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Near East & South Asia

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Italy, Algeria Agree To Protect Investments

91P40305A Algiers AL-SHA'B in Arabic 19 May 91 p 3

[Excerpt] Algiers, APS—Yesterday in Algiers an agreement between Algeria and Italy to develop and protect previous investments in both countries was signed by

Ghazi Hidouci for Algeria and by Mr. Baldini, Italian ambassador to Algeria, for Italy.

This agreement aims to develop Italian institutions' investments in Algeria and Algerian institutions' investments in Italy, and to protect investors by protecting their capital and their capital returns [passage omitted].

REGIONAL AFFAIRS**IDF Officer Examines Syrian Deployment in Lebanon**

*TA2251329A Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew
22 May 91 p 6*

[Interview with Maj. Gen. Uri Orr by Aharon Klein, HADASHOT correspondent; place and date not given]

[Text]

[Klein] The Syrians are spreading out in Lebanon. Is this good for the Jews?

[Uri Orr] The Syrians will have an advantage if they start a war against Israel and attack from two fronts, the primary front on the Golan Heights and the secondary front in Lebanon. But, if Israel attacks, the extensive Syrian deployment in Syria and Lebanon will provide the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] with an advantage.

[Klein] There are those who expect a cooling off of terror on the northern border, now that the Syrians are in control in the field.

[Uri Orr] Wrong. In light of the situation, the security zone now has renewed importance. The Syrians will, however, prefer not to be in contact with the IDF and the security zone, but will leave a wide buffer zone north of the security zone for the Shiite and Palestinian terrorist organizations to operate against Israel.

[Klein] What should Israel do?

[Uri Orr] Israel does not have to set "red lines" for Syrian activity in Lebanon. If Syrian operations, in the future, endanger Israel, then steps should be taken accordingly. The IDF need not make changes in its preparedness today in light of the Syrian-Lebanese agreement.

Moroccan-Libyan Meeting on Economic Cooperation

*LD1651441 Rabat MAP in English 1334 GMT
16 May 91*

[Text] Rabat, May 16 (MAP)—The working session on economic and financial cooperation between Morocco and Libya held here Wednesday, set up two sectorial commissions to work out recommendations on the fields.

The first commission will look into the possibility of increasing the trade exchange rate between the two Maghreb countries whereas the second will be in charge of bolstering financial and investment cooperation.

The session was chaired by Moroccan Finance Minister Mohamed Berrada and the Libyan secretary in charge of foreign investments.

Maghreb Union 'Legal Body' Established

*LD0905160891 Tripoli Domestic Service in Arabic
1230 GMT 9 May 91*

[Text] Members of the first Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] legal body took the oath this morning before the brother leader of the revolution [al-Qadhafi], head of the AMU chairmanship council. The legal body is one of the institutions whose creation was stipulated by the treaty on the establishment of the AMU on 27 February 1989.

The AMU legal body is composed of two judges from each member-country. It specializes in dealing with disputes relating to the interpretation and implementation of the treaty on the establishment of the AMU and of the accords concluded within the framework of the union which are referred to it by the chairmanship council or by one of the countries party to the dispute or according to the specifications of the body's statute.

The body's verdicts are binding and definitive. It will also give consultative opinions on legal issues put forward to it by the chairmanship council. It should be recalled that the AMU chairmanship council, which held its third session in the city of Ra's al-Unuf in the Great Jamahiriyyah, has passed the legal body's statute.

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS**West Bank Notable on Rejection of U.S. Dialogue**

*91AE0410A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
19 May 91 p 5*

[Interview with Dr. Riyad al-Maliki by Zaki Shihab: "Palestinians Did Not Reap Gains From Talks and Intifadah Is a Way of Life Under Occupation"; place and date not given]

[Text] Dr. Riyad al-Maliki is an academician in the occupied territories known for his work at Bir Zeit University and his incessant political activity.

Dr. al-Maliki has taken part in many meetings Palestinian notables have held with Western delegations visiting the occupied territories in the last few years, and has also shared the podium with Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Arab Studies Center in Jerusalem, before Palestinian audiences debating the usefulness of dialogue with the United States, and the benefits attained from it.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT held the following interview with Dr. al-Maliki:

[Shihab] Why did you boycott the meetings held with American Secretary of State James Baker in occupied Jerusalem and what is the outcome of the meetings with him?

[Al-Maliki] The question about the outcome of the meetings should be directed to those who took part in these meetings. I was among those who boycotted them

and, based on my talks with those who took part in them and my perusal of the minutes of the sessions, it is clear to me that the Palestinian side did not come out with any results. They were fact-finding meetings between the Palestinian delegation and the American delegation, and we cannot say that the Palestinian people won from the American side any concessions or a recognition of the Palestinian constants.

[Shihab] Who invited you to participate in the meeting with Baker?

[Al-Maliki] I had met with the European troika and, therefore, my name is included in the list of Palestinian people with whom notables visiting the occupied territories meet.

