti and Meskene? How can one explain the burning and destruction of Armenian towns, villages, hamlets and monasteries? How can one explain the sale of ecclesiastical and other artifacts in Istanbul and other big cities?

If the official measure taken was provisional deportation, why were the Armenians not allowed to return to their hometowns after the war? Why were the frail survivors who returned after the armistice subjected to a second wave of terrifying massacres by the orders of Mustafa Kemal and why were they forced out of Turkey?

Elekdag knows very well the answers to all these questions. His compatriot historians and academicians also know the answers. They know, but they do not have the strength or the courage to admit what has happened. They do not have the honesty of even the vilest Nazi executioner to acknowledge the Crime publicly. But that Great Crime will remain with them and will follow them until the day when humanism finally becomes dominant in their character and when they confess to what the entire world has accepted and condemned for the past 68 years.

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KIDNAPED ASHJIAN'S CASE ELABORATED

Attitude of U.S., Turkish Governments

Beirut AZTAG in Armenian 21 Jun 83 p 4

[Text] Almost six months have elapsed since the vile kidnaping of Comrade Apo Ashjian, and the fate of our comrade still remains unknown.

For us, it is clear and obvious that it is the fascist government of Turkey that is responsible for this base act. We are sure that the Turkish government is not just merely indirectly involved in this contemptible conspiracy, but that it actually implemented this dark plot stemming from the criminal character of the Turk through its secret services.

Turkish fascist leaders did not miss a single opportunity to threaten the Armenian people in an effort to counteract the anti-Turkish blows of the Armenian fighters and a resurgent Armenian Revolution on its way to recover the timeless rights of the Armenian nation. The Evrens, the Turkmens and the Turkish press, which acts as the mouthpiece of Turkish fascism, do not spend a single day without issuing threats against the Armenian people.

The Turkish propaganda machine wants to give its anti-Armenian campaign the character of a battle against international terrorism. But we know very well that Turkey, using the means available to its government and with the assistance of its allies, wants to refreeze the Armenian question which has been revived in recent years and which has given the Armenian people the hope that Justice may be restored while causing nightmares in the Turk's criminal mind.

The Armenian nation knows very well that the Turk is highly skilled in plotting conspiracies in the dark. Turkey's allies are also aware of that fact. The archives documenting the Armenian genocide are mostly in the possession of Turkey's allies. It was those same allies who in the last few years condemned Turkey's fascist government, which subjects even its own citizens to state terrorism. Only recently, the entire world witnessed an operation of persecution planned and implemented in the dark against the Kurdish people and causing the death of many Kurds.

In the light of these facts, it is not surprising--it should even be expected--that the Turkish criminal mind undertake acts aimed at the right arm of the Armenian people.

Turkish leaders declared from the very outset that they will not remain silent in the face of demanding blows by the Armenians and that they will retaliate. On 19 October 1981, General Evren said in a speech in Malatya: "We do not have an Armenian question. We never had one and we never will. Turkey has not seized any territory from any Armenian state. We do not have any land to give to any country. If they (the Armenians) feel they have enough strength and they can seize lands from Turkey, then they will get their due." On 27 August 1982, Evren said on another occasion: "The Turkish government is determined to resort to any means to curb Armenian terrorism."

For us, these statements constitute the best proof of the existence of the Turkish criminal character, which we already know too well. These statements confirm that the kidnaping of Comrade Ashjian is part of the campaign Turkey has launched against the Armenian question and the Armenian people.

The government of the United States is also well aware of this fact. But as is seen from the replies presented on this page in response to letters written in connection with Ashjian's kidnaping, the U.S. government not only avoids a direct answer, but also tries to defend Turkey by saying that it has no part in the said vile act of kidnaping.

Perhaps, we should have expected such a reply from the beginning, because we know that, in view of its strategic interests, the United States not only provides military and economic assistance to Turkey, but also turns a blind eye on Turkey's policy of repression and violation of human rights. Consequently, the United States would not want to alienate its sick ally by uncovering the true and sole author of Comrade Ashjian's kidnaping, namely the Turkish government.

We must particularly not be surprised that the U.S. government has assumed such a posture, since only recently the United States gave in to Turkish pressures as a result of that same single-minded policy of pursuing interests and became an accomplice to Turkey's efforts to distort facts in order to deny the Armenian genocide and to change the character of the Armenian question. Why should we be surprised when the United States, which regards itself as the defender of the free world and human rights, violates the principles of justice and imprisons Hampig [Sassounian] and five other Los Angeles youths, thus placing the victim on the defendant's seat and letting the executioner free to continue violating the legitimate rights of many other nations?

Memos Exchanged

Beirut AZTAG in Armenian 21 Jun 83 p 4

[Text] Letter to U.S. Government Officials from the Armenian Cause Committee of California

Issues raised by the various recourses made in California in connection with the kidnaping of Comrade Apo Ashjian are condensed in the following letter written on behalf of the Armenian Cause Committee of California:

On 29 December 1982, Apraham Ashjian, a Lebanese-Armenian community leader, was abducted in Beirut and his whereabouts still remain unknown. The abduction came on the steps of statements by Turkish President Kenan Evren which quote him as saying that the Turkish government has formed special "hit squads" to abduct Armenian leaders and to take them to Turkey.

Turkish President Evren's threatening remarks and the subsequent abduction of Ashjian in Beirut are ominous signs of a mounting state terrorism by the Turkish government against Armenian leaders and active individuals, including those who are U.S. citizens.

In the United States there are thousands of Armenian-American community leaders who, like Apraham Ashjian in Beirut, have exerted pressure on the Turkish government through legal channels to make it accept the massacre of 1.5 million Armenians by the Ottoman government in 1915. There are other Armenians who are working tirelessly through charity foundations, schools, athletic clubs and cultural organizations to preserve the cultural identity and communal integrity of the Armenians in the Diaspora. Many of these leaders are worried that other Armenians may also become the targets of Turkey's "hit squads." Such a situation could have a freezing effect on the activities of these leaders and such an adverse effect could have serious consequences here and overseas.

Curbing the /legitimate/ activities of the Armenian community would simply make the Armenians more nervous, and, having been disillusioned and angered, they would have to face the possibility of resorting to violent means.

The Lebanese-Armenian community, which has always been one of the major stabilizing forces in that war-weary country, has resorted to strikes with a full commitment to protest the abduction. If Ashjian is not released other regrettable acts may follow.

Today, the United States has a strong presence in Lebanon both militarily and diplomatically. It has been stated that that presence has been established in order to restore peace and to inspire confidence among all inhabitants of Lebanon.

We call upon you to conduct investigations in connection with this abduction and to demand officially, on behalf of the U.S. Department, from the governments of Turkey and Lebanon to make inquiries into this issue. We believe that such efforts are essential to assure the Armenian communities of the United States that serious attempts are being made to secure the release of Apraham Ashjian.

Respectfully, [signed] Armenian Cause Committee.

Letter to the U.S. State Department by Some Members of the International Relations Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives

California congressmen Mervyn Dymally, Tom Lantos and Mel Levine have sent the following letter to Secretary of State George Shultz posing explicit questions:

On 29 December 1982, Apraham Ashjian, a Lebanese-Armenian community leader, was abducted in Beirut, and, two months later, today, his whereabouts still remain

uncertain. The abduction followed statements by Turkish President Kenan Evren in which he is quoted as saying that the Turkish government has formed special "hit squads" to abduct Armenian leaders and to take them to Turkey.

Initial inquiries have shown that the Turkish government may have been involved in Ashjian's abduction, but a complete investigation is essential to dispense any doubts about the circumstances of the abduction. We request that the following questions be addressed and their answers conveyed to us:

--Does the State Department have any information on the whereabouts of Ashjian?

--Has the State Department made any inquiries with the Lebanese government and the Israeli forces in Lebanon in connection with Ashjian?

--Are there any other governments that are linked with this abduction?

The Armenian-American community is alarmed as a result of these incidents. Armenian active individuals and community leaders are worried that they, too, may become future targets of Turkey's "hit squads."

We would greatly appreciate your speedy response to our questions.

Thankfully, [signed] Mervyn Dymally, Tom Lantos, Mel Levine, members of the House International Relations Committee.

Philip Habib's Reply

Philip Habib's letter of response also has the same general character. We quote the following paragraph from Habib's letter:

Although I am not directly involved with the matter, I am naturally familiar with the disappearance of Apraham Ashjian. Our ambassador in Beirut, Robert Dillon, has raised the issue of Ashjian's disappearance with the leaders of the Lebanese-Armenian community and Lebanese government officials. Members of the Lebanese-Armenian community have expressed concern that Mr. Ashjian may have become the victim of a kidnaping attempt by Turkish agents. The Turkish government has assured our embassy in Ankara that it is not in any way linked with Mr. Ashjian's disappearance. Unfortunately, at the present time we have no information on the whereabouts of Mr. Ashjian.

Sincerely, [signed] Philip Habib.

The U.S. Government's Response to Inquiries in Connection with the Kidnaping Case of Comrade Apo Ashjian

The letters above and several other similar letters were responded to by the press secretaries of President Reagan and Secretary of State Shultz, Philip Habib and other representatives of the State Department and the U.S. Congress.

All these letters of reply give virtually the same answers, except some phrasing differences, to the questions asked and focus around the following main points:

- a) We have seen press items in connection Mr Ashjian's disappearance, but we have no information on his whereabouts. We have no way knowing conclusively whether Mr Ashjian is alive or dead.
- b) Our embassy in Beirut has raised the issue of Mr Ashjian's disappearance with the leaders of the Lebanese-Armenian community and officials of the Lebanese government.
- c) The embassy has not raised the issue with Israeli officials, because the Israeli forces were not in that area of Beirut where, according to the information given, Mr Ashjian disappeared.
- d) We have not found any evidence that the Turkish government has organized any attacks against Armenian individuals and organizations in retaliation for attacks staged by Armenian terrorist groups against Turkish diplomats and institutions. Nor have we found any declarations by Turkish President Evren where he promotes the alleged "hit squads" formed with the purpose of kidnaping Armenian leaders and taking them to Turkey. The Turkish government has assured our embassy in Ankara that it is no way linked with the disappearance of Mr Ashjian.
- e) We have not found any evidence whereby the disappearance of Mr Ashjian can be attributed to any armed organization belonging to any foreign government and operating in Beirut.
- f) We are grieved about Mr Ashjian's disappearance and we hope that the chain of violence in Beirut will come to an end soon. We also hope that the international community will be able to halt the peril of international terrorism by working together.

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ARMENIAN AFFAIRS

ASALA SAID TO BE CHANGING TACTICS

New Name: 'Democratic Front'

Beirut ZARTONK in Armenian 21 Jun 83 p 2

[Text] Democratic groups which support the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia [ASALA], such as the Armenian National Movement (France) and the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Armenia (United Kingdom and North America), held a congress around the beginning of April. According to the conclusions of this congress, the goals of "armed propaganda have been realized", the activities of existing liberation groups no longer conform with the needs of the current stage and the struggle must be moved on to the occupied territories of Western Armenia, for which, however, the existing groupings are not ready.

The congress decided to unite all existing groups under a single "Democratic Front", which will be completely independent from other existing organizations. The new organization has called upon the Armenian people to join forces with the Democratic Front "in order to wage jointly our armed liberation struggle in accordance with the imperatives of the current stage and with the aim of liberating Western Armenia." [The front] considers a long-term popular armed struggle as the only means to recover the Armenian lands.

'Cooperation' with Japanese, Italian Groups

Istanbul JAMANAK in Armenian 2 Jul 83 p 4

[Text] We read in BULVAR: The conclusion that has emerged from the two meetings held by the Armenian terrorist organization, ASALA, in Athens and Damascus is that ASALA has decided to cooperate with the Japanese Red Army and the Italian Red Brigades. It is reported that these two meetings were also attended by international terrorist "Carlos" who is also known as "the Jackal."

Also present at both meetings was the female Middle East representative of the Red Brigades.

Well-informed sources note that the terrorist incident in the Grand Bazaar in Istanbul occurred immediately after these meetings. The same sources report that during the meetings held in the Greek and Syrian capitals the Italian Red Brigades promised to help ASALA by providing weapons and the Japanese Red Army offered to participate in ASALA operations.

Officials state that the meeting in Damascus was also attended by the leaders of [Turkish] terrorist organizations who had fled to Syria after 12 September [1980].

In the light of this information, several intelligence organizations and secret services report that, according to experts investigating the Grand Bazaar incident, the weapon used by the terrorist was an Italian Baretta whose serial number was carefully erased.

This is the first time that this weapon is seen in Turkey.

According to the same experts, all the murderer's clothes were Italian and Portuguese products, except his trousers which were made in Turkey and were of a type extensively used in southern Anatolia.

Despite intensive investigation efforts, it has not yet been possible to determine the identity of the Armenian terrorist, who did not stay in any hotels during the time he was in Turkey. It is also suspected that the weapon entered Turkey through Cyprus.

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ASALA REPORTEDLY SUPPORTED BY TURKISH COMMUNIST PARTY

Istanbul JAMANAK in Armenian 22 Jun 83 pp 1, 4

[Text] The Armenian terrorist organization, ASALA [Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia] has claimed that it lost 22 of its members, including high-level fighters, during the Turkish army's operations against secessionists in northern Iraq.

In a letter sent to the New York office of THE ARMENIAN REPORTER, a paper published in the United States, ASALA stated that the Turkish army lost track of 22 ASALA revolutionaries during its operations and that ASALA fighters have been fighting against the Turkish army together with Turkish revolutionaries.

ASALA's letter does not say whether the said 22 terrorists are dead or alive or captured. The report published on the first page of the Armenian paper says that ASALA is in the middle of a serious crisis and that it has been divided into two. According to the paper's information, disputes have arisen among the Armenian terrorist organizations of North America and Europe on grounds that certain members have deviated from their objectives and have killed non-Turkish individuals; they have thus blemished the Armenian cause. The said report also states that Armenian terrorists in Europe and America must carry out their attacks only "on Turkish soil and against Turkish citizens."

Meanwhile, two days ago ASALA distributed pamphlets in Athens stating that attacks will continue against all political, economic and touristic organizations representing Turkey.

Meanwhile, the Turkish News Agency reports on the basis of a news item published in an Armenian magazine that ASALA is receiving assistance from the illegal Turkish Communist Party [TCP].

The magazine ARMENIA, which is published in five languages and which is ASALA's official press organ, said in an article that the TCP, particularly the Leninist faction headed by the publication ISCININ SESI, endorsed a resolution in connection with the Armenian cause during its general congress in Germany.

This is the first time that a Turkish political organization has shown a positive attitude toward the Armenian question and Armenian rights.

Meanwhile, in a lecture on terrorism yesterday, retired Admiral Sezai Orkunt said that world governments must take serious precautionary measures against international terrorism. Emphasizing that terrorism has been present throughout the course of history, Orkunt said in connection with Armenian terrorism that the real goal of the Armenians is to seize lands belonging to Turkey.

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ARMENIAN AFFAIRS

ASALA REPORTS 22 'MILITANTS' KILLED ON IRAQI BORDER

Istanbul JAMANAK in Armenian 22 Jun 83 p 1

[Text] Washington (Mediterranean News Agency)--In a letter to the New York office of THE ARMENIAN REPORTER, ASALA [Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia] claimed that 22 of its militants--one of them being a high-level official--were lost during Turkish army operations on the Iraqi border. A report published on the first page of the said paper states that ASALA is in the middle of a serious crisis and that it is divided into two as a result of the killing of non-Turkish individuals.

In its letter, ASALA urged all its activists in Europe and America to carry out their attacks only on Turkish soil and against Turkish citizens.

ASALA also issued a statement in Athens two days ago saying that attacks will continue against all political, economic and touristic organizations representing Turkey.

Meanwhile, the Turkish News Agency reports on the basis of a news item published in an Armenian magazine that the Turkish Communist Party [TCP] supports ASALA.

An article in ARMENIA, ASALA's official press organ which is published in five languages, says:

"The TCP, particularly the Leninist faction headed by the publication ISCININ SESI, endorsed a resolution in connection with the Armenian cause during its general congress in Germany. This is the first time that a Turkish political organization has taken a positive step with respect to the Armenian question and Armenian rights."

Meanwhile, retired Admiral Sezai Orkunt said during a lecture on international terrorism in Turkish Cyprus yesterday that world governments must take serious measures against terrorism. Emphasizing that terrorism has existed throughout the course of history, Orkunt concentrated on Armenian terrorism and said that the real goal of the Armenians is to seize lands belonging to Turkey.

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ARMENIAN AFFAIRS

TURKISH PAPER SAYS MARKET-PLACE ASSAILANT WAS NOT ARMENIAN

Istanbul JAMANAK in Armenian 7 Jul 83 p 1

[Text] Tokay Gozutok reports in TERCUMAN:

It has been found out that the terrorist attack in the Grand Bazaar, which ended in the death of two people and the wounding of 21, was planned by the overseas leaders of Turkish separatist and destructive Marxist terrorist organizations and that two countries which support these criminals helped the staging of this attack. The attack was staged in retaliation for the operations of the Turkish armed forces against separatist elements on Turkey's southern borders. The terrorists came from overseas and were trained in a country neighboring Turkey. The investigation on the incident revealed that the terrorists, who numbered at least two, infiltrated into Turkey through the southern border and stayed in Istanbul in a house used as an organization cell.

Turkish security officials conducting the investigations stated that the terrorists, trained and sent to Turkey by a neighboring country in the south, may include an Armenian, but that that does not mean that the attack was staged by ASALA [Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia]. Thus, the statements issued 21 hours after the incident through news agencies in the Greek part of Cyprus, Greece and France to the effect that ASALA claims responsibility for the incident contained phrases and terms commonly used by Turkish--not Armenian--terrorist organizations.

It has been determined that the bombs used in the attack were Soviet-made grenades and the automatic weapon used was manufactured by Baretta of Italy. The 1953 model weapon had its serial number scratched out. This was done in order to cover up the country to which the weapon was sold.

Security officials conducting the investigations have determined that the administrative cadres of Turkish terrorist organizations have fled to Europe while their paramilitary activists are hiding in a neighboring country in the south. Noting that there are Armenian as well as Turkish terrorists in the camp (Lavrion) in a neighboring country in the west, the officials stated that this country wants to undermine Turkey's tourism industry.

The neighboring country in the south which provided assistance for the Grand Bazaar attack employs the leaders of Turkish separatist Marxist organizations in its police force and provides them with housing, cars and money.

FOREIGN-SPONSORED, INTERNAL POLITICAL, MILITARY UNREST IN SOUTH DISCUSSED

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic No 172, 28 May-3 Jun 83 p 24

[Article: "Southern Sudan Is Weak Link in Numayri's Regime; Military Insurgency Attempt in Southern Province Aimed at Striking Country's Unity"]

[Text] A few days after the election of Ja'far Numayri as president of the Republic of Sudan for a third term by 99.6 percent of the voters, an insurgency attempt occurred among the Sudanese armed forces in the Southern Province with the aim of "striking Sudan's unity," according to official sources in Khartoum.

On the night of Sunday-Monday, 15-16 May 1983, a company of the 105th Battalion of the 1st Division of the Sudanese armed forces command in Southern Sudan staged an insurgency attempt that led to clashes and to a number of casualties. The official Sudanese authorities did not announce the attempt until Wednesday, 18 May, when they issued a statement revealing the staging of the attempt by a company of the 105th Battalion, saying: "Signs appeared in this company in the past months indicating lack of discipline and major financial violations." The official Sudanese statement points out that as a result of "foreign contacts," the company troops went so far "in their transgression in recent weeks as to disobey orders, thus leading to decisive measures being taken against these positions in order to preserve the country's unity and the armed forces' discipline, prestige and traditions." The statement adds that "military operations were carried out against the battalion's positions in Bor and al-Baybur. The operations were successful and settled the situation finally. During the operations, vast quantities of weapons and munitions were seized in Bor, thus indicating that there is hostile activity aimed against the country's unity and security. These weapons have come from abroad as part of the criminal schemes against Sudan." The statement asserts that security has been established in the area and that the army controls the situation.

Another Sudanese military statement said that putting out the rebellion resulted in 8 fatalities among the Sudanese army forces and insurgent losses of 70 killed and dozens of wounded and a large number captured. Official Sudanese sources said that the insurgents are involved in a serious conspiracy supported by foreign circles that supplied this company's command with money and weapons to strike the regime.

This attempted insurgency again spotlights the situation in Southern Sudan and raises the question: What are the difficulties facing President Numayri, as he begins his third term in office?

The various facts indicate that Numayri is enjoying a stable political situation, especially in the northern parts of the country, and that there is no imminent and serious danger from any internal elements, that the attempts attributed to elements loyal to Libya seeking to shake the regime's stability are not of significant scale and are not supported by internally influential forces, especially since application of the regional government system, which has given the various Sudanese provinces a kind of self-administration in various spheres. It can be said that the majority of the old partisan elements in Sudan have joined the country's regime directly or indirectly, with the exception of some leftist and Ba'thist groups whose influence the regime has been able to curtail, particularly in the wake of improved relations with the Iraqi regime.

Added to this is the fact that many elements of the opposition abroad, previously represented by the National Front operating abroad, joined the [regime's] ranks when President Numayri declared the national reconciliation. The most prominent elements of this opposition include al-Sadiq al-Mahdi and the Muslim Brotherhood. Even though al-Sadiq al-Mahdi has not actually participated in the government, his movement does not now represent a power that could pose a threat to the movement of the ruling Sudanese regime for reasons embodied mainly in the internal struggle between al-Sadiq al-Mahdi and Ahmad al-Mahdi for leadership of al-Ansar sect, which was previously the largest opposition bloc. Ahmad al-Mahdi has been able to gain the regime's sympathy in this struggle, has emerged, on the regime's admission, as al-Ansar sect leader and has thrown his weight behind President Numayri's leadership and regime. This has been evident in the appointment of Ahmad al-Mahdi to the Socialist Union's central command. Ahmad al-Mahdi also participated in the campaign for the referendum on the third presidential term in support of President Numayri and his program. As for the external opposition groups that have inherited the opposition of al-Sharif Husayn al-Hindi since his death, they have been submerged in their internal struggle for leadership, waged by Ahmad Zayn-al-'Abidin and 'Abd-al-Majid Abu Hasabu, two of the leaders of the Unionist National Party. Though this opposition has been able to gain the Libyan regime's support, it is not qualified for a major opposition role against the Sudanese regime.

South...Weak Link

If we exclude the critical and difficult economic situation in Sudan, the main point of weakness threatening the regime's continued stability lies in the developments being witnessed by the Southern Region. At the same time, this region represents an outstanding accomplishment for President Numayri's regime, which has achieved peace and national unity between the north and the south after a war that lasted 17 years.

