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ALGERIA

REPORT ON CONGESTION IN PORT OF ORAN

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 4-5 Mar 77 p 3

[Article by M. Benhalima: "Servitude and Constraint"]

[Text] According to those responsible, at every level, for the second largest port in the country, the periodic congestion is the consequence of various internal and external causes, which make the port administration very difficult.

These causes are said to stem especially from the absence of planning on the part of the international shipping companies involved in the transportation to the importing countries as well as on the part of the national companies in the matter of removing the merchandise from the port.

As for the transportation of the freight, we know that the developing countries do not yet have a strong merchant fleet capable of giving them independence in the carrying out of their import programs. Because of this shortage, international trade is subject to pressure by ship owners, whose interests are contrary to the objectives of economic development of the countries of the Third World.

Taking advantage of this situation, which is aggravated by the "development race," the international shipping companies do not hesitate to practice methods which are contrary to morality, just as they get every last penny out of ships which no longer meet the international standards for commercial shipping.

Taking into account the requirements of development of the Third World countries, the "sharks of shipping" act therefore with impunity in not respecting maritime law and they impose their will on the importing countries.

This is why the freight is delivered in bulk according to the availability of the companies' ships, which allows them to reduce the transportation costs, which is to their advantage and not to that of the users. This leads generally to the disruption of the movement of ships within the ports

which are served and to excessive penalties which can reach the equivalent of 25 percent of the price of the transported merchandise.

In addition, for every ship waiting at anchor, a penalty of \$2,000 per day (10,000 dinars) is imposed by the shipping companies. And when we learn that this penalty is payable in currency, we get an idea of the financial drain and the constraints which weigh on the economic development of the developing countries.

The solution to the problem of importing obviously lies in the creation of national merchant fleets capable of assuring control in this area and in the unification of resources among the countries confronted by the pressing needs of their own development.

The Internal Causes

To these external problems must be added the internal causes for the congestion of the port of Oran. These are essentially due to the slowness which characterizes the removal of the merchandise, which results in saturating the wharves and the maritime warehouses and in addition to slowing up the port activities.

Thus, for a slack day like Thursday 4 February (a half-day of work), 2,715 tons of merchandise were unloaded while only 2,650 tons were removed. This without taking into account, obviously, the 26,460 tons stored on the platforms and 6,104 tons in warehouses, which are still awaiting their problematic removal.

According to those responsible for the port, "this situation is perpetuated because the port is considered a permanent storage zone and not a transit area and a tool which must answer the demands of provisioning and of commercial exchanges."

Starting with this erroneous criterion, the national companies consider the development of planning for imports, transit and utilization of the imported merchandise as an aspect unnecessarily restrictive of their activities. "Now, we believe, it is to this aspect that are subordinated the sound management of the national companies and the profitability of the imported materiel, which proves to be generally very costly, in consequence of the incoherence resulting from the absence of serious and rigorously concretized planning."

On their side, the companies which utilize the port argue "that the merchandise is subjected to a complicated legislation which does not help the proceedings" and they consider the loading formalities a forbidding ordeal which is unnecessarily long.

It seems however that this argument has become groundless in the sense that the presidential order no 75-40 of 17 June 1975 simplifies the formalities and "makes it an obligation for the companies to remove the merchandise stored in the port within the shortest delay."

Still according to the administration of the port of Oran, "the removal of the merchandise is currently done by simple request for authorization from the customs office," the regularization taking place according to the legislation only after the removal of the merchandise.

Handling Capacity: 4 Million Tons per Year

With the imbalance between the arrival of the imported merchandise and its removal to the importing national companies, the port of Oran suffers a congestion which leaves one to suppose inadequacies and gaps at the level of the port equipment.

The port of Oran is however equipped in such a way as to respond to the requirements of handling evaluated at double the current traffic.

With its 33 dock stations, 12 cranes, 731 fork lifts and its 76 hectares of storage areas, 5 of which are in warehouses, the port of the western capital of the country has a handling capacity of 4 million tons per year with possibilities for simultaneous docking of 26 ships.

The port traffic has however not reached its full capacity since the operations have shown, during the last three years, only 2,338,935 tons in 1974, 2,404,797 tons in 1975 and 1,986,836 in 1976.

For the single month of January 1977, 146 ships were handled, for a volume of merchandise evaluated at 192,150 tons, while for the same traffic the tonnage was only 176,154 tons for 128 ships during the month of January 1976.

"The problem of the port of Oran, emphasize the local authorities, is therefore not a question of handling capacity but of the removal of the merchandise and, consequently, of availability of the storage areas and warehouses."

As for the human resources of this handling, the management of the port has adapted the work schedules to the current requirements for importing and exporting. This is why two teams work practically non-stop from 0600 to 2000 and from 2000 to 0300. But it is certain that the extent of the operations remains dependent on the storage possibilities.

These possibilities are, of course, linked to the transit structure and to the will of the national companies to plan not only their imports but also their clearing of the port, which will be the proof of a real concern for regular provisioning and profitable management of the various sectors of the national economy.

For, if in the current state of affairs the port of Oran is the reflection of the battle carried forth in the setting of the development of our country, its congestion is nevertheless the mirror of the productivity in the production units.

PERES DISCUSSES PLANS IF ELECTED

Tel Aviv HA'AREZ in Hebrew 15 Apr 77 p 13

[Report of interview with Shimon Peres by Yoel Markus: "This Is How I Will Act as Prime Minister"]

[Text] At the end of a dramatic week, by the end of which a deep crisis in the Alignment had been avoided at the last minute, the questions remains as to what sort of a prime minister Shimon Peres will be, if in fact he receives a mandate in the elections to form a government. In a long and candid discussion with Mr Peres at the end of the week, the essentials of which are indicated below, I focussed my interest on this issue. Mr Peres, who appeared relaxed, without any signs of tiredness, listened without blinking an eye to my first question: "It is said that because of all of the promises which you made both before and after the confrontation, the government will of necessity have more than 30 ministers."

Mr Peres maintains that he promised nobody anything, with the exception of Yigal Allon. There are many stories circulating about promises, but he says they are without foundation. He maintains: "I have no obligations except for general moral obligations." It should also be stated that he adds that except for one or two cases, nobody asked him for any promises. Was it necessary to make a promise to Allon? Peres answers in the affirmative, and explains: the problems are not formal. They are not solved by raising or lowering the hands. The crisis came upon us quickly -- it could have caused either total disintegration or we could have come out of it strengthened. There was a need to come out of the crisis without broken bones, and also to deal with the issue rapidly. ("This is an encouraging sign of the democracy of the party.")

political life is not conducted according to dictates, but rather according to considerations. Peres hopes that in spite of the differences of opinion and what he calls "reservations which developed over the course of time," it will be possible to maintain good team work.

How will Yigal Allon be able to settle himself in the Defense Ministry, where there is a crystallized community of workers, which since the establishment of the state has been on the side of the Ben Gurion camp? Peres answers: it is a national ministry par excellence. I am convinced that all appointments in this

ministry have been appropriate. There is no party differentiation in this ministry where there are people from Prof Zussman to Shimon Avidan. This is how it should be in every governmental ministry. But especially so in the Defense Ministry, and not only because on the matter of defense there is a national consensus, but because the lives of thousands of people depend upon the absolute trust between the minister and his subordinates.

The position of Rabin is a delicate matter about which Mr Peres is not happy to talk. Rabin appears in a not prominent position on the list for Knesset, and he has not stood by his commitment to transfer his authority in the present government. The expression "we will be fortified from him" of which the law speaks is not only an objective matter but a subjective matter, and if the prime minister has decided that he does not have to transfer his authority, he is still faithful to the law, and it is possible that the public understood Rabin's intentions otherwise when he announced his resignation on television. When I raised this issue with Mr Peres, he refused to respond. He only notes that he participated in the cabinet meeting and drew his conclusions. Peres will also not speak of Rabin's political position in the future. To my question as to whether Rabin will have a right in the future to run for the prime ministry, the same right which he took for himself, Peres only notes that there is still democracy in the party.

A second delicate matter is Moshe Dayan. He does not respond to the negotiations which Dayan conducted with Likud at the last moment. I remind Peres that once in a conversation with me he said that Dayan and Eban should be used in the cabinet. Then he was saying what Rabin should do. What would be his attitude to Dayan? Answer: Moshe Dayan belongs to people who make decisions on their own account -- by themselves. When he wanted to leave the Defense Ministry, he confessed that he would remain. Even in the future, much depends upon him.

He confesses that he is not free to express opinions as long as he has not put together a team and made it public. Yet I pose the question to him, that if he serves as prime minister will Dayan be with him in what Sapir once called the "upper echelon of the upper echelon?" Peres says that the Knesset list and Dayan's position on it speak for themselves.

Aside from political negotiations, the need to renew immigration ("without it we will not be able to withstand the political debate"), the closing of social gaps, the elimination of bureaucracy by streamlining government, and the raising of national morale, Peres will give top priority to economics: a revision of all debts of the state; a renewal of economic growth which will renew the flow of investments by Jews from abroad; and most important, the war against inflation. Theodore White once wrote that in a regime of inflation, it is the grasshopper and not the ant which benefits. Inflation destroys the faith of the people and the work ethic.

Is it not strange, I ask, that for the first time in history, there is no economist in the first tenth of the party list? Peres confesses that this is so, but says that in the second tenth of the list there are six people who can deal with economic affairs. It is possible, he hints, that he will have to enlist

economists who are not on the Knesset list (which he considers to be very representative), but Peres prefers not to go into details or to mention names, and his caution is apparent. Is it thinkable that he will put people into his cabinet who are not on the party election list? Although Peres does not exclude this possibility, he emphasizes that the cabinet will for the most part be composed of candidates for the Knesset. To do otherwise would be a deviation, and would certainly not be easy. He hinted at an internal coalition created within the Alinement.

I reminded Mr Peres of his statements regarding the need for reorganization of the government. Yes, he says, he will work in light of accumulated experience of the past to both reduce the number of offices, and to deepen staff work. He says that he has asked several colleagues to draft a reorganization plan. By the time the next cabinet is composed -- and Peres has no doubt that he will compose the next cabinet -- he says that he will be able to bring a formulated plan for this matter. A reduction of offices for reasons of saving or functionalism? For both reasons.

He sees a top priority in a Ministry of Public Welfare, which will of course have an effect on the number of offices and will also lead to savings. As for the rest, he does not want to make any public commitments, but he has his ideas. It is known that he takes into account the need to leave something for a coalition partner. As for the party aspect, Peres wants to revive the institution of "our colleagues" from the days of Ben Gurion, which means a party coordinating body with the participation of factors of influence, such as the coalition chairman, the party secretary, and the secretary of the Histadrut (in accordance with the issue). This body will deal with crises before they appear on the surface.

Using metaphor, Peres says that Socrates said that government is like a house maid, in that it not only has to prepare the meals, but also wash the dishes afterwards.

Will he set up a national security commission in his office? Peres says no. We live under a cabinet regime, and the ministers are responsible. If the cabinet is small, it will sit as a whole as a ministerial commission for security affairs. If it is broader, it will be necessary to create a ministerial commission for security affairs. But no more than that. If he becomes prime minister, what will be the basis for his grasp of foreign and security affairs? Answer: the prime minister is responsible for the undefined area between foreign and security affairs, and in the future he will be very active in both areas, as has been the practice in the past. Is he aware of the fact that the Alinement this time will have to part with one of the three important portfolios (defense, finance, and foreign affairs)? Answer: I hope not. We are faced with serious and essential problems, and it is essential that there be a central body which enjoys the full support of the people. My comfort is that our people will know how to be great, and will place the proper emphasis on the important issues.

As for the authority of the prime minister, isn't Mr Peres a captive in the hands of the doves? Peres answers: the doves claim that I am in the hands of the hawks, and the hawks claim that I am in the hands of the doves. The truth is that we are all prisoners in the hands of the situation. The late Mr Sneh once said that it makes no difference to a dove if it is locked in a gilded cage. Our principal effort must be to be alert to opportunities to extricate ourselves from the situation. The Labor Party has always pursued the centrist road in Israeli policy, which has never been able to be too dovish or too hawkish. This is the training which I received all of my life. Was Ben Gurion a dove or a hawk? He was a great activist, but he always preserved his ability to make decisions.