The invitation came from the American Department of State and the American Consulate in Jerusalem.

[Shihab] What kind of impact does this sort of boycott have on Palestinian unity inside the occupied territories?

[Al-Maliki] First, the American question is one in a set of issues being debated within the Palestinian house. It is a matter of contention. But there is another set of basic questions on which we agree. The matter of assessing the American role and how we deal with it is an old long-standing issue caused by the customary attitude toward recognition of the national rights of the Palestinian people.

These meetings have had a clear impact on the average Palestinian. The average Palestinian is split over the stance toward these meetings, their usefulness, and their outcome. There is also a controversy and a difference of opinion, as is the case with the Palestinian national movement in the occupied territories where one Palestinian side took part in the meetings while the three principle sides in the PLO boycotted them.

The disagreement became clearly manifest following the explanations I set forth in my press communiques. The difference between my boycott of Baker and that of Dennis Ross or Tom Kelly was that, in the past, I was satisfied with declaring my position verbally. Now, however, I have come out with a public position and have joined Faysal al-Husayni in three open meetings with the Palestinian masses at the Hakawati Theater and on other occasions in East Jerusalem where we debated the matter publicly before these masses, and we listened to the criticism aimed directly at the notables who met with the American administration. Meetings with the American administration are attended by the Palestinian people inside the occupied territories, but the split over the assessment of the American administration's role inside the occupied territories does not in any way mean a split or a crack within Palestinian national unity, but is rather a live debate on a crucial issue. My appearance with Faysal al-Husayni in a joint seminar was but an affirmation that the disagreement over meetings or no meetings has no bearing whatsoever upon national unity.

[Shihab] To what extent is Israel exploiting this difference of opinion among Palestinian notables within the occupied territory?

[Al-Maliki] The campaign of libel and slander in the occupied territories is old and well known to our masses. The minute the dispute over the Palestinian position on relations with America came to light, we expected Israel to exploit this occasion to cast doubt on certain notables, and, at the same time, drive a wedge between the differing sides. Israeli radio and the Israeli Arabic-language TV station tried through certain reports to raise doubt about some positions, to favor one position over another, or to bring out certain tendencies, like saying that the Popular Front would not sanction, or that the average Palestinian was divided and there are clear differences being discussed by the Palestinian leadership, or that there are indications of infighting breaking out. As I see it, these are nothing but rumors the occupation authorities are using to drive the average Palestinian to despair and to lose hope in its leadership and political representation.

The Palestinian people are quite aware of this and, therefore, we are not scared of these Israeli campaigns.

[Shihab] It is no secret that economic conditions in the occupied territories are tough. Doesn't this situation affect the intifadah's ability to go on in the way the world has come to know?

[Al-Maliki] Now that the intifadah has become a way of life for the average Palestinian, it will go on, and it cannot to be any other way, the tough economic conditions notwithstanding. The intifadah is the only weapon the Palestinian human being has to resist the occupation in the occupied territories and, therefore, he has resolved to go on until the demand for self-determination is realized.

[Shihab] The subject of Palestinian representation remains a subject of debate between the United States and Israel. How do you perceive this?

[Al-Maliki] The matter of Palestinian representation is an internal private matter and part of Palestinian autonomy that we have long defended. We reject any American or Israeli pressure to specify the names or makeup of a Palestinian delegation to the negotiations. At the same time, we refuse to waive key topics such as self-determination, the future of Jerusalem, and the Palestinian state.

[Shihab] For a while now, the formation of a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation has been put forth as a solution. What do you think?

[Al-Maliki] Palestinian autonomy must be preserved and must be perfectly plain. There is a Jordanian decision to disengage from the occupied West Bank. Accordingly, Jordan cannot have the exclusive right to represent the Palestinian people or speak for them.

[Shihab] Palestinian universities in the occupied territories are still closed by order of the occupation authorities. Is anything being done to make up for this loss?

[Al-Maliki] Forty-two months ago, or when the intifadah got underway, the occupation authorities closed Palestinian universities and schools, including kindergartens and nurseries, on the charge that they posed a threat to the Zionist entity's security. We, as Palestinian people and academicians, have tried to explore educational alternatives amid such closings. In fact, ever since then we have been instituting an underground educational program as an alternative to university education. We have leased offices and apartments in Palestinian cities on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and have contacted our students in the various cities to offer them the requirements needed to maintain a good academic standard within the existing circumstances. In the last four years, we have been able to graduate no less than 300 students from Bir Zeit University alone, something we are proud of. That class was named the Intifadah Class though the intifadah authorities do not recognize their degrees since the university is closed [as published].

The university, along with other universities, has opened new branches of the open university. The Palestinian open university basically reflects the needs of Palestinian society, and this is part of the new service Palestinian universities have added, even amid the closing, to their basic responsibilities.

[Shihab] Are the degrees you grant academically recognized at the international level?