Political conditions in the south herald a hot security situation in the coming phase and represent a major challenge to stability because of the

tribal differences that have begun to assume a political dimension in the struggle for local rule. The elements of this danger gathered when the issue of dividing Southern Sudan into small provinces was raised. This issue has turned into a severe political crisis, which has major impact on the region's security conditions. The political opposition to the current regional government, headed by Joseph James (Tombrab) Tombura and the fifth government since conclusion of the peace agreement, is intensifying constantly. These opposition groups are led by members of the Sudanese Front and (SANO) Party. There are major fears that the current political and tribal differences will turn into a military conflict and into armed clashes between the supporters of the present government, which enjoys the backing of Sudanese Vice President Joseph Lagu, former military commander of the rebellion in the south. The supporters of this government are exerting efforts to divide the region into small provinces, whereas the tribal and Nile groups, led by the Dinka, comprise the factions opposed to division of the region.

The security sources have referred to Libyan endeavors to stir troubles in the Upper Nile Province by arming some citizens belonging to the opposition. These sources have revealed that pamphlets signed by the operations room of the Popular Arab Revolutionary Committees have been seized and that these pamphlets urge the citizens to stage a popular revolution and to carry arms to establish the people's authority, to form people's secretariats and to dissolve the Ministry of Defense and turn it into a popular administration.

It can be said that Southern Sudan is currently passing through extremely difficult political tests and equations and that one cannot speculate on the extent of the ability of the present coalition ruling the Southern Region to confront these difficult tasks and their impact on the political, security and economic conditions in the south. Informed sources say that President Numayri may try to calm emotions by dissolving the present regional government and forming a broader alliance comprised of the various elements and representing a sort of national regional government in order to reach the ideal situation for ruling the Southern Region. The latest insurgency has shown that the Southern Region represents the main weak link of the present regime.

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CSO: 4504/415

HIGHER EDUCATION PROBLEMS DISCUSSED BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL

Jiddah AL-MADINAH in Arabic 26 May 83 p 16

[Interview with 'Abd-al-Rahman Abu Zayd, secretary general of the Sudanese National Council for Education, by Muhammad Ahmad 'Awad: "Secretary General of Higher Education in Sudan Discusses Sudan's Higher Education Concerns' Arabization of Curricula in Sudan Reflects Our Arab and Islamic Nationality; Creation of Joint Saudi-Sudanese Committee for Coordination Between Two Countries"; Khartoum, date not given]

[Text] A delegation of the Sudanese Ministry of Education and Guidance visited the kingdom recently with the aim of opening channels of cooperation between the two fraternal countries. AL-MADINAH has taken the opportunity of this visit to interview Prof 'Abd-al-Rahman Abu Zayd, general secretary of the Sudanese National Council for Education, who discussed the numerous problems and difficulties facing Sudanese higher education and the efforts being exerted to find successful solutions to them. The interview also dealt with the visit to the kingdom and the accomplishments of the visit, in addition to numerous other questions answered patiently and capably.

Regional Universities

[Question] Some people oppose the establishment of regional universities, demanding that the existing universities be strengthened and that the regional universities be dispensed with. What is your view?

[Answer] The opposition, if there is opposition, is based fundamentally on the country's current economic situation. This opposition states that this economic situation cannot afford the creation of new institutions because the establishment of a university is a costly undertaking. This is a justifiable objection, which we fully respect. On the other hand, there are strong reasons for the creation of institutes of higher education in the new provinces. The first of these justifications is that millions are being spent on development projects in Sudan and these projects, like all other state facilities, suffer from a shortage of capable cadres. Moreover, the establishment of new regional governments in Sudan requires highly qualified and college-graduated cadres and cadres with middle-level qualifications to guarantee success for the regional-rule experiment. Moreover, the vast expansion in general education during the May revolution

period has created a bottleneck in the existing higher education institutions. We expect, for example, nearly 80,000 male and female students to take the Sudanese certificate [high school] test this year and expect one half this number to pass with grades qualifying it to enroll in universities and higher institutes, whereas the current capacity of the universities and higher institutes may not be able to accommodate 10-15 percent of this number. As we see, the large gap will represent an enormous human loss to Sudan. We must meet this demand for higher education institutes. Fourth, Sudan has suffered heavily in recent years from a braindrain to the fraternal countries. This drain has resulted in a drop in the level of necessary services for the Sudanese citizen. We are now suffering, for example, from a sharp drop in the standard of education at all levels. We also suffer in the other service sectors. We must find the format to counter this major drain. Add to this the fact that Sudan is committed at the pan-Arab level to meeting the fraternal countries' needs in all well-trained and well-qualified cadres, be they engineers, doctors or university professors. We will not close our doors to such requests from the dear brothers. Moreover, Sudan's constitution guarantees the Sudanese citizen the democratic right to work wherever he wishes. In any case, the establishment of new universities will be done in stages, which will begin with the end of the term of the present regional governments, a term that lasts 7 years. We hope to see, and we do see, signs indicating that our economic situation has begun to improve greatly. We also notice the popular interest in and determination to contribute to the establishment of these institutes. The plan states that the institutes will start with a small number of basic colleges that meet the needs of the provinces and constitute nuclei for the new universities. These universities will then develop qualitatively, like other world universities. This means that we will not begin with universities containing all kinds of colleges. Let us cite Darfur University as an example. It will start with only three colleges, in education, veterinary medicine and natural resources.

Scientific Expansion

[Question] What about streamlining the Cairo University branch and utilizing its resources in line with the country's need for cadres?

[Answer] The Cairo University branch was founded historically, as you know, as a branch of the mother Cairo University--and is still a branch of this university--with the aim of solving Khartoum's crisis on the eve of the country's independence. At the time, this branch university focused and is still focusing on theoretical studies because they are not costly and do not require the vast sums of money needed by the science and applied studies colleges. Sudan needed such studies and the Cairo University branch has performed and continues to perform a pioneering role in training Sudanese at the university level. The brothers at the mother Cairo University have been very responsive to the needs of Sudan's growth and have begun to formulate plans to establish science colleges. The study is still under discussion and parts of it have begun to see the light. We hope that the entire plan will be implemented in the near future. Sudan's National Council for Higher Education is in close contact with the administration

of the Cairo University branch in Khartoum to support its plan to implement it so that this university can help train scientific cadres.

Stability of Education

[Question] Why is university education in Sudan unstable?

[Answer] The most important factor usually leading to this instability is perhaps the student overcrowding at these institutes, thus creating shortages of boarding facilities, laboratories, libraries and study auditoriums. Moreover, the braindrain to which we have referred is also the result of complaints from the students. These collective problems surface sharply every now and then, thus giving the impression of instability in Sudan's higher education. But if we view the issue from the angle of training alone, we find that the formula in accordance with which the higher education students are enrolled in Sudan is no longer acceptable to numerous circles and that sharp discussions are currently taking place to find a new formula. As you know, we enroll Sudanese students in the boarding sections of the universities at no cost to the students, free of charge. Consequently, the universities and the higher institutes shoulder the cost of the students' living expenses, their trips home during vacations and their medical care. Poor students are also given monthly pocket money. This is not the task of the universities. Free education does not mean providing living expenses and travel expenses, which are exorbitant. To many academicians and university administrators, free education must be confined to providing professors, books, lecture halls and libraries. Anything else should be shouldered by the student's family, as in other universities of the world, even the universities of the very rich and very advanced countries. If this concept is accepted, then the instability to which you have referred will disappear and the universities will be able to double the number of students enrolled annually.

Sudanese-Saudi Cooperation

[Question] You and the minister of education visited the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia recently. What was the purpose of the visit and what results were achieved?

[Answer] The visit of the minister of education and guidance and the chairman of the National Council of Education who took me and the general director of the Higher Education Financing Administration along--this visit came in response to an invitation from Shaykh Hasan Al al-Shaykh, the Saudi minister of higher education, with the aim of strengthening the ties of cooperation and fraternity between the higher education institutes in Sudan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The visit was very successful because we were able to reach a full understanding on the means by which to bring Saudi and Sudanese universities closer together and to open channels of cooperation involving professors, student training, joint scientific research and financial support for our Sudanese institutions. The creation of a joint committee from the kingdom's Ministry of Higher Education and the National Council for Higher Education was one of the most

important results of this visit. This committee will follow up on implementing what was agreed upon.

Univeristy Atmosphere

[Question] University professors complain about their material and moral situation. What is the council's role in achieving university professor's aspirations?

[Answer] The National Council for Higher Education is concerned with creating the right atmosphere for the university professor. This atmosphere should include working conditions acceptable to the professors within the bounds of Sudan's financial and civil service laws as a whole. It should also provide the professors with proper living and environmental conditions, such as giving them and their families housing and medical care. In consultation with the universities, the council, on behalf of higher education, deals with what has been agreed upon with the state agencies concerned. The National Council for Higher Education has succeeded to a large extent in creating the right atmosphere for Sudanese professors. Constant discussions and numerous studies are currently under way to achieve more gains for the university professor.

Question of Arabization

[Question] Some people call for Arabizing the curricula of the universities and higher institutes. What is your opinion and is there a possibility for such Arabization?

[Answer] Arabizing the curricula is an extremely important pan-Arab issue. Sudan is one of the Arab countries seriously seeking to Arabize education in all of its stages out of pride in its Arab and Islamic nationalism and out of the conviction that the mother tongue must be the language of education and of instruction. Sudan has taken great steps in this direction and all general education and major parts of higher education have been Arabized. Efforts are still in progress to Arabize the remainder, especially in scientific fields such as engineering, medicine and agriculture.

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POLLS SHOW LIKUD MINUS BEGIN PREFERRED

Jerusalem KOTERET RASHIT in Hebrew 6 July 83 p 5

[Article by Eliyahu Hasin: "Begin Is Now a Liability to the Likud"]

[Text] It seemed improbable at first glance; therefore, we reexamined the question in May and June. Yes, the Likud without Begin wins three more seats than the Likud with Begin. In competition between it and the Alignment, Begin's liability is five seats. It is possible that with respect to the Likud, Begin has done his part.

The discovery was made more than one-half year ago. A survey of November 1982 by the Dahaf Research Institute found already at that time that the omnipotent electoral charisma that the political community attributes to Menahem Begin does not have much basis. The election forecast made on the basis of that survey was that the Likud's electoral potential without Begin was only very little less than it was with Begin as its head. The difference between the two possibilities in those days amounted to only three seats: 59 seats for the Likud with Begin, 56 seats without him. At the same time, the Alignment's strength was 42 seats against the Likud without Begin and 40 seats with him. ("From Begin-Begin to Likud-Likud" KOTERET RASHIT 1).

One-half year later, in a survey of May 1983, KOTERET RASHIT reexamined this subject. For this purpose the interviewees were asked how they would vote "if Menahem Begin would leave political life and the Likud would be headed by another of its leaders such as Yitzhaq Shamir or Moshe Arens" while "the other lists would remain intact."

In light of what has happened to us and to Begin in the 6 months between the two surveys, the results should not apparently have been surprising. However, they so conspicuously contradicted the customary estimate in the political campaign that for the purpose of extra caution we preferred to reexamine the matter before publicizing the results.

The June survey, that was conducted in the field between 19 and 24 June, did this. Its findings verified that not only does the prime minister not add to the electoral strength of the Likud but instead he detracts from it. In other words, had the elections to the Knesset been conducted in the last 10 days of the previous month and had the Likud competed without Begin, we would have the following results:

Likud -- 54 (51 in the current forecast with Begin); Alignment -- 45 (47); NRP -- 5 (5); Agudah -- 4 (4); Shinui -- 3 (3); Tehiya -- 2 (3); Civil Rights Movement -- 2 (2); TAMI -- 1 (1); Democratic Front for Equality -- 4 (4).

This means that in the circumstances of the dates of the survey, Begin "cost" the Likud a net of three seats and in terms of the difference between the Likud and the Alignment, five seats, a difference of nine seats without him in contrast to a difference of four seats with him.

It is not to be inferred from this, of course, that Begin's charisma has weakened in the traditional sources of strength of the Likud or, more precisely, the Herut Movement. Those who point out "Begin-Begin" will continue to do so no less enthusiastically than heretofore, but their vote will go to the Likud in any event, whoever is at its head. The aforementioned findings however show apparently that on the periphery of the Likud supporters, on both ends of the spectrum, there has recently developed a phenomenon of potential voters whom the leadership of Menahem Begin, in his present edition, prevents from voting for the Likud.

Again, it must be stressed, of course, that all the limitations pertaining to the customary results of public opinion polls are doubly relevant to this question. The reason is that here the 1,187 interviewees were not asked to respond to a known issue which they had been considering over and over again but rather to a hypothetical possibility at the time, the reaction to which requires a certain amount of imagination and sophistication. Moreover, in the very posing of the question as it was, several far from certain assumptions were involved. For example, the transition from Begin to his heir would take place in the Likud calmly and peacefully, without bitter struggles; the general conditions in Israel would remain more or less the same; the heir would not arouse personal opposition on the part of the Likud supporters; and all the other decisive factors in the political campaign would remain the same, including the Alignment's repulsiveness that influences the picture no less than the Likud's attractiveness.

Despite all these reservations and similar ones, there is in this result of the June survey a much better indication regarding this subject than in the customary estimates and appraisals. The same applies to the electoral significance: In the current circumstances and the prevalent tendencies among the public, the personality of the prime minister no longer constitutes an election asset to the Likud but instead, to a certain extent, even a burden.

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ISRAEL

POLITICS OF BENI BEGIN, SON OF PRIME MINISTER, DISCUSSED

Jerusalem KOTERET RASHIT in Hebrew 29 June 83 p 10

[Article by Yisrael Segel: "The Rise of Beni Begin: The Son Is the Holy Spirit"]

[Text] When the political journalists this week accidentally found out that Beni Begin has been involved in the "doctors' crisis" and in the negotiations that have been conducted in the closed rooms and offices of the prime minister and minister of finance, the news made headlines. The truth is that Beni Begin has been "involved" in political processes for a long time.

Menahem Begin is proud of his son and appreciates his intellectual talents. "Beni is intelligent, logical, and honest," he once said to his advisor on communications, Uri Porat. Beni Begin, like his mother Aliza, is a definite hawk. During the Camp David period, he tried to influence his father to take a hard line. In his eyes, the complete Eretz Yisrael is a supreme value.

Binyamin Ze'ev, 40, the firstborn son of Aliza and Menahem Begin, is a geologist. His area of specialization is geomorphology, and he is the head of a department in the Geological Institute. In contrast to his father, Begin the son immerses himself in details. His approach is the one of the natural scientist. Externally, there is an astounding similarity between Beni Begin and his father when the latter was his age.

December 1981. The prime minister decides on the annexation of the Golan. A few minutes after the ministers arrive for a special meeting at Begin's home, a slim, bespectacled young man with a pile of rolled maps under his arm arrives. The young man is Beni Begin. He sketched the map that served as the basis for the annexation decision.

Beni was the one who in February 1982, after the energy innovation of Minister Ya'aqov Meridor was shelved, telephoned "David Ya'aqov" -- this is what the fighting family called Meridor -- and begged him not to leave the cabinet and resign his position.

Since the death of the prime minister's wife, Aliza Begin, Beni's influence over his father has been growing. Begin uses the good offices of his son for the purpose of delicate political missions, and primarily when he wants those

visited to know that he is personally in back of the mission. Several weeks ago, at the height of the doctors' crisis, Ministers David Levi and Yoram Aridor met secretly at Beni Begin's apartment on Yefe Nof Street in Jerusalem. They were cloistered in one of the rooms and tried to find a common ground among them in the atmosphere of crisis.

The extent of Beni Begin's involvement in the political processes grows primarily in those times when his father decides to remain silent. At these times his son Beni is his mouth and ears. He is the only one that Begin the father knows that anything he will say is not dictated by personal political interests. The Herut members of Knesset say that the involvement of family members in Israeli politics is not unusual. Have you forgotten Miriam Eshkol? Leah Rabin? Beni Begin fulfills a vital function for the prime minister.

No one disputes Beni Begin's personal integrity. His associates in the Geological Institute say: "He generally doesn't belong to the 20th century in terms of his personal integrity." At his place of work he is highly respected professionally. He was appointed the director of a department in the Geological Institute after the employees recommended his appointment (in accordance with the current procedure in the institute, the employees have the right to advise on the selection of the directors, a right which carries considerable moral weight with the management).

Beni Begin has an extremely modest lifestyle. There are those who say that he is even "ascetic." A senior official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs relates that prior to Beni Begin's trip on a speaking tour on behalf of "the bonds" in the United States, he asked to be present at a speech which his father delivered before a group of Americans. The speech took place in the Plaza Hotel and was preceded by a gala banquet. Beni Begin was invited to the meal. He adamantly refused and "did not want to eat a supper on the nation's account," according to the official.

As for his intellectual talents, there are differences of opinion. Ezra Sadan, the director-general of the Treasury, said this week at the height of the doctors' crisis, "Beni is a brilliant man." A member of Knesset from the Herut Movement was more restrained: "He explicitly lacks his father's charisma. He is serious to an awesome extent and completely lacks a sense of humor. . . He lives in another world, cut off." Begin the father would like to see his son in politics. To this point, Beni has refused.

This special status worries activists in the Likud and arouses criticism. "What's going on here? Is this a Byzantine court? Is this a family business? Here lies the root of the problem -- this government doesn't even have a kitchen. Everything is conducted here like a family business," says one of the Herut ministers.

Beni Begin is a close friend of Aridor: "This has nothing to do with his father," says one of the personalities who have been involved in the crisis. "When you are in trouble, you consult with your friends. And this is exactly how we have conducted ourselves. Not only in the doctors' crisis, but always."

The long talks that were conducted over the past weekend until the wee hours of the morning in what was later called "the company headquarters" created a special atmosphere. A senior official who followed the consultations told me: "I am telling you the truth. I was simply jealous of them. I saw comradeship there, simply the comradeship of friends who are in trouble." The discussions concerned not only the crisis. One of the participants relates: "We had a real debate over the philosophy of the administration. Must one govern only in order to govern or must there be a purpose beyond that? Everyone cited his own quotations from history in order to strengthen his view. We had the feeling of a moment of truth, when all those present without exception poured out their hearts and conducted a penetrating soul-searching with themselves and others. The one who radiated this atmosphere was unquestionably Beni Begin."

Everyone who participated in these marathon talks testified that he had a real experience. There are those who even go so far as to say: "We had a kind of convergence of the right. People said what they were thinking, including Aridor."

Beni Begin said among other things: "I speak as a citizen, as one who lives in this country and wants to continue to live in it. The government doesn't interest me at this moment, and neither does the Likud. I want to know what is good for the economy." Beni Begin opposed the resignation of Yoram Aridor as minister of finance: "We cannot work things out without Yoram and Ezra Sadan. We cannot let them go."

When the time comes, will Beni Begin "run" for politics? This question has been repeatedly asked this week within the Herut Movement. There is no doubt that as long as he continues to serve his father in his position, Beni will avoid every overt political activity. What will happen when Begin leaves the political stage -- on this there are different estimates. His closest friends say, "Beni is not built for politics and its intrigues. He simply will continue to work as a geologist." The young Herut members of Knesset, who consider Beni a dangerous competitor who is likely to be "catapulted" to the head of the list, also concur in this estimate.

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ISRAEL

STAND TAKEN ON VERBAL ABUSE IN MEDIA, INTERVIEWS WITH MINORS

Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 26 June 83 p 6

[Article: "Press Council Calls for the Maintenance of Civility in Controversy"]

[Text] The Press Council views with grave concern every instance of verbal violence disclosed in Israeli society, including its public arena. The council calls on all the press media, both printed and electronic, to scrupulously adhere to the general maintenance of ethics that prohibits incitement on ethnic, religious, personal, racial, and national grounds. Every public dispute must be conducted with patience and civil language with complete preservation of the freedom of expression and the full and reliable report, and the press should set an example for this.

This resolution was adopted on Friday by a plenary session of the Press Council that was convened in Sokolov House in Tel Aviv at the conclusion of the discussion that began at a previous session on verbal violence on ethnic and general grounds.

The president of the council, Dr Yehoshua Rotenstreich, who concluded the discussion, noted that if we do not fight against verbal violence, it is likely to become a flood. Verbal violence has become worse in the public arena in which there have recently been heard expressions such as "absolutely worthless," "utterly abominable," and "the Hebrew University is a PLO university."

The council president added that the Committee for Updating the Code of Standards of the Council will soon submit its recommendations on this matter.

At the conclusion of the general discussion most of the speakers stressed that the extremism in public controversy that is deteriorating to the style of incitement stems from a lack of restraint on the part of public representatives, additional violent exacerbation on the part of marginal groups, and journalists who occasionally receive anonymous threatening letters.

Participating in the general debate were Rabbi Isser Frankel, David Pedatzur, Levi Yitzhaq Hayerushalmi, Prof Aharon Ankar, Hayim Faikersh, Natan Shaham, Noah Moses, Dr Ze'ev Segel, Moshe Zak, Lawyer Hayim Shapiro, Ya'aqov Kifer, and Moshe Dor.

In the second half of the session the plenary group of the council adopted a resolution on guidelines for interviews with minors in the media that included, among other things, the following:

* A journalist should not interview a minor under 14 years and should not publish the results of the aforementioned interview on the following matters:

a. A crime and any immoral act committed on a minor or in his presence or in which the minor was involved in any other way.

b. A matter concerning his private affairs or those of his family.

c. A matter involving moral turpitude or a marital relationship.

* It is permitted to interview minors between the ages of 14 and 16 regarding the above matters but only with the consent of their parents or guardians.

* An interview permitted in accordance with these rules is to be held in the presence of those who permitted it and anyone who wants to be present except if he explicitly permitted the interview to be held without the presence of anyone.

* The photographing of the minor during the interview and anything related to it and also the publication of such a photograph require the specific and explicit permission of the one who permitted the interview.

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ARABIC PAPER INTERVIEWS HEBRON COMMUNITY LEADER

Ramallah AL-MIR'AH in Arabic 25 May 83 pp 4, 5

/Article: "AL-MIR'AH Meets the Vice Chairman of the League of the Governorate of Hebron, Muhammad 'Isa Dudin, in a Frank, Comprehensive Conversation"

/Text/ The newspaper of the masses, which speaks the truth honestly, plainly, in a pure manner and without equivocation, deviousness or the avoidance of facts, has been accustomed to meeting with our working men, to converse with them and to hold discussions with them in order to examine all the facts, so that we can present them in our customary democratic, purposeful style to our masses and so that they may be constantly in contact with the movement of construction, along its long road.

This major, extensive meeting took place with one of our men of great abilities, our brother Muhammad Dudin, the vice chairman of the League of Hebron and the director of cooperative activity in the governorate.

As we present Mr Muhammad Dudin here on the pages of AL-MIR'AH, we must make a frank, truthful statement to our masses; he is one of the few people who are endowed with frankness, truth and clarity along with the ability to speak precisely, without caution, fanaticism or reserve, honestly expressing the truth as he sees it, in a clear manner and through sound discourse.

We do not want to add more; the reader may judge this through this great meeting, which accommodated every kind of question presented, dealing with the issue from all angles. The questions, with all their ramifications, diversity and delicacy, met with a clear, unequivocal response.

We herewith present our honored readers with this interview in full:

Question: The movement of Palestinian leagues on the West Bank arose with the emergence of the nucleus of the movement in the city of Hebron in 1978. That was the original movement.