Regarding the principal issues in the country, Peres speaks of three spheres: continuation of the process of reaching a settlement; the situation in Lebanon; and the USSR. Mr Peres sees no reason to travel to Washington, and certainly not now, even before a cabinet has been formed. He says that we forget that the prime minister is first of all the representative of the people, and that he must have a mandate. Therefore it is preferable to first establish quickly a stable and reliable government, and then there will be a place to conduct negotiations.

The American position, which is now in the process of formulation, will become clear at the end of May, Peres says, and adds: it is to be hoped that the administration is alert to the fact that there is a national consensus in Israel not to return to the 1967 borders, to preserve the unity of Jerusalem, to demand defensible borders, and that territorial concessions are reasonable if they entail a real peace. On these issues, there is broad agreement among the people, and this must be made clear to Washington. At the same time, if the Geneva Conference is reconvened, he will support it "with all his heart." The difference between our position and the Arab position is that they say "peace with no concessions" and we say "concessions for peace."

Peres says that the principal difficulty is that there is no readiness on the part of the Arabs to make any real territorial concessions. He does not understand Sadat's frequent talk of peace, but refusal to meet face to face. Peres says that he does not see any inviolable pre-condition, but that if we would meet face to face, he believes that the degree of understanding would increase. Peres sees support for this in the interim agreements, which have established quiet on the borders, yet which do not have the status of treaties.

When our discussion turned to Lebanon, Peres distinguished three elements: the Syrian army, the terrorists, and our relations with the settlements in southern Lebanon. He says that the Syrian presence has assumed the form of a long-term and permanent occupation, and this is both tragic for Lebanon and problematic for Israel. But as long as the Syrian army does not cross the parameters which we have announced, we do not have to intervene militarily. Question: but shouldn't we set time limits to the Syrian presence? Answer: I would not make an ultimatum. We have to see how things develop.

As for the element of the terrorists, Peres admits that in the fighting in Lebanon, they have learned how to fight in semi-military formations. On the other hand, it is difficult for them to cross the border. But if the terrorists seek targets in Israel, we will not hesitate to take all necessary measures against them. In speaking of the third element, the Christian settlements, Peres slides into the sphere of sentiment. Close to the Israeli border, these Christian settlements are cut off from all support and supply. The fate of these villages is definitely of interest to us. Israel is not a materialist and cold blooded country which considers only strategic factors. It also has a sense of humanity. We have extended the hand of friendship to these villages, and Peres says that he will not permit us to turn our back and betray them. We must live in a neighborly relation with them. Our hand is extended not only to these villages, but to all of Lebanon, and Peres hopes that relations will be restored to what they once were.

As for the USSR, Peres says: there were Russian signs which directed Israel's attention to formulations by Brezhnev. Absent from these formulations was the usual hostility to Israel, and it is said that Russia is not pushing for an imposed solution. The correct way to test Russian statements is not to look for what is lacking and present in the formulations, but rather to look at the attitude itself. The USSR unilaterally severed relations after what it described as military aggression in the Six-Day War. But it did not do the same to Syria and Egypt which attacked Israel in the Yom Kippur War. The non imposed solution must begin with the non-imposition of a system of relations, whose only purpose is to vex Israel. In foreign relations, there is no substitute for normal relations.

Before the end of our discussion, I reminded Mr Peres of his principal claim, when he ran for the candidacy of the prime ministry. It was that he would prevent on election day the defeat which was predicted for the Labor Party if it was headed by Rabin. Does he still hold to this? Peres' answer was both detailed and direct. He said: "Yes."

7075
CSO: 4805

ISRAEL

NEW MISSILE PATROL BOAT DESIGNED

Construction To Be Completed in 2 Months

Jerusalem Domestic Television Service in Hebrew 1830 GMT 30 Apr 77 TA

[Text] It was announced publicly this evening that Israel Aircraft Industry has designed and is developing a new patrol boat to be called "Devora." The aircraft industry's Ramta plant is now completing production of the prototype of the missile-carrying patrol boat, which differs in its dimensions and weaponry from the missile boats now in use in the navy. Our correspondent Yigal Goren reports on the new boat. [begin videotape recording]

[Goren] This is what the new Devora patrol boat, whose construction will be completed in another 2 months, will look like: The new boat will be exhibited for the first time abroad at the Aeronautical Salon in Paris the beginning of June. The first boat is now in the advanced construction stages in the aircraft industry's plant in Beersheva. For the last several years this plant has already been producing the Dabur boat which has been purchased by the navy, among others.

The boat, which is of aluminium, is 22 meters long and 5-1/2 meters wide. It is not heavy and is equipped with two very strong diesel engines. The combination of small dimensions and a narrow beam, light weight and powerful engines will, according to the boat's designers, give it a particularly high speed and maneuverability. It will have a speed of 35 knots--about 65 kilometers an hour.

All weapons systems on the boat will be made in Israel. They are based on the knowhow acquired over the last few years, particularly during the Yom Kippur War. The Devora's main armament will be two Gabriel-type sea-to-sea missiles. In addition to the missiles the boat will have two light cannon and a number of machineguns.

What is special about the new boat?

[Aircraft Industry Employee] This boat is in fact part of an especially unique weapons system, with the boat being one of the smallest of those in

use today capable of carrying out fast operations at sea. The weapons system is based mainly on Gabriel missiles, which have proved themselves in operational situations, and the boat can serve as a platform for other varied weapons systems.

[Goren] When construction of the boat is completed it will be hauled by vehicles to the open sea for a series of sea trials. Aircraft Industry personnel point out that this is the only missile boat in the world that can be moved by vehicles. The Devora's operating range will be about 1,300 kilometers. Its crew will consist of 8 to 10 people. The boat, say its designers, will have the ability to sail on a stormy sea and it will be able to remain at sea for a long time without being dependent on regular supplies. It will be able to undertake patrol, hauling and policing duties and in time will be able to be combined [meshulav] with large naval equipment.

As far as is known, the navy has not yet ordered any of these boats and apparently is awaiting the boat's first series of sea trials. Meanwhile, a number of foreign delegations have visited the Beersheva plant and expressed interest in the new boat.

[Aircraft Industry employee] What is particularly interesting about the boat is that, together with an unusually high performance, the costs are less than what is normal in this field. Because of this the boat is already, at this stage, very attractive for many countries, particularly small ones which do not enjoy direct aid from the big powers. We assume that it will be a hit on the international market. [end videotape recording]

Several Countries Interested in the "Devora"

Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 5 May 77 p 2 TA

[Article by Ya'akov Erez]

[Text] The Aircraft Industry has already begun negotiations with various countries which have expressed an interest in purchasing the new patrol boat that is being manufactured by the Ramta factory of the Aircraft Industry in Beersheva.

Negotiations have not yet reached an advanced stage; however, representatives from the countries have seen the Devora and heard about its specifications. The price of the Devora is about \$3 million.

Various countries in Central and South America have in the past expressed an interest in buying Israeli vessels. As a result, two Israeli "Reshef" class boats visited Colombia in July last year after they completed their visit to the United States as part of the U.S. 200th anniversary celebrations.

The Devora patrol boat is equipped with two sea-to-sea Gabriel missiles and can be armed with two 20-millimeter cannon, two double-barreled 0.5 caliber machineguns and other weapons according to the specifications of the client. The Devora can get up a speed of 35 knots and has a maximum range of 700 nautical miles. The crew consists of 8 to 10 persons.

CSO: 4805

SINGLE PLAN FOR GALILEE DEVELOPMENT

Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 8 May 77 p 3

[Text]

NAZARETH. — "The first thing I did was to formulate a single plan," Reuven A. David told a press conference on Friday marking the end of his first six months as Coordinator of Government Activities in Galilee.

His plan, which supplants the 14 different documents prepared by various authorities which he found when he took office, is designed to double the population of Galilee within the next 15 years, following a government decision to give priority to the region. The projected population of one million will be half Jewish and half Arab.

During these months the coordinator said he set up a working team, established coordination among various government ministries, and determined priorities.

A first priority will be the telephone and roads networks. The largest road will link the Coastal Plain with Kiryat Shmona via Wadi Milek, Yokneam, Hasolelim, Golan Junction, Amihud and Merar. Water resources will also be developed.

Industrial centres are already under construction or projected in the Tefen area (Western Galilee), Mahanayim (Upper Galilee), Golan Junction (Eastern Galilee), Kabri (Nahariya region) and Tzippori (Nazareth region). New industry will provide jobs for Jews who will be moving to Galilee, as well as for that portion of the Arab population that will be shifting from agriculture to industrial work.

There will also be industrial centres in the Arab villages of Sakhnin, Merar, Nakhkef, Tamra and Bismat Tivon.

The Minister of Commerce and Industry is making every effort to promote cooperation in investment by both Jews and Arabs with capital, David said. The Lands Authority will allocate sites for construction of high rise housing.

JORDAN

'AL-AKHBAR' CHARGES ISRAELIS IMPLEMENTING KOENIG DOCUMENT

Amman AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 7 May 77 p 1 JN

[Text] Amman--AL-AKHBAR report--Travelers from the West Bank have stated that the Israeli occupation authorities have begun implementing a new expansionist plan aimed at compelling Arabs in the territories occupied since 1948 to leave for the West Bank. The Israeli authorities compelled a number of families in the Triangle and Galilee to move to the West Bank, and banned them from returning to their lawful home. These families were given 24-hour notice to vacate their houses or be forcibly evicted.

The travelers said this policy of confiscation of land and eviction caused the recent eruption of demonstrations in the villages of Baqah al-Gharbiyah and Jatt and in other areas in protest against this policy. The occupation authorities adopted collective repressive measures, ordering troops to break into all houses without exception. The troops went through the two villages house by house beating up citizens indiscriminately, whether children, women or old people.

The house of Baqah al-Gharbiyah's mayor received its share of this barbaric campaign. His mother was beaten up by the occupation troops. The mayor submitted an official complaint calling upon the mayors of Baqah al-Gharbiyah, Jatt and Nazareth to hold a meeting in Baqah al-Gharbiyah to submit a collective complaint to the Zionist interior minister.

This repressive campaign which the occupation authorities are gradually implementing against the Arabs in Palestinian territory occupied since 1948, aims at evicting the Arabs from this area in accordance with the Koenig Document.

Koenig is the administrative governor of Galilee. In his document, Koenig proposed emptying the Galilee and Triangle areas of Arabs through direct harrassment, confiscation of land, and depriving them of their livelihood.

CSO: 4802

JORDAN

EEC, JORDAN DISCUSS FINANCE TERMS FOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 3 May 77 p 3

[Article: "Talks with the European (Common) Market To Finance Jordanian Development Projects"]

[Text] Amman--JNA--Yesterday afternoon, a meeting was held in the Ministry of Trade and Commerce between Jordanians led by Dr Najm-al-Din al-Dajani minister of trade and commerce, and a delegation from the European Common Market community led by Mr (Andson), director of technical cooperation.

During the meeting, ways of effectively concluding an agreement between Jordan and the EEC were studied.

The Jordanian side presented the projects to be partially financed by aid and loans agreed to by the two sides. Among these is a project to transport water from the King Talal Dam to the city of Amman and to finance medium and small industrial projects through the Industrial Development Bank (vocational and technical training for the work forces, the Abu Nusayr housing project, the Irbid water project from the al-Yarmuk River and the purchase of diesel locomotives to transport phosphates).

During the next two days, the two sides will hold a number of meetings in the various ministries and agencies of the nation in order to acquire more information on all of the aforementioned projects.

These meetings are considered prefatory to the goal of collecting information and learning about fields of cooperation so that subsequently the final agreements will be concluded on the basic projects which can be adequately financed.

It should be mentioned that this agreement had been reached four months ago and included the offer of 22 million dollars in financial aid to Jordan in the form of a grant and a similar amount in the form of loans, in addition to 5 million dollars offered as loans on easy terms.

Yesterday, talks between Jordan and a delegation from the European Common Market community began discussions in the National Planning Council.

During these discussions, broad plans will be made in the light of which activities and projects which can be carried out through the agreed upon aid and loans (some 45 million dollars) will be allocated.

The Jordanian side is being represented in these talks by a delegation led by the secretary general of the National Planning Council and having a membership of specialists from the Ministry of Trade and Commerce and the National Planning Council.