[Al-Maliki] Of course, there are ongoing contacts with Arab universities and the International Universities Federation and the degrees of the six Palestinian universities in the occupied territories are recognized at the Arab and international levels. All this underscores these universities' confidence in the academic standard we are intent on maintaining amid the continued closing.

ALGERIA

Report Updates Nomination Figures, FLN Campaign

91AA0381A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
15 May 91 pp 1, 4

[Article: "FLN Wages Algerian Elections With Lists That Exclude Symbols of Past Phase"]

[Text] Algiers—AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, News Agencies—In a step reflecting its wish to rid itself of the past and of its symbols, the FLN [National Liberation Front], which rules Algeria, has decided to wage the country's first pluralistic elections in 27 years with new figures, excluding more than 80 percent of its members in the present parliament. This step has led to the disappearance of figures who have been tied to the phases in which the party monopolized power and adopted the socialist

course. Observers have said that the party is trying to prepare itself for a new political life in which it will find itself compelled to compete with more than 40 groupings from various tendencies.

Karim Younes, an FLN Political Bureau member, has said that the party has selected nearly 60 figures from among its deputies, totaling 294, to run in the forthcoming elections. The current parliament was elected in February 1987 before President Chadli Bendjedid started dismantling the centralist system which had prevailed in Algeria in the 25 years following independence. Those missing from the list of candidates include Abdelaziz Bouteflika, an ex-minister of foreign affairs; Belid Abdessalem, an ex-minister of industry; and Mohamed Salah (Yehiaoui) and Mohamed Cherif Mousadia, both of whom have held the position of the number two man in the party.

Moussadia lost his position in October 1988 when rioting in a number of major Algerian cities demonstrated how extensive popular resentment of the single-party system was.

Younes has said that when the grace period for registering the names of candidates ended two days ago, the FLN had presented just one candidate and one reserve candidate for each of the electoral districts which total 542 altogether.

Prime Minister Mouloud Hamrouche will run for election in the Qasr Chellala District, located 200 km south of Algiers, the capital.

Younes added that the candidates represent all of society's sectors, excluding women. Women refuse to run for election because of the pressures exerted by Algeria's Islamic Movement, which is expected to be the second largest parliamentary bloc behind the FLN Party. Younes noted that the FLN candidates include former civil servants, journalists, revolutionaries who took part in the independence war, and 40 members of the party's Central Committee which consists of 268 members.

Younes denied that there has been any attempt to get rid of the ruling party's veteran leaders. Abdelrazzaq Bokhari, an FLN Central Committee member, has said that he was stunned when he did not find his name in the party's list. He has threatened to file a lawsuit because of the moral damage he has suffered as a consequence of this absence.

He has said that he had been the party's sole candidate in his district and that broad popular support has been expressed for his nomination. Bokhari added that under the umbrella of the liberal economic policies embraced by the government, he no longer feels that he lives in his country.

As for Abdessalem, he has decided to run for election as an independent and he has urged the party's active elements to stage an internal rebellion against the party's reformers.

The FIS [Islamic Salvation Front], which beat the ruling party in local elections held last June, has said that it has candidates in nearly all the districts.

The other major parties taking part in the elections are the Movement for Democracy in Algeria, which is led by ex-President Ahmed Ben Bella and which has 500 candidates; the Socialist Forces Front, which is led by Hocine Aiat Ahmed and has 287 candidates outside its strongholds in the Berber districts; and the Grouping Party for Culture and Democracy which represents the Berber and which has 167 candidates.

'Contemporary Muslim Algeria' Party Submits Application

91AA0380B Algiers AL-SHA'B in Arabic 28 Apr 91 p 3

[Article: "'Contemporary Muslim Algeria' Party Applies for Accreditation; Genuineness and Contemporariness"]

[Text] AL-SHA'B—Yesterday evening, the 'Contemporary Muslim Algeria' Party called a press conference at the Ministry of Interior in the presence of a number of its founding members, led by Dr. Ahmed Ben Mohamed, the party chairman, on the occasion of its application for accreditation. Dr. Ben Mohamed noted that the average age of the founding members ranges from 31 to 44 years.

In the conference, attended by a number of representatives of the national media, Dr. Ben Mohamed discussed the party's policy of opening its doors for membership, saying that the party ranks encompass men from various professional specializations, including doctors and engineers, and public and private sector cadres who meet the condition of "purity of the call," meaning that they have not profited from the Islamic call and have not engaged in salon politics and that they believe that there is no contradiction between Islam and the spirit of the age.

Regarding the party's economic program (700 pages), the chairman cited examples of the proposed ideas.

Regarding the party's position vis-a-vis Islam and Muslims, he said that Islam must be absolved of mistakes made by people and that there are Algerian Muslims and Muslim Algerians, meaning that the relationship with the creator is put ahead of the relationship with the created.

Regarding the requirements of enrollment in the party, he said that it is open for every Algerian man and woman who loves God, the apostle, and Islam, regardless of their degree of religiousness. Regarding the party's position on the language issue, he said: The priority will be given to Arabic because it is sacred, divine, universal, international, and the language of all Muslims. He believes that the Berber languages have geographic and historical extensions in the Maghreb and he has called for translating the concepts of the Koran into the local dialects because there is no contradiction between ethnic genuineness and the venerable Koran.