What is the role of the original pioneering movement today, now that our Palestinian leagues encompass all areas of the West Bank, from the following standpoints:

- A. Social?
- B. Economic?
- C. Cultural, moral and informational?
- D. Finally, political?

Answer: The role of the League of Hebron Governorate, as you mentioned, has been a pioneering one, and this league will continue to be a source of everything that will entail strengthening the movement of Palestinian leagues on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. Its personnel will continue to be able to make creative maneuvers in all political, economic, social and cultural contexts, and they will continue to consider themselves a part which is wholly equal to all the fraternal leagues, whose sacrifices are no less than those of the League of the Governorate of Hebron.

Question: The league announced a people's conference last February but it did not take place. Was it cancelled or postponed? What was the reason, in either case?

Answer: The conference was postponed, but not cancelled, because the conference was comprehensive and general in character, and the leagues were to have held it collectively through their federation. Since this invitation had been issued by the League of the Governorate of Hebron, which was an error to which some of the people in charge of the League's affairs succumbed, the conference was postponed until people's thinking matured and the appropriate time for holding it arose.

Question: What is the extent of relations and cooperation between the Palestinian leagues and the inhabitants of the Gaza Strip?

Answer: The composition of the population in the Gaza Strip is different from that of the West Bank; whereas on the West Bank there are 450 villages and 26 municipalities, a similar composition is not to be found on the Gaza Strip; rather, there is a minority who are landowners and a majority who are refugees from 1948. In spite of this fact, the enthusiasm which ordinary groups of people in the Gaza Strip have expressed is embodied in the fact that the local leaders in the strip have been in contact with the leagues on the West Bank. It is also embodied in the fact that these contacts have continued and a study has been made on conditions for setting out corresponding national institutions in the Gaza Strip, which are indeed proof of the depth of cooperation between the bank and the strip. We are ultimately a single people, and we aspire to a single future and a single solution to the problem of these people, whether they are living in the Gaza Strip or on the bank.

Question: We have heard that the Palestinian leagues include individuals in their ranks who are not accepted by the various classes of the people as a result of their conduct, which is alien to decency. What is your opinion? What is your reply?

Answer: The charters of all the leagues specify good conduct and behavior and a good reputation as a condition of membership. In any case where it is proved to the boards of directors of the various leagues that a given member has behaved in a way that will inflict harm on the reputation of the league, or that he has committed an act which violates it, the league expels these sorts of persons from its ranks, and declares in its paper, the venerable newspaper AL-MIR'AH, the names of the members who have been terminated and the reason for their termination. We appeal to all the members of our people, with open hearts, to inform us truthfully and honestly of any conduct that is harmful to the reputation of the Palestinian leagues.

Question: People have said, and there has been much talk, that the Palestinian leagues do not work on behalf of their masses. We know that the movement of Palestinian leagues has made, and is making, tremendous developmental and construction activity which has encompassed all the villages in the West Bank.

What is your response to this statement?

Answer: As in olden times, "The dogs bark but the caravan moves on." If everyone who wanted to serve his people was obstructed by individuals who are benefitting from the misfortunes of the people, our people would have remained the prey of those promoters and beneficiaries of their sufferings.

Question: What is the reason for the fact that the league has not played the role that was hoped for from it in reuniting families?

Answer: The current leadership of the league took note of this situation, and on the basis of it the president of the league presented the chairman of the civil board with the undertaking that the Hebron League was on a par with the other governorates in the area of reuniting families. The chairman of the civil board responded gratefully by accepting this request, and announced it at the latest meeting in this league, which took place in his presence. The league, for its part, will present demands for being reunited from every deserving person. On the basis of the civil board chairman's agreement to the league chairman's request, we hope that these applications will progress as swiftly as possible in order that the complaints that have been registered on this subject may be eliminated.

Question: We know that the Hebron League has performed many projects and services for the citizens, but, in its capacity as the pioneer in the process, has it done things we could be proud of before everyone?

Answer: The greatest accomplishment in the activity of the Hebron League was the establishment of the conviction, among the responsible elite of people in other governorates, that fraternal leagues must be established and then that a federation must be established among them. As far as other things are concerned, we believe that there are matters of which one must be proud, because the leaders of the other leagues have not let any opportunity go unexploited to provide the necessary services for the inhabitants of the governorates whose leadership they are in charge of.

Question: Do you believe that Israel's policy vis-a-vis the occupied territories will remain unresolved as it is now, after the passage of 15 years since the 1967 war and the signing of peace with Egypt and Lebanon?

Answer: You tell me what there is to compel Israel to change this situation, and why Israel should change to a different form of activity. I will ask you first of all whether the military power of the Arab countries is able to change this state of affairs. Is the Liberation Organization's power able to do so? Can the decrees and recommendations of the United Nations bring us to a different result? Are Arab pressures on the major powers able to compel the two great powers to intervene to compel Israel to do otherwise? All this is known to us, the Palestinian people, who are living through circumstances of occupation, and the only thing that will make Israel live up to its responsibilities toward the world will be our presentation of a peace plan such as Egypt presented. If we present Israel with serious peace plans, take the rein of affairs in our own hands, and do our duty toward our own people as Egypt did, in this case alone will it be possible to change the existing situation to one where we ourselves become sovereign and become an entity living in peace and security on our own national territory.

Question: What is your comment on the policy of the establishment of Israeli settlements on the West Bank?

Answer: The establishment of settlements is a peripheral aspect of the basic problem, which is the occupation. It is well known that the Israelis would not have been able to build settlements for themselves had they not occupied this area, and that the remedy to the issue of the establishment of settlements lies within the remedy to the basic problem from which the establishment of the settlements arose, namely the occupation. The maxim on this point says "He abandoned the fox and went after its footprints." Some Arab media agencies have specialized in dealing with the issue of the establishment of settlements as if it were the gist of the problem, but we in the leagues consider that the issue of the establishment of settlements is part of the major problem, which is the occupation, and that we should proceed to remedy the problem from this angle in principle because, if the problem of the occupation is resolved, then the establishment of settlements will not continue to be a problem--indeed, it will be resolved along with the main issue.

Question: What is behind Jordan's statements on the policy of the bridges in the recent period?

Answer: In an earlier question on Jordanian-Palestinian relations, I replied that we are a single people, and indeed, more than that, we are a single family, and that most of the inhabitants of the East Bank are our own people and tribe. For this reason, any measures that the Jordanian government adopts with respect to the bridges are tactical steps, not strategic ones, and the reason for these measures was a signal on our part that we were doing everything in our power to take the reins of the initiative regarding our own future and destiny into our hands, especially since the discussions which took place between His Majesty King Husayn and 'Arafat have proved the validity of the theory which the leagues have implanted, which is that the dispute among the detachments of the Liberation Organization and the differences in their policies, in accordance with their

subordination to various Arab regimes, and the lack of unity of leadership in the ranks of the Liberation Organization, make it impossible for them to reach agreement among themselves on anything, no matter how small or large it may be.

Some of the extremist measures petty officials carry out in offices in Amman or on the two bridges are individual acts which do not measure up to the level of responsibility with which His Majesty King Husayn could be characterized and thus are not expressive of this policy. For this reason we are confident that Jordan will not relinquish its crucial relationship with the people of the West Bank, because the end of the West Bank's cause will be the beginning of the end as far as the East Bank goes. That is, the destiny is a single one and the responsible steps make it mandatory that we closely understand the motives behind them.

Question: Is there hope for a further Jordanian-Palestinian meeting?

If one takes place, what will be the extent of its effect on the inhabitants of the occupied areas and the fate of the Palestinian people here?

Answer: The issue is not one of hopes and wishes. The people who live in Jordan and under the occupation are the offspring not just of a single people but of a single family, the destiny is the same, the future is the same, and conditions make it mandatory that the two entities achieve coordination between themselves at various levels in order to reach a safe shore, salvation and peace.

Question: Who is the sole beneficiary in having the situation we are suffering from, in the form of the stalemate we are experiencing, continue? What is the road to salvation and to our people's attainment of the establishment of their independent state and recognition of our legitimate rights?

Answer: The only beneficiaries are the enemies of this people, the people who are trafficking in its misfortune and have enriched themselves at the expense of this misfortune. Our road to salvation is to take the reins of the initiative on our cause in our hands and not leave them as prey to these greedy merchants, who have been driven thirsty by the blood of our people since their cause began.

Question: What if Jordan were able to return to the bank? We were very familiar with it before 1967.

Answer: In the history of all peoples, lean years and dark days pass in which the members of the people are afflicted by various swindlers. In response to your statement that we have been familiar with Jordanian rule in the past, the people of the East Bank, especially Kafr Sum, all the villages, and al-Karak together suffered at that time from some of these swindlers. However, the security of the state, from our point of view, after we became acquainted with our responsibility, made it mandatory that harsh measures be taken. The consequences of the loss of security are known to people in general. In the past, it was said, in describing such chaos, that it was "the garb of power." In such cases, the loss of security means the loss of security for the people too, not just for the government. We hope, and we are the ones who most fervently hope, that the Jordanian family will

be brought together again, and that life will return to its normal course. We are proud of the close bonds between us as a single Jordanian family which thinks nothing of bearing a certain amount of aggravation.

Question: How can we build bridges of love and concord and create circumstances for true peaceful coexistence between our two peoples, although we have made many successful strides in this area, on the basis of two conceptions which differ totally on this constructive, beneficent notion? These are:

A. The major process of establishing settlements on the West Bank.

B. Attacks from many Israeli bodies and newspapers on our sound, constructive movement.

Answer: Although there are a number of extremists among the Israeli people, the likes of whom are to be found among the Arab people on the bank and in the strip on the one hand and in the other Arab countries on the other, the proportion of extremists is very low anyplace. The Israeli people are a people who long for peace, in their overwhelming majority, and it has become clear to us, through numerous meetings which have taken place between the members of the leagues and Israeli intellectuals including, for example, Tzvi Peleg, Shlomo Ilia and many other Israelis, that they are peaceloving and are striving for peaceful coexistence between our two peoples.

As to the media attacks, we consider ourselves responsible for their occurrence, because we have been deficient in getting in contact with Israeli media personalities and presenting the Palestinian cause to them as a cause of national liberation, truth and justice. If those people understood our cause, their style of attacking us would change to methods for explaining and winning over all segments of the Israeli people.

The cause of our deficiency lies in two areas:

First, the material one, that is, the lack of availability of what is required in the material sense.

Second, the fact that most of our leaders are not fluent in the Hebrew language, which we must be proficient in in order to be able to address ourselves to Israelis in general.

Question: Are there any means on which the leagues can rely in the material sense, other than civil administration, bearing in mind that what the administration offers is one of our people's rights?

Answer: It is well known that the West Bank is one of the world's developing areas and that the main resources of the inhabitants of this area are scarcely adequate for the inhabitants' essential requirements. As you know, the league employs a number of full time workers and it participates in many projects bearing on services and development projects, for which it needs financing which the aid it receives from various bodies does not cover. If we look at the Saudi

support money and the funds bearing on brotherhood among cities which reach the municipality of Hebron, for instance, we will find that this amount is sufficient for most of the inhabitants of the Governorate of Hebron, when the expenditures from it are restricted to municipality works within the limits of the municipality of Hebron.

The league is striving, from the premise of its notion that financing is a basic aspect of all its works and projects, to increase its income by the various means available; the more money that is available to this league the greater the services it can offer to its member public.

Question: Do you believe that the movement of Palestinian leagues has a popular base that enables it to represent the Palestinian people on the occupied territory in any political activity? What is the evidence for that?

Answer: Yes, the league has a popular base, and nothing beside the leagues has a popular base. It is the only organization that exists on the bank and works in the open, in full daylight, under the rays of the sun, not in hiding; there are no organizations besides it. When such sorts of organizations come into being, we will compare their popularity with ours in a direct referendum through the people; the people are the arbiter and the ruling factor. However, for us to compare ourselves with some individuals who claim that they are speaking in the name of one given body or another--no organization can put itself on a par with individuals.

Question: What might we consider the movement of Palestinian leagues specifically? Is it a popular movement, an official organization, a government department or a political party?

Answer: We consider it everything you said. It is a mass organization because it illuminates the road before the masses, it is a political party because it organizes people in its ranks on ideological bases, and it is a government department because it is the people and the members in it who will take charge of the administration of the government, as far as its people go, someday.

Question: If the movement of Palestinian leagues declares the formation of a negotiating delegation, what do you expect the reaction of the people in the occupied territories will be?

Answer: The formation of a negotiating delegation will be declared in the leagues only through a mandate of the people. If the people make such a mandate, all the segments of the people will say "Yes to the leagues," because they are the ones who gave it the mandate. We will not form a delegation to negotiate, but we will be satisfied with what our people decide.

Question: What will be the political future of the movement of Palestinian leagues if the Israeli government refuses to recognize it as a negotiating party on the basis of the Camp David agreement?

Answer: The Israeli government does not appoint our people's representatives and it does not have the right to dominate this people and exercise tutelage over it to the point where it can appoint the people who will have to speak in its name. What is more significant to me is, what is the difference between the government of Israel and the Rabat conference? Israel is a democratic state, and, if our people empower us to speak on their behalf, the Israeli government will accept this mandate, and will accept the people their people delegate to speak in their name. There is no basis for assuming that the Israeli government will refuse to recognize us, because it is our people who are presenting us, or are pushing others, to speak in their name.

Question: What is the meaning of the transporting of Soviet subjects from Lebanon and Syria's claim that Israel is preparing to fight it? Should one believe that war will take place?

Answer: What has been broadcast and spread about on this subject in accordance with the official statements issued by the Soviet news agency TASS is exaggerated, and the purpose in it is to keep the state of tension and anxiety in the Middle East area at its most intense, to enable the people who benefit from it to escalate the prevailing campaign of tension in the area to its maximum, then to reap the rewards of it by selling more arms to the oil producers and the rich people in the area, whose pockets are bulging with the bank balances which they cannot count or develop the lives of their peoples with. Assuming that what has been broadcast is real, that proves that the two great powers want to test advanced new weapons on the inhabitants of the Middle East area who are under their control by fabricating this sort of situation.

Question: It has been stated that the United States and the Soviet Union disagree over everything that is going on in the Middle East in general and the Palestinian cause in particular. What is the degree of truth in this?

Answer: I do not believe that that statement is founded on a scientific basis. The East and the West do not concur, but there is one single fact, which is that the whole world has recognized the state of Israel and that the two great powers, who are the most powerful countries, recognize this fact at the top of the list, and both of them, or the United States alone, will not allow the Jews to be exterminated or the state of Israel to be eliminated from the map of the world.

Question: It is said that the interests of the United States dictate a rapid solution to the Palestinian cause, while the interests of the Soviet Union dictate that the stalemate continue. Is that correct? Why?

Answer: That is not correct; the opposite is correct. The United States wants the state of tension and stalemate to continue as long as one barrel of oil is left in the area, because it is the American companies, and not the Soviet ones, that are exploiting the oil in these areas, and the headquarters of all these monopolies and companies are located in America, not Russia. If America wanted to create a solution in the area in which peace would prevail, it would have done so before you could blink an eye, as the genie told Solomon. It is America which holds the keys to affairs in all the Arab countries and Israel.

Question: What is your opinion regarding the information department of the movement of Palestinian leagues: do you consider that the media in our movement are playing their part as they should?

Answer: As a start, the Federation of Palestinian Leagues adopted a decision to establish a media department which would speak in the name of the Palestinian leagues. Much improvement, change and programming will have to be made in order to raise it to the requisite level of competence at which it will be able to address itself to all viewpoints in Israel and abroad regarding everything they will have to know about our movement.

Delegations of journalists, media figures, members of parliaments and representatives of organizations from all areas of the world are constantly present in the centers of the Palestinian leagues, in an unending process of dialogue and discussion.

When the media department matures, it will have to receive these groups and set out special programs of visits and meetings for them, supply them with books and publications describing our cause, and supply them with guides from the media department who will accompany them to all the facilities which the leagues want to have the members of these groups become acquainted with. So far as I know, the federation's policy for the coming months will include increasing the competence and capabilities of the media department so that it can reach the level we want and so that the department can perform its duty as thoroughly as possible.

Question: What is your opinion about AL-MIR'AH newspaper's staff?

Answer: In general, the staff of AL-MIR'AH is functioning at a capacity which is greater than its real volume in producing the paper in its current form and in developing it so it will become a daily paper. All this staff lacks is an improvement in its own standard of living and support in the form of competent persons who will be able, by having a grasp of various languages and cultures, to help reach the level of perfection as far as this staff goes.

Here I would like to point to the stinging comments which a smart man who uses the byline "hornet" writes, because most people are not familiar with the material he writes, which we read in AL-MIR'AH. Here, on the pages of AL-MIR'AH, we must thank the man with the hornet's sting for his style and way of writing.

Question: What is your opinion on the regular columns, articles, interviews, statements, comments and everything that appears in AL-MIR'AH on the one hand? What would you like to read in it?

Answer: The statement on matters on that subject must be directed to the reader; I cannot argue with a reader who is fond of solving crossword puzzles, for instance, a reader who is concerned with knowing a plan, or a reader who gives priority in his reading to sports, literature, religious thought or politics. You know what tastes the readers are fond of, and therefore I consider that from my point of view the only regular feature that exists is the one for which there are readers.

Question: What shortcomings can you observe in our newspaper? Would you like things to be added to it? How would you like to see it?

Answer: The first thing that concerns me about AL-MIR'AH newspaper is that its circulation among people spread, and I give primary importance to that.

In regard to classifications, size and the statement of some of the things that our people are concerned to know the truth about, AL-MIR'AH is the sole newspaper on the West Bank which does this job, and I believe that the modest resources available to this adolescent newspaper have gone beyond the stage that any of us dreams of and have reached the stage where it is pleasing to the readers, in accordance with its resources.

Question: AL-MIR'AH has been accustomed not to flattering anyone at the expense of the truth, and that is the platform it has followed since it was established. In accordance with the freedom of opinion it believes in, the readers have read violent articles on its pages which treat the Arab and Israeli parties equally, and that remains the opinion of the writer of the article. What is your opinion on that?

Answer: In accordance with my understanding of the mission of the press, there is no surveillance over a writer except his conscience, and if a writer believes in his viewpoint, he has the freedom to express himself any way he wants, within the limits of the law, to express his conviction in prose or poetry, and no entity has the right to hold him to account for this conviction of his.

Question: In your capacity as a director of cooperative activity, what are the reasons that are working to keep the cooperative and development societies in the District of Hebron from being a success?

Answer The reason has appeared in the answers to some questions. We are a developing area and in all developing countries the government is in charge of financing all cooperative and developmental projects. As you know, no one is helping us with the necessary money for this work; in spite of our extreme appreciation of the importance of programming development work in this region, we view the future with optimism.

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CSO: 4404/427

ISRAEL

BRIEF

ISRAEL-GREECE COMMERCIAL RELATIONS--Commercial parties in Greece and Israel are considering the possibility of establishing technology-intensive enterprises in Greece that will be based on cooperation between the two countries. The Greek Association of Industry and Commerce expressed its readiness to establish a company that will obtain a first sum of \$3 million for this purpose. Consequently, a reciprocal visit of a Greek economic delegation to Israel is expected in about 3 months in order to accelerate the discussions concerning the establishment of projects of mutual interest to both countries. The visit of the Greek delegation was decided upon during the stay of the commercial delegation from Israel headed by Zalman Shalev, director general of the AEL electronics firm, in Athens. The Israeli delegation proposed to the Greeks that the visit be immediately after the holidays, in early October. The head of the Electrical and Electronics Section of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Beni Neuorf, reported that it was decided that the Greek delegation that would come to Israel would include representatives of the government and the private sector. The Greeks are interested in cooperation that would contribute to the development of the electronics industry in their country. It will also be for the purpose of informing Israeli exporters of the potential of the Greek market that is geographically close to Israel. Greek imports in 1982 from throughout the world amounted to \$15 billion, of which \$3 billion was for oil imports. Israeli exports to Greece in 1982 remained at the level of the previous year despite the war in Lebanon which caused a cooling in the relations between the two countries, and it remained at \$70 million. [By Hayim Bi'ur] [Text] [Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 27 June 83 p 8] 5830

CS0: 4423/156

DIPLOMATIC, POLITICAL RESPONSES TO WITHDRAWAL AGREEMENT VIEWED

Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic No 327, 28 May 83 pp 18-19

[Article by Salim Nassar: "While Awaiting Outcome of Diplomatic Contacts, al-Biqa': War That Will Cancel All Wars"]

[Text] The political and diplomatic analyses of the Lebanese and Mideast situation following conclusion of the [Lebanese-Israeli] agreement end in one conclusion: If diplomatic efforts fail to find a solution, war will break out. President Reagan is waiting for "something" to declare that he will run again for the presidency.

The latest clashes in Lebanon, and all the mass kidnappings in al-Shuf and along the southern coast, are no more than political indicator of developments in the diplomatic war in the area. The clashes as a whole emanate from the conflicting internal and external conditions, considering that the agreement has affected the balance of forces in the Arab world on the one hand and the balance in relations between Lebanon and Syria on the other. This is why it is said that the distance separating the declared diplomatic war and the anticipated actual war is no farther than the distance separating President Reagan from the date on which he will announce his candidacy for a second term. This means that the coming month of June will be the month of decision insofar as all the pending issues are concerned. This is the month that Israel chose in 1967 to attack all the eastern front states and then decided to test these states in the same month of last year, attacking the PLO and demanding from Lebanon the price for its withdrawal.

Observers in the Arab world fear the sixth or seventh war because, in their view, it will be of dimension that will cancel all previous wars. The Jordanian-Syrian rapprochement, signs of which have appeared recently in some changes, will perhaps open the way to a Syrian-Iraqi dialogue, if Moscow succeeds in persuading Damascus that Iran's position in the wake of the liquidations carried out against the Tudeh Party, is no longer worthwhile in terms of helping to weaken the Iraqi position. Even though it is difficult to arrange for this relationship between the two [Syrian and Iraqi] regimes because of the deep differences between them, Moscow feels that it is necessary to revive a united Arab front that could form a nucleus for a conference to confront the Lebanese-Israeli agreement--a conference similar to the Baghdad conference.

It is obvious from the positions of the various Arab currents that their rejection of the agreement reached by Lebanon has not been of the same dimensions as their almost comprehensive rejection of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. However, the diplomatic battle mobilized at present is seeking to attract the Gulf Cooperation Council states and to shift Jordan's and Iraq's position with the aim of creating a front supporting Syria's inclinations without necessarily opposing Lebanon's inclinations--a front founded on rejecting the present settlement while awaiting a better opportunity that helps enhance the hope for securing a comprehensive peace that is in the interest of Syria and the Palestinians as well. This cannot be achieved without effecting a change in the positions of some Arab countries, such as Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, North Yemen and Jordan, considering that it is difficult to change the positions declared by Egypt, Somalia, Sudan, Morocco, Oman and Tunisia.