CSO: 4802

DESTRUCTION, CHANGES IN POST-WAR LEBANON

Paris MAGHREB-MACHREK in French Jan-Mar 77 pp 34-43

[Article by Joseph Phares and Yves Schemeil, Center of Advanced Studies on Modern Africa and Asia: "The Cities: Changing the Urban Site of Beirut"]

[Text] To go by press reports alone it seems unlikely that many districts of Beirut should have weathered without major damage more than 18 months of civil war. Yet, the fact is that the population of the Lebanese capital has been able to adjust to particularly difficult living conditions, that it learned to avoid dangerous situations by following instructions broadcast over the radio, and that finally it on the whole hoped that it would never have to evacuate, making as if things like that happened only to neighbors. But it is precisely in its effort to adjust to circumstances that the population modified to the greatest extent, between March 1975 and December 1976, the urban site of Beirut and its suburb, without even talking of the ruins heaped up on both sides of the front line.

In order to appreciate the scope and nature of these changes it is appropriate to recall Beirut on the eve of what was successively called "incidents" from 13 April to 16 May 1975,[1] then "events" from 16 May to 1 July 1975, "civil war" from 24 August 1975 to early April 1976, and finally war, period, since the intervention of the Syrian troops. As far back as one may go in history, the fate of this city seems to have been to believe in things on a large scale until a catastrophe occurs to level an ambitious metropolis. The destruction caused by the earthquake which ravaged Beryte in 555 A.D. heralded that of these past 2 years.[2] Especially, the existence of a natural site midway between Jerusalem and Antioch has never prejudged urban continuity, jeopardized by the region's chronic instability and marked, in addition, by difficult links with its hinterland. That is why the vestiges of the past eras, whatever they may be, are very rare there.

With the exception of a Sunnite Moslem core around which an eastern city, very similar to its neighbors, [3] was founded, there were thus in Beirut only two "historic" districts (see map No 1): One, administrative, built by the Ottomans when the city of Beirut became, in 1999, the capital of the vilayet [or wilayah, administrative district] (province of Beirut). [4]

The other, stemming from maritime trade at the era of the "ladders of the Levant" which developed in the last few decades of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century. Despite an imperial architecture (involving freestone, arcades, and decorated facades), the Ottoman monuments could not rival in appearance the wealthy merchants' residences in the environs of the port. But the construction of the latter was at times less sturdy, the sandstone from dunes used in building houses, known as "ramlah," subject to crumbling, incidentally, being simply applied on top of more commonplace construction materials. In brief, it would have been difficult for the solid government buildings to disappear, and real estate speculation had very little effect on them whereas the residences converted into offices or slums were particularly vulnerable. During the time of the French mandate [1920-1945] the city spread in a southerly and westerly direction where housing of all kinds, whose only common feature was the haste with which it was built, replaced in very short order the orchards that had existed before, surrounding on all sides the rural homes and poor farms.[5] The population density of this initial belt was much smaller because of it. Additionally, the price of construction sites excluded any influx of migrants with modest means, settled still farther out in the suburbs, even in the shantytowns and camps whose population density greatly exceeds that of downtown Beirut[6] (see map No 2).

During the latest crisis, the number of unbuilt plots of land in the first belt helped to mitigate the effect of the shelling there. Similarly, the spacing of zones laid out haphazardly confined the deadly destruction to some points only.

The historic development of the city explains why it appears to be less disfigured by the war today than a resident of Paris, Lyons, or Marseilles would imagine. The considerable changes that Beirut has witnessed are to be sought elsewhere, in the war economy which was its setting for at least one and one-half years. Or, more exactly, in the fact that the definitive destruction has made highly uncertain a return to the earlier urban configuration, which has become less necessary in the meantime. One must therefore explore the scope of the damage before turning to the other types of changes of life and of the urban site. This step incidentally depends on the accuracy and availability of information.

Since no land survey has yet been established, it is the large-scale damage that is obviously the most apparent. The other types of damage have been estimated through the collection of several statements and press reports. It is still impossible to establish any kind of financial estimate, assuming that one can ever achieve in this field a sufficient degree of approximation. Besides, what is involved there is a secondary problem if it is compared with the irreparable nature of the loss in human life or physical integrity. Reconstruction plans are taking shape in architects' studios as well as in government offices,[7] and a few isolated individuals have already undertaken to erect their stalls even before any stabilization of the political and economic situation. However, many problems continue to face the Lebanese urban planners. Should they proceed with a rapid patch-up job of those areas

that were least hit or should they take advantage of the opportunity to build a model city on the site of an older city with streets that were too narrow and with a layout that was anarchic? Should they tear down what is not totally destroyed or allow the building of architectural "artificial make-shifts" of questionable taste? Should the law of demand and supply be allowed to become operative at the risk of seeing commercial and financial activities move to other sectors, even other countries? Should the government intervene through the establishment of mixed [private-public] companies with the danger that these will enhance the concentration of capital among a few hands even though such companies may represent perhaps a more efficient arrangement for the renewed start-up of the Lebanese economy? The answers to these questions are difficult and to a large extent go beyond the framework of this article. We shall thus limit ourselves to considering merely its material aspects: Behind the topographic approach, the impressions of the sociologists will often become apparent.[8]

The Destruction

In most of the cases the destruction was gradual, and it can be said that those buildings which have now disappeared were generally destroyed stone by stone, one at a time, through a series of attacks that differed in nature (see map No 3). By classifying these in order of seriousness one finds first the simple bombings of stores, the work of commandos who ventured, during early months of the war, into enemy territory. More or less attributed to Nasirite groups hailing from the Sunni Moslem districts of Mazra'ah-Bastah, these attacks affected especially the business streets of Bab Idris and Qantari, the latter being the extension of the former and both offering easy access from bases located near the southern peripheral (Mazra'ah) "Corniche" [waterfront promenade]. It is incidentally public knowledge that some personal or business scores were settled on that occasion by those who resorted to hit men originating from the Kurdish slums of Wadi Abu-Jamil who came to take over--in reverse manner in a way--the business centers.

The response of the Christian parties (one should rather mention the Christian sides since the Kata'ib,[9] for example, can be distinguished from the Guardians of the Cedar in terms of organizational principles and recruitment) was fire, notably that around the Place des Canons, of the Opera Cinema and Souk Nuriyyah [bazaar] the food and clothing market more popular than its rivals, Souk al-Franj and Souk Tawilah [bazaars] located along Rue Bab Idris [street]. The light frames of these stores one or two stories high withstood this treatment much less than the more elegant store windows, frequently reinforced with aluminum frames which were recently extended by reinforced concrete wings.

By contrast, the initiative of moving the fighting from the southern suburbs (Shiyah, 'Ayn al-Rummanah) where it began to the residential center seems to have been the decision of the rightist movements. The occupation of the hotels on the waterfront, converted into advance positions of the Christian sector, was decided by the Kata'ib following the initial bombings when it

appeared that the offices located on the Rue Georges Picot [street] in the extension of Bab Idris were threatened by the occupants of the old urban cores of Wadi Abu-Jamil, 'Ayn al-Muraysah, and Ramlat al-Zarif. Proof of this is that, since they had first pick, the Kata'ib chose the Holiday Inn, already completely outfitted (in contrast to the concrete frame of the Hilton Hotel which had no water lines, no electricity, and no supplies) and was fireproof (in contrast to the Phoenicia and Saint Georges Hotels, of older construction, which partly burned down). The case of the Murr tower--Beirut's first skyscraper, still incomplete--does not represent an exception to the extent that its Christian owner thought that he was immune from occupation thanks to the subsidies paid to the various groups which may possibly have been tempted to occupy the building.[10] Whatever the case, destruction consequent on fighting with light arms, characteristic of civil wars, thus extended to the inhabited areas of the heart of the Lebanese capital. The doggedness of the two sides and their unshakable will to maintain themselves there cost this sector of the city dearly, exposed without major interruption to the fire of rifles, machineguns, or RPGs [Rocket-Propelled Guns], a kind of portable missile-launcher.

Depending on the duration of exposure to combat, one can distinguish zones partially or totally destroyed without heavy artillery duels being responsible.[11] The latter had far more impact on the rest of the urban site in terms of isolated destruction than on the sections involved along the axis of the fighting--in other words, the radial line running from 'Ayn al-Muraysah to the Ba'abda presidential palace. To be sure, self-propelled guns or anti-tank howitzers were unquestionably used along this route part of which--and this is the peak of irony--bears the name of the Syrian capital. But they did not have enough room or power to be easily handled. Additionally, they proved to be useless in the hunt for isolated killers. Too, the damage resulting from the use of field artillery (mortars, anti-aircraft guns, 155-millimeter guns, "Grad" ground-to-ground missiles) was highly scattered. The cost of ammunition, the shortage of qualified gunners, the requirements of the "battle of the mountain" which moved from slope to slope along the international Damascus road diverted from Beirut the threat of systematic shelling that would have duplicated there the fate of Dresden [Germany, heavily fire-bombed during World War II].

The strategy of the belligerents nevertheless had consequences on the application of what could be called "political urban development." The leveling by public works bulldozers brought to its peak the destruction by erasing from the city's map two Beirut districts--those of Quarantine (Karantinaw) and Tall al-Za'tar. The razing to the ground of these neighborhoods of misery, often contemplated while there was still peace, was thus realized for less noble reasons. The wall erected by the authorities in the past bordering on the Tripoli road to conceal the poverty of the shantytowns of the port area came down with the hovels. This is hardly a glorious even though significant episode. In order to tear down frail but still living neighborhoods, the bulldozers had to be called in. One understands then why the better-built zones, those not so densely populated and less strategic, managed to avoid their disappearance.

The Other Changes

The will to survive has marked the city to such a point that after talking of destruction it would be appropriate to speak, among other changes, of construction. For the least war-torn areas had to accommodate a constantly growing flow of refugees. Where did the unwilling migrants come from? Is there a common denominator between their origin and their destination? It is a little too early to say. A crude estimate of the migratory flows and whether they affected all the inhabitants of a given district or some specific activities only may however be made. Furthermore, such population movements could not remain without effect on the material organization of life or on the system of values of the residents of Beirut. Material disorganization being an essential source of cultural disorganization--without even mentioning mental disorders about which doctors will one day be able to testify--the growth of unlawful activities during the war was easily predictable.[12]

The city was first emptied of part of its inhabitants in proportions difficult to estimate but which seem to have exceeded two-thirds of the total. Out of more than 1 million residents of Greater Beirut, only 300,000 to 400,000 remained on the spot on a permanent basis. To these should be added a number of travelers who used to pay, at the time of each lull in the fighting, brief visits to their homes. The departures seem to have reduced the number of inhabitants both in the eastern and western districts of Beirut, and the destinations of those who left can be estimated as on map No 5.[13]

Among those who moved one can distinguish three cases: Some (about one out of three or those who remained, that is, one inhabitant out of every 10 peacetime residents) who had to leave their original neighborhoods. The others are divided in nearly equal parts: The larger group went abroad (especially to Syria but also to other Arab countries), very few moving in the last analysis to Europe and the traditional emigration countries. Another group left for other regions of Lebanon. Three-quarters chose either southern Lebanon or the Mount Lebanon area (a revealing fact when it is known that the two confessional communities most active in this war were the Shi'ite Moslems and the Maronite Christians). By comparison, northern Lebanon and the al-Biq'a' region each saw the arrival of no more than 3 percent of Beirut's residents. This confirms--if it were needed--that the Lebanese Sunni Moslems (but not the Palestinians) suffered less than their fellow-citizens.

The displaced persons, even if they had no parents or friends in the districts that were spared, very naturally occupied illegally the residences evacuated by tenants or property owners in order to seek shelter. Those neighbors to whom house keys were entrusted struggled to defend these vacant accommodations but without always succeeding in the face of moves made simultaneously or successively by persons without a roof over their heads, by militiamen wishing to shelter the families of their members put "hors de combat" or deprived of their homes, or very simply by shady intermediaries skimming while they were in transit a sizable commission, whether they deceived or not the

new-arrivals on the precise status of the "furnished" lodgings secured in this manner. In addition, property owners driven away from their homes by the advance of the fighting expelled the tenants of their other apartments without further ado, at times throwing women, children, and old folk into the street.