Regarding the party's position on pluralism, he said that pluralism is a Koranic phenomenon.

The party chairman then explained some ideas and theories at length, resorting to the use of technological idiom. He promised those present that they would be provided with a copy of the party program which contains precise details in the political, economic, social, and cultural areas.

Ali Kafi Says New NPA Will Be 'Crucial'

91AA0380A Algiers AL-SHA'B in Arabic
29 Apr 91 pp 1, 3

[Article: "Success of Elections Depends on Observing Red Line"]

[Text] Yesterday morning, AL-SALAM hosted Ali Kafi, the NOS [National Organization of Strugglers] secretary general, who had on the occasion a discussion with the journalists in which a number of questions and queries were raised. He answered them, offering all the necessary clarifications at a time when Algeria is preparing for legislative elections in order to build a modern state based on democracy.

On the role of the strugglers as a vanguard contributing to changing the course of history, especially in this period of legislative elections, the secretary general said that when it elected its new secretariat, the NOS encountered numerous difficulties, considering that its role had been marginalized and that it had been concerned with purely social action, plus finding solutions to some personal problems. Consequently, the partisans' thoughts descended to issues incompatible with their makeup, with the efforts they had made within the context of the liberation, or with the spirit of the national liberation war.

The struggler had not engaged in field action. Consequently, his will and his initiative had been wrested from him. Therefore, he could not ponder issues and could not work at the base level. Without a base and without organization, the NOS cannot survive, cannot pose a challenge and, consequently, cannot convey its message which emanates from the November principles. Therefore, we began to gather ourselves and hastened, initially, to revive the (united historical structure of the provinces) as an essential and important base and then to return to the struggle arena which is the starting point of our first activity.

According to Ali Kafi, a document has been drafted and sent to the base to study it and then to return it to the secretariat for consideration.

Ali Kafi said that the new National People's Assembly is a crucial assembly and that this is why the NOS has exerted efforts to include the historical provincial councils so that they could offer their views.

Ali Kafi says that the initial outcome continues to be kept confidential so that we could ensure the success of the activity. The National Secretariat will then be contacted and it will, in turn, contact the Revolutionary Family to rally it behind this issue and to adopt the necessary resolutions afterward. Regarding the forthcoming legislative elections, Ali Kafi said that in order for these elections to be held in a proper climate, we have exerted efforts to delineate the red line which nobody can cross. Thus, it is inevitable that there be points of agreement which will be announced later to ensure relative tranquillity and so that the elections could be held in an ideal, or at least an acceptable, climate.

UGTA Leader Interviewed on Political, Labor Issues

91AA0352A Algiers AL-SHA'B in Arabic 5 Apr 91 p 4

[Interview with Secretary General of General Union of Algerian Workers, Abdelhaq Benhamouda, by Abdeljelil Jellali: "Strike Puts Government to a Test, Must Respond to Workers;" first four paragraphs AL-SHA'B introduction; place and date not given]

[Text] The national general strike, called by the General Union of Algerian Workers [UGTA] on 12 and 13 March 1991, in protest over the insane rise in prices, deterioration of purchasing power and living conditions, and the worsening of the economic crisis that threatens social peace and security, has achieved major success.

However, despite that, the government has done nothing to respond to its demands, which were not defined. The government is determined to continue moving toward applying its programs, despite all the inflationary effects, and the painful impact on the legitimacy of labor, especially.

Nevertheless, the UGTA, whose stance has been supported by the law, which has granted it the right of collective response by calling a general strike, has gained maximum benefit from new factors. These include reaching an agreement with the government, starting with the October Agreements, along with opening large files for workers, and pushing forward with a mix of political and union action, through participation in decision making and elections, either through nominating unionists, or in alliance with certain political parties, in exchange for certain conditions.

With regard to these new factors in the wake of the general strike, and in the context of dealing with the social and economic situation, we continue the dialogue, which we began in a previous series with Abdelaziz Belkhadem, chairman of the People's National Council. Today, we talk with Abdelhaq Benhamouda, the secretary general of the UGTA, and the full text of this interview follows:

[Jellali] Despite the loss of most of the gains that workers obtained during the sixties and seventies, and the draining away of the true substance of the rest, in light of

the reforms, the UGTA has done nothing. Don't you think that the UGTA, by its long silence, has acted in collusion with successive governments at the expense of the workers, and that it has only taken the initiative when its own future was threatened?

[Benhamouda] It is difficult to answer your question, because it would be preferable to respond to it outside the context of our union movement. However, it is certain that the UGTA has never remained silent. We have always said that we could not safeguard the rights and integrity of the worker, if the country's independence was threatened. The worker is committed to the country's destiny and, consequently, balance was difficult in reconciling workers' rights and the nation's best interests, inasmuch as the UGTA was always its first sacrifice.