This week's kidnapping and liquidation incidents and chaos have shown that the agreement with Israel has not succeeded in separating the Lebanese problem from what is happening in the area because developments in the Lebanese war began as a result of the Sinai agreement signed in September 1975. These developments have continued until now. It is noteworthy that over the past 7 years, the battles have intensified or subsided according to external pressures and intervention. The connection between these battles and the projected solutions has been an organic connection because Lebanon is the only Arab country where all interests and all tendencies meet, and it is the only area in the Middle East in which exists the presence of all the sides, from Moscow to Washington, from Tokyo to Berlin. It is to this particular point that U.S.-Lebanese disagreement over the dimensions of the agreement is confined. Shultz views the agreement as a separate solution similar to the solution between Egypt and Israel, whereas Lebanon wants the agreement to be one of the chapters complementing the Fez proposals and Resolution 242. This is why Lebanon has demanded that the dialogue with Syria be strengthened, because a settlement leading to respect for the unity of Lebanese territory and Lebanon's political independence is not, in the view of the officials, complete unless it adopts the Arab solutions.

The question presently raised in major capitals concerns the interpretation of the latest events and whether the acts of kidnapping and a murder on the basis of identity cards have dragged the crisis back 7 years and opened a Pandora's box to various possibilities, including partition, patriation [of the Palestinians], the creation of sectarian ministates and the division of Lebanon, for solving the fundamental issues that have been pending for 30 years. This is the issue that Andre Fontaine, the well-known French commentator, raised at the outset of the Lebanese war when he wrote about the difficult equation facing three peoples living in two countries. The peoples are the Israelis, the Lebanese and the Palestinians. The two countries are Israel and Lebanon. It is Fontaine's view that the Israelis seized the Promised Land from the Palestinians, and the Lebanese and the Palestinians have remained as two peoples on the same land.

The same question leads to the new tunnel entered by the Lebanese problem as a result of the faltering U.S. solution. Does this faltering require the start of a new diplomatic and military phase in preparation for another chapter?

In reply to this question, Dr Elie Salim, the minister of foreign affairs, says: "Israel has sent to the United States messages stating that it will not withdraw until Syria withdraws and until the prisoners are returned. We have sent to Washington messages stating that if Israel fails to withdraw, this agreement is considered suspended or virtually abolished, depending on the circumstances that develop. If the withdrawal is not carried out within a reasonable period of 1 or 2 months, the agreement will die a natural death."

With this statement, the minister of foreign affairs is betting on a set period of time not exceeding 2 months. It is natural that the Syrian position will remain unchanged, with the aim of foiling the agreement. This is the least that Lebanon expects in terms of obstructing the withdrawals now that the crisis has turned into a reflection of regional pressures and of the policy of the two superpowers in the area. This is why Lebanon finds it necessary that the international community, especially the European countries, intervene, considering that their role is not confrontational as is that of the United States or the Soviet Union.

The United States may retreat at present, giving Lebanon the freedom to perform the required role, considering that the United States has taken into account the given facts, including its non-participation in the Syrian-Lebanese negotiations, unlike the previous phase, when it performed the role of partner and observer in Khaldah and Qiryat Shemona.

It is said that Lebanon is the side that has asked the United States to step aside because Syria does not accept this partnership and because Beirut's relations with Damascus continue to be direct relations that need no support or cover. Washington has agreed to retreat for the time being, provided that the agreement with Israel is not exposed to being torpedoed and provided that the negotiations remain essentially confined to efforts to oust all foreign forces.

The European countries have explained their ideas to the minister of foreign affairs within this framework. Even though the Western position is somewhat discordant, it has given Syria the cover it may need to open a dialogue by way of the West outside the United States, keeping in mind that British Foreign Minister Pym has told Dr Elie Salim that he will discuss in Washington dispatching Shultz to negotiate with Damascus again. It is Pym's belief that the situation can withstand no procrastination and that Philip Habib has lost the political momentum of the mediating role after the visit of the U.S. secretary of state and the success of his mission in a period of no more than a week.

The Lebanese diplomats say that this is not a political scenario but a political option and that this option may close by the end of June or the middle of July, depending on the date that Reagan sets to announce his candidacy.

These diplomats are unanimous in their view that the political option may not succeed because the Soviet Union is determined to take part in the settlement in return for the military and political support with which it has restored the balance and obstructed the imposed solution. On this particular point, Israel is preparing to reject this participation because it will be the side that will have to give up the Golan and the West Bank. This is a chronic problem, which started with the 1956 campaign against the Suez and then assumed its true dimensions after the 1967 war. The successive events and wars have shown that in the Middle East, the Soviet Union is a force for rejection, not

imposition, meaning that it cannot impose an agreement with which Israel and the United States are not satisfied but it can obstruct or torpedo an agreement. This is what it will try to do in the coming phase, unless it is faced with a decision similar to al-Sadat's i.e., full isolation from participation, and unless all the eggs are put in one basket.

There is an almost complete consensus in the Western capitals that the month of June will carry with it the boom of guns, the drone of aircraft and the rumble of tanks and all that happened in June of 1967 and June 1982. Reporters visiting al-Biqa' believe that a single bullet could spark war along a front that is more than 40 kilometers wide and in which 30,000 Syrian troops, 25,000 Israeli troops and 7,000 Palestinian fighters will be engaged over an area of no more than 50 square kilometers crammed with an enormous number of heavy tanks, estimated to total 2,000 on both sides and positioned in fields, on hilltops, in the valleys, in apricot and pear orchards, in watermelon patches and elsewhere and surrounded by more than 1,700 guns of various calibers, some of them tracked, some vehicle-mounted and some stationary. Iron and steel have turned fertile in the most fertile part of the world. The muddy earth has dried up and all are standing alert. It is as if one bullet fired by mistake could turn this green spot into a red hell igniting both earth and sky on the last confrontation line.

Will this happen?

In Israel, there is currently a struggle between two political schools, each of which claims that it can dictate the solution. The first is Sharon's school, which calls for a comprehensive sweep that threatens Damascus, strikes Jordan and puts the Palestinians in al-Biqa' between two lines of fire. In the latest meeting held by the Israeli cabinet, the former minister of defense said that this war should have the dimensions of the great wars that cancel all small wars and should force the countries concerned to sign a peace treaty. This fundamental military solution was opposed because it is a kind of adventure that broadens the front in a way that makes it difficult to control, even if the entire Israeli army rushed to protect it. In addition to these practical difficulties, the Soviet Union would be forced to intervene in a manner that would pose the threat of an international confrontation. One of the inevitable consequences of such a war would be elimination of the so-called moderate role in the Arab world, which would turn in its entirety into a steadfastness and confrontation front. The Israeli papers point out that Sharon excluded the possibility of involvement by the two superpowers in the wake of Vietnam and Afghanistan, claiming that the air force would settle the battle in just 3 days.

The school of his successor, Arens, calls for procrastination [al-murawahah] and for full utilization of the status quo, because Lebanon will collapse and burst from within as a result of Arab and international inability to find a satisfactory solution. As chaos has recently spread and the role of the state has diminished as a result of the intensifying violence in Mount Lebanon, the further intensification and dissemination of these negative manifestations

in other areas will lead to total domination by foreign forces, each over its security zone. This is what Lebanon is trying to avoid through negotiations. However, it opposes control and domination in the process of restoring its sovereignty.

In the view of the officials, neither school serves Lebanese interests because the negative results emanating from postponing a solution are equal in danger to those of an all-out war. They are dangers that expose Lebanon's role, national unity, sovereignty and borders to complete violation.

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EFFORTS TO REVIVE NATIONAL LABOR COUNCIL DISCUSSED

Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic No 327, 28 May 83 p 39

[Article: "Will National Labor Council Close the Page on the Socioeconomic Council?"]

[Text] On 17 May 1983, Dr 'Adnan Muruwah, Lebanon's minister of health, labor and social affairs, headed a meeting of the National Labor Council, which had been inactive since 1979.

In his message to the Lebanese on May day, 1 May, Minister Muruwah had promised to summon the National Labor Council to resume its meetings and to carry out the tasks entrusted to it.

Muruwah has described this council as a "parliament" of businessmen and workers who discuss within its framework all matters pertaining to relations between the two sides and to the labor market.

The fact is that the National Labor Council is an experiment that has not been given enough time to make it possible to judge whether it is a success or a failure. The council was founded in the early 1970's when Ghassan al-Tuwayni was the minister of labor and social affairs. The council had hardly completed its initial steps when it came to a halt. Since then, the council has met only a few times, with no continuity. The National Labor Council comprises representatives of businessmen, including industrialists, merchants, business owners, free craftsmen and professionals. The council seeks, among other things, to create a proper climate for calm dialogue between the two sides in production in order to deal with economic and social problems and with conditions in the labor market.

The fact is that timing the revival of the National Labor Council under the current critical circumstance raises some questions before which we must pause:

First, the Ministry of Labor's initiative in reviving the "parliament" of businessmen and workers has followed incomplete initiatives by the General Labor Federation and by the businessmen to open a direct dialogue at the offices of the chairman of the Beirut Chamber of Commerce with the aim of dealing with economic and social problems fighting inflation, developing production and confronting the pressures to which both parties in production are exposed in order to avoid the problem of increased wages which intensify inflation and cause the problems of wages and cost of living to be in a constant infernal race.

The truth is that we cannot understand the initiative of Antoine Bisharah, chairman of the General Labor Federation, toward the chairman of the Beirut Chamber of Commerce right now. But it is possible to say that this initiative does not encourage optimism, especially since it has remained confined to the aforementioned two individuals and has not attracted the support of any other group.

It can also be said that this initiative has been received with strong reservations by the industrialists who have disregarded the initiative at times and tied their approval of it to preconditions at other times.

Therefore, it seems that revival of the National Labor Council now comes as an attempt on the part of the Ministry of Labor to control matters anew and to play the role of patron of the dialogue between the two parties to production, keeping in mind that this is the ministry's natural role. The minister of health, labor and social affairs is fully convinced that such an essential dialogue between businessmen and workers cannot succeed unless the Ministry of Labor is a fundamental part to the dialogue, for many reasons, including the contradictions between the businessmen on the one hand and the workers on the other and the absence of a tradition between the two sides to allow them to embark on a constructive and successful direct dialogue.

Second, the timing of revival of the National Labor Council has come in the wake of intensifying talk about the possibility of creating a socioeconomic council. The idea of this council is an old Lebanese idea that dates back to the mid-1960's.

The fact is that the idea of the socioeconomic council, which was voiced for the first time by exminister Pierre Iddih, has always been received with reservation and a lack of seriousness, which have caused it to fail. Recently, there has again been intensifying talk by labor and economic circles about reviving the socioeconomic council.

Will revival of the National Labor Council be a substitute for the socioeconomic council?

Has the National Labor Council come in the new attire planned for it in order to put an end to the idea of the socioeconomic council which some people fear will gradually turn into a pressure-exerting individual?

Whatever the case, if the National Labor Council is used seriously and supplied with the necessary help and capabilities, it can constitute an alternative because the issue is not one of names but of content.

What is also important is that the Ministry of Labor now has three parliaments for businessmen and workers, namely:

The National Labor Council.
The Joint Indicator Committee.
The National Social Security Fund.

These parliaments are sufficient for establishing a calm dialogue between the parties to production that are in the direst need of this dialogue by virtue of the difficult circumstances being experienced by the establishments. So will the dialogue begin?

DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO GET SYRIAN TROOPS OUT DESCRIBED

Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic No 327, 28 May 83 pp 20-21

[Article by Ghassan Bayram: "The Reply to Lebanese Complaint; Washington: This Agreement Is for Implementation"]

[Text] More than 10 days have passed since conclusion of the Lebanese-Israeli agreement. Yet, there is nothing to indicate an imminent Israeli withdrawal in accordance with the agreement's provisions. Syria rejects, the United States is determined to implement and Lebanon has been in a state of waiting for 8 years.

In the final meeting, which witnessed the signing of the Lebanese-Israeli agreement, David Kimche, the head of the Israeli negotiating delegation, likened this agreement to a precious "granite" rock "which we have spent months sculpting until it turned into a beautiful statue."

As soon as Kimche completed his words, Dr Antonine Fattal, the head of the Lebanese negotiating team, answered his Israeli counterpart, saying: "It is true that we have spent more than 5 months sculpting this precious rock until it has turned into a beautiful statue. But the important thing is not that we have finished sculpting this statue but that we know how to put it on a pedestal befitting it and highlighting its meanings and its aesthetic dimensions. This statue must be given life, that it may survive and become fruitful and that it not end in the graveyard of agreements that did not find their way to implementation, otherwise we will have sculpted a wooden statue that will rot, not a granite statue...."

These portions of the dialogue of symbols that took place between the heads of the Lebanese and Israeli delegations reflect and express the atmosphere that dominated the signing meeting, indicating the fears that have accompanied the Lebanese negotiator from the outset of the negotiations and that "are still our companion to this moment. But having attained this agreement, we hope that it will be one of life's children and that it will not end in death and extinction...."

It is most likely that when the head of the Lebanese negotiating team demanded that this agreement be given life, his words were not addressed to the Israeli side but to the guarantor, the U.S. partner, who headed the table. So far,

the U.S. guarantee is the only hope for implementing the agreement between Lebanon and Israel.... Insofar this U.S. guarantee exerts itself strongly and credibly, so will the desire to fight the difficulties and obstacles now standing in the path of this agreement be strong.

Every observer of the various phases of these negotiations acknowledges the truth of the claim that Lebanon has gone through the hardest, most difficult and most tiring negotiations in modern history. When these observers admit that Lebanese President Amin al-Jumayyil has managed skillfully the most difficult negotiations under the most difficult circumstances, then events confirm that the source of the suffering is not that Lebanon, weakened and exhausted by the years of war and tribulation, has been facing an arrogant Israeli negotiator deriving strength from its army, which occupies Lebanese territory, and trying, by virtue of this position, to dictate the difficult conditions and demands that President Amin al-Jumayyil once described as debilitating. It is because Lebanon was not negotiating with Israel alone but was negotiating with other parties not sitting around the negotiating table, while negotiating with Israel at the same time. Lebanon was negotiating with Israel and, through Israel, it was negotiating on what Syria could accept or reject and, at times, what the United States could accept or reject. The same went for the Palestinians. Finally, it was negotiating for what could maintain the internal unity of the Lebanese lines and what could spare this unity any upheavals or disintegration.

Thus, the Lebanese negotiator was negotiating with Israel and, at the same time, was implicitly negotiating in the name of all these parties so that it might ultimately reach an agreement that would achieve two fundamental things:

First, that no party to the conflict in this area feel that its interests have been undermined or that Lebanon has negotiated with Israel for its interests at the expense of others, both nearby and remote. This consideration is what made Lebanese President Amin al-Jumayyil draw for the Lebanese negotiator red lines and declare principles and given facts that reject any undermining of the Arab world's interests and security or of Lebanese-Arab relations and that, of course, reject any undermining of Lebanon's sovereignty.

Second, that Lebanon after the negotiations reach an agreement that provides the minimum positive conditions and climate for making this agreement acceptable to all.

The question that persists is: Has Lebanon been able to achieve what it wanted after this long and hard procession?

In principle, Lebanese officials are unanimous that Lebanon has succeeded in achieving a lot, having reached an agreement whose importance does not lie in the fact that Israel will withdraw from Lebanese territory in accordance with this agreement but in the fact that the withdrawal in itself will mean more of a rebirth for Lebanon than it means the restoration of large parks of its territory. This is because there is no state in the world where the tie between the land and the political entity is as strong as it is in Lebanon.

Amidst all these Lebanese, Arab and international conditions and climate, Israel is trying to evade implementing the agreement. The information available to more than one official source confirms that fact and talks of numerous methods to which Israel may resort in order to foil the agreement concluded with Lebanon without appearing as the plotter and the aggressor before world public opinion, because what Israel ultimately wants is to destroy the formula of the Lebanese entity. The Israeli position lost its credibility in the eyes of the Lebanese negotiator when Israel insisted on tying its withdrawal from Lebanon with a Syrian withdrawal while knowing perfectly well that the circumstances of its presence in Lebanon are in total contrast with the circumstances of the Syrian presence and that the conditions for its withdrawal from Lebanon cannot be the same as for the Syrian and Palestinian withdrawal.

Ex-Prime Minister Sa'ib Salam dwelt at length on the issue of the Israelis in Mount Lebanon in a long conversation he had last week with U.S. presidential envoy Philip Habib, Salam told Ambassador Habib that Israel, to show its goodwill and credibility toward the agreement it signed with Lebanon, must stop its actions in Mount Lebanon and put an end to this sectarian fighting, which it has been trying constantly to fan.

Despite signing the comprehensive withdrawal agreement, Israel has not abandoned its plans for partial withdrawals from Lebanon. While U.S. president envoy Philip Habib has been conducting his shuttle visits to the Middle East capitals, the Lebanese capital has received information confirming that Israel is preparing for an initial withdrawal to al-Awwali River in case the Syrians refuse a simultaneous comprehensive withdrawal.

Western diplomats who have come to Lebanon from Israel have said that the Israelis are preparing for this plan of partial withdrawal and that they are setting a date for the Syrian withdrawal so that in case the Syrians refuse to withdraw, the Israelis will implement this plan under the slogan of showing goodwill toward Lebanon, thus keeping southern Lebanon. These diplomats have said that a number of prominent Israeli officials believe that withdrawal from Mount Lebanon under the slogan of showing goodwill may motivate the Syrians to withdraw from the upper al-Matn areas because their presence there will no longer have any military justification.

Lebanon has answered this Israeli scheme with a memorandum from the Lebanese Government to Washington saying that it considers the agreement with Israel an indivisible whole and that it is either implemented in its entirety or not implemented at all and that the game of partial withdrawals is rejected because it poses a major danger to Lebanon due to the fact that its objective is to create a fait accompli that turns the occupation of southern Lebanon into a permanent occupation. Lebanon has demanded a clear U.S. position toward this point--a position that rejects the principle of partial withdrawals.

U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz expressed support for this Lebanese position in the message he sent to Elie Salim, Lebanese minister of foreign affairs, assuring him that the United States will not stop its efforts until the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon is achieved.

Lebanon continues to exert active diplomatic efforts to prevent Israel from planning to implement the partial withdrawals that in fact pose a danger to Lebanon's unity under the canopy of the situation existing in Mount Lebanon. This danger exceeds the danger of the continued presence of all of the occupying forces in their current positions because from Lebanon's viewpoint, partial withdrawals constitute the beginning of real partition and of the creation of ministates.

At the same time, the U.S. assurances on implementing the agreement are still based on the fact that the door remains open to negotiation with Syria on withdrawal from Lebanon. But the numerous efforts made since the conclusion of the Lebanese-Israeli agreement have not led to starting negotiations with Syria.

While escalating its political and propaganda opposition to the agreement, Damascus has at the same time refused to receive U.S. presidential envoy Philip Habib, describing him as one of the most dangerous enemies of the Arab cause. Before this, Damascus refused to negotiate with the Lebanese working team that had been formed for the purpose under the canopy of official Lebanese assurances on readiness to conclude an agreement with Syria dealing with what Syria believes to constitute a danger in the Lebanese-Israeli agreement and organizing bilateral relations between the two countries.

But this Syrian rejection has not been viewed as a final closing of the door in the face of the possibility of negotiation and understanding. This has been the view of Washington and of some Arabs, in addition to being the view of Lebanon, which has continued to deal with the Syrian position with a large degree of composure and positiveness, displaying full readiness to deal with the problem with Syria with utter love and fraternity. Within this framework, Lebanese President Amin al-Jumayyil decided to delay for a time signing and concluding the agreement with Israel so that his signing it would not be construed as a challenge to the Syrian position and in the hope that the postponement would soften the Syrian position.

In this stand, President al-Jumayyil responded to the advice of a number of Lebanese and Arab leaders who had exerted efforts in this regard.

The policy of open doors practiced by Washington, Lebanon and a number of well-meaning Arab leaders has not failed so far because the door of political dialogue is still wide open. The fact that the doors of dialogue continue to be open as they are at present is not because, in the view of a number of Arab diplomats in the Lebanese capital, the agreement is so bad but because of the presence of fundamental positions that continue to control the movement of the regional struggle in the area, whether at the Arab-Israeli level or at the level of the struggle of the major powers.

These Arab diplomats say that any change in the fundamental positions will be necessarily be reflected in the positions toward the agreement and that this requires that the following points be considered:

The Lebanese inclination to call for Soviet mediation. The Lebanese are urging on the Americans the need for negotiation with the Soviets on the Lebanese issue. Kamil al-As'ad, speaker of the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies, expressed this Lebanese inclination in the speech he made to the European Parliament, which met in Strasbourg a few days ago, in which he urged the European group to exert pressure on the Americans to negotiate with the Soviets on Lebanon.

The nature of the diplomatic efforts being exerted by Washington with Syria, either directly or through some Arab friends. Reliable official information confirms in this regard that the diplomatic efforts exerted by Washington with Damascus are still in their initial phase and that Washington has understood Syria's refusal to receive envoy Philip Habib to mean that what is required is to dispatch Secretary of State Shultz to Damascus. It is well known that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad invited Secretary Shultz to visit Syria again in the wake of the discussion that took place between them in Damascus. The U.S. secretary has understood the invitation to mean that the negotiations must be held with him personally for the sake of clearer and more frank determination of the positions, for making clear [rasd] the truth of what Washington is thinking and, consequently, for determining the political commitments, if there is justification for the presence of commitments.

U.S. officials have said that Secretary Shultz recounted aboard his private plane while on his way back from Damascus a part of the conversation he had with President Hafiz al-Asad. Those close to the U.S. secretary have said that he focused on the point that the question of the Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon must be discussed between Syria and Lebanon. When Shultz projected this viewpoint of his, the Syrian president said: "This is your problem, Mr Secretary." Secretary Shultz replied: "No Mr President, it is your problem. But we will be happy if we can help."

When Philip Habib came to Lebanon and Damascus refused to receive him as an alternative negotiator to Secretary Shultz, the question that pursued Ambassador Habib was: Does Secretary Shultz plan to return to the area and visit Syria? In some of his answers, Ambassador Habib did not exclude the possibility of the return of his country's secretary of state to the area for this purpose. But Habib expressed the belief that if something of the sort is decided, Shultz' visit to the area may not come so quickly.

It seems that Washington understands that conducting direct negotiations with the Syrians through the person of Secretary Shultz will be difficult and that the U.S. secretary may not always find himself capable of responding to President Hafiz al-Asad because the Syrians do not, in the view of the Americans, want to negotiate on the issue of their withdrawal from Lebanon but will negotiate on this point through comprehensive negotiations on the situation in the area. This is why Washington prefers at present to see activity confined to pressuring diplomatic efforts exerted by Lebanon, within its capabilities, and by some Arab leaders, on Syria. Washington hopes that if these efforts with the Syrian capital fail to change the Syrian position, they will at least succeed in softening this position and in determining the political and strategic price this position seeks so that when Shultz comes to Damascus he will not be confronted with a long list of dues going beyond the Lebanese issue and the Syrian issue to the situation in the area.