These chain reactions saturated the "market" in available housing in fairly short order, all the more so as the Beirutis, made prudent by some well-publicized examples, resigned themselves to the protection of partisan forces, at times tantamount to nothing more or less than a racket, but always effective when a militia controlled the territory that served it too, militarily, as a sanctuary. The refugees then turned to the beach houses, numerous on the shore, particularly on the road leading to Beirut's Khaldah international airport. Finally, at the last stage, they occupied the abandoned public buildings, notably university buildings, increasing the number of slums in the environs of the capital and clogging the approaches of the runways forsaken a long time earlier by planes. At the same time the geographically unstable inhabitants of the Sidon road built stories or wings to their homes, forbidden by urban development regulations in the approach zone of Beirut airport. Four parpen walls and a roof represent as many shelters which have been proliferating since then like mushrooms. In the north it is especially new construction, makeshift or not, which is in evidence, the slightest crannies being used for the purpose--for instance, at the Bay of Juniyah, to house the Christians originating from Ashrafiyyah (for fear of shellings) or from the west (for fear of possible reprisals). The disappearance of all municipal authority was an occasion which most property owners with land to build knew how to seize as did many inhabitants of makeshift housing, whose roofs had until then supported metal struts slated for a possible additional floor.

The belligerents undoubtedly tried, each in his zone, to uphold a system of law and order whose basis, incidentally, some of them challenged. But while they managed most often to bar ordinary delinquency, they were unable to prevent lootings and sundry war crimes. For fear of being outdone, they often had to close their eyes on the latter and to participate in the former in order to benefit directly from them. Too, the map of organized looting overlaps that of nearly total destruction whereas the selective looting of homes (more than of personal effects, usually carried away to the last item) generally offsets the map of partial and isolated destruction, with the exception of the modern leisure and business section of the city--Hamra--where the police of the Palestinian and the progressive forces on several occasions challenged thieves, fences, and resellers at bargain prices of items filched from the stores whose owners lived in the eastern districts of Beirut. The inventory of items available before the destruction of the port, the closing of the airport, and the occupation of the al-Biqat' region by Syrian forces thus led to a deal, illegal to be sure but in keeping with its initial purpose. The economic paradox of this civil war will undoubtedly appear in retrospect, namely, that the only permanent black market which accompanied it will have had the effect of lowering prices rather than of increasing them as a function of shortage and risk.

Not that all commercial activities consisted of flagrant infractions. The economically active population of Beirut and its suburbs witnessed as many vicissitudes as the population as a whole, and one loses count of the changes or shifts in the places of activity. While it is impossible to establish a survey of how many factories were dismantled, whether voluntarily or not (even though one may suppose that al-Matn and Kasrawan were the principal beneficiaries of same), one can determine that the changes in the commercial sector are the most striking (see map No 6). First, the difficulties of moving from one zone to another compelled the principal Christian district to open a "people's market" under the control of the Kata'ib, who set it up on top of the Ashrafiyyah hill in the shelter of an automobile road tunnel under construction. Then, the Lebanese of Christian faith opened up, as they did at Juniyah, temporary duplicates of their stores of Bab Idris or Hamra. Finally, Hamra district saw the arrival of handcarts, automobile trunks transformed into stalls, the eccentric baskets of professional or improvised merchants, most of them Moslem, who gave to the sophisticated Western store windows of Beirut the appearance of a bazaar and flea market similar to that found in Beirut's rivals of the East.

The division of the capital [into essentially Christian and Moslem sections] did not merely entail the breakup of Beirut's business center. It also dichotomized and changed all essential services: Radio broadcasting (with four additional transmitters), the hotel business (near disappearance of the big hotels of the waterfront with the exception of the Carlton Hotel and the Beirut International Hotel, the others being converted either like the Commodore or the Bristol into press and reception centers, or like the Coral Beach Hotel into a Red Cross center), communications (the total destruction of the port installations mandating the use of Juniyah-Kaslik for the eastern [Christian] zone, of Sidon or Tripoli for the western [Moslem] zone. The need for the regular acquisition of weapons led to the construction of three new airport runways, even though fairly distant from Beirut, including one in the Christian sector), education (characterized by a proliferation of university centers and the opening of extensions in areas in order to make them accessible to some of their students or pupils).

At this stage the changes are full of significance. When the state university finds itself authorized to split on the basis of the faith of its students and faculty, this means that the two sectors of Beirut are becoming even more radically segregated following a cease-fire than they had been in the initial stages of their fratricidal war. One question remains then in all its acuteness: To determine who, whether the technocratic and constructive urban developer or a prodigiously ingenious people but one at times dominated by suicidal impulses, will win out.

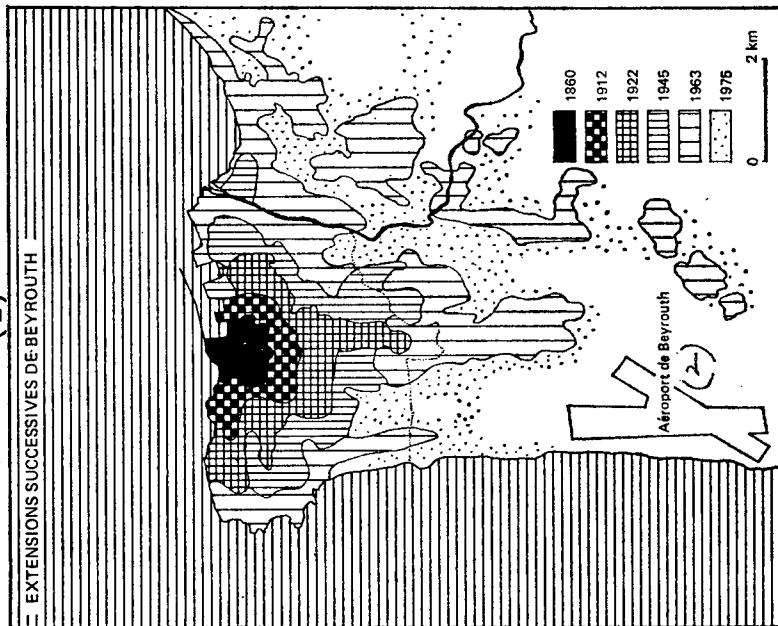
FOOTNOTES

1. For the chronology of the war see "Events in Lebanon," MAGHREB-MACHREK, Nos. 69 and 70, 1975; Nos. 71 to 74, 1976; and below, page 50 [not included].

2. N. Elisseff, "Bayrut," in "Encyclopedie de l'Islam" [Encyclopedia of Islam], new edition, Brill publishing house, Leyden [The Netherlands], [n.d.], pp 1171-1173. The city was completely destroyed around 140 B.C. and 551 A.D. It was partially bombarded in 1197, 1773, and 1840.
3. Including, like Beirut's neighboring cities, orthodox communities which made little use of stone at that time. One of the rare, not unattractive, descriptions of Beirut in that era is that of Henri Guys, "Narrative of a Stay of Several Years in Beirut and in Lebanon," Paris, French and Foreign Publishing House, 2 volumes, 1847.
4. At the conclusion of the troubles which disrupted Lebanon in the middle of the 19th century, an autonomous "mutassarifat" [administrative district] of Mount Lebanon was established in 1860 with Ba'abda as its administrative center. The city of Beirut, falling outside of this "mutassarifat," became in 1888 only the capital of the vilayet [wilayah] bearing the same name which covered notably the regions of Lebanon not included in the autonomous zone.
5. See the study of urban sociology by Samir G. Khalaf and Per Kongstad, "Hamra of Beirut: A Case of Rapid Urbanization," Brill, Leyden, 1973, XIV, 152 pages.
6. See Andre Bourgey and Joseph Phares, "The Shantytowns of the Beirut Agglomeration," REVUE DE GEOGRAPHIE DE LYON, 1973, pp 107-139.
7. France, with the experience of World War II behind it, sent to Beirut a mission from its Ministry of Equipment headed by Pierre Consigny.
8. We would like to honor in this connection one of the pioneers of this approach in the Orient, Jean Sauvaget. See his work "Aleppo, Essay on the Development of a Large Syrian City: From Its Origins to the Mid-19th Century," Paris, Geuthner publishing house, 1941, XVII, 302 pages.
9. The Kata'ib Party, also known as Lebanese Phalanges, headed by Pierre Jumayyil, is the best organized of Lebanon's political movements. See on this subject developments and the bibliography in Yves Schemeil, "Sociology of the Lebanese Political System," Grenoble, University of Social Sciences (dissertation for the degree of government doctorate in political science), 1976, 619 pages plus annexes.
10. The forces of the Kata'ib were, incidentally, the first to occupy Murr tower, but they climbed down from this ideal observation post located a few dozen yards from the major hotels when they received from its owner assurances of his neutrality.

11. See map No 3. This map was drawn by Joseph Phares at the conclusion of an investigation on the spot made between 26 December 1976 and 4 January 1977, an investigation that was itself slated to verify the data collected by the press and oral or photographic evidence available to the authors. The term isolated destruction refers to hits by shells or missiles of various calibers which could be inventoried by the methods described.
12. See map No 4 drawn according to the principles presented in the previous footnote. By selective looting one understands the stripping of some homes, offices, or stores chosen among groups abandoned by their occupants. By "slumification" is meant the transformation into slums of overcrowded housing units following the internal migrations of the population.
13. Estimates based on the report which the humanitarian organization, Caritas, made on persons displaced during the war and which was published by the Beirut daily AL-NAHAR as well as from various other sources. One should not assign to these estimates greater accuracy than they have on first analysis. What is involved is merely a comparative order of magnitude.

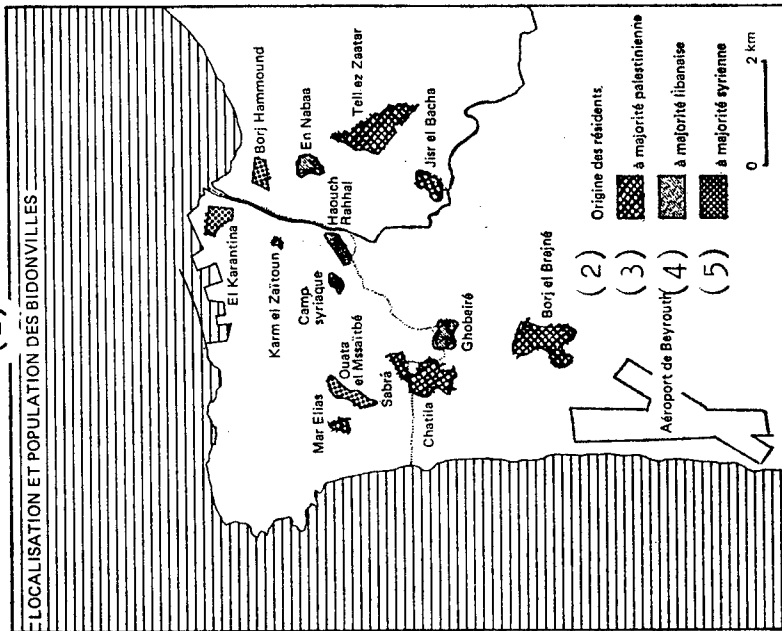
CARTE N° 1
(1)



Key to Map No 1:

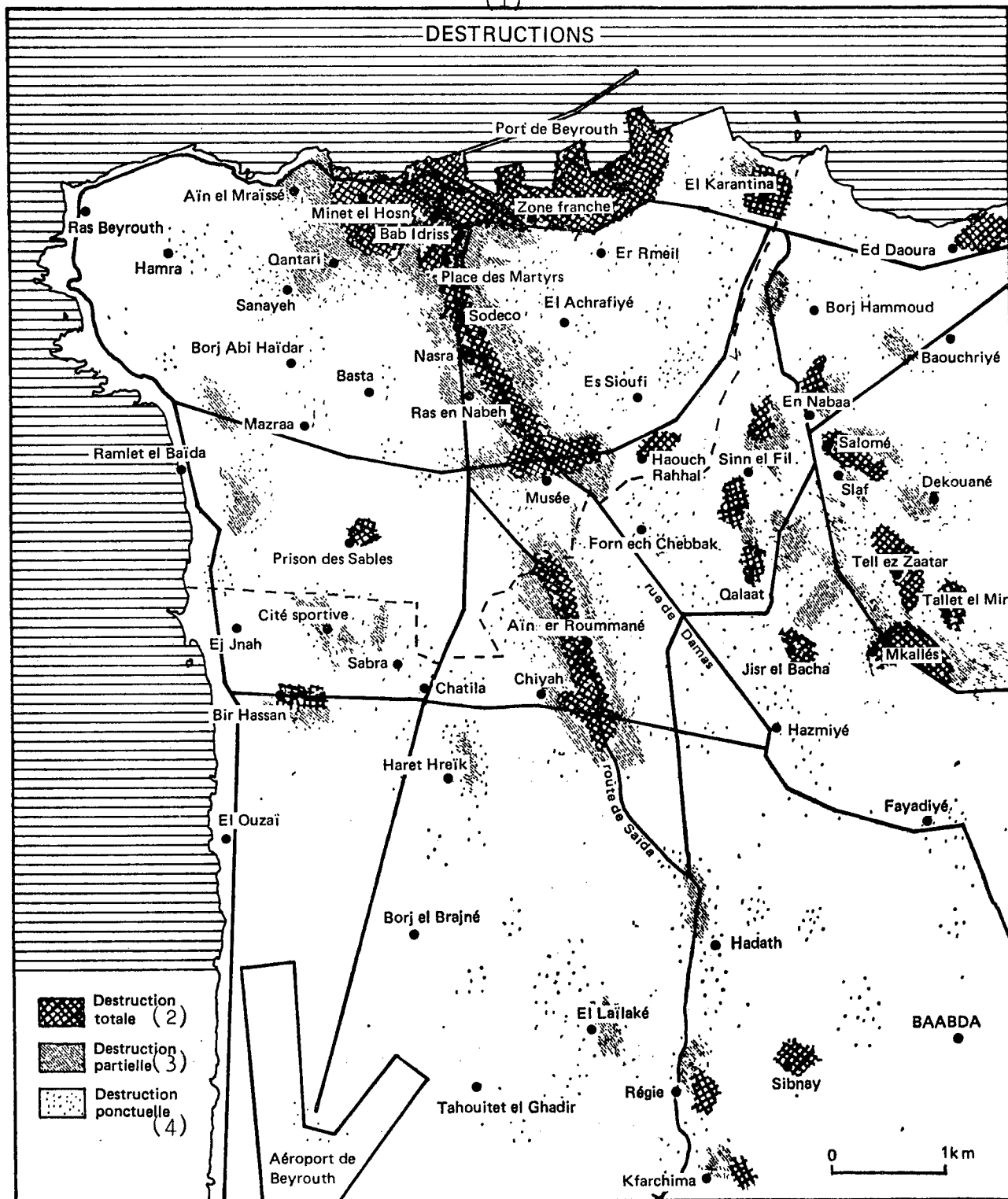
1. Successive extensions of the city of Beirut
2. Beirut airport

CARTE N° 2
(1)



Key to Map No 2:

1. Location and make-up of population in Beirut shantytowns
2. Origin of residents:
3. With Palestinian majority
4. With Lebanese majority
5. With Syrian majority

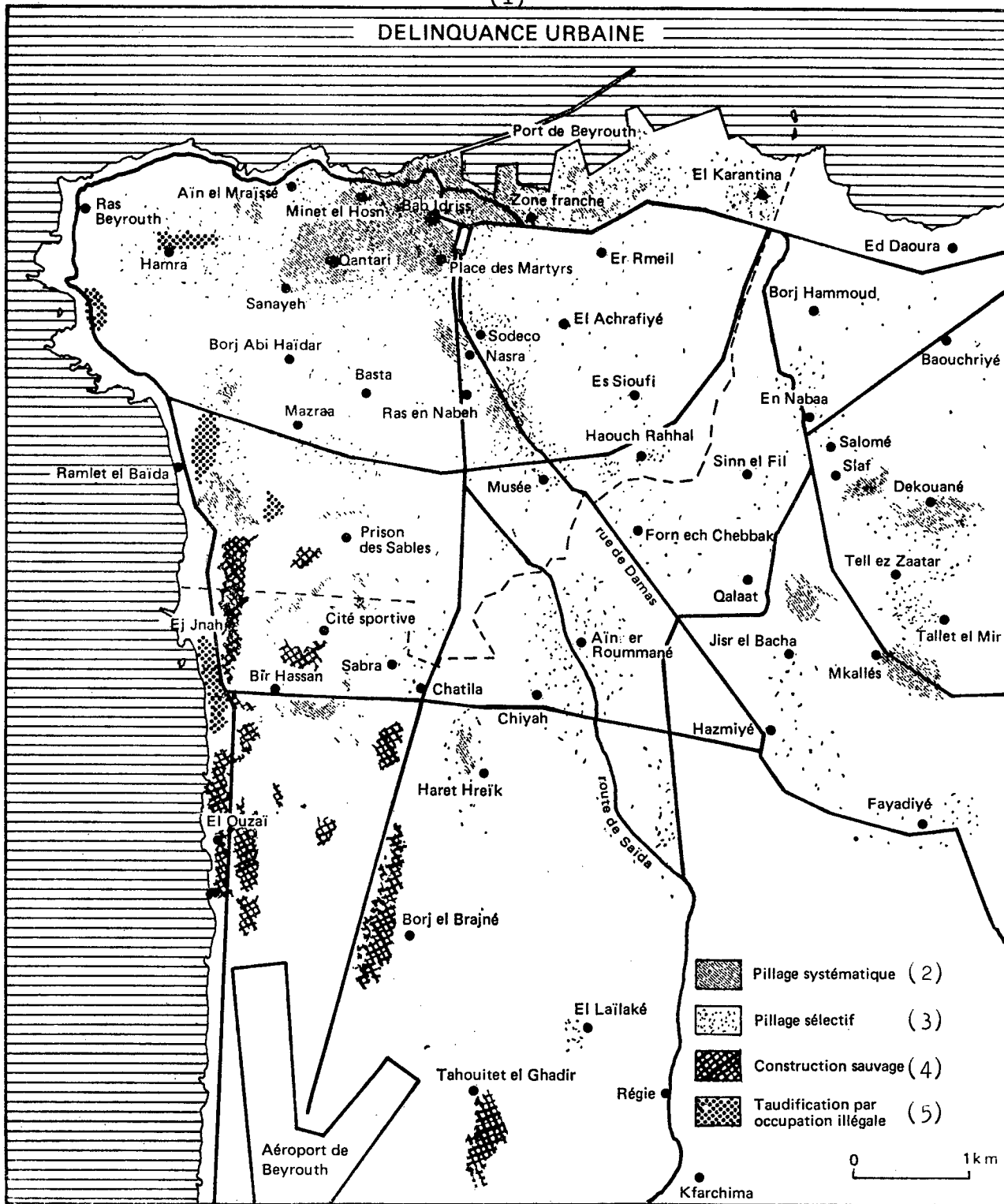


Key to Map No 3:

1. Scope of destruction in Beirut
2. Total destruction

3. Partial destruction
4. Isolated destruction

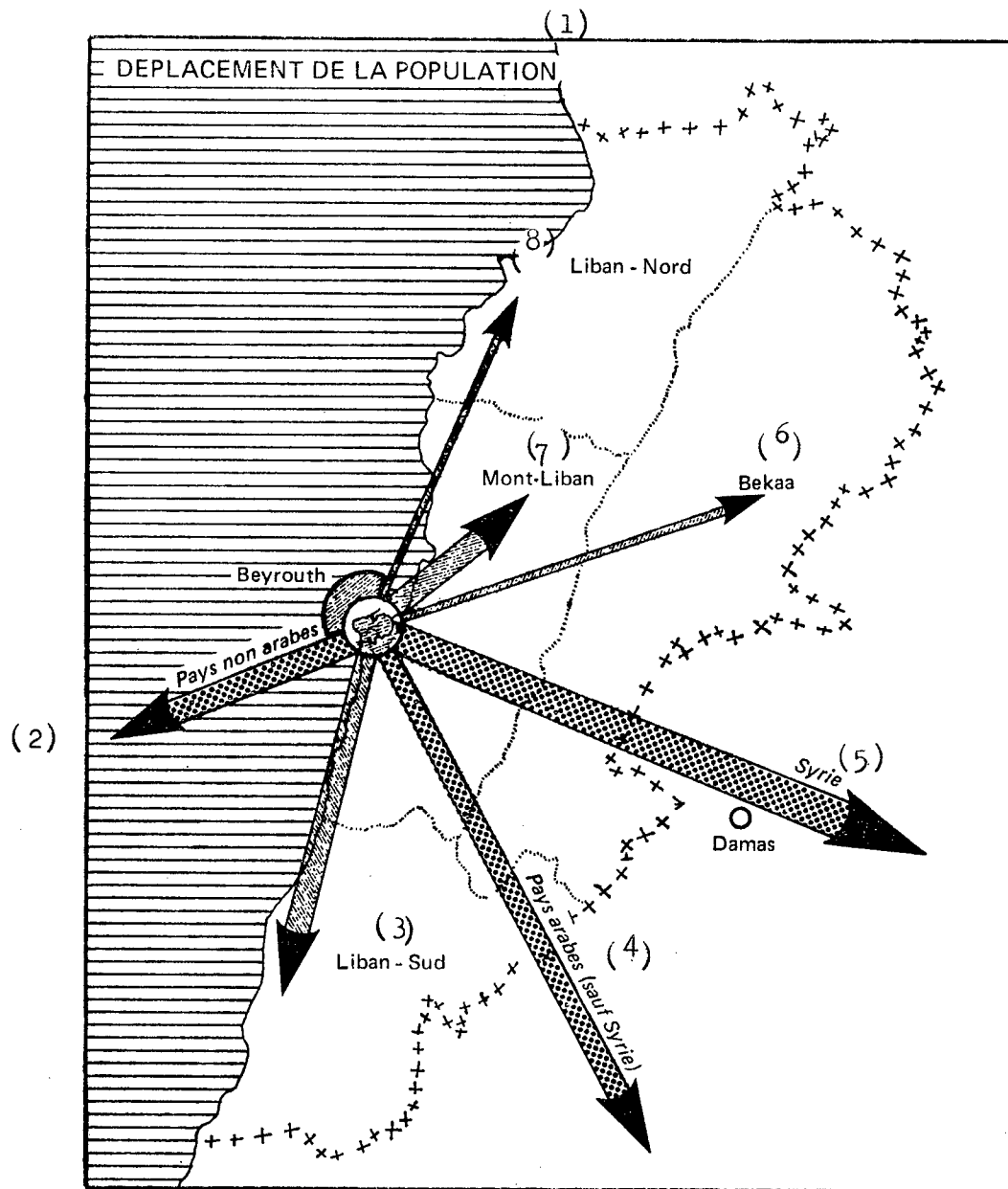
DELINQUANCE URBAINE



Key to Map No 4:

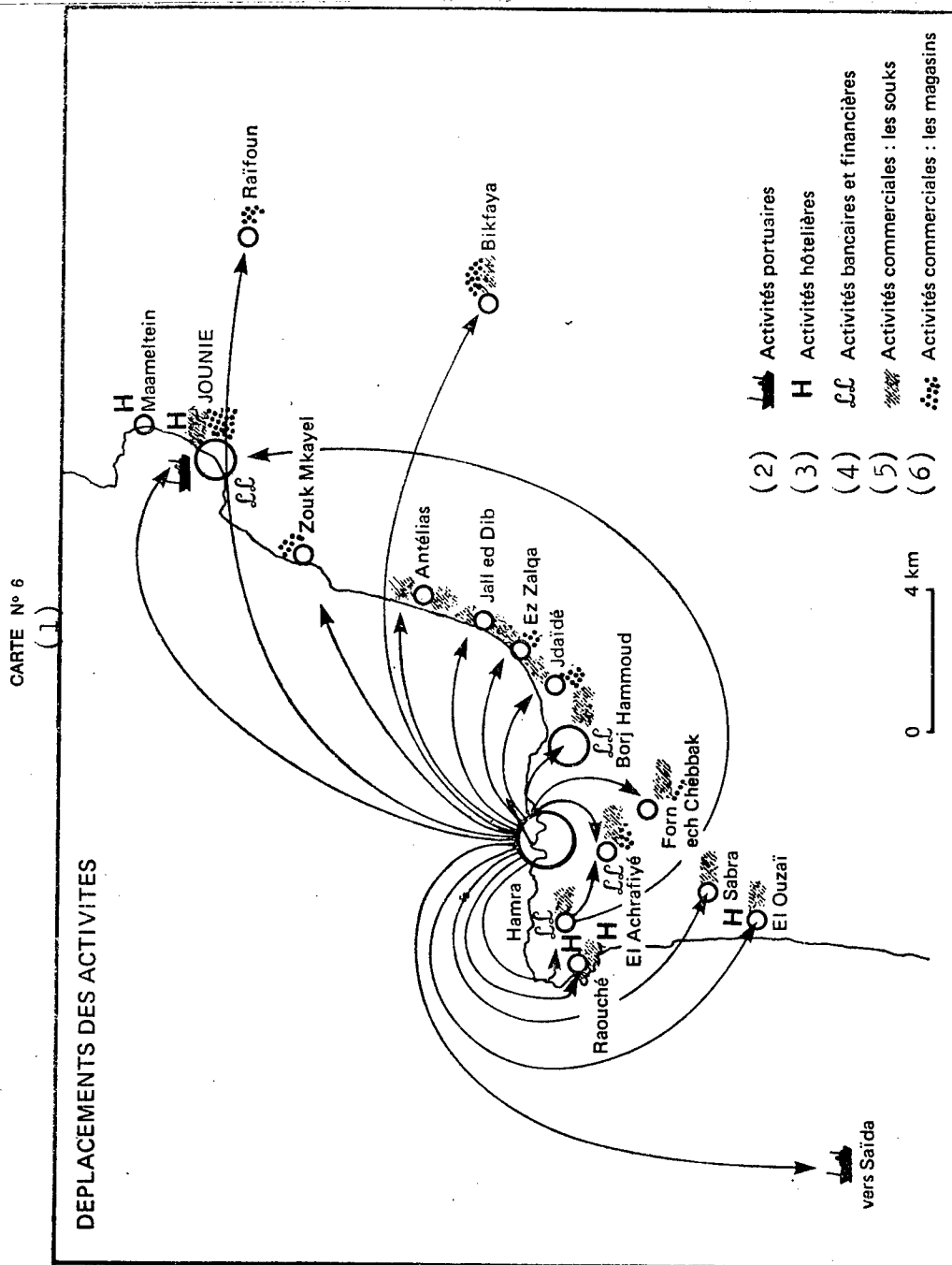
1. Urban delinquency in Beirut
2. Systematic looting
3. Selective looting
4. Makeshift construction
5. Slumification through unlawful occupation of premises