We can offer evidence of that from the field. For example, when the workers chose their representative, for the most part they were unable to run, and were replaced by others who were incapable of gaining the people's loyalty, which made union representation similar to an administrative appointment. Perhaps situations like this left the UGTA eaten away from the inside on several occasions. Each time its struggles and actions were damaged within its cadres. Little by little, the UGTA drew apart from the broad working masses. This was an extremely vital matter, because union action is built on worker solidarity. No union can stress its role, if it lacks workers. This is what happened to the UGTA. They took it out of its natural environment, put it into the prisoner's dock, and rubbed all the country's sins into it. Despite that, we don't criticize the past which, in fact, is part of our history; we are part of it, whatever its nature.

If the accomplishments in the sixties and seventies were major ones, with real social substance, then they have chosen the past 10 years to shrink the UGTA, and empty it of its capabilities and its activists. In the reforms, every faction—either governmental or opposition—said that the UGTA is a part of the single-party system. That system must be smashed, because it is aimed at monopoly and, consequently, achieving renewal. However, our activists do not see renewal in fragmentation and changed viewpoints, or rather, of men, programs, and ways of working. This is what has caused the UGTA to travel this dangerous, tortuous course, not with less damage in its recent Eighth Conference, despite the difficult circumstances. Safeguarding that on the nation's plan is the most important thing for us.

Moreover, our answer to those who say that political pluralism must of necessity lead to union pluralism, is yes, pursuant to the will of the workers. As for union pluralism being imposed on the workers, it is imposed. The Eighth Conference of Workers is the one that gave prominence to union action, either in pluralism or no monopoly. Consequently, the UGTA has not been silent vis-a-vis events.

National General Strike: a Worker, Not a Political Demand

[Jellali] Despite the fact that the government accuses the UGTA of cutting off consultation and dialogue, for the purpose of reaching an agreement on a dynamic thrust for the October Agreements, can we ignore all previous negotiations, which blessed the situation that the government had previously rejected, despite opposing the workers' interests? Doesn't this mean that the general strike was with a wink from the government to support the UGTA's status, swallow the workers' revenge, and pass measures freeing prices without causing an explosion? Is this why the strike did not have specific demands?

[Benhamouda] The statement that the national general strike was with a wink from the government implies that the government controls the UGTA and, consequently, that the government directs it, not the workers. I say, if in fact it is at the government's direction, then let them produce the evidence for that. More than that, we challenge anyone to prove that we carried out a political strike, with a connection to any other party, except the workers. The Islamic Salvation Front and the Algerian Renewal Party were both with the government, against the workers. We would like to ask at this point, whether we could in fact agree with the government on not applying the October Agreements? These agreements, which mean abundance, freezing of prices, and financial supports for establishments? You know that there was a lot of talk the end of September about closing deficit-racked public establishments, which means that these agreements saved 850,000 jobs that were threatened, as well as no price increases for subsidized goods, either by executive decree or joint ministerial edict.

The balance today is clear. If there were a strike that did not arise from the workers' will, the great majority of workers would not support it. Basically, it was a collective labor demand. As long as it was called for, workers have gone on strike in certain units. These have spread to the sector level, and later included the governorate level. Despite this escalation in workers' demands for a general strike, the government did not respond to their concerns and, therefore, the workers' leadership chose the timing for this general strike.

Regarding your statement that the national general strike did not have specific demands, its goal was the results of the October negotiations, which have neither been respected nor applied, along with our demands in light of the new factors, which the government has imposed, by reopening large files for workers.

Government Must Explain Its Position Vis-a-Vis Workers

[Jellali] Despite the national general strike's major success, we note that the government has done nothing, or rather, has persisted in going ahead with applying its programs, including all the inflationary effects and the painful impact on labor, without involving the very

wealthy, and giving priority to investment and production. In light of the strike's results, how will the UGTA move to meet the present, extremely tense situation? Is the decision in the elections, and application of the winning party's programs, unacceptable?

[Benhamouda] At the present time, I cannot make a statement about anything, until after the end of the dialogue and consultations with the government. If we attain results satisfactory to the workers, we will have fulfilled our responsibility. In the event we reach an impasse, each side must bear its complete responsibility. I cannot define precisely what could happen, because that gets into the framework of speculation, which might be regarded as a threat. We must avoid that.

Each side has its views, points of departure, and programs. We are committed to the workers. We have a program, and it must be well understood. At this point, we pose a fundamental question. Is the government working for the advancement of the average Algerian? If that is the case, it must be proved. And that should be proved in the field, and not in speeches and slogans, because they do not satisfy, just as *fatwahs* [Islamic legal opinions] do not clothe the family.

If the answer is in the negative, i.e., that the government is working against the workers' interests, the major portion of society, and it has sufficient justification for that, it must explain that position. This would be helpful; this is democracy. Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was working against the interests of the poorer classes, which resulted in a downturn of their purchasing power. She made no attempt to use trickery with slogans, or to conceal the truth of her policy. However, in the present circumstances, we don't believe it possible to continue applying a policy like this, because the Algerian worker, whose son is hungry and naked, will not be satisfied with this situation, which directly reflects on his attitude on social peace itself.