Within this framework, the diplomatic efforts will continue and there is nothing to indicate, at least so far, that the diplomatic solution is likely to go bankrupt in the near future. From an American, Arab and Lebanese viewpoint, the situation is very difficult and requires concerted efforts, though they may be tiring, exhausting and costly.

It seems that persisting with these efforts to their end is a U.S. decision that is optimistic regarding the success of the political solution and that finds a dire need to always favor this solution over the military solution. Since conclusion of the Lebanese-Israeli agreement and the doubts surrounding the possibility of its implementation, the Americans have said to the highest Lebanese authorities, by way of reassurance, something to the effect: "This agreement, for which we have worked long, has not been concluded between Israel and Lebanon to be buried in a graveyard. This is a position and a decision that must be understood by all, regardless of how complex the issues get and how much time is consumed by efforts to eliminate all the obstacles that now stand in the face of implementation."

8494

CSO: 4404/416

INFORMATION MINISTER INTERVIEWED ON RELATIONS WITH EGYPT, PLO POLICY

Cairo UKTUBAR in Arabic No 347, 19 Jun 83 pp 64-65

[Interview with Omani Minister of Information 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Rawwas by Maryam Rubin: "Omani Minister of Information Says 'We Have Special, Unique Relations With Egypt'"; date and place not specified]

[Text] Where is Oman's political activity heading? What has it achieved in the Gulf, the Arab world and on the international level? What is the nature of Omani-Palestinian relations? Has the PLO asked to open an office in the Sultanate? What is the secret behind the Iranian aircraft flying to the Sultanate? When will diplomatic representation be exchanged between Aden and Muscat?

All of these questions were put to Omani Minister of Information 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Rawwas in an interview, the text of which follows.

[Question] It has been announced more than once that Iranian aircraft and Iranian citizens have fled to the Sultanate. What are the facts? What was their purpose?

[Answer] Such news is routine to us because it happens frequently. The Iranian pilot's fleeing to Musandam with his aircraft may have been the fifth such incident because of its proximity to Iran.

The incident of an Iranian engineer who landed by parachute actually involved an Iranian air force B-2 aircraft which entered Omani airspace during a hijacking attempt, which failed because Omani authorities refused landing permission.

The hijacker, an Iranian air force engineer, was then able to parachute into the outskirts of the capital. He was arrested and put in prison on charges of entering the country illegally "by force," while the Iranian aircraft returned to Iran. The Iranian engineer will be brought to trial after the required interrogation. A government will often ask that such a person be extradited, but we usually do not expel someone from the Sultanate who wants to seek asylum.

[Question] Many people are saying that a PLO office will be opened in the Sultanate, since they have submitted an official request. What is the truth?

[Answer] We have no such request. However, certain Palestinian leaders have sent unofficial messages, not for the purpose of opening an office, but to establish some sort of relations between the Sultanate and the PLO. Actually, we have nothing against the PLO, which is a member of the Arab league, but we do have reservations about certain groups who have always had a policy of opposition to the Sultanate. We believe that right now, the Palestinians must adopt the necessary policy, and the Arab countries must evaluate this policy. If the Palestinians ask for assistance, we are absolutely ready. The Sultanate's position on the Palestinian issue has been well known since its full participation in the Arab League began in the early 1970's. The Sultanate's position has been one of support for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, rights which have historical, geographical and cultural roots and a national identity which cannot be doubted nor disputed. In all Arab and international forums, Oman's position has always been one of openness in private and in public. Unfortunately, there have been circumstances in which Oman has been misunderstood in one way or another, or in which parties which did not want the Arab cause to be truly understood wanted Oman to be misunderstood in one way or another, or did not want the Arabs to agree on a pivotal issue such as the Middle East. Oman has always been in the forefront, supporting the Palestinian people with all its ability at all stages. We are now at a new stage, which could be called the stage after Beirut. This phase has flashed a red light in front of us so that we can say that we have an impetus to take action. As long as there is no other impetus to change this reality to another, we are afraid that we will lose more than we have already lost. This concern prompted the Sultan to meet with his brothers at the Gulf summit in Bahrain and with his brothers Husni Mubarak and King Husayn. He also consulted with the Arabs and made private and public contacts through envoys to the other Arab leaders, enabling Oman to act out of concern for the Arab cause on the one hand and out of responsible action which does not seek to make headlines into slogans representing the essence of its work in the real world.

[Question] The Lebanese problem still imposes itself on the Arab world. What is the Sultanate's position on the Lebanese-Israeli agreement?

[Answer] The Sultanate has clearly and frankly announced its support for the Lebanese-Israeli agreement on withdrawal of foreign troops from Lebanon and restoring Lebanese sovereignty to all Lebanese territory. Furthermore, the council of foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] issued a statement in Riyadh respecting Lebanon's wishes as expressed by its legislative body, which approved the agreement and authorized the Lebanese government to take all steps necessary for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Lebanon.

We believe that the Lebanese government does not have many choices in removing foreign forces from its territory. This agreement was the only way to get Israeli forces out of Lebanon. For this reason, the council supports Lebanon and appreciates its circumstances and problems. The objective of the council is that Lebanon have stability and security and that the legitimate government be able to exercise Lebanese sovereignty over all Lebanese territory.

[Question] People are saying that Sultan Qabus asked officials in America and London to work with the Soviet Union to find a way to stop the Iran-Iraq war.

Does this mean that there is a change in the Sultanate's position toward the Soviet Union?

[Answer] Believing in the Sultanate's efforts to stop this war, which has hurt the entire region, the Sultan has asked all officials, even those in the Soviet Union, to work toward ending the war if they can think of a way to do so. H.M. the Sultan believes that if several countries get together and think it is better than only one, even if this happens on the local level, for it would have an effect on the entire world.

[Question] The Soviets are calling for a neutral, nuclear-free Gulf region, while at the same time increasing their military presence in Afghanistan and the horn of Africa. What is your position on this appeal?

[Answer] We have rejected it because it allows for foreign sovereignty over the sovereignty of the Gulf countries. We are no one's vassal to have conditions and restrictions placed on our independence, wishes and sovereignty. We cannot discuss anything of this sort which affects our ability to choose our own policy, whether the appeal be from the Soviets or elsewhere. Therefore, we cannot discuss this subject. We believe that the call for neutrality, which Soviet Premier Brezhnev made earlier in India, was an appeal that never got off the ground.

[Question] At more than one UN and non-aligned conference, the Sultanate has asked that the Indian Ocean be made a zone of peace. What has happened so far in this regard? Is there hope that the Indian Ocean will be peaceful and neutral?

[Answer] There is a UN General Assembly resolution to make the Indian Ocean a nuclear-free zone of peace. A committee named the Indian Ocean Committee was formed including the countries which surround the Indian Ocean. The committee met two or three times at UN headquarters in New York. Attempts were made to hold the first official meeting of the committee in Sri Lanka sometime in the future, but the countries could not agree on the agenda and the committee was unable to meet. I do not believe that this meeting can be held as long as the superpowers are the cause of the problem. Because the United States and the Soviet Union are members of the committee, we do not believe that agreement can be reached on the committee's meeting until the two superpowers agree on a policy in this regard. It is unacceptable for one side to use the Indian Ocean as a naval base while we do not talk about Soviet troops in Afghanistan, since the presence of these troops is the reason the American fleet is in the Indian Ocean. If the Soviet Union would agree to withdraw its troops, we could say that the United States had to get out of the Indian Ocean and then draw up rules necessary to make the Indian Ocean a zone of peace.

[Question] What steps have been taken in improving relations between Oman and Aden?

[Answer] I believe that the dialogue between Oman and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen is in itself a good sign on which we base great hope and our government's desire that the region avoid the perils of the dangerous

international conflict which envelopes the region. There has been a reconciliation with the PDRY, sponsored by the sister countries of the GCC, which resulted in the announcement of principles which have been virtually the cornerstone of Omani foreign policy since the Sultan took power. This policy is one of adherence to the principles of peaceful coexistence among countries, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, mutual respect and recognition of the national sovereignty of each country within its borders. We would like to meet with our brothers in Aden on this basis. I believe that the steps taken in this meeting, which ended a rift of 15 years, are positive steps which must give rise to optimism. The most advanced countries in the world have border disputes; what is expected of us in a developing country with its own internal and economic problems and its problems in dealing with other countries? However, these factors must not overshadow the crux of the matter.

[Question] Has anything been done concerning the border problem between the two countries?

[Answer] The border commission met once in Abu Dhabi under the auspices of the GCC, and each side listened to the other's point of view. The Sultanate presented all the papers and historical documents supporting its view.

[Question] When will diplomatic representation be exchanged between the two countries?

[Answer] In our opinion, diplomatic relations are not desired in themselves, but are an end result. Diplomatic relations are established primarily to protect the common interests of the two countries. In our dialogue and meetings through the sponsor of these meetings, the GCC countries, we are trying to reach this stage. When we make progress, when our interests coincide and when the procedures dictated by these interests are defined, diplomatic relations will be the natural result.

[Question] Have any visits been exchanged between Aden and Muscat?

[Answer] When Gulf Television held a forum with the International Communications Federation, a PDRY official at the regional center in Baghdad asked to participate in the forum as a delegate from Aden. The Sultanate welcomed his request, and he attended all meetings held in Muscat.

[Question] For my last question, what about the major role the Sultanate is playing to restore Arab-Egyptian relations?

[Answer] The Sultanate's position has always been against a break in Arab-Egyptian relations. Relations between peoples are eternal and historical, not to be broken by a decision or restored by a decision. Arab-Egyptian relations were not broken in the true sense of the world. Egypt is one-third of the Arab world and the repository of Arab expertise in modern development. Egyptians are found throughout the Arab world, so Arab-Egyptian relations have not been broken. Diplomatic representation between Egypt and certain Arab countries was severed. Some channels were open, and out of a desire to keep the Arab world together and capable of acting on the international level, Oman urged that diplomatic relations not be broken between Egypt and its sister

Arab countries. When the opportunity came to restore the favorable climate in which the Arab dialogue could be positive and reasonable, we observed that there were consultations and meetings between President Husni Mubarak and his brother Arab leaders on numerous occasions. We hope that these relations will continue. Relations exist now and will be formalized in accordance with each country's diplomatic practices in dealing with other countries. I believe that this issue is no longer a subject for discussion since it has become a reality. Egypt is a force for action in the Arab world. The effects of this force will be better and its results greater if diplomatic representation is restored between Egypt and the other Arab countries. Egypt would then resume its position, and the Arabs would regain their ability to act with Egypt among their ranks.

[Question] What about the informational cooperation protocol between Egypt and the Sultanate?

[Answer] Our relations with Egypt are special and unique. Cooperation in the information media is merely a symbol of this cooperation, which we see in all political, cultural, health and agricultural spheres. We have total coordination in our political position and total cooperation in all spheres of vital importance, which are no less important than the political sphere. The continuing consultations and contacts between you and us on all levels, indeed on the highest levels, is merely an accurate picture of this estimable cooperation.

9882

CSO: 4404/459

BRIEFS

RISE IN CUSTOMS DUTIES--Muhammad Musa, undersecretary in the Omani Ministry of Finance, affirmed that the recent government decision concerning an increase in customs duties on certain goods will not affect foodstuffs and other goods that affect the average citizen. He said that it had been decided to increase customs duties between 75 and 100 percent on a number of goods such as cars and electrical and electronic equipment. It was also decided to increase the customs duties on cigarettes from 30 to 50 percent. The Omani official said that revenue from these increases will amount to about 30 million riyals a year and is aimed at increasing the country's income to counter the effect that the decline in oil prices has had on the country's budget. We should mention that the Sultanate's income this year amounts to 1,443 billion riyals, with 118 million in net oil revenue, and that the budget is showing a deficit of 208 million riyals [Text] [Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-IQTISADI in Arabic No 753, 20 Jun 83 p 60] 9882

CSO: 4404/459

IMPROVEMENT OF WORKING CONDITIONS FOR WOMEN URGED

Riyadh AL-YAMAMAH in Arabic No 757, 22 Jun 83 p 15

[Editorial by Dr Anwar 'Abd-al-Jamid al-Jabrati: "A Word About the Working Woman"]

[Text] We must reiterate two principles, over which I do not believe there will be any argument:

1. We need an increasing number of female Saudi workers in agreed upon areas, such as education, and strategically and for various reasons, we cannot continue to rely on non-Saudi skills in areas like these. This requires that we provide employment conditions that will attract and ensure better continuity of elements in these important sectors.
2. The family--cohesion and child-raising--demands that the mother not be separated from her children, especially during the first years of their lives. Accordingly, the conditions of female workers must not be in competition with the home, but rather, must be complementary and supportive, in order to eliminate or reduce the psychological pressures from which the working woman suffers and lessen the negative educational and social effects which might result from her non-family occupation and obligations.

The working woman in our country has become a fait accompli which must be faced and dealt with wisely and intelligently. The question raised here is: Can working techniques in the public and private sectors accommodate the circumstances of female workers, with their various social and educational dimensions? I do not want to belittle the importance of the principle of equality in wages for efforts expended irregardless of "sex," from which springs general employment legislation in our country. This is a significant principle and an important gain which many advanced countries have not yet achieved. However, in my opinion, it is a principle from which we begin and not one at which we stop.

The principle of equality in wages and in pregnancy and childbirth leave represent the minimum of the employer's special obligations regarding the special circumstances which the situation of the working woman imposes.

The door is open to formulate a great deal of creativity, by means of which the various dimensions of the woman's situation in the workplace can be accommodated.

We must not limit our efforts or hopes in affording the talented woman room to participate in public life, and is agreed upon, suitable areas, without that participation leading to an infringement on the integrity and cohesion of the family.

The time has come to expand employment and labor legislation and to see the possibilities of growth and improvement in this important area.

7005

CSO: 4404/469

AGRICULTURAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY SOUGHT

Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic No 326, 21 May 83 p 57

[Article: "After Oil and Minerals, Is Saudi Arabia an Agricultural Country?"]

[Text] The Saudi agricultural sector has become the most expanding production sector after the oil sector. Government support for it has succeeded in transforming it, during a short period of time, from a sector of traditional agricultural crops to an advanced agricultural sector, which satisfies a large percentage of the domestic consumption requirements of most of the important agricultural products, such as wheat, fruit and vegetables.

With regard to the production of grains, wheat production especially has made great strides, since this production rose from one percent to 80 percent of domestic consumption needs during the past 5 years, i.e., from 30,000 tons to 600,000 tons, which is the amount expected during this year. Accordingly, the kingdom is expected to achieve self-sufficiency in wheat production by the beginning of 1984.

The Saudi agricultural sector has achieved these rapid results thanks to the annual governmental financial assistance, and thanks to the policy of support that the state has pursued for agricultural production.

The percentage of governmental support for agricultural production is considered the highest in the world. As an example, the cost of producing one kilo of wheat in Saudi Arabia is about 3.50 riyals, i.e., the equivalent of one American dollar. This amount is enough to purchase an equivalent amount of wheat from the United States.

By comparison with British production, it becomes clear that the Saudi farmer gets a price for wheat that is 6 times what the British farmer receives for the same production. The government subsidy for flour, produced by Saudi mills, is 400 percent of the value of the flour. It is worthy of note that the size of production has risen to 11 million sacks of flour and 3 million sacks of bran during the past year, i.e., a 32 percent increase in flour and 48 percent for bran. Five new granaries for wheat and five new mills have been built in various parts of the kingdom. Moreover, the Ministry of Agriculture and Water recently

announced that it had granted the private sector licenses to establish new projects, with a value of 86.2 million riyals, i.e., the equivalent of \$25 million. These include production of poultry, eggs and grapes and cattle breeding. At the end of last April, the ministry licensed the private sector to establish a group of new agricultural and livestock projects, valued at a total of 22,590 million riyals, in various areas of the kingdom. They were to be financed through the Agricultural Bank.

Many Saudi youths no longer consider agriculture as undesirable, manual labor. Thanks to the policy of official support, that has been changed into a profitable investment in advanced agricultural technology. Despite that, only a fifth of one percent of arable land is in fact being used.

Official studies confirm that land suitable for agricultural development amounts to 2 percent of the kingdom's total land, i.e., an area equivalent to 5 million hectares.

The minister of agriculture and water, Dr 'Abd al-Rahman Ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz Al al-Shaykh, emphasizes that the agricultural sector has shared, in accordance with the last 5-year plan, in an annual growth rate of more than 5 percent of the gross national product. This rate will double during the first year of the current 5-year plan (1980-84), which makes the agricultural sector the largest growth sector in the kingdom.

Saudi Arabia is currently beginning to produce its sufficiency in eggs and poultry, and is progress toward self-sufficiency in the production of milk. The anticipated date to attain this goal is 1985, since it is expected that milk production will reach 500,000 tons a year, supplied by about 110,000 head of cattle.

Saudi Arabia is currently seeing a rapid growth of cattle breeding farms specializing in the production of milk and fresh dairy products, which have been aided by European techniques, most especially those of the Dutch and the Irish in this field. Generous loans and agricultural subsidies have attracted many Saudi citizens to invest their money in the agricultural sector, especially since the loans, which are interest-free, are offered by the government in amounts of up to 80 percent of the invested capital.

The minister of agriculture, Dr 'Abd al-Rahman Al al-Shaykh, states that the Saudi government is committed to the economic principles of self-sufficiency for the kingdom, by developing a diversified economy, less dependent on its depleting oil resources. The kingdom's agricultural development will provide, before all else, vital food security for a country whose land, for the most part, is composed of desert.

7005

CSO: 4404/469

DEVELOPMENTS IN OIL SECTOR VIEWED

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic No 174, 11-17 Jun 83 pp 46-47

[Article: "Syria Exports 5.3 Million Tons of Oil Per Year"]

[Text] Development of the Syrian oil sector is facing numerous difficulties at a time when the Syrian economy is becoming increasingly dependent on oil revenues as a basic source of foreign currency.

Syrian exports, until the middle 70's, depended upon agricultural products for the most part, and especially cotton, as a source of foreign currency. However, this situation has been changing radically since 1974, when Syrian oil exports began to form some 75 percent of its total exports. In light of this new situation, the importance of Syria continuing as a oil-exporting state began to become clear, and the Ministry of Oil and Mineral Wealth in Damascus began to work for the development of drilling and exploration in the country.

Official estimates show that the known reserves of Syrian oil will be exhausted within a period of no more than 25 years. Since local consumption of energy has been rising 7 percent per year, the urgency of discovering new oil fields has increased.

Production and Profits

In 1982, Syrian oil production totaled 8.2 million tons, valued at \$1.6 billion, as compared with 10 million tons in 1979. Despite the fact that 1979 production was considered a benchmark, 1982 production was not at the required rate. Syrian Ministry of Oil circles expect a fractional increase, during this year, up to 8.4 million tons.

On the other hand, domestic consumption requirements in Syria amounted to 5.6 million tons in 1982, and Syrian crude oil constituted 3.6 million tons of that total. In the same year, Syria exported 5.3 million tons of crude oil to foreign markets.

It can be deduced from these official figures that Syria's total oil production in 1982 amounted to 8.9 million tons and not 8.2 million, as Ministry of Oil statistics indicate. However, ministry circles explain this discrepancy in figures, amounting to some 700,000 tons, as the result of refining "additional"

quantities of crude oil. Some observers in Damascus state that this discrepancy is the amount of crude oil confiscated by the Syrian authorities from Iraq, when they closed down the Kirkuk-Baniyas pipeline in April of last year. Despite the fact that this allegation might be true to some extent, most informed observers state that it is a partial explanation for the discrepancy.

As for the official explanation for this discrepancy, as offered by the Ministry of Oil, it is that Iran shipped 6.5 million tons of crude oil to Syria in 1982. In addition to this amount, "some quantities" of Iraqi crude oil were refined in the Baniyas and Hims refineries. Western diplomatic circles in Damascus say that it was expected that Iran would ship 8.9 million tons of crude to Syria in 1982. However, the difficulties that confronted shipping this oil, stemming from the Gulf war, led to restricting Iranian exports to only 6.5 million tons. It is well known that Iranian oil destined for Syria is loaded into huge tankers at Khark Island, and then reloaded into smaller tankers at the port of Suez, by virtue of the fact that Baniyas is not equipped to receive the huge tankers.

The problems of shipping Iranian crude oil to Syria make these exports an expensive proposition, despite the fact that it is not completely clear who bears the shipping costs in that concluded Syrian-Iranian deal, whereby Iran was committed to supply Syria with 6.7 million tons of crude oil in 1983, distributed on the following basis:

- A million tons as a free gift
- Five million tons, payable on the basis of \$28 per barrel, i.e., one dollar less than the official OPEC price.
- 700,000 tons, payable through complicated barter arrangements, which might increase the mystery that surrounds the Syrian balance of payments situation.

Despite the fact that the discount per barrel of Iranian oil exported to Syria amounts to one dollar, paying the cost of 5 million tons of Iranian crude puts an obvious burden on the government's balance of payments and on its foreign currency reserves.

From the purely technical aspect, Iranian crude oil is considered vital for Syrian refineries, since the Baniyas and Hims refineries are not equipped to refine the very heavy Syrian crude. Accordingly, Syrian crude is mixed with Iranian crude in equal proportions for the use of Syrian refineries.

The capacity of the Baniyas refinery reaches some 6 million tons annually, while the capacity of the Hims refinery, which was damaged by Israeli aircraft during the 1973 war, is 5.2 million tons, although the Hims refinery's actual production does not exceed 4.8 million tons at the present time.

Syrian Oil Ministry circles attribute the falling off of refining capacity to "old" age, and the Czechoslovak "Techno Export" Company has obtained a contract valued at \$143 million to build a sixth refinery works at the refinery.

The Ministry of Oil intends to upgrade the Hims refinery, by increasing the quality of its production, not the quantity. That will be done through reducing the sulphur content of its refined products and converting the oil into gasoline with a 97 octane rating. In addition to this, the ministry has drawn up projects to establish power stations that operate on oil and gas. The Techno Export Company began to implement them a few months ago. The Czechoslovak Government is committed to finance these actions through a 3-year loan with a "special" interest rate.

On the other hand, the Syrian Government has contracted with the Techno Export Company to build a 16-inch pipeline to transport gas to Hims from the fields near Jabisah where a Soviet team discovered it, in order to produce ammonia urea for the national fertilizer industry. For this purpose, the Hims refinery requires about 2 million cubic meters of gas per day, and the Jabisah fields provide about 1.5 million cubic meters, an amount considered adequate to undertake the project.

The cost of the project to collect the gas required for the fertilizer industry is about \$310 million, and the Syrian Government hopes to cover this by production and by barter arrangements with Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria, whose governmental company "BULGARGOMIN" is also sharing in developing sources of domestic energy.