CARTE N° 5



Key to Map No 5:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Shifts of Beirut's population | 5. To Syria |
| 2. To non-Arab countries | 6. To al-Biqa' region |
| 3. To southern Lebanon | 7. To Mount Lebanon region |
| 4. To Arab countries (except Syria) | 8. To northern Lebanon |



Key to Map No 6:

1. Shift of economic activities in Beirut
2. Port activities
3. Hotel activities
4. Banking and financial activities
5. Commercial activities: The bazaars
6. Commercial activities: The stores

OPPOSITION LEADERS SET FORTH POLITICAL POSITIONS

Editorial Introduction

Brussels REMARQUES AFRICAINES in French Mar 77 p 86

/Article; Passages enclosed in slantlines printed in italics/

/Text/ /When we left Morocco in the middle of February, there was a prevailing atmosphere of depression, attested to in an alarming fashion by the statements of certain political leaders in the public eye (see: REMARQUES AFRICAINES No 499-500 pp 14, 15 and 16).

Among the numerous personal testimonies that we were able to record at that time, opinions concerning the municipal, provincial and legislative elections were divided into two camps: there were those who claimed that the king was not sincere and that--under a false appearance of democracy--a strong regime was being set up that would perpetuate an anachronistic absolute monarchy; others maintained that the sovereign was playing the game honestly and that what was taking place was a true change in the political structures aimed at a modernization badly needed by the country.

At the conclusion of a long study in which we pointed out that, in certain instances, representatives of authority had shown a regrettable "zeal," which, moreover, had not been asked of them, during the municipal and provincial elections in countering the opposition candidates, we asserted that Moroccan democracy was still to be constructed and that, in any event, it would be constructed around Hassan II.

One can say that it is now proved that the monarch has always been loyal in expressing his "open-door" policy and also that the true process of democratization has now begun.

A large Paris newspaper, which cannot be suspected of exaggerated sympathy toward Morocco, writes:

"The event is rather rare in Africa, and even in the Third World, not to be marked with a white stone. After a long period of ostracism (...), King Hassan II has just made a place for the opposition in the Moroccan Government."

As a matter of fact, four state ministers without portfolio have just been named to government posts, two being the principal leaders of the opposition: Me Abderrahim Bouabid, first secretary of the USFP (Socialist Union of Popular Forces), and Me M'hamed Boucetta, secretary general of the ISTIQLAL [expansion unknown] Party. "The other two--M Aherdane, secretary general of the Popular Movement, and Dr Khatib, secretary general of the People's Democratic and Constitutional Movement--have always remained close to the sovereign power or, in any event, unconditionally faithful to the sovereign, despite certain critical attitudes from time to time."

Hassan II's decision clarifies a doubtful situation. Henceforth, the leaders of the opposition will be able--like the other ministers--to control the reliability of the balloting which is announced and which, more than likely, will be delayed until this coming May by common consent of the parties. But the role of the new members of the government team will not be limited to that task: they will take part in all deliberations at the highest level, in all cabinet plans, as well as in the "preparation of state options." This decision is very important. It shows his majesty's desire, as of now, to associate parties that were kept in the dark for a long time with the political, economic and social life of the entire country. Through this action, a mechanism has just been put into gear, which--according to Me Boucetta's recently expressed opinion--would be impossible to stop, once put into action.

In reading the following statements of the two great opposition leaders that we recorded as objectively as possible, one must not lose sight of the fact that they were made before the events that just took place, at a moment when relations between the opposition and the palace were not exactly pleasant.

Let us wish that Abderrahim Bouabid's cry of hope will soon be realized: "We are seeing the birth of a new Morocco. If this experiment succeeds in a state of enlightenment and authenticity, we shall be one of the Third World countries in which there will be a measure of democracy."/

Our Program: Liberty, Equality and Social Justice

Brussels REMARQUES AFRICAINES in French Mar 77 pp 86-88

[Interview with Me M'Hamed Boucetta, secretary general of ISTIQLAL; March 1977; place not given]

[Text] One can say that Morocco, in this already sunny springtime, has now arrived at a day of reckoning. As a matter of fact, the government--the longest in effect since the achievement of independence--is going to compose a sort of synthesis of the action it has taken. Its days are numbered to the extent that, according to a procedure carefully devised and up to now respected, we are headed toward legislative elections, after which--in all the countries of the world--it is customary for the prime minister to present his resignation to the head of state.

We have before us today one of those who are participating in an essential manner in the political life of this country. He is Me M'Hamed Boucetta, secretary general and well-known militant of ISTIQLAL, who was successively director of the office of the prime minister of foreign affairs for Morocco, Ahmed Balafrej, then minister himself in the last government with which the ISTIQLAL was associated. And we know that it is thanks to this consequential political group that Morocco regained its independence under the protection of Allal El Fassi, powerful fighter and one of the most remarkable statesmen of the Arab world.

Much time has passed since then. What does Me M'Hamed Boucetta now think of the political situation in his country and of the democratic process under way? We met with him to ask him this question and many others, which he answered with a certain liveliness.

[Answer] Concerning the last elections, they were the result of a process which, itself, had required continuous demands on the part of our party, in order that that democratic process might finally be released, for which Morocco had great hope and likewise great need. One could not be continually governed without popular institutions, without direct ties between the people and the directors. These ties are the sine qua non condition for every economic takeoff, for every social justice: the people must take part in them!

Since 1963 we have lived practically without institutions, since, unfortunately, the prevailing concept was that such institutions, if they should exist, had to reflect exactly what the administration wanted. That is the opposite of democracy. Our demands were repeated. One of our party's great men, the greatly missed President Allal El Fassi, who fought for the country's independence and sacrificed himself without regard for his honor or dignity, expressed--beyond the scope of our traditional values--a primary demand: that of democracy!

Our campaign for democracy continued until the moment in which promises were made by the king last year and commitments were made by the government at the highest level for elections to be held. That was announced in the 9 July speech--the day of the king's anniversary--and immediately followed by steps relative to communal and provincial elections.

These elections did actually take place. Much ink flowed; many speeches were made. We maintain, in the first place--although total democracy is impossible in one step--that irregularities were committed. Despite everything, we embarked in the experiment, and the result is of little importance: we saw the start of a process in our country, that will continue to improve.

We hope that attention will be drawn at the highest state level to the irregularities of which we have spoken, so that they will cease and so that we may see established in our country, if not a complete democracy, at least the beginning of a true democracy.

[Question] There seemed to be a certain symbiosis of action between your party and the palace relative to the recovery of your Saharan provinces. Can one say that it still exists at the present moment?

[Answer] There are only points of understanding between our party and the palace relative to the basic demands and the great causes of our fatherland. Our disagreement concerns those members of the administration who want to welsh on the commitments made by the palace relative to the establishment of democracy.

[Question] That did not prevent your party from obtaining interesting results at the elections. You are at the head of a great many city and village administrations.

[Answer] It is not the results themselves that are important to me but, rather, the fact that a true democratization is taking place, that free elections were held. Obviously, we know that we are Morocco's first modern party and that we are solidly entrenched throughout the country and in all social strata of the Moroccan people. We agree with a state of morale, a code of ethics and a form of patriotism that our voters defended despite certain pressures.

[Question] We have not only arrived at a day of reckoning but are also faced with future perspectives. If tomorrow, as the result of legislative elections, you were associated with the government, what large projects would you like to see succeed in terms of ISTIQLAL's ideology?

[Answer] Our projects may be viewed from different angles, over the short and long term. At any rate, even without being in the government, our party has seen various points of its program implemented by the governments which succeeded each other. On the day following independence, it was our party which gave the country the starting signal, especially when we were in the Ministry of Economy and Finance. The country's agricultural program was put into operation when our party was in the government. What interests us most for the immediate future is for our country to be able to achieve its true economic beginning. We are presently undergoing what other countries of the Third World are undergoing, that is, the economic disturbance that is prevailing in the rest of the world is influencing the behavior of our budget and our successive plans. We should do all we can to launch our economy in a definite way, not only through financing but also arousing the people's enthusiasm to participate.

In our economic program there is an important word: "equalitarianism." That word sums up our economic doctrine. As a matter of fact, it signifies for us first of all and essentially that in aspiring for more freedom, we are aspiring to more social justice. This country, which has resources, must be able to permit all its sons and daughters to profit from those resources as much as possible and in an equal manner. That is the meaning of our concept of equalitarianism. It is important to decrease the differences which exist among the classes of society of our people: a few privileged and too many underprivileged.

This objective can be achieved in the agricultural domain by better organization of the farmers. It can also be applied to the labor sector, to the job sector, and make better use of our country's resources.

[Question] In the area of foreign politics, one can say that Morocco, in an officious manner, is practically at war with Algeria, and Algeria is also inciting trouble with Mauritania and South Africa. What are your comments concerning the present situation?

[Answer] In truth, we have gone through 1974 and 1975, and even 1976, steeped in enormous difficulties, which were only multiplied due to the behavior of the Algerian Governments. Aspiring to a greater hegemony and wanting to impose a certain ideology in the area, the Algerian leaders did not look kindly upon Morocco's recovery of an integral part of its territory, that is, its Saharan provinces.

Through the expedient of a group of mercenaries, the Algiers rulers wanted to cause disturbance in the area, so that, all things considered, they might make the Saharan provinces in question an Algerian department. Moroccan reaction, on the part of all political parties, was unanimous in favor of the king, resulting in the recovery of the Sahara through the Green March and through other mechanisms put into play on the domestic as well as foreign levels.

The Algerians were ready to exacerbate this group, christened Polisario, and were even on the point of establishing--in an Algiers hotel--an alleged Saharoui Arab republic. Algiers is imposing guerrilla warfare on Mauritania and Morocco. But, since the middle of last year, the situation has reversed itself to Algiers' disadvantage. Moroccan peace-keeping forces have taken the initiative, cleaning up certain sectors, where mercenaries, aided by Algeria, were operating. National support by the people, as well as more suitable war preparations, has made it possible to perform a better cleanup operation.

Mauritania is experiencing more difficulties; but the cooperation of that country with ours will make it possible to put a rapid end to the untimely and unjustified interventions of the Algerians.

The Moroccan people are determined to defend their fatherland to the end, whatever sacrifices they must make.

[Question] Yours is an Arab country, member of the League of Arab States. Do you also believe that Morocco has an African mission?