We would like to return to the subject of dialogue and consultation, so that we can point out that, through the present contacts with the government, we are striving to obtain results that will satisfy the workers, and serve our institutions. We hope that there will be a meeting soon with the central authority, on the basis of a rapprochement in ideas and viewpoints, and then arrive at an agreement before the meeting. However, you must take into consideration our identity, not as the government, but as an opposition authority. Consequently, the strike is not something we achieve, but a legitimate right that we hold firm. The matter is different this time, in view of the existence of certain quarters that doubt our right to legitimacy. However, after giving the word to the workers, and their making their voices heard by the public authorities, a white card was given to the UGTA. The government was put to a difficult test. Whether the government says that I am with the workers, or the reverse, it still must respond or not respond to the

workers' demands. Therefore, if the strike was held with a wink from the government, as you put it, it would have put itself in a predicament.

Can Candidates be Nominated for the Legislative Elections?

[Jellali] The reforms set off political pluralism, the applied free economy, and union pluralism, as well as today's aftermath with regard to the emergence of more than 40 political parties. In light of the experiences of these parties, will labor's problems obtain the same important efforts in preparation for elections and in attaining authority? Does the UGTA propose to offer a number of candidates for the legislative elections, or will it support a specific party, in exchange for certain conditions?

[Benhamouda] I cannot give you an opinion about any party, because we don't know the parties' programs as pertain to labor, despite the fact that some parties stress that they defend the workers.

With regard to the issue of legislative elections, and the possibility of producing a strategy for an alliance with certain parties, it is not being proposed within the UGTA at present. We have not looked into the matter as of yet, despite the fact that the issue of legislative elections interests union organizations, by the very nature of the case. We definitely encourage union nominees, without determining the nomination method, either by offering slates or by alliances. However, our basic problem today certainly is finding solutions to social and economic problems and, for its part, union leadership could ultimately be strengthened in this matter.

Painful Living Conditions; No Good News

[Jellali] In your statement concerning the national general strike, you stressed the need to introduce beneficial corrections and radical changes, and for boldness in the country's economic and social policies. By that, did you mean the reforms specifically which, today, are reaching the point of decreased consumption and, consequently, reduced production, which definitely will lead to increased unemployment?

[Benhamouda] We avoid discussing this matter. Our position cannot be either for the reforms or against them. Consequently, we neither support nor oppose the reforms. Some blame the UGTA for not having a clear position with regard to this matter. The fact is that we are for economic efficiency. We have said that economic stimulation is impossible, if there is no consumption, and certainly neither purchasing power nor job protection. This is what is meant by protecting the means of production. In contrast to that, if there is no consumption, there is stagnation. The business that does not market its products, closes its doors and, thereby, we fall into an incompatible situation, in terms of encouraging unemployment instead of combatting it.

Our judgement on living conditions today is that they are painful, and more than that, there is no good news. After this pain, where is the cure? On the contrary, there will be serious repercussions and, so that we don't distort our position, we say let's work at the reforms, however they want. But on condition that the worker does not pay the bill for the reforms, by losing his job, home, and a place in school for his son, by losing his bed in the hospital, or by deteriorating his purchasing power to the misery level.

If we oppose the black market, which the workers' purchasing power cannot afford, how is it that today the official market is even more repulsive? For example, refrigerators on the counterpart market last year cost 8,000 Algerian dinars, but today their cost has leaped to 120,000 dinars. Is this what is meant by the counterpart market, with all its negative aspects, being more merciful? If this is reform, we are against reform.

Reforms acceptable to us are those that support economic growth, which should come after social considerations. Despite that, we are against reform, whenever the benefit enables Algeria, for example, to invade the outer space and enjoy technological progress, while 95 percent of its population live in wretched poverty.

Unions Must Be Based on Solidarity

[Jellali] If the government thinks that the bill for reforms, particularly in terms of their social cost—an inevitable necessity no matter what their painful impact—should be borne from the outset by the limited-income workers, middle-income persons have also been affected, forming a single poor class. Do you think that by defending the limited-income workers, and protecting the prices of the 22 basic consumer items, the UGTA neglects its responsibility vis-a-vis the workers with medium incomes, along with maintaining the balance of other necessities of life?

[Benhamouda] It is true that those who have an income ranging from 6,000 to 7,000 Algerian dinars have today joined with the broad limited-income groups. Without a doubt, they are included within our responsibilities to defend every worker who has a wage, no matter what its level. In response to a previous question, I made it clear how the UGTA works to defend workers' unity, and to defend their interests.

It would be impossible to defend the workers, if labor strife occurs. Unfortunately, we note that every labor group works as a union for itself, believing that they can defend their own interests while, at the same time, forgetting that their interests might be contrary to the interests of another labor group. At that time, labor strife begins. Unions have not been built on solidarity, but on the basis of self interest, which has negative repercussions on other groups.