Exploration Activities

Aside from the actions to develop production, there are continuous operations to discover new fields in the country. In this regard, two companies are active, the Marathon Company and the Syrian Pecten Oil Company. The Marathon Company has oil drilling rights in the area north of Hims, totalling some 14,800 square kilometers. After 4 years of drilling activities, this company has spent \$12 million and has dug two wells without a commercial discovery. As for the Pecten Company, it is certain that it has spent some \$80 million in drilling and exploration activities in an area totalling 22,000 square meters. It has dug six wells and has found good quality oil in one of them. However, during the test stage, the rate of production did not exceed 100 barrels per day. In addition, it has discovered a field of gas. Despite the fact that the tests made on the gas were good, the company is not sure that that means the presence of gas in commercial quantities in the area in which it was discovered. On the other hand, since domestic consumption of gas is considered small, the infrastructure necessary to make the consumption of gas general is unavailable in Syria, and the process of converting the present factories to the use of energy produced from gas is costly.

For its part, the Marathon Company discovered a good grade of oil some 80 kms from Hims, but the daily production during the test period did not go above 180 barrels.

One of the difficulties that confronts the production of gas in Syria lies in the strongly acidic quality of this gas, i.e., it contains a high percentage of hydrogen sulfide, which makes it toxic and corrosive in nature. Consequently, it is very costly to process and separate. It is worth noting

that the gas discovered by the Pecten Company is 99.9 percent pure methane, while the gas discovered by the Marathon Company contains concentrations of butane and propane, which gives it a higher commercial value.

The Future of Drilling

Syria has given the Marathon Company the option to sign a new exploration contract for a period of 2 years, which would commit it to spend not less than \$8 million on drilling operations. However, it has not yet decided the question of drilling for gas, since the company claims that it is ignorant of Syrian plans with regard to projects to develop gas production. Despite that, the company continues drilling operations and has recently tasked an American company to conduct geological studies and a seismic survey in its areas.

For its part, the Pecten Company has granted the British Geco company the right to conduct geological studies and seismic surveys in its areas. It also has an option to extend its contract with the Syrian Government for 2 more years (1985-86). At the present time, the company is showing special interest in obtaining drilling rights in a 15,570 square kilometer area in Dayr al-Zawr near the Iraqi border. This was taken away from the Syrian-American SAMOCO Company in January 1982. The SAMOCO Company relinquished the oil drilling rights in Dayr al-Zawr after having drilled two wells. It conducted tests on good quality oil, which it extracted from these wells and which differs from the heavy grade oil extracted from other Syrian wells.

The Pecten Company justified the SAMOCO firm's relinquishing the oil drilling and extraction rights, in the Dayr al-Zawr area, by the "technical" difficulties, which the Houston, Texas, American subsidiary of the Coastal Corporation faced, and "other problems" which caused it to withdraw from its operations abroad and confine its activities to American soil only.

In the opinion of Pecten, this explains SAMOCO's relinquishing digging operations in the Dayr al-Zawr wells before reaching the depth required to make sure of the presence of oil in commercial quantities. Accordingly, Pecten hopes, after taking over the SAMOCO wells at a depth of 3,000 meters, to continue to dig down to 4,000 meters, and it does not conceal its optimism over the possibility of finding commercial quantities of oil at that depth.

Three western companies are participating with the Pecten Company in ongoing drilling operations in the Dayr al-Zawr region. These companies are the West German Deminex firm, which owns 37 percent of the Pecten stock, and the Shell Company, through its Dutch and American subsidiaries, which also owns 37 percent. Bear in mind that the administrative responsibility for the drilling operations rests solely with the parent Pecten Company.

It is worthy of note that the contract signed between the Syrian Government and the Pecten Company gives the Syrian Government the right to take back the drilling concession granted to the company, in the event it fails to discover oil by the beginning of 1985.

ABU DHABI GAS LIQUEFACTION COMPANY RECEIVES \$500 MILLION LOAN

Paris AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT AND MEMO in English No 26, 27 Jun 83 p 12

[Text]

The Abu Dhabi Gas Liquefaction Company (ADGAS) has awarded the mandate for a \$500 million loan to the National Bank of Abu Dhabi (NBAD), at the head of a consortium of Arab and foreign banks. The other banks and finance houses involved are Abu Dhabi Investment Company, Arab Banking Corporation, Arab Petroleum Investments Corporation (APICORP), Chase Manhattan Bank, Bank of Tokyo and Gulf International Bank.

The eight-year loan carries an interest rate of 1/2 per cent above the London interbank offered rate (LIBOR) for the first four years, rising to 5/8 per cent above LIBOR for the remaining four years. The shareholders in ADGAS will fully guarantee the loan. They are the state-owned Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, with 51 per cent, the Mitsui group of Japan with 24.5 per cent, British Petroleum with 16.33 per cent and Compagnie Française with 8.17 per cent.

ADGAS will use the funds to finance spending on projects such as the construction of seven new liquefied natural gas (LNG) and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) storage facilities at the company's Das Island gas liquefaction plant. A tender for the new storage tanks (three for LNG and four for LPG) was issued in 1980, but financing difficulties delayed the award of contracts to execute the project.

The Das Island plant, which currently has the capacity to produce 2.3 million tonnes of LNG and 1.2 million of LPG and pentane gases per year, sells its entire output to the Tokyo Electric Power Company under a long-term contract. It is supplied by natural gas from offshore fields.

CSO: 4400/426

BRIEFS

DISMISSAL OF TEACHERS--Budget constraints have led to the dismissal of 1,083 teachers in the UAE even though they and 500 more teachers will be needed during the coming academic year, UAE Minister of Education Saeed Salman revealed last week. Mr. Salman was making a written reply to the UAE Federal National Council and he said the decision to dismiss the teachers was taken by the cabinet following a recommendation by the Ministry of Finance and Industry. No allocation had been made in this year's budget to pay the salaries of the teachers whose contracts had been terminated, Mr Salman stated. The budget has not yet been made public. The Minister of Education said 586 of the 1,083 teachers worked in Abu Dhabi, the Western Region and Al-Ain. The remaining 497 are teaching in the northern Emirates, Mr Salman said. He added that the dismissed teachers and an additional 500 were needed because the ministry's elementary schools expected to receive 15,000 new pupils during the next academic year. [Text] [Paris AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT AND MEMO in English No 26, 27 Jun 83 p 3]

CSO, 4400/426

ANALYST NOTES IMPORTANCE OF CANADIAN OFFICIAL'S VISIT

Madras THE HINDU in English 3 Jun 83 p 1

[Article by G. K. Reddy]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, June 2.

The Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. Pierre Trudeau, is sending his Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Allan MacEachen, to Delhi early next month for talks on what India, as Chairman of NAM, expects the proposed gathering of world leaders at the U.N. to achieve in terms of the recent summit declaration.

After the 1974 setback to Indo-Canadian relations in the wake of the Pokhran nuclear test explosion, it will be the most important visit to India by a senior Canadian Foreign Minister, although other Ministers dealing with trade, technical cooperation and immigration have been to this country for bilateral discussions.

As one of the leading Western countries which has been taking a positive interest in the aspirations of the Third World, Canada has been supporting the moves under way for a North-South dialogue on international economic problems. The talks that Mr. MacEachen will be having with the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi and the External Affairs Minister, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao, will help to enlist Canada's cooperation in ensuring fuller response to the non-aligned summit appeal for a gathering of world leaders at the U.N. during the next General Assembly session.

The Canadian Foreign Minister's visit assumes added significance since he will be arriving in Delhi on July 3, two days after the visit of Mr. George Shultz, the U.S. Secretary of State. The Government of India has been highly appreciative of the helpful part that Mr. Trudeau played at the Williamsburg summit in at least creating a better awareness of the critical needs of the developing nations.

The Government is now making a detailed study of the Williamsburg declaration and the

texts of the speeches made and observations made at their press conferences by the heads of the seven participating countries to make a proper assessment of the Western attitudes, before making fresh diplomatic moves to keep up the tempo of the NAM campaign for more meaningful North-South contacts in the near future.

The Canadian Foreign Minister's visit could not have been more timely in the sense that, apart from ensuring Ottawa's continued cooperation in this campaign for global negotiations, it would help to close an unhappy decade in Indo-Canadian bilateral relations. Despite its mounting economic difficulties at home, Canada has been stepping up its aid to India in recent years, especially in the field of power generation.

The ground has been well prepared for the revival of the old warmth and shared ideals in Indo-Canadian relations by the present High Commissioner of Canada, Mr. John Hadwin, working in close concert with the Indian Government. A seasoned diplomat, he has brought in a rare understanding of India's aspirations, as the single largest country in the Commonwealth and the most important developing society in the world, to provide a deeper social dimension to Indo-Canadian economic cooperation.

The talks that Mr. MacEachen is going to have with Mrs. Gandhi and Mr. Narasimha Rao will set the tone at the highest level for the visit of Mr. Trudeau himself in November for the Commonwealth Heads of Government conference in Delhi. But Mrs. Gandhi would have met him meanwhile at the U.N. during the General Assembly session.

NAMBOODIRIPAD TALKS TO NEWSMEN AFTER CPI-M MEET

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 4 Jun 83 p 4

[Text]

CALCUTTA, June 3 — CPM general secretary E M S Namboodiripad said here today that the threats to national unity and integrity emanated from the 'wrong policies' of the ruling Congress-I and from the activities of the divisive forces. He was briefing newsmen after the Politburo meeting held here on 1 and 2 June.

The CPM expressed the hope that the agreements reached at the Vijayawada conclave of opposition leaders would be followed up and the people's support for them mobilised.

The CPM leader said his party did not visualise any all-in anti-Congress opposition unity. He emphasised the need for Left and Democratic unity in the country.

The Politburo greeted the electorate of West Bengal who once again "reposed their confidence in the Left Front". It showed that the six-year long administration of the State by the Front headed by the CPM "has the support of the people".

The Politburo also noted that there had been lack of unity and cohesion in the Left Front.

The Politburo was satisfied that the State unit of the CPM did its utmost to preserve the unity and cohesion of the Left

Front, but these efforts failed "because of the unrealistic claims made by some of the constituents. It hopes that correct lessons will be drawn from this experience by everybody concerned".

The Politburo said the demand for enlargement of the Sarkaria Commission to review Centre-State relations did not constitute a threat to national unity and there need not be any confrontation on the issue with the Centre. It, however, decided to continue the process of consultation among Opposition leaders on the vital problems facing the nation.

ASSAM ELECTIONS

On Assam situation, Mr Namboodiripad said that the elections had been 'a farce' because a large number of people could not exercise their franchise due to attacks by agitators. There should be sanity among the people and they should realise that Assam is a multi-lingual State.

Replying to a question, he said, that the continuance of the Saikia Ministry or installation of any other Ministry would not help solve the problems, which were so deep-rooted that there could not be any ready-made solution.

PAPER REPORTS REACTION TO ALLEGATIONS AGAINST DESAI

Desai Denial

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 3 Jun 83 pp 1, 9

[Text] BOMBAY, June 2--MR. Morarji Desai, former prime minister, today described as "sheer madness" the allegation by a leading American journalist, Mr. Seymour Hersh, that he was a paid informer for the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) until 1970.

Mr. Hersh has alleged in his forthcoming book, "The Price of Power", that Mr. Desai also acted as a secret informant for President Nixon and Mr. Henry Kissinger during the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971 and that he had been paid dollar 20,000 a year during the Johnson administration, according to a report from our special correspondent in Washington.

Mr. Desai was not a member of Mrs. Gandhi's government in 1971. He had left it, as he recalled today, in 1969 when Mrs. Gandhi decided to divest him of the finance portfolio. The well-known columnist, Mr. Anderson, had then quoted Mr. Kissinger as having 'alleged that the information that India intended to dismember West Pakistan (present Pakistan) as well had come from within Mrs. Gandhi's government. This had led to the speculation that the CIA's source was the then defence minister, Mr. Jagjivan Ram. Mr. Ram strongly denied the charge and the speculation died down.

'I Can Sue You'

"There can be no greater defamation than this", a visibly angry, but controlled Mr. Desai said. "Are you mad to believe such an allegation? I will prosecute you for defamation if you publish it. I can't go to America and prosecute but I can sue you", he threatened.

Mr. Hersh, 46, won the Pulitzer prize in 1970 for his reporting on the massacre of Vietnamese civilians by U.S. troops at My Lai. He was on the staff of the Washington bureau of "The New York Times" from 1972 to 1979 and is the author of three books--"Chemical and Biological Warfare: America's Hidden Arsenal," published in 1968, "My Lai: 4: A Report on the Massacre and its Aftermath," published in 1970, and "Cover-up: The Army's Secret Investigation of the Massacre of My Lai-4" published in 1972.

Mr. Hersh first earned international recognition in the 'sixties when he exposed the activities of the CIA in various countries and organisations. This has been his special field of interest since.

1,000 Interviews

The book, "Price of Power: Kissinger in the Nixon White House", is being published by Summit Books this month. Mr. Hersh has spent three and a half years in writing and collecting documented material.

He claims that among the sources for the book were more than 1,000 interviews with American and foreign officials and a confidential diary kept by a White House staff member during the Kissinger era, secret papers on the Vietnam negotiations that had been provided to the South Vietnamese president, Mr. Nguen Van Thieu, by the Johnson administration and a host of other official and non-official documents.

An AFP report says that Mr. Hersh, quoting anonymous officials, writes: "I have been able to establish firmly that (Morarji) Desai was reporting (to the CIA) through 1970."

After that year, "the officials who were willing to discuss Desai's information with me were no longer in a position to see his reports, which, presumably, continued to flow to Washington, the book adds.

The agency adds: The allegation of Mr. Desai's CIA connection has been made previously. But Mr. Hersh adds more details that he says have come from the U.S. intelligence officials. It also quotes Mr. Hersh as having written that the information was often wrong or distorted and "led to the appalling ignorance in the White House of the Realities of South Asia."

Mr. Desai was in the Union cabinet from November 1956 to 1963, when he relinquished office under the Kamaraj plan of "party before post". He was again in the Union cabinet from 1967 to July 1969, when he resigned after being relieved of the finance portfolio, although it did not affect his position as deputy prime minister. This was at the time of nationalisation of 14 major banks and the developing clash between Mrs. Gandhi and the old guard which culminated in the first Congress split.

Mr. Desai said he had no inkling of Mr. Hersh's allegation till a stringer for an international news agency called on him yesterday. Then, this morning he got a telephone call from a correspondent in New Jersey asking him about the allegations.

Asked what could be the basis for the story, an angry Mr. Desai said: "Madness. What else? Can I be bought? Has anyone tried to do so so far?"

"Don't Own A House"

Asked whether there could be smoke without fire, Mr. Desai shot back. "Are you mad to believe the story? This is how journalism has degraded itself,

though I cannot say the same thing about the entire press." He went on to say that nevertheless he was a "believer in the freedom of the press."

Mr. Desai said he first went to the U.S. when he was the finance minister, with an exemption from being vaccinated against small-pox.

When told that he need not have been paid only in the U.S. and that he could have been paid here, he said: "Do you think I have money? I do not even have a house though people think I own so many things, including a mill (a reference to Morarjee Mills)". The former prime minister said that if he were in America, he would have liked to sue Mr. Hersh for a million dollars, not for the sake of the money, but to teach him a lesson. When told that Mr. Hersh was a respected journalist, Mr. Desai said: "That is the trouble with you journalists. Sometimes you fall."

Asked if this would not hurt the image of the Janata party with which he was closely identified, Mr. Desai asked: "Why should it?" Then, as an afterthought, he said that what mattered was that it would hurt the image of the country.

According to PTI, the main thrust of Mr. Hersh's book is against the former presidential national security adviser and secretary of state, Mr Kissinger, who, Mr. Hersh says, provided secret information both to the Republican presidential candidate, Mr. Richard Nixon, and his Democratic rival, Mr. Hubert Humphrey, in the hope of securing high office whichever side won. Mr. Nixon defeated Mr. Humphrey and Mr. Kissinger became Mr. Nixon's national security adviser and secretary of state.

Among other things, Mr. Hersh disclosed is that a secret war plan commissioned by Mr. Kissinger and his senior military aide, Mr. Alexander Haig, who later became the secretary of state under President Reagan, was completed in mid-1969 without the knowledge of the defence secretary, Mr. Melvin Laird.

The plan, the book says, included "The destruction, possibly with nuclear devices, of the main north-south passes along the Ho Chi Minh trail on which supplies were ferried from North Vietnam to Vietcong guerillas in the South.

"There was a separate, even more secret, study dealing with the implications of using tactical nuclear weapons on the rail lines, the main funnel for supplies from the Soviet Union as well as China," according to the book.

Mr. Hersh says that to exert pressure on Hanoi, the North Vietnamese were warned about the plan "through intermediaries."

'Holes' in Charges

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 4 Jun 83 pp 1, 9

[Text] NEW DELHI, June 3--There are some obvious mistakes in Mr. Seymour Hersh's account of his charge that Mr. Morarji Desai was a paid CIA informer up to 1970 and possibly beyond.

To begin with, it is notable that he should settle on 1970 as the date in respect of the charge when his concern, as it emerges in his book, "The Price of Power", relates to the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war. Mr. Desai was, of course, not a member of Mrs. Gandhi's cabinet even in 1970, not to speak of 1971. And if Mr. Hersh's sources dry up in respect of events beyond that year, as he himself admits, how does he write so much about what happened in 1971? On the basis of conjecture?

Even if it is assumed that Mr. Desai could find out on the strength of his old contacts what Mrs. Gandhi was planning to do to Pakistan in 1971--Pakistan had unleashed a reign of terror in its eastern wing which had led to the flight of millions of refugees into India--it is not at all clear how he could discover that the "Soviet Union had agreed to sign the friendship treaty (with India) as the price of an indefinite delay in India's plans to recognise East Pakistan".

Treaty Proposal

Two points may be made in this connection. First, only a few individuals close to Mrs. Gandhi were involved in the discussions culminating in the treaty. Apart from Mr. D. P. Dhar, who favoured the treaty, none of them was a cabinet minister. They were officials not known to have been well disposed towards Mr. Desai at any stage.

Secondly, those who were involved in the negotiations of the treaty on the Indian side recall that Mr. Tad Szulc, of "The New York Times," whom Mr. Hersh quotes approvingly, had got his facts wrong.

The proposal regarding the treaty had been mooted by the Soviet Union some time in 1969, that is after the Congress split had deprived Mrs. Gandhi of a majority in the Lok Sabha and made her dependent on left support to stay in office till early 1971 when she went to the polls and won a landslide victory. The Kremlin revised the proposal when, faced with the intolerable refugee problem and the possibility of an armed conflict with Pakistan, India sought from it an assurance of support so that in the event of an Indo-Pakistan war, the Chinese would not intervene on Pakistan's side.

Indian policy makers and military planners, it is hardly necessary to recall, had been greatly concerned regarding China's intentions since the armed conflict with it in 1962. This concern had heightened as a result of the Chinese threats at the time of the Indo-Pakistan war in 1965. Though Peking had then couched its threats in a language which was apparently not meant to be taken seriously and had in fact contented itself with the supply of arms to Pakistan, in 1971 India took care to ensure that it did not get involved in armed hostilities with Pakistan so long as the Himalayan passes had not frozen, that is so long as it was possible for China actively to come to Pakistan's help. New Delhi did so despite the treaty with the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union was keen on the treaty in the context of the Brezhnev doctrine of Asian collective security--a plan whereby Moscow would sign a number of such bilateral treaties with friendly countries such as Egypt, Iraq and

Afghanistan and seek to persuade these countries to sign similar pacts among themselves or otherwise step up co-operation.

India was finally willing to go along because it needed an assurance of support which would deter the Chinese. It was then also widely believed that the Soviet Union was dragging its feet on the question of supply of arms which India needed for the war with Pakistan which it feared might be unavoidable. President Sadat subsequently said that after the treaty Moscow diverted arms from Egypt to India. Whether it did so or not, it met India's needs.

There is no evidence that Mrs. Gandhi was planning to recognise the Bangladesh government in exile which Mr. Tajuddin Ahmad had set up. The Soviet Union might have been opposed to such a recognition. But there could be no question of its paying or needing to pay a price for India's compliance with its viewpoint in the form of the treaty because New Delhi's policy covered with Moscow's approach. The logic behind the pact was different on both sides.

Initially, Moscow appeared to have been opposed to war. But it had no alternative to suggest for enabling India to send back the ten million refugees whose continued presence would have destabilised the whole north-east. Witness the consequences of a smaller influx in Assam. Mrs. Gandhi's visit to Moscow in September 1971 perhaps clinched the issue.

Mr. Hersh is similarly wrong in respect of the American columnist, Mr. Jack Anderson. Mr. Anderson had then written that the CIA had a source in Mrs. Gandhi's government. Since Mr. Desai was not in the government--he was in the opposition Congress (O) party which had contested the 1971 election against Mrs. Gandhi--Mr. Anderson's reference could not possibly have attracted attention to him and endangered his life.

Nixon's Gesture

The following are some excerpts from the book, "The Price of Power", in which references have been made to Mr. Desai's role as an "informant of the CIA":

The author, Mr. Seymour Hersh, writes on page 449 of his book: "On May 2, (1971) Nixon made a gesture towards appeasing those in his administration who wanted a strong stand against Pakistani terror (in what is now Bangladesh) by signing an order limiting American aid to spare parts and non-lethal equipment but even that step was mitigated when the President added in his own handwriting, "To all hands, don't squeeze Yahya at this time--R.N."

"At this time a miraculous new element emerged to buttress the seemingly incomprehensible White House policy: Highly classified evidence that Mrs. Gandhi was planning to attack East Pakistan. In mid-May Kissinger wrote, he and Nixon had learnt "from sources heretofore reliable" that Mrs. Gandhi had ordered plans for a lightning Israeli-type attack to take over Pakistan." The evidence, taken at face value in the White House, confirmed his and Nixon's view that as Pakistan grew more and more isolated internationally, Mrs. Gandhi appeared to seek above all Pakistan's humiliation. There was no doubt, Kissinger added, that the millions of refugees fleeing from East Pakistan were a

factor in her concern but "as weeks passed, we began increasingly to suspect that Mrs. Gandhi perceived a larger opportunity."

For the next six months, until the final defeat of Yahya Khan at the hands of India, Nixon and Kissinger constantly invoked their "reliable sources to justify the White House's hard line towards India. The source was never named for an obvious reason: The informant was reporting from India through the Central Intelligence Agency. Nixon and Kissinger may have been honourable in protesting the man, but the few in the American administration who knew his identity must also have known that his information was highly biased. The informant was undoubtedly Morarji Desai, a prominent Indian politician who was fired from the post of deputy Prime Minister by India Gandhi in 1969--but stayed in her cabinet--after a bitter political dispute. Desai was a paid informer for the CIA and was considered one of the agency's most important "assets". He had been in public life since the late 1940s, serving as the chief minister of the state of Bombay, as finance minister and briefly, as deputy Prime Minister. He was a political reactionary and a bitter opponent of Prime Minister Gandhi, his hostility showed repeatedly in his three volume "The Story of My Life", published in India in the mid-1970s.

Star Performer

Former American intelligence officials recall that Desai was a star performer who was paid \$20,000 a year by the CIA during the Johnson administration through the 303 committee, the covert intelligence group that was replaced by the 40 committee under Nixon and Kissinger. One official remembers that Desai continued to report after Nixon's election, much of his information having to do with contacts between the Indian government and the Soviet Union. According to this official, Kissinger was "very impressed with the asset he could not believe it was really in the bag." During meetings with CIA and other officials dealing with international crises, he would occasionally smile knowingly and say to Helms or to one of his deputies, "Why can't you have a source in the cabinet?"