[Answer] Morocco is the port of Europe for Africa and the port of Africa for Europe, being located geographically at a distance of 20 kilometers from Europe. There are routes which have always crossed Morocco in going toward Africa and which have been the arteries that have given life to European-African relations.

We believe that a large part of our heritage comes from our contacts with the Africans. In many African countries the name of Morocco is esteemed and well-known.

We intend, in the future, to develop and strengthen our relations with the African countries. There is an enormous task to be performed in this area, as well as in all other areas.

A New Morocco Is Being Born

Brussels REMARQUES AFRICAINES in French Mar 77 pp 88, 91, 92

[Interview with Me Abderrahim Bouabid, first secretary of the USFP; March 1977; place not given]

[Text] Paying a visit to Me Abderrahim Bouabid, first secretary of the USFP, evokes memories for anyone who knows Morocco. In fact, this fighter has been involved at the high point of the country's present situation for a long time. This does not mean we are in the company of a solemn old man; on the contrary, Me Bouabid is an active young man who has scarcely changed since I met him for the first time, when he was preparing for his country's independence. Minister responsible for negotiations with the French Government in Aix-les-Bains in 1955, first Moroccan ambassador to Paris, he was also minister on the successive teams of Si Bekkai's government, vice president of the council, and minister of economy and finance in Moulay Abdallah Ibrahim's government. Since that moment, Me Bouabid has led a long fight in favor of his democratic ideal.

We have reason to believe he is about to succeed, since Morocco is making some degree of democratic overture. First of all, there were the elections of 12 November of last year and then the provincial elections, all of that destined to emerge in legislative elections.

While conducting domestic political action, Me Bouabid has also played an important role on the international scene in close association with his sovereign, Hassan II. In fact, when it had become a matter of "becoming involved" at the time of the true national mobilization decreed in reference to the recovery of the Saharan provinces, the former Spanish Sahara, Me Abderrahim Bouabid answered "present." His valued experience in the country's service pointed him out as the logical one to handle several informative missions abroad to explain Morocco's position on the Saharan question.

[Question] Minister Bouabid, could you tell me what you think of Morocco's position in the Intermaghreb [Magrheb--Arab North Africa] framework in the midst of the difficult contingencies we are experiencing? Are you optimistic or pessimistic for the future?

[Answer] We were not expecting the attitude that the Algerian rulers adopted at the time of our recovery of the Saharan provinces. Their hostility was almost systematic. At the present time, the situation concerns us very much.

Being a socialist, I have always called the attention of all the foreign socialist parties and movements to the possibility of underestimating the gravity of this situation.

Nevertheless, I look upon the future with optimism in the sense that our party-- moreover sharing the position defined by the king during his last trip to France--has always viewed that future within the framework of the construction of Maghreb, for which we envision the Sahara as a land which serves as a junction among the Maghreb peoples. But to speak of a Sahraoui people only in the western part of the Sahara is nonsense. There is perhaps a Sahraoui people, but, then, also in the areas under Algerian administration...

We have spoken of Maghreb for more than 30 years! The opportunity is now at hand for Morocco, Mauritania and Algeria finally to do something more concrete without dishonor for anyone. I am appealing to the Algerian rulers and people in telling them that the only alternative in resolving this question is to act as we have acted with Mauritania, not a partitioning, of which the Sahraoui people know nothing and which is indicated only on maps, but rather an area of cooperation: they are among us and we are among them! We ask the same thing from the Algerians. As a result, we could--if the Algerians so desire--jointly exploit the phosphate and iron of Tindouf's South. That is what we could call a genuine Maghreb cooperative effort.

Twenty years ago, France wanted to convert the Saharan regions into a commonwealth of Saharan regions endowed with autonomy and detached from the adjacent countries. As for us, we say to the Algerian rulers: let us create a Maghreb commonwealth! That is the only solution that will enable all parties to view the future with serenity and confidence and to leave something positive to future generations.

[Question] This is a very beautiful projection of the future. I am afraid, unfortunately, that, so far as Algeria is concerned, we cannot consider that there has been very much good will. One has the impression that they are arming more and more at various points of the border and that the situation is becoming tense. I recently visited Mauritania, where raids are being made by the Polisario as well as by the Algerian army. What do you think about all this?

[Answer] The Polisario is the Algerian army. What is called the Polisario Front has never existed. Until 1974, Algeria and Boumediene himself had never stated that there was a Sahraoui people or a liberation movement called Polisario! We have documents which attest to Algeria's attitude before the Arab League. In 1974, Algeria had acquiesced and admitted not taking part in the Saharan question.

A few months later--a complete reversal of the situation. It is very serious for the Algerian Government to follow this path. I know that the Algerian radio and press attack me almost every day, but I know that our party--the USFP--sees the future clearly. The Algerian Government must, in any event,

know that the Moroccan and Mauritanian peoples will never be able to accept a solution based on force, which would establish a hegemony. We shall accept Maghreb, on the other hand, a Maghreb of cooperation, a pooling of our potentialities for the benefit of all. The Algerian Government speaks of the "Maghreb of the peoples"; let us make it this "people's Maghreb," but one made in rationality and justice, in a real interdependence of the three countries.

Whatever be the case, if there is war, we shall engage in it; but there will be no victor, only the vanquished!

[Question] I am afraid that the Moroccan situation is not always appreciated the way it should be. During your recent trip to Paris, did you succeed in making your French socialist comrades understand the justifiable situation of your country?

[Answer] Responsible socialists, who are well acquainted with the problems of the Third World in general and of Maghreb in particular, have absolutely no illusion. I do not believe that the joint communique issued at the time of Francois Mitterand's visit to Algeria has any significance. It was mainly a matter of obligation, of courtesy. I personally called the French Socialist Party's attention to the seriousness of the explosive situation and emphasized that the Algiers government is being combated by the Algerian opposition in its country and abroad.

I proposed a sort of round-table conference among the political parties of Spain, Morocco, Mauritania and Algeria. At the last moment, the Algerian official circles withdrew! At the time of my informative missions abroad, I always asked the Algerian ambassador to attend the meetings. In every instance, there were only avoidances.

Despite everything, we have confidence in the future! But with the money we are spending for development of the Sahara and that which Algeria is wasting on armaments, we could have jointly constructed something solid for the benefit of the people.

[Question] I am speaking now more precisely to the first secretary of the USFP in asking what you think--within the framework of the present democratic overture--of the prospect of the impending legislative election.

[Answer] Unfortunately, that prospect is not yet very clear. We have accepted the process of democratization in playing the game openly and in realizing perfectly well that it takes time to go from one political phase to another.

The election of November 1976 was one stage. We would have liked for this step that was taken to permit the establishment of a credible democracy. But it is necessary for new structures to enable our youth to express itself, to become aware of its responsibilities and, in time of need, to challenge.

[Question] However, your party obtained a certain degree of success in the municipal elections, since we see your councillors heading up some of the sizable municipalities, beginning with Rabat, where Mr Mouline of the USFP is the current president of the Municipal Council, not to forget Casablanca and other cities.

[Answer] Agreed; but it is nevertheless true that there are still enemies of change and of democracy.

We are not pretentious enough to claim to be in the majority. We want to be considered what we are, no more no less. On the other hand, in reference to the future, I believe that Morocco has gained a lot in its national unanimity on the side of the king relative to the recovery of the Saharan provinces and to territorial unity. The agreement with Mauritania is also a proof of maturity. Our nationalism is neither closed nor out of date; it is open to the future and stamped with reason. It has emerged on a process of democratization. A new and more credible Morocco is being born.

The future implies recognition of the social changes that are presently taking place. The communal platform is excellent; now it is necessary for those elected to assume their responsibilities and perform accordingly. There is no lack of problems: housing, buses, education, etc. The young people have a passion for that; we must give them the opportunity to express themselves.

If our young people see nothing change, what is going to happen? The process of democratization in Morocco has forced Boumediene finally to publish a Constitution in Algeria and to give a legal facade to his factual situation.

Therefore, we want to set the example by taking inspiration to a certain degree from what is happening in Senegal, where the socialist orientation of President Senghor has doubled with the guarantee of a pluralism on the part of the political parties.

One phase has passed. The second is approaching. Democracy is being constructed. I believe Morocco can succeed!

A "Tranquil Father" of Moroccan Politics

Brussels REMARQUES AFRICAINES in French Mar 77 pp 92, 93

[Interview with Abdelwahhab Mouline, president of the Rabat Municipal Council; March 1977; place not given]

[Text] Robust, muscular, solid shoulders, smooth face, a clear look which gazes tranquilly into the depths of your eyes, Abdelwahhab Mouline has the face of an honest man; he inspires confidence.

A higher meticulous official, I knew him as secretary general of the Foreign Exchange Office in Rabat. He still holds that position (for one must live from something), and he holds this plurality of important offices as best he can

with the not less important task of president of the Rabat Municipal Council (without remuneration).

Mr Mouline is mayor of the capital of the Moroccan Kingdom with, however, this peculiarity which is worth stressing: he is a part of the opposition, since he comes from the ranks of the USFP whose leader, as is known, is Abderrahim Bouabid.

When he entered the city hall with his staff, the administration officials looked at him with a certain stupor, somewhat as if he were a Martian. Also with a certain degree of fear: they looked instinctively to see if he had a knife between his teeth. None was discovered, and everyone got along very well.

He receives us in an immense office filled with files.

Preliminary statement: "Our collaboration with the government is among the most loyal. We are not here to give systematic opposition but to rectify what it might be. We are counting on the public to help us. The USFP is a guarantee of democracy in relation to the government, which should then respect that democracy."

[Question] Have you any plans?

[Answer] Heaps of them! We should clean up the city, which is badly in need of being cleaned up--general cleaning, sewers, rat extermination. Improve public lighting. Work to beautify the city. Concern ourselves urgently with the idle time of the youth (68.5 percent of the people are less than 15 years old). Reorganize urban transportation, so that all quarters have connections among them. Resolve the housing problem. Apply the concept of the USFP our way: "Leave to those who have; give to those who do not have."

[Question] What else?

[Answer] One of my dreams: create a green belt around Rabat and community centers to stop immigration and fight against shantytowns, and that with the help of our "satellites": Sale, Bouknadel, Temara, Skhirat, Bouznika, Sidi Yahia and Ain El Aouda.

[Question] The USFP had good success in some cities.

[Answer] Yes, in Rabat, Sale, Agadir, Meknes, Sidi Kacem.

[Question] Do you have any criticisms concerning these elections?

[Answer] It is a fundamental problem. The entire electoral process needs redoing. Up to now it is organized in terms of land area. It is for this reason that Rabat has 39 seats with 650,000 inhabitants, while Tamara has 25 seats with 6,560 inhabitants.

In short, you can see that we have plenty of work. But we have courage, good will, obstinacy. And we are animated by the faith which moves mountains.

The UNFP's Position

Brussels REMARQUES AFRICAINES in French Mar 77 pp 92, 93

[Statements by Moulay Abdallah Ibrahim, secretary general of the UNFP]

[Text] The UNFP [National Union of People's Forces]? A short time ago, it was the subject of much conversation. Less today, since it split into two parties: the USFP, directed by Abderrahim Bouabid, and the UNFP, whose secretary general is Moulay Abdallah Ibrahim.

Who is the latter? One of the pioneers of independence. He was undersecretary of state for information in Si Bekkai's first government and minister of labor and social affairs in the second. He became prime minister in 1959 and remained in that office until 1960. Bouabid was his vice president of the Council. Three years after independence and at the end of the reign of Mohammed V, they jointly attempted a democratic experiment which was not lacking in interest.

Moulay Abdallah Ibrahim is an unswerving ally of Mahjoub Ben Seddiq, secretary general of the powerful union UMT (Union of Moroccan Workers). He is accused of being a little too much under the influence of the latter.

Up to now, his political game has not been very clear. He has hardly presented any candidates for the municipal elections (although certain candidates from his party were recommended), and we do not yet know his position in reference to the coming elections.

Here are the essential tenets of his political action, as he himself defined them:

Stability: "Our country is going through a historic phase which requires an enthusiastic and creative cooperative effort on the part of the masses to combat underdevelopment, shielded from the tempests of anarchy and general despair."

Democracy: "The effective participation of the people in the management of their affairs is the first condition for national stability, the only basis for enlightened mobilization of the masses, and the effective instrument for deepening the people's sense of collective responsibility in the face of its vital problems."