This is not to deny the fact that we defend all who work for wages, all of whom we consider today to have limited incomes. This causes us many problems. Despite that,

the UGTA speaks logically. For example, when we talk about cooking fuel, they tell us that it is a luxury, and its price cannot be subsidized. However, if we have to go without using it, by virtue of its being a luxury, then the government must provide an alternative. Please note that the price of charcoal is up to 30 dinars per kilogram. Accordingly, providing meals at a reasonable price is considered a matter of necessity.

Purchasing Power Supported by Providing Jobs for Workers' Sons

[Jellali] The problem of unemployment in our country threatens us with serious repercussions, in light of establishments continuing arbitrarily to dismiss more than 125,000 workers, in addition to the millions without work or compensatory income. Is this one of the UGTA's largest concerns? Can it find practical, rapid solutions at least to put an end to its spread?

[Benhamouda] Clearly, the UGTA was the first to propose the unemployment file. When we talked about unemployment, all hell broke loose, and it was considered an exaggeration, because the UGTA was not a union for the unemployed. The truth, of course, was otherwise, because the unemployed are not the sons of the wealthy, but rather, they are the sons of the workers. This was our basic concept in defense of providing jobs.

We took this into consideration in the October negotiations, when we accepted 2,500 Algerian dinars as the minimum wage, instead of 4,000 dinars. We said that the workers' purchasing power would be bolstered through the opportunity being given to the government to provide jobs for their sons. Workers' purchasing power would be protected in direct ratio to the number of workers in the Algerian family. However, regrettably, jobs were not provided to workers' sons; instead, a decrease occurred, and a loss of present jobs, after we had agreed with the government on not dismissing workers through guaranteed financial support to public businesses. This was one of the principal factors that led to the national general strike.

This means that the unemployment problem is considered to be an extremely serious problem in Algeria, demanding extraordinary concern, follow up, and management. The unemployed youth must be of special concern to every establishment and state organization, as well as every public and private contractor. The UGTA is working in that direction, with several initiatives, both with the government and with the unemployed youth themselves, in order to organize them, inform public opinion of their problems, and encourage productive investment. We are not currently expecting results in this field. We cannot talk about employment, when we are pushing workers into unemployment. This disturbs us a great deal.

Labor Is a Commodity, and Must Be Revalued

[Jellali] In light of the market economy, various theses are being advanced today to justify the insane rise in

prices of goods and services. Don't you think that, in light of the trend toward applying so-called true prices for products, it should be decided to reconsider radically what constitutes the basic value of every national treasure, and apply true value to labor?

[Benhamouda] In exchange for entering the market economy, and applying true prices for products, we constantly stressed that labor is a commodity in its own right, which must also be valued and given true wages. This demand surfaced several problems, as to whether we should tie wages to production or to prices.

We believe that wages must keep pace with the percentage of increase in prices and inflation, since the profit margin keeps pace with production, because the more profits increase, both in quality and quantity, the more bonuses there should be for workers. The wage is basic, but the bonus is additional, and not constant. Work must be valued; it is also a commodity in the market economy. The worker must be given his true wage and, therefore, we should disregard directives that offer easy, non-productive profit.

Municipal Councils Must Assume Responsibilities Toward Local Businesses

[Jellali] Situations of public establishments, which the government has been maintaining with its financial support, are worsening, especially local establishments. This will lead, in one way or another, to their demise. Do you think that continuing to maintain factors that continue these businesses' deterioration is aimed—basically—at breaking them up, and forcing the private economy, with its national and foreign segments, to be the basic key to the national economy?

[Benhamouda] Everything is possible, including dissolving the public establishments, despite the fact that the government promised through the October Agreements to support them financially. This is inevitable, so long as our debts are the debts of the administration, which must bear the responsibility of managing them and which, consequently, permits the operation of these establishments without financial burdens. However, we cannot act alone with regard to local establishments; this is a matter for popular municipal and governorate councils. At this point, we would like to ask a question: Did the citizens elect those elected officials for the purpose of improving the citizens' social conditions, or for the purpose of closing public establishments and making their workers unemployed? The loss of these jobs increase their misery, [especially] if they don't have homes.

Regrettably, many refuse to take workers into account, but today, the time has come to make all parties accountable to this broad legitimacy of society, in terms of protecting public establishments, which form 85 percent of economic activity. Breaking them up would mean smashing the national economy, and firing 85 percent of its work force. It is incumbent upon us to feel concern for

public establishments, and to insure their financial support. All resources and conditions should be provided to them, to insure their entry into free competition, instead of our pushing them into direct competition, when we would know in advance that they are dead establishments.

Different Political Affiliations, a Source of Power for Labor

[Jellali] Without a doubt, union pluralism has begun to be applied, through the emergence of independent unions. The Islamic Labor Union has become a threat to UGTA's future. How do you view union action, in light of union pluralism?