In a footnote to this page, Hersh writes: "I have been able to establish firmly that Desai was reporting through 1970. After that year, the officials who were willing to discuss Desai's information with me were no longer in a position to see his reports, which presumably continued to flow to Washington. American officials inadvertently provided another hint that the reports were continuing by stressing the high position and proven reliability of the source they used in late 1971 to try to justify the administration's policy in the war, Desai became Prime Minister in March 1977 and Mrs. Gandhi returned to office in July 1979.

In another footnote to page 452, Hersh writes: "On August 13 (1971), Tad Szulc of "The New York Times" reported that the United States had received intelligence information from New Delhi that the Soviet Union had agreed to sign the friendship treaty as the price for an indefinite delay in India's plan to recognise East Pakistan." The story upset Richard Helms who telephoned the White House and urged them to investigate the leak which he said put his agent's life in danger. The story had also the effect of diminishing the White House argument that the Soviet Union had joined India in humiliating China and Pakistan. The endangered agent was obviously Morarji Desai...."

On page 477 the author describes how Nixon planned to get the journalist Jack Anderson killed because he had published some sensitive information that had compromised "a top American intelligence source overseas--an apparent reference to Morarji Desai, the Indian whose reports had been so heavily relied upon by Nixon and Kissinger in the India-Pakistan war."

Purpose of Report Questioned

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 4 Jun 83 p 8

[Text]

As agency messages relating to Mr. Seymour Hersh's charge against Mr. Morarji Desai came in on Thursday, our reaction was one of stunned disbelief. Everything we have known about Mr. Desai led to the inescapable conclusion that he could not be guilty of such a heinous crime—his long record of dedicated service to the country, his ambition to be India's prime minister which he did not hide even during Mr. Nehru's life-time, his self-righteousness and pride, his connections with leading Indian businessmen who could easily have met his personal and political needs, his singular inability to engage in secret activity of any kind and so on. He has, of course, been an anti-communist all his life. Indeed, till 1977 when he became the country's prime minister and then came to realise the importance of the Soviet connection, he is known to have been privately critical of Mr. Nehru's and Mrs. Gandhi's allegedly pro-Soviet foreign policy. This ideological bias has exposed him to persistent attacks by the Indian left. He has also been opposed to Mrs. Gandhi, especially since 1969. But all this cannot possibly be adduced as evidence that he cooperated with the CIA and fed the U.S. administration material which it could use against India. Mr. Desai favoured the war with Pakistan in 1971 as much as any other Indian. Before 1977, he was never known to favour good relations with Pakistan. The ridiculously low sum mentioned—20,000 dollars a year—made the whole story look silly. Even so, on Thursday we decided to withhold comment because we wanted to see the text of what Mr. Hersh had written in his book.

The excerpts which appear elsewhere in this issue contain a number of obvious mistakes of fact which our political correspondent has exposed. This leaves little room for doubt that Mr. Hersh has not been as careful as he should have been while making so serious a charge against no less a person than a former prime minister of so important and self-respecting a country as India. In fact, he has been quite casual. He could, for example, have easily checked up that Mr. Desai did not stay on as deputy prime minister after Mrs. Gandhi had divested him of the finance portfolio in the summer of 1969, and that she did not return to the office of prime minister in July 1979. While this carelessness establishes that Mr. Hersh has not scrutinised the "information" leaked to him by some former CIA men, it does not provide a clue regarding the motives of those individuals. We cannot, therefore, say whether there has been a confusion of identities and whether the individuals concerned have deliberately indulged in this "dirty trick" (to use a favourite American expression). And what on earth could their purpose be? All we know is that an honourable man has been maligned grievously and gratuitously. Mr. Hersh did not need to bring in Mr. Desai's name to make his charges against Mr. Nixon and Mr. Kissinger stick.

NO IN-DEPTH TALKS WITH PAKISTAN ON NO-WAR PACT

Madras THE HINDU in English 4 Jun 83 p 1

[Article by G. K. Reddy]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, June 3.

As expected, the current Indo-Pakistan talks in Islamabad have been confined by and large to matters being dealt with by the Joint Commission, although some references were made to pending political issues during the private talks between the Foreign Ministers of the two countries, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao and Mr. Yaqub Ali Khan.

There was no in-depth discussion on the Indian and Pakistani proposals for a friendship treaty and a no-war pact, but the two sides agreed to resume talks on the subject at the Foreign Secretaries level in Delhi in August.

The Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Yaqub Ali Khan, and the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Niaz Naik, will be coming to Delhi for the ministerial and senior officials' meetings of the South Asia Seven about that time. The intention is to utilise the occasion for further bilateral exchanges on the no-war issue after the conclusion of talks on regional cooperation.

Further discussion

The same procedure was adopted when the Indian Foreign Secretary, Mr. M. K. Rasgotra, went to Islamabad last year for the official-level discussions on South Asian cooperation.

The senior officials of the South Asia Seven — India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and the Maldives — will be meeting in Delhi from July 27 to 29 to prepare for the Foreign Ministers meeting from August 1 to 3 to carry forward the dialogue towards a summit meeting of the heads of Government in due course. Mr. Niaz Naik will probably stay on for a couple of days after the conclusion of the ministerial meeting for further discussion on the no-war proposition.

Meanwhile, there is considerable satisfaction in Delhi that the Joint Commission and its four sub-commissions have set the right tone for increased bilateral cooperation, although it is going to take a long time to get it going

without any fresh hurdles. The two countries have agreed, in principle, to establish STD facilities for quicker and cheaper telephonic communication, reduce postal rates, simplify visa regulations and streamline travel facilities, step up cultural exchanges, avoid double taxation, stop hostile propaganda and cooperate in checking communicable diseases.

But there has not been much progress over expansion of trade. Although there is talk of industrial cooperation, there is a marked reluctance on the part of Pakistan to open up its markets to Indian goods and allow private traders on both sides to deal directly without canalising all commercial transactions through the two governments.

At the political level relations between India and Pakistan have been soured to some extent by the recent pronouncements of top personalities on either side. So the main effort during the informal exchanges in Islamabad was directed at dispelling misgivings about each other's intention, before resuming the dialogue on the no-war question.

The Pakistan Foreign Minister apprised Mr. Narasimha Rao of the talks he has had in Beijing and Washington on the Afghan problem, before the resumption of the indirect talks in Geneva later this month. He is reported to have told Mr. Rao that China and the U.S. were prepared to underwrite any agreement reached by Pakistan and Afghanistan to pave the way for a phased withdrawal of Soviet forces.

Sore point

A sore point with Pakistan is India's continued reluctance to back its readmission to the Commonwealth, as indicated by the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, in one of her recent press interviews on the subject. An attempt is still being made to persuade India to give up its opposition and let Pakistan rejoin the Commonwealth at the next meeting of the heads of Government in Delhi in November.

SINHA RETIREMENT POINTS UP POOR PERSONNEL POLICY

Madras THE HINDU in English 3 Jun 83 p 9

[Article by G. K. Reddy]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, June 2.

The Vice-Chief of the Army Staff, Lt. Gen. S. K. Sinha, who has been superseded by Lt. Gen. A. S. Vaidya for the post of Army Chief, has put in papers and sought permission to proceed on leave preparatory to premature retirement, in accordance with the established practice among the Armed Forces in such situations.

He will relinquish charge on July 31 when the present Army Chief, Gen. K. V. Krishna Rao, retires from service, so that he will not have to serve under Gen. Vaidya who is junior to him in service.

In any case, Gen. Sinha would have retired on January 6, 1984, although he would have continued for two more years, until 60, as a full General had he been chosen as the next Chief of the Army Staff in terms of his seniority in service.

Not the first time: This is not the first time that an officer in the line of succession, who has been superseded, has put in his papers. Others in similar situations have done so in the past. The very first to resign when he realised that the Government had decided to by-pass him, was the late Lt. Gen. P. S. Bhagat, VC, when the term of the then Army Chief, Gen. G. G. Bewoor, was extended by a few months until he (Gen. Bhagat) reached 56, which was then the age of superannuation for officers of his rank, to pave the way for the selection of Lt. Gen. T. N. Raina.

When Gen. Raina actually took over from Gen. Bewoor, Lt. Gen. N. C. Rawley, who was also senior to him, sought premature retirement. So there is nothing extraordinary in Gen. Sinha's decision to proceed on leave with effect from August 1, when Gen. Vaidya will assume charge.

Unnecessary embarrassment: But the Government could have avoided unnecessary embarrassment to Gen. Sinha by taking the decision a few months earlier, before he was appointed Vice-Chief with the obvious intention of promoting him as the next Army Chief after Gen. Krishna Rao's retirement. Though it is a

selection post, the seniority rule has generally been followed by the Government except when Gen. Bhagat was passed over, for whatever reason.

Unfortunately, the Government of India has not had a proper personnel policy, whether it is on the civil or military side, with the result that an avoidable controversy is created when top appointments are made for selection posts. In other countries, promotions are so arranged that there is no need for any supersession, since the officer earmarked for a particular post moves up the queue in the normal course and gets selected in his own right.

Not unaware: In the present case, the Government could not have been unaware of the fact that Gen. Vaidya has had better combat experience, although Gen. Sinha, who was senior, was equally qualified in other respects. If the intention was to appoint Gen. Vaidya, then Gen. Sinha need not have been brought back from Simla, where he was serving as GOC-in-C of Western Command, as Vice-Chief at the Army Headquarters in Delhi.

Retirement in the Armed Forces, for various categories of officers, is governed by age. But their *inter se* seniority in the service is determined by their dates of commission, not of promotion to any particular rank. Thus, Gen. Sinha is senior to Gen. Vaidya by nearly a year although he is only 20 days older.

Fade away cheerfully: Lt. Gen. S. K. Sinha said today that he would like to "fade away happily and cheerfully," (reports UNO).

Asked how he took his supersession, Gen. Sinha said: "In the Army we have learnt to take everything in our stride." However, he did not want to "create any controversy over the Army Chief's appointment."

He said, "I do not want to violate any rules and I am very earnest in keeping up the best traditions of the Indian Army." He said he did not want to be embarrassed by questions which might spark controversies.

Question: Is the appointment of a Chief of Staff a political decision or guided by political considerations for matters of political expe-

diency?'

Gen. Sinha: 'I am a soldier always whether I stay in the Army or not. I would not like to discuss even remotely any matter which has political overtones. Please don't mix politics with the Indian Army which is a highly professional service.'

Q: 'Did you have any political connections with the late Jayaprakash Narayan or with a former Defence Minister?'

Gen. Sinha: 'I repeat I am a soldier, and armymen are far away from politics. My father was closely connected with Jayaprakash Narayan and was looking after his social welfare work. He is 80 today and, is still engaged in the same cause purely on an honorary basis.'

Q: 'Many ex-Generals have been given high posts in public sector undertakings or offered diplomatic assignments or gubernatorial posts in the past. If one is offered to you, would you accept?'

A: 'I am leaving the Army with dignity and shall always uphold the best traditions of my service. I do not seek any office after my retirement application is accepted. I have done my innings in the Army with complete dedication and devotion and why should I seek an office after 39 years of service?'

Gen. Sinha said he would return to his parent State of Bihar and settle down there. 'I would like to pursue my intellectual interests and I propose to do some writing.'

He is the author of two books — 'Operation Rescue' which deals with the 1947-48 Kashmir conflict and 'Of Matters Military'.

CSO: 4600/1297

REPORTAGE ON EFFECTS OF DROUGHT, MONSOON WORRIES

'Havoc' in Southern India

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 3 Jun 83 p 22

[Text] THE extent to which the prolonged drought has affected the plantation industry of southern India has been brought out in a study made by the UPASI, just published. All the four major crops--tea, coffee, rubber and cardamoms--have suffered very serious crop loss to an extent unheard of before.

The output of tea, estimated at 5.2 million kg. for April 1983, actually fell by 2.4 million kg. (31 per cent) from the corresponding month of 1982, and by 9.7 million kg. (65 per cent) from the peak April crop of 1981. Hopes of a bumper coffee crop during the 1983-84 season have failed, and while the original estimate of 170,000 tonnes have already been scaled down by 10,000 tonnes, the actual crop is expected to be much less than this figure. Natural rubber has suffered more markedly with the April production at 4,000 tonnes only, compared to 12,450 tonnes in April last year. But the crop worst affected is cardamom, its output in 1982-83 at 2,900 tonnes being already down by 34 per cent from the previous season, and the production for 1983-84 showing indications of a further substantial fall from last year.

Value of Crop Loss

The drought has turned tea areas brown, coffee has missed the crucial blossom showers, cardamom plants have dried up and rubber tapping has had to be suspended. UPASI estimates that if the present situation continues, the value of the crop loss from the four plantation crops in Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu could be up to a value of Rs. 100 crores, besides Rs. 30 crores by way of export loss and considerable fall in revenue to the government. Added to it, the scarcity of drinking water has been critical and at a time when planting activities should be in full force, estates are preoccupied with the task of tapping every small source of water to cater to its own fields as well the resident working population.

The early months of 1983 had brought some cheer to the tea and rubber planters by a steady rise in prices, but this benefit now seems to have been offset by lower crops, resulting in some increase in the unit cost of production.

While this is the depressing situation in south India, reports from Assam and Cachar in north-east India speak of unfavourable weather conditions with most areas experiencing excessive rainfall and unusually cold weather. The position is a little better in Darjeeling, Dooars and Terai areas, where normal production is expected.

Tea Production

While the overall situation does not warrant any hope of rise in tea production in the near future, it is amusing to see that a target level of 950 million kg. by the end of the century has been fixed at a recent high-level discussion. The production in 1982 was only 561 million kg, which itself was a few million kg. short of the previous year's production. A production target of 950 million kg. seems to have been arrived at by a projected domestic consumption of 0.6 kg. per capita and export of 28 per cent of the world exports. The capital investment required for achieving a target production of 950 million kg. is estimated at Rs. 1,226 crores, which spread over a period 15 years, works out to Rs. 82 crores annually. While institutions like Nabard and IDBI may help with loans, the tea industry itself would be required to put in a share of this large capital and one wonders how it will be in a position to do so.

However, it is gratifying that there is now a sense of realism in estimating the target production. A year ago, the government was hoping that tea production would reach 1,400 million kg. by the turn of the century. It is now more realistically set at 950 million kg.

Agriculture Ministry Report

Madras THE HINDU in English 4 Jun 83 p 9

[Text]

NEW DELHI, June 3.

The loss of farm production on account of drought and earlier floods is marginal, says a press release issued by the Union Ministry of Agriculture.

Reports from the States as well as from follow-up teams which have visited the drought-affected States confirm that the food situation is under control. A number of remedial measures have been taken to provide relief to the flood and drought-affected States.

The press release, however, mentions that about 43 million hectares of land and 262 million people were hit by drought in 15 States. Heavy rain towards the end of July-August 1982 caused floods in parts of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Assam, Orissa, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The area thus affected is 5.3 million hectares. About 50.7 million people were affected.

Decline compensated: Timely measures were taken to compensate the marginal decline in the summer crop due to the drought and floods by raising a record rabi crop with the provision of the required quantities of inputs like seeds, fertilizers and pesticides in the affected areas. Continuous monitoring and good

winter rain also helped the process.

The record winter production will offset the marginal loss caused by drought and floods to the earlier crop. The country is expecting wheat production of 40 million tonnes, the highest ever figure so far as this crop is concerned.

Record Central assistance: The responsibility for providing relief against natural calamities like floods and drought rests with the State Governments. At the same time, Central assistance is also provided to the States and Union Territories to mitigate distress. The drought-affected States received record Central assistance of over Rs. 400 crores and Rs. 355 crores was provided to meet the situation caused by floods.

About 1.2 to 1.3 million tonnes of food-grains are made available to the States every month for normal distribution through the public distribution system. Additional quantities are being made available through the National Rural Employment Programme and special drought relief programme to help the States pay part of the wages in kind to people engaged on relief work.

Buffer stock adequate: Adequate stocks

of foodgrains are available in the buffer stock. These are being augmented by procurement which is proceeding briskly at present. Procurement this year is nearly double that of last year.

Enough drilling rigs are available in the country to sink borewells. Wherever no source of water is available nearby, emergency piped water supply schemes are being taken up as a relief measure. Where it is not possible to obtain water from borewells, handpumps, dugwells, tubewells, water is supplied by road on an institutional basis.

Mobile squads have been set up to repair handpumps whenever they go out of order. Health and hygiene measures at the source of

water are being taken. Adequate quantities of bleaching powder/chlorine tablets are made available. A regular watch is kept on these operations.

Drinking water problems: The inadequate rain has caused drinking water problems in some parts of the country. There are Plan programmes at the Centre as well as in the States to help the identified villages where there is no source of drinking water. Resources under these programmes are augmented by Central assistance during times of scarcity to help the States take necessary measures to make drinking water available.

Water has been transported wherever necessary by road or rail.

Worry Over Monsoon Prospects

Madras THE HINDU in English 9 Jun 83 p 1

[Article by G. K. Reddy]

[Text] NEW DELHI, June 8.

The Ministries concerned at the Centre are keeping their fingers crossed as they await a detailed forecast by the Meteorological Department of the south-west monsoon prospects this year, since any serious shortfall in rain could impede food production and aggravate the inflationary pressures already at work in other spheres.

The meteorological experts at Pune, working on the necessary parameters of climatic conditions collected from all over the globe, are expected to give their assessment to the Government in the next few days whether the country is going to have a normal monsoon this year.

The monsoon clouds which have already been delayed by a week are expected to hit the Kerala coast in the next 48 to 72 hours and start moving north-westward towards the Maharashtra and Gujarat coasts before reaching the northern States. But it is too early yet for experts to forecast on the basis of the available data whether peninsular India is going to have its normal share of rainfall during the south-west and north-east monsoons.

Pre-election year worry: As some economists have already started hinting that the country might be heading for another bout of double-digit inflation in the wake of industrial recession and an anticipated short-fall in food production, the Government is awaiting the long-range monsoon forecasts by the meteorological experts to decide its plan of action for dealing with the economic situation in the event of a poor south-west monsoon. The Government can ill-afford to put up with a further rise in prices followed by shortages in a pre-election year, when the ruling party is making a determined bid to give the impression that it was all set to retrieve its lost influence in several States.

After the debacle in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, an attempt is being made to project the Congress (I)'s impressive performance in the West Bengal panchayat elections, and the

good account it has given of itself in at least the Jammu region as a reassuring reflection of the people's faith in the party in many other States. But what is conveniently forgotten in this context is that the very people who have voted for the Congress (I) in these local elections for whatever reason could also turn against it in no time if the Government is unable to hold the price line and the country is faced with yet another inflationary spiral in the wake of a weak monsoon.

Politics of the monsoon: So the monsoon prospects this year are assuming undue political overtones with the critics of the Government already jumping to the conclusion that the rainfall this year might be poor, which after an year of severe drought would certainly add to the inflationary pressure. It is not without significance that the daily summaries of political events in the country transmitted to the Prime Minister when she is on a foreign tour will now include the monsoon forecasts for the next two weeks, which are crucial for calculating whether the rains in the northern States would be in time for the sowing season.

The officials voicing some degree of understandable concern at a possible shortfall in rains this year maintain that they are only cautioning against complacency and not taking an alarmist view of it, since India has learnt to live with the vagaries of monsoons that have transformed the country's agriculture into a gamble on rains. But they are also sounding a note of warning that a poor monsoon after widespread drought would impose an intolerable burden on India's balance of payments, since the country will be compelled to go in for more food imports.

At a time when the country is already burdened with mounting defence expenditure, and the trade gap continues to widen, India can ill-afford to import food without running the risk of further inflationary pressure. And it is the fear of this cumulative impact on the country's over-all economy that is so worrying the Government at present.

LABOR MINISTER SPEAKS AT GENEVA ILO MEETING

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 4 Jun 83 p 8

[Text]

GENEVA, June 3 (PTI)—India's Labour Minister Veerendra Patil said today the International Labour Organisation should not be allowed to become an arena of bitter political controversies and deflected from pursuing its fundamental objective of social justice.

Addressing its 60th session here, Mr Patil said ILO standards should become more relevant to conditions obtaining in developing countries and welcomed the trend towards recognition of the need for flexibility in formulation of standards.

He hoped that next year's conference at which ILO standards would be the central theme of the Director General's report would provide a good opportunity to appraise these standards and their contribution towards achievement of social justice—the basic objective of ILO.

Mr Patil said that with the virtual disappearance of detente and divisive forces becoming stronger, 'certain political questions which have crept into ILO deliberations have tended to

divide the organisation.'

Mr Patil did not identify the questions but added 'limitation of resources and constant threat of further reductions in their availability have affected ILO's capability in coping with its tasks.'

He congratulated Mr Francis Blanchard on his re-election for another five-year-term which he said was a recognition of his dedicated service and valuable guidance. He also welcomed China taking its rightful place at the conference.

Mr Patil said recent international developments posed a major threat as well as a challenge for ILO which was founded with the objective of securing enduring peace by means of social justice. Eradication of unemployment was a major objective of ILO and it should warrant priority attention of the organisation.

The regional institutions of ILO should provide meaningful assistance of member countries in stepping up employment promotion and training activities.

CSO: 4600/1300

ROHINI RSD-II SATELLITE REPORTED OPERATIONAL

Madras THE HINDU in English 3 Jun 83 p 1

[Text]

BANGALORE, June 2.

The Rohini RS-D-II satellite, which was beset with problems in its vital Smart sensor camera, has been declared fully operational, giving a shot in the arm to Indian space technology.

The 41.5 kg. satellite, built by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), has been circling the earth since it was launched into a near-earth orbit by SLV-III from Sriharikota on April 17.

No problem: An ISRO spokesman told PTI today that the spacecraft had been declared 'fully operational and it is functioning normally. There is no problem.'

The Smart sensor camera, the 'eye' of the satellite, which developed anomalies, is also working well and sending pictures of the Indian landmass from its scheduled orientation, he said.

After the launch and spin axis orientation manoeuvre, all the spacecraft's systems, including its payload, were checked out for normal operation. The Smart sensor was activated on a trial basis immediately thereafter.

Even as scientists at Sriharikota were making efforts to declare the satellite fully operational in mid-May, there was a major set-back when they noticed anomalies in the Smart camera. The operation of the camera was suspended on May 16.

Temperature problems: The struggling scientists got a ray of hope when they traced the anomalies to temperature problems. The camera started sending out pictures only after a change in the orientation of the satellite. The problem was solved on May 21 and the spacecraft started taking pictures in its scheduled orientation.

Rohini circles the earth once every 97 minutes. The Smart sensor camera, which was being switched on for 10 minutes every day dur-

ing the satellite's passes over India, incorporates the latest solid state technology for the first time. It is also capable of taking pictures both in the visible as well as infrared bands with a frame size of 200 x 65 km.