Justice: "Stability cannot be built on injustice and exploitation. As a matter of fact, we do not conceive of the possibility of a true stability of the national society benefiting one social class, or else, for the people that stability would be passive and would be based only on force and submission to the fait accompli."

Moulay Abdallah Ibrahim is eager to add this comment:

"This is the spirit in which the UNFP--far from any thoughts of party selfishness--treated the question of democracy, when it arose. On the contrary, our party has given proof of sacrifice, for its fate is linked with that of the Moroccan working class and the oppressed people as a whole. If it had taken the other path, our party would have gained in a formal way, like all the others, in the scramble of electoral speculation. And because the UNFP was deeply conscious of the importance of the democratic problem posed, of the necessity for unification of the national positions in that regard, concerned also in keeping democracy safe from haggling, confidential speculation and secret dealings among the various managements, it sent a fraternal letter 1 year before the municipal and communal elections to the ISTIQLAL Party and to the UNFP, in which it proposed the creation of an open 'Koutlah' [meeting] concerned with a minimum program to confront the difficulties of the future phase with a unified vision and coordinated action along a common line. The answer, unfortunately, was a courteous refusal on the part of some and an attack that was both uncontrolled and publicly ostentatious on the part of others."

Why the Moroccan Communists Are With Hassan II

Brussels REMARQUES AFRICAINES in French Mar 77 p 93

[Interview with Ali Yata, secretary general of the PPS; March 1977; place--Casablanca]

[Text] Ali Yata, secretary general of the Party of Progress and Socialism [PPS] (name assumed by the former Moroccan Communist Party), who spent 12 years in prison or in exile for his Marxist and revolutionary militancy, has for a long time allied himself with the government and Hassan II, particularly at the time of the national undertaking relative to the liberation of the Sahara. This stand caused the liveliest repercussions in Algeria as well as in certain Leftist intellectual circles in Spain, France and Italy.

In a long interview he granted us in Casablanca at the headquarters of the party's daily, AL BAYANE, Ali Yata gave us his viewpoints.

"For the Moroccan Left and more particularly for us, the avant-garde party of the working class, the question of the Western Sahara was and still is a question of national liberation. The Sahara has always been an integral part of Morocco and was ethnically, historically and culturally a Moroccan land separated from the rest of the national territory and occupied by Spanish colonialism.

"Fighting to liberate it was conducting an anti-imperialist and anticolonialist combat, a combat of national liberation. The Moroccan Left, and more particularly the PPS, could not decline to take part in this fight without betraying its mission. To my knowledge, no Communist Party has ever refused to take part

in a similar fight in which its country was engaged. There are numerous examples, especially during World War II and in Western Europe. Our party's behavior does not seem always to have been well understood by our brother parties."

[Question] A sort of incomprehension in your regard has risen because of your attitude relative to Algeria, which considers its regime progressive and socialist. How do you explain this ideological divorce with Algeria?

[Answer] This incomprehension unfortunately exists on the part of the Algerian Government. We regret that situation very much but are not in the least responsible. We, who have never ceased to be and remain sympathetic to the Algerian people's struggle for national independence or territorial unity or social improvement, hoped for reciprocity toward us on the part of the Algerians! There was none.

The reasons? They are numerous. First of all, a desire on the part of the Algerian leaders to assure themselves a certain degree of leadership in the area.

Secondly, Algeria's desire to border on the Atlantic Ocean and thus provide itself with a window which it considers necessary for economic expansion.

Thirdly, the hope of obtaining the substantial deposits of phosphate, which it lacks in its territory but which lie hidden in the subsoil of Western Sahara.

Fourthly, the desire to prevent Morocco and Mauritania from having common borders which would facilitate their rapprochement and, as a result, the formation of a Moroccan-Mauritanian coalition.

For all these reasons and for others, the Algerians have done everything to prevent Morocco from liberating and recovering the Saharan South. Life has shown that the calculation was false, and it has sided in with Morocco, whose aspiration and struggle were just.

Another error of evaluation was committed by the Algerian leaders. Not only did they not consider the very deep national sentiment on the part of the Moroccan people but also they counted on a division in the national forces and, particularly, on opposition of the Left in regard to the government. But as I have said, on this occasion, no one could refuse to take part in the national struggle without condemning himself to total isolation, for the people were unanimously in favor of re-establishing Moroccan sovereignty over the Sahara.

Moreover, I do not believe in the sincerity of the Algerians, when they speak of consulting the Saharoui people. During an initial phase, Boumediene had taken it upon himself to support us without any question of referendum (as

attested to in his speech at the Arab summit meeting in September 1974). In a second phase, the Algerians took it upon themselves to proclaim the Sahraoui Republic and to establish an alleged Sahraoui Government without at all consulting the people concerned. That is a proof that the self-determination that they supposedly advocate is, in fact, one of their means of misleading international public opinion.

Despite that, we are working sincerely toward normalizing the situation between our two countries, toward assuring their good understanding and toward the cooperation necessary for their development.

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SYRIA

THE SAYDNAYA SATELLITE GROUND STATION

Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic 10 Feb 77 p 5

[Article by 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Za'im]

[Text] The Saydnaya satellite ground station will go into operation late next April [1977]. This station, the first of its kind to be constructed in Syria, was scheduled to go into operation and to serve the citizenry at the beginning of March. As a result of the recent bad weather, the deadline was delayed and the foreign company was unable to install the station equipment [on time].

This station which now has 72 telephone lines, enough to meet the country's need, will be used for direct telephone, telegram and telex communication with sister Arab countries, friendly foreign nations and the countries of the Near and Far East as well as all the European and American countries.

The station has control and follow-up systems which operate electronically and direct all the equipment of the station, including the special antenna which is considered among the most advanced in the world. The station is connected to all the automatic telephone exchanges and the television studios in Damascus with a capacity of 960 telephone lines. As a complement to the project, the microwave line is now being established to connect the station at Saydnaya with Damascus and the automatic telephone and the television station. The capacity and size of the station will be expanded in the future to meet future needs of the country.

Effect of the Station on the Citizen's Life

The station will enable any citizen in the country to talk from his home phone with any part of the world cheaply for as long as he wants. Telegrams and telex messages will be sent more quickly with five times more lines than are presently available. Thus, businessmen, medical personnel, economists, journalists and even politicians will be able to hold conferences by television. This will reduce travelling.

The owner of a television set will, therefore, be able to turn some knobs and see what goes on in any country in the world or even visit its famous sites via the little screen.

Uses of the Station

The services of the station will undoubtedly have many beneficial and positive effects upon the citizen because it will end the crisis in international communications which the country now faces. Telegrams will also be sent at great speed without delay. Telex communications with the rest of the world will also be instantaneous. Time, effort and money will be saved while the citizen will be given the latest news. It will also be possible to develop a unified new international language according to the opinion of radio and television experts. Various communications, therefore, will no longer depend on traditional means such as cables over land and sea.

A Glimpse at the Station's Equipment

At a distance of 26 kilometers from Damascus and at a special geographic site among mountains--the Saydnaya station was built. Initial studies and design took about 1 year. Actual work began at the end of 1975. Work and experiments will be completed and the station will be ready to serve the citizenry by the end of next April [1977]. A Syrian technical cadre composed of 30 engineers and technicians was trained to run the station.

Saydnaya was chosen as a site for the station because of its particular geographic site and terrain so that it would be in the plain surrounded by mountains in four directions. The surrounding mountains provide protection against unwanted frequencies and interference. The station also had to be near the capitol.

The equipment of the ground station is some of the most modern in the world, especially the electronic systems and antenna which is provided with reflective solar mirrors. The antenna is 37.5 meters high above the ground and the diameter of the disk is 32.5 meters and weighs 280 tons. It moves automatically at two angles: plumbline and horizontal through computerized electronic follow-up and control systems.

The Saydnaya ground station is directed by the satellites over the Indian Ocean. This direction will provide telephonic and telegraphic communication and will transmit and receive regular and colored television programs via these stations and satellites between Syria and the sister Arab countries and the friendly foreign nations.

Jordanian and Syrian Stations

As for similarities and differences between the Syrian station and the Jordanian station, the latter is smaller with its antenna mounted above it and rotates with it. The equipment of the Syrian antenna is mounted upon

ground foundations capable of more control. Furthermore, the Saydnaya station antenna has reflective solar mirrors and modern equipment considered among the most advanced in the Arab area.

It is worth mentioning that the Jordanian station antenna revolves in the direction of satellites positioned over the Atlantic Ocean while the Syrian antenna revolves in the direction of satellites positioned over the Indian Ocean.

In this way, the two stations will form one great useful unit, securing for both countries necessary communication in all directions. This constitutes an advanced modern system as a result of cooperation and coordination among the engineers of the two sister countries.

The Syrian Arab Republic has joined the International Organization for Communications via Satellites, Intelsat, along with 90 countries. Today there are 125 stations in the world, i.e., 80 nations own such stations at present.

The Syrian station cost an estimated 30 million Syrian pounds. The foreign company is installing systems and equipment and conducting experiments before handing it over to Syrian engineers.

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SYRIA

ORGANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF FISHING INDUSTRY

Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic 24 Feb 77 p 5

[Article by Kasir Ahmad: "What Has Been Achieved So Far in Organization and Development of Fish Production"]

[Text] Fish has great nutritional value, and surpasses meat in that it is more tender and digestible and in that 10 percent of its weight is animal protein. Therefore, it is regarded as an important nutrient, especially for children whose growth rate demands more than meat protein.

Nevertheless, in 1975 each Syrian [on an average] accounted for no more than 0.3 kilogram of the fish production. The annual consumption per person [on an average] from all kinds of marketed fish was 350 grams. This differs from one individual to another depending on income. In comparison to Japan, [on an average] the figure is 27 kilograms annually. There, fish is considered a popular staple because it is inexpensive, while in Syria serving fish on your table is regarded as a sign of wealth.

No serious steps were taken to organize fish production until 1974, when the General Fishing Authority, on instructions from President Hafiz al-Asad, was established by decree 392 which stated its goals as follows:

- a) conducting fishing in coastal waters,
- b) utilizing the bodies of water in the interior efficiently,
- c) construction and utilization of water reservoirs to produce fish, frogs and other aquatic animals,
- d) import of foreign fish and other water organisms for domestication and reproduction.

The authority, however, did not have any power until 1976 when its plan was included in the Fourth Five-Year Plan of the country. The necessary allocations were authorized and it opened the marine fishing branch at Latakia, the fishing branch at al-Thawrah City, the production unit at al-Ghab, the fishing branch at Damascus and the production unit at Homs. These branches and units cover most of the provinces in the country. It should be indicated

that the experiments carried out at Qal'at al-Madiq fish hatchery have proven the great potential in exploiting water resources to produce fish. The tasks of this hatchery in 1965, however, were limited to the production of that crop which is needed for stocking the natural bodies of water in the country. It continued functioning in this capacity until 1969 when the results were encouraging enough to establish a production farm at 'Ayn al-Taqa, al-Ghab. In 1973, another farm was started at Shathah on an area of 60 hectares and it was completed last year.

This was achieved with regard to fresh water. Ocean fishing was left to the private sector where fishermen scatter along the Syrian coastline using old methods and traditional equipment. Mr Tawfiq 'Ali Hasan, Director General of the Fishing Authority, says that Syria suffers from a shortage of animal protein, although it enjoys relatively good water resources, especially after the construction of the Euphrates Dam. For this reason, the General Fishing Authority was established to shoulder the responsibility of utilizing this resource through specialized expertise.

He added that the project for completing fish farms at Nab', Masabb al-Sinn, Shathah, al-Rawj, al-Suwayda', Muzayrib, and al-Zabdani will be included in the production plan beginning this year. The project of utilizing al-Asad Lake is now at the study stage in the usage of scientific techniques in various methods of fishing.

There is also the project for completing the marine fishing center which aims at conducting studies within territorial and international waters to explore new fishing areas and to extend fishing there. Three boats are expected to arrive for this purpose, beginning next May [1977].

He said that work will also start this year at a frog production hatchery in al-Raqqah Province to meet the need of al-Asad Lake and the other bodies of water in the eastern areas for improved frogs.

He talked about better production, stressing that the authority's production of all kinds of fish in 1976 was more than 800 tons compared to 315 tons in 1975. Its production of frogs was 2.8 million [frogs] last year [1976] compared to 1.381 million [frogs] in 1975. Was this achieved without difficulties and obstacles? We will discuss this in a future article.

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END