[Benhamouda] Some believe that union pluralism is merely the collecting of signatures, submitting credentials, and then operating as a union organization, with the right to speak on behalf of workers and defend them. However, on this occasion, let us tell workers to beware of gambling with their issues, because union action—along with its regulations that serve the interests of workers—is, of necessity, that which stems from the workers. Despite the fact that some accuse the UGTA of being composed of activists from the National Liberation Front Party, they disregard the presence of unions that are totally subordinate to political parties, such as the Islamic Union, which is the union of the Islamic Salvation Front.

Therefore, one must be cautious, because the union movement should stay clear of all outside direction. The union that is supervised and financed by a specific party is no longer a union for workers, but rather, it is a union for that party that founded it. Accordingly, we suppose that when workers organize a union only in the context of a federation of political affiliations, it will be considered a blessing and a source of power for workers. Every worker would have to adopt his party's program, which would be imposed on the workers, while the workers' program would be imposed on the party. Consequently, workers would invade the parties, instead of letting the parties invade them.

Ulema Association Re-Forms, Issues Statement

91P40266A Algiers AL-SHA'B in Arabic 9 Apr 91 p 3

[Text] On 26 March, the Association of Muslim Ulema was legally approved by the interior ministry.

According to a statement submitted to AL-SHA'B, this association is considered an extension of what it was in the past. In this preparatory period, it intends—God willing—to achieve as many of its priorities as possible. Some of these priorities are: to establish a third edition of the "al-Basa'ir" [Insights] newspaper, to be the association's voice today as it was in the past; to send delegations to various parts of the country to set up branches and subdivisions; and do other things to direct, organize, and [maintain] cohesiveness. The association's (temporary) permanent office [as published] comprises

the following members: Mohamed Kheireddine, honorary chairman; Ahmed Hamani, chairman; Abderrahmane Chibane, first deputy chairman; Ali el-Maghrebi, second deputy chairman; Ibrahim Mezhoudi, third deputy chairman; and Mohamed el-Taher Fadla, secretary general.

Ouerdi Elected Chamber of Commerce President

91P40302A Algiers AL-SHA'B in Arabic 21 May 91 p 3

[Text] Algiers, APS—The current president and general manager of the Institute for Real Estate Development, Chabani el-Ouerdi, was elected president of the national Chamber of Commerce during an emergency meeting of its board of directors.

Chabani el-Ouerdi is also president of the National Building, Public Works and Irrigation Federation. He was previously employed in the bridges and roads sector.

Sonatrach, Total To Cooperate on Hamra Oil Field

91AA0381B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 14 May 91 p 10

[Article by 'Uqbah 'Ali al-Salih: "Accord, First of Its Kind, Turns New Leaf Between Companies and Producing Countries; Total Invests Half a Billion Dollars in Algeria's Hamra Oil Field and Strengthens Its Cooperation With Sonatrach in Exploration, Production, and Marketing"]

[Text] Total, a French oil company, signed on the 12th of this month of May an accord with Sonatrach, the Algerian National Oil Company, to exploit the Hamra gas field, located southeast of Hassi Massoud.

Official sources in Total have characterized this accord as the first of its kind, saying in a communication with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the accord turns over a new leaf between international oil companies and oil-producing countries.

According to the agreement, the French and Algerian sides will participate in all phases of the project, beginning with blueprinting, engineering, and construction and ending with operation of the production and exploitation installations. The project will cost nearly 3 billion French francs (a little more than half a billion dollars), most of which will be supplied by Total which also undertakes to supply technological equipment needed to produce "condensed products," oil gas, and natural gas. In return for this contribution, Total will get the right to exploit the project's entire production throughout a period of 14 to 17 years beginning with the year of operation, expected to be 1994. This means that in addition to its share, Total will be the sole buyer of Algeria's share and that it will market this share on its own. Upon the completion of this period, full ownership of the project will revert to the Algerian company. According to Total's estimates, total production during

the period of its exploitation will amount to the equivalent of 150-200 [million?] oil barrels in gas and condensed products. Concurrently and along a parallel line, Total will form a joint company with Sonatrach to market butane and propane gas. This accord accomplishes for Algeria a number of major benefits, enabling it to implement projects that require big capital. It will also permit Algeria to train technical cadres which will take part with the French in all phases of the project. But primarily, the accord will be a start for exploiting the major gas area located between Hassi Massoud and Hamra. As for Total, this new pattern of industrial and commercial partnership will secure for it large and constant oil and gas resources for a long period. It also opens the door for stronger cooperation with the companies of oil-producing countries.

Total has underlined its firm cooperation with Algeria, considering that it signed on the same day two new agreements with Algeria's Sonatrach. The first is connected with getting two prospecting concessions: one for an area of 4,500 square km in Boutina field and the other for an area of 1,950 square km in the southeast Hamra field. This agreement follows the conventional pattern of "production sharing," considering that Sonatrach will get 51 percent of the production and Total, which will conduct seismological surveys and drill six