Better contrast: The visible imagery will give details about vegetation and soil types while the infrared pictures give better contrast for water and land boundaries.

The pictures taken include the Cauvery, Godavari, Krishna and Brahmaputra rivers, lakes like Nagarjunasagar, Chilka and Hirakud and places like Rameswaram and parts of Sri Lanka.

Rohini is the eighth satellite of ISRO to circle the earth and the fourth in the SLV-III series. It is the second Indian satellite now in operation in space, the other one being APPLE, which will complete two years of orbit on June 19.

Motor failure: ISRO launched the first SLV-III experimental launch vehicle in 1979, but the third stage motor failed due to lack of fuel and the first Rohini satellite fell into the ocean.

However, the second in 1980, was a success, launching the Rohini satellite into the desired orbit. It stayed in space for more than the stipulated life of 100 days. But the third Rohini in the series, launch by the SLV-III developmental vehicle in 1981, burnt out in nine days when the fourth stage motor of the launch vehicle failed to put the spacecraft in the scheduled orbit.

Improvements incorporated: Following the failure, the fourth stage motor of SLV-III was modified and 18 major improvements incorporated. This proved effective and paved the way for the successful launch of the Rohini-D-II last April.

The successful launch has also made scientists confident about the development of the 150-kg class spacecraft for launch by an SLV in the mid-Eighties.

CSO: 4600/1297

PLANS FOR INSAT-1C LAUNCHING IN 1986 TOLD

Madras THE HINDU in English 4 Jun 83 p 1

[Text]

BANGALORE, June 3.

India will launch the third multipurpose satellite, INSAT-1C in mid-1986 as a replacement for the unsuccessful INSAT-1A, the Indian Space Research Organisation announced today. The Union Cabinet has approved its launch from the US space shuttle.

A launch reservation for INSAT-1C on the space transport system had already been made by the Department of Space, and confirmed by the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). INSAT-1C is expected to be delivered by the end of January or early February 1986.

A press note said it would be procured from the Ford Aerospace and Communications Corporation (FACC) in California under the existing contract.

"Though conservatively designed, INSAT-1C would represent a transitional stage between foreign-made INSAT-i satellites and the indigenously built INSAT-ii series," it said.

The new spacecraft is a gap-filler between INSAT-1B, scheduled for launch in August next, and the Indian-built INSAT-ii test spacecraft which will be available by the end of the decade.

Additional safety features: INSAT-1C will have all the additional safety features and minor changes that have been incorporated into INSAT-1B as a result of INSAT-1A failure investigation. It will have one additional safety feature and will be compatible with a 12 O'clock nominal, 10-30 p.m. injection as compared to 6 a.m. for INSAT-1A and 1B. The latter feature is being incorporated for greater flexibility in sharing a launch, ISRO said.

The INSAT-ii spacecraft, according to ISRO, is currently under definition. First-level functional requirement projections for service capabilities in the mid-1990s for INSAT-ii are already in hand and are being refined with user agencies participating in the INSAT system, it said. Completion of the definition and approval is expected by early 1984.

DELEGATE ADDRESSES DISARMAMENT COMMISSION MEETING

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 5 Jun 83 p 3

[Text]

UNITED NATIONS, June 4 (UNI) — India has 'serious difficulties' with the report of an independent commission on disarmament and security issues led by former Swedish Premier Olof Palme.

An Indian official told the UN Disarmament Commission yesterday that his Government was against 'some of the principles, proposals and recommendations of the Palme Commission'.

Mr T P Sreenivasan was addressing the Commission's 1983 substantive session, which adopted its report to the UN General Assembly on Thursday. The Palme report was taken up earlier this year.

The Indian diplomat said even though the disarmament Commission took note of the Palme report, that did not imply endorsement of all that the Palme document contained.

He said India believed the UN 'should not be called upon to discuss or even command a private study, however eminent the participants in the study'.

The Palme Commission talks, among other things, of a nuclear arms race between India and Pakistan, recommends nuclear free zone for South Asia and suggests that India's peaceful nuclear explosion might turn her into a nuclear power.

Mr Sreenivasan said, 'we also have some doubts about the new concept of common security the (Palme) report appears to advocate if it is in any way different from the concept of collective se-

curity which is the basis of the UN charter'.

He said it was for Government's to take the Palme recommendations into account or decide whether they should be pursued any further.

Mr Sreenivasan also touched on some other topics, such as reduction of military budgets, confidence building measures and South Africa's nuclear weapons capability.

He attacked 'a group of countries that prevented the adoption of a set of proposals made by the non-aligned movement' and said, 'we fully associate ourselves with the sense of disappointment and despair that the non-aligned world as a whole has felt'.

He was referring to the second special session on disarmament held last June, which failed to achieve tangible results. India had dissociated itself from the final document the session adopted.

Another Indian delegate, addressing the meeting on behalf of the non-aligned movement, regretted that a working paper prepared by the movement had not won all members' approval.

Mr Rajendra Rathore blamed the failure on total lack of interest in making serious efforts to reach agreement on these concrete proposals on the part of some of the nuclear weapon powers and their allies.

'Obsessed by their own narrow security concerns, they adopted a negative attitude which made progress impossible'.

REASONS FOR BAZARGAN'S DENUNCIATION OF BRITISH IN PARLIAMENT DETAILED

London AL-DUSTUR in Arabic No 290, 13 Jun 83 pp 32-33

[Article by Dr 'Ali Nurizadeh]

[Text] At 10 o'clock last Sunday morning Hashemi Rafsanjani rang the bell of the Iranian Parliament to announce the opening of the morning session. As was his custom he began by addressing the deputies: "Last night we heard the words of our commander and leader Imam Khomeyni. As we expected, his words came as a voice from heaven or as an inspiration that quiets our nerves. I want to repeat some portions of the leader's speech, especially when he said some people pretend to be faithful to Islam and the revolution and others sit among the deputies and plot against the Islamic Republic. As president of the Islamic Consultative Assembly I want to explain the imam's words. Our imam does not mean the majority of deputies who believe in the Islamic Republic and the rule of the faqih; rather, he means those liberals among you who have never given up the "necktie" and attack our system, and wound the feelings of the imam and those of the men of religion. You, my friends, know who is the leader of this group, for he sits among you and when your voices are raised in this hall in opposition to the Americans, this man and those with him laugh at you. This old man and his necktie appears among you as a satan who whispers in your hearts and tries to lead you astray. He does not jeer at the Americans for one reason, namely, he wants to flirt with America because he dreams of inheriting power with the support of the Americans. I wanted the imam to give me permission to unmask you, but you know his compassion and gratitude."

Rafsanjani stopped speaking and silence reigned in the hall of Parliament. The majority of deputies looked toward a corner in the northern part of the hall where Engineer Mehdi Bazargan, the first prime minister after the revolution, was sitting with 10 of his followers among the deputies. As soon as Rafsanjani began to speak, all the deputies knew that the president of Parliament was referring only to Bazargan who has continued to assail the corruption and fascism that have been widespread in Iran since he entered Parliament. Because of Bazargan's popularity and the high esteem in which he is held by the Iranians, especially the middle classes and merchants, Khomeyni and his helpers have not dared to attack him openly, but this time Rafsanjani did attack him directly and in Parliament without naming him.

According to the well-known saying, Rafsanjani described all the qualities of the "grape" without naming the fruit. The silence did not last more than a few minutes when Bazargan rose from his seat and requested the president of Parliament to give him a minute to speak about an important matter.

Rafsanjani replied very quickly! "We have important proposals to consider and we can't waste Parliament's valuable time to discuss your specific problems."

Bazargan did not lose his composure and again addressing Rafsanjani said: "Mr President, I would like you to give me the opportunity to announce three slogans against foreigners!"

Since Bazargan insisted, Rafsanjani had to satisfy his request. The veteran politician strode to the podium and standing in front of Rafsanjani declared: "Honorable deputies, you listened to the president's explanation of Imam Khomeyni's words and you realized that the imam and Mr Rafsanjani were disturbed that I didn't join you in jeering at the Americans. I have come to you today so that we can yell together against the Americans. Perhaps the imam and Mr Rafsanjani will forgive my sins. Our country is the first country in the world in which a man becomes anti-American and anti-imperialist simply by shouting the slogan: Death to the Americans." This slogan provides you with the necessary cover for to be American agents in practice and enemies in name only. Gentlemen, I shall tell you my slogans and ask you to repeat them after me: "Death to the Americans." All the deputies shouted with Bazargan "Death to the Americans."

"Death to the Soviets."

Only three-fourths of the deputies shouted after Bazargan "Death to the Soviets."

Then came another slogan: "Death to the British and the British agents." At this point only 10 deputies in Bazargan's group shouted.

Bazargan looked toward the podium and said: "Thank you Mr President for your kindness and interest." He then returned to his chair and sat down.

Iranian radio which usually broadcasts the sessions of Parliament in its programs failed to transmit Bazargan's remarks. But the next day the Iranian newspapers carried dozens of articles and analyses criticizing Bazargan and his group.

What was behind these attacks and why did Bazargan shout against the British in defiance of Rafsanjani and his followers in Parliament?

Observers of Iranian events after the revolution know the truth of the relations between the existing regime in Iran and the British government. Britain was the first Western country to play a major role in Khomeyni's coming to power and sustaining it by various ways and means.

During the course of the revolution the British radio turned from its Persian program to broadcast to the Khomeynites. British companies and factories became the most important "partners of the Islamic Republic" after Khomeyni came to power.

This means that the Khomeynites responded to Britain's friendliness with the wealth of the Iranians. Perhaps 30 years from now when the British Foreign Office documents are published the world will learn the dimensions of the relations between the regime of the Ayatollahs and Her Majesty's government.

Britain was the only country that reassured the Americans and the Western bloc with regard to Khomeyni's policy toward the communist countries. Because the Americans were convinced after the American embassy operation in Iran that the communists had some influence on the Iranian administration and were sure the communists would be likely to seize power after the death of Khomeyni, we find that for these reasons the Americans were indirectly supporting the regime's opponents. Washington was broadcasting in its Persian programs (6 hours a day) news of the opposition and statements of its leaders. However, Britain succeeded in persuading Washington to stop supporting the opposition. They also persuaded it that Khomeyni and his policies would continue in Iran and that "we have to cooperate with them to facilitate our regaining the position we had before the revolution."

The British also explained to their partners in Washington their views on the leaders of the Islamic Republic. They said: "Why do you want to oppose the Khomeyni regime and replace it at a time when it welcomes us and reveals its desire to obtain our support?"

The Americans did not rush to reply to Britain's explanations until last fall when the defecting Soviet diplomat Kuzichkin came to London.

What Kuzichkin said about the communists in Iran was reported to Iran by agreement with the United States. It was not long before the campaign of arrests of communists and dissolution of the Tudeh Party began.

Only then did Washington reply to London: "We are with you in supporting the Khomeyni regime."

Here began Britain's mediation between Iran and Washington. Some say Israel played a major role in bringing American and Iranian views closer together until one of the B.B.C. analysts acknowledged the Israeli role in the program "Around the World" on Saturday 4 June. For these reasons those familiar with the secrets of Iranian relations with the West were not surprised by the statements made by the leaders of the industrial nations at their last conference in Williamsburg in support of the Khomeyni regime. They all welcomed Khomeyni's new policies against the communists. The German Minister of Foreign Affairs enthusiastically defended the Khomeyni regime. Then there were the statements of British Prime Minister Thatcher who said the Iranian regime has sent us positive signals and we have to respond to them and try to help solve the country's economic problems.

Does anyone believe that the Khomeyni whom the press pictured as a "blood-thirsty Satan" has now become, because of British solicitude, "the honored leader who wants the best for his people and his country?" Let us not forget that the Western press indicated until a few months ago that the present regime in Iran would fall as a result of its barbaric actions, corruption, and dictatorial ways. Yet we now have a British minister on the program "Panorama" say that the "Khomeyni government has become stable. If we look at the British-Iranian trade figures, we can better understand why Bazargan attacked Britain and British agents in Iran.

In 1977, that is, one year before the arrival of Khomeyni, Iranian exports to Britain were estimated at \$2.5 billion while Iranian imports from Britain were valued at \$1.7 billion, that is, Iran exported more than it imported from Britain.

However, in 1982, that is, 3 years after Khomeyni came to power, the announced figures on British exports to Iran came to more than \$2 billion compared with a \$200 million volume of British imports from Iran. Britain also exported through brokers and intermediaries arms and equipment worth \$2 billion. It is no secret that the last figures have not yet been entered into the official records of British-Iranian exports and imports.

Britain is the only country that did not refrain from sending experts and industrial equipment to Iran during the last 4 years. Japan, now the largest purchaser of Iranian oil, is followed by the British oil companies which import Iranian oil. Finally, last week the Islamic Republic reached agreement with a British oil company that has relations with the government on the reconstruction and repair of an oil refinery in Abadan, oil installations on Kharj Island, and other installations. The agreement is worth \$3 billion. The Iranians promised to pay the amount in 6 installments as soon as the operations get under way.

What else do we need to know in order to understand why Bazargan shouted in Parliament?

The old Iranian used to say: "The sun is not absent from the skies of Iran except by order of the English." Now their descendants say: "Khomeyni will not fall until Britain stops supporting him."

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RIVALRY BETWEEN VARIOUS CENTERS OF POWER DISCUSSED

London AL-DUSTUR in Arabic No 287, 23 May 83 p 29

[Article by Dr 'Ali Nurizadeh]

[Text] Many analyses and articles appeared in the last few weeks in the international press on the transformation and "changes" that have taken place in the policies of the regime governing Iran.

Most of these articles and analyses discussed the actions taken against the communists in Iran. Some of the analyses went so far as to conclude that the regime is neither "neutral nor revolutionary."

The Western analysts suddenly forgot what they wrote about the Khomeyni regime while it was holding the American hostages. At that time Khomeyni was "an evil and satanic individual more dangerous than the communists." How many writers and intellectuals wept in sorrow over the pain from which the Iranian people were suffering!

And now because the fire threatens the Soviets' house and is far from their house, Khomeyni has suddenly become a neutral individual, a great scholar and a merciful leader.

However, the fact is what happened in Iran is nothing but an internal confrontation and struggle between various power centers.

Who is the winner and who is the loser in this struggle? The crisis among the rival governing groups is not new. Indeed, it began the first day that Khomeyni came to power, but the protagonists changed with the seasons.

At first the mullahs were on one side and liberals and the National Front on the other.

Because the extremists and revolutionary groups like the Feda'iyeh Khalq and Mojahediye Khalq and the communists supported Khomeyni and his followers, the mullahs won the first battle and the other parties lost. Then came the confrontation between the Mojahediye Khalq and the mullahs, and the communists and Feda'iyeh Khalq backed the government against the Mojahediye Khalq.

Last year the communists were able to infiltrate some of their supporters into government ministries and agencies under the cover of the Khatt ol-Emam group and they set out to defend the Khatt ol-Emam against imperialism. But the mullahs and the regime's supporters split into two groups: (1) supporters of the Khatt ol-Emam and (2) the Hojjatiyeh. While the Khatt ol-Emam group was defending the nationalization of trade and industry, the Hojjatiyeh group was shouting and demanding that relations with the atheistic Soviets be broken and that the Islamic Mohajedin in Afghanistan be supported.

Khomeyni sided sometimes with the Hojjatiyeh and sometimes with the Khatt ol-Emam. This situation continued until the death of Brezhnev. When the stands of the new leaders in Moscow changed, especially on the Iraqi-Iranian war and the Khomeyni regime rejected peace proposals, and after warming up relations with Israel and some Western countries due to their sending arms and materiel to Iran to continue the war against Iraq, Khomeyni ordered the Hojjatiyeh to arrest the communists.

When Khamene'i, one of the prominent figures in the Khatt ol-Emam, protested against the new policy toward the communists, Khomeyni ordered him to stand aside...that is, remain apart from the struggle.

At first observers thought the arrests would also include elements of the Khatt ol-Emam, but in the first stage Khamene'i was satisfied with arresting the prominent communist officials and some prominent figures in the Khatt ol-Eslam whose contacts with the communist Tudeh Party were known to all.

The most important reason why Khomeyni didn't get rid of all the elements of the Khatt ol-Emam was his fear that the Hojjatiyeh would remain the sole dominant force and in control of the power centers in the country. In looking at the contending parties in Iran, we find the situation to be as follows:

There is a radical wing led by Khamene'i who lost the first battle but was not finally defeated. He now relies on his relations with some mullahs among the extremists, some army and Revolutionary Guard leaders, and 50 deputies in the Consultative Assembly and 6 ministers affiliated with the Khatt ol-Emam.

Then there is the Hojjatiyeh wing or group. The members are rightists who insist on the need to establish solid relations with the West and some Islamic countries. They strongly oppose any contacts with the communist countries. They are supported by some ayatollahs like Golpayegani and Najafi Mar'ashi. They also have 4 ministerial posts and 65 deputies in the Islamic Consultative Assembly and some pillars of the regime like Rafsanjani who support the Hojjatiyeh indirectly.

A central wing (moderates) is made up of a group of mullahs and politicians who support the moderate line. Their leader is Ayatollah Mahdavi Kani, a member of the Revolutionary Leaders Council at the beginning of the Khomeyni regime and prime minister pro tem after the office of Raja'i and Bahonar was blown up.

There is also the group of Bazargan, the first prime minister after the revolution, and some ministers like Minister of Foreign Affairs Velayati who follow the middle line. They believe that the revolution has ended and the war cannot continue and that the people must be given some freedoms. This middle line defends the idea of establishing friendly relations with all countries in both the communist and the capitalist camps.

The number of contending groups in the "Islamic Republic" is not limited to 3 because there is the army and 300,000 officers and soldiers. Nor can one forget the army's revulsion at those who ordered it to kill and torture its commanders and comrades-in-arms at the beginning of the new era. This Iranian officer who Khomeyni sent to the front is dreaming of occupying Basra for the Khomeyni regime; he must explode some day and direct his fire against those responsible for this disaster. And there are 150,000 revolutionary guards--no one knows their ideological orientations. While the leaders of the guard back the Hojjatiyeh or the Khatt ol-Emam, even Khomeyni himself doesn't know where the guards will stand when the struggle starts.

Some say all the contending parties are awaiting the death of Khomeyni. However, the Iranians believe the day of vengeance will come while Khomeyni is still alive.

This old man who has played with the lives of millions of people must personally experience the judgment of the people on him in his lifetime.

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PROPAGANDA, POW'S IN IRAQ, REGIONAL AFFAIRS DISCUSSED BY OFFICIAL

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 26 Jun 83 p 17

[Interview with Javad Mansuri, cultural and consular deputy of the ministry of foreign affairs, in Bandar Anzali; date not given]

[Text] Javad Mansuri, cultural and consular deputy of the ministry of foreign affairs, who had traveled to Bandar Anzali, answered questions concerning the country's political issues in an interview with KEYHAN's correspondent.

At the start, concerning the Ministry of Foreign Affairs plans for Islamic propaganda abroad, he said: In light of the totality of the country's existing conditions and resources and of the extraordinary importance to us of delivering the message of the revolution's culture and recompensing the blood of our homeland's martyrs, all of the organs involved with propaganda abroad carry a very heavy responsibility. In light of the type and broad scale of responsibility the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has, it cannot be as active vis-a-vis propaganda abroad, except that through our knowledge of the possibilities and our rational encounter with the world's various political and cultural development, we can raise the issues of the Islamic Republic of Iran worldwide. He added: The propaganda that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs can make is, on one level, relatively limited, but from the political angle the ministry can have extensive activity which naturally will be effective as a propaganda instrument. So that we can give more attention to propaganda issues abroad we have created a special bureau in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for this purpose. Last year the Majlis appropriated a budget for this purpose and strengthened the foreign missions, so that due to those two factors and the additional one of the propaganda bureau, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will be able to deal more actively in this area, God willing.

Indirect Propaganda

He added: However, at the same time I must add that perhaps it will be years before we can answer all the widespread propaganda being made against us in the world. Yet we have the hope that through the calculated actions taking place domestically, and the expansion of foreign travel to this country whereby these travelers can recount their visits upon their return, we will have a kind of indirect propaganda and a more effective kind.

Conditions of Iranian POWs in Iraq

Concerning the actions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs relating to the condition of Iranian POWs situated in Iraqi camps, brother Mansuri said: We have had fruitful and active contacts with the International Red Cross from the beginning of the war, and we have regularly asked them to give us the latest figures and complete information. However, just as the recent report of the International Red Cross admitted the restrictions and limitations that have lately arisen in investigating the affairs of our POWs in Iraq, even though the report was not unbiased, we believe that due to the beliefs of the Iraqi regime the possibilities of restriction, pressure and torture for our prisoners is rather great. This is just the opposite to us who are treating the Iraqi POWs in a totally friendly, fraternal and devoted way on the basis of our beliefs. Of course we have evidence from some letters and some persons who have come from Iraq that unfortunately they are treating our prisoners contrary to the laws and regulations of the Geneva Convention and show no adherence to these regulations whatsoever, just as they have committed every other kind of war crime.

Results of the UN Commission's Inspection of the Fronts

Concerning the complaints of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations based on Iraq's barbaric attack on the Islamic homeland and the decisions adopted by the United Nations in this regard, he said: Following the widespread effort of the Islamic Republic of Iran's mission to the UN after the war began, the first action taken was to dispatch a commission to Iran to follow and investigate the war. During its trip this commission repeatedly announced that Saddam's war crimes were unparalleled in the world. After this commission's observation of Khorramshahr it even stated with surprise that 'we had never imagined that the ruin would be so widespread'. He added: In our own reports we try to point out the vast dimension of this tragedy and also the violations of the laws of war that have occurred, and to notify the concerned authorities of these violations. Of course United Nations authorities have so far shown no reaction to these reports. We think that the world's international circles will be compelled in the future to revise their judgment of Iran and reciprocally of Iraq and at least to be somewhat convinced that a great deal of their judgment was influenced by the propaganda of Iraq's regime.

Silence of Reactionary Arabs and the Murder of Six Iraqi Mullahs

Concerning the silence of the reactionary Arab countries over the murder of Ayatollah Hakim's family by Iraq's mercenary regime and the position of the Iranian government on this point, the cultural and consular deputy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said: We do not expect the governments affiliated with world arrogance to defend the deprived, those troubled by oppression or unjustly killed or tortured.

We do not expect these governments to even issue one word of truth, much less defend the truth or reprove an oppressor. In essence there is no difference between these governments and the Iraqi government in their affiliation,

and in a way they are the planners and supporters of the Baghdad government's administration.

Brother Mansuri spoke in conclusion about Israel's attacks on Syria and the position of the Islamic Republic of Iran on this point, and said: Just as we have repeatedly announced, our position is that we strongly defend Syria's position against Israel, and to every extent possible we support and aid this state in its fighting with and resistance to the aggressor Israeli regime. We also think that in light of the totality of political conditions governing the region that Israel's action might eventually lead to a serious military and political blow against Israel. This is because there is a wide disparity between the region's current status and the conditions of time within which Lebanon is being attacked [as published].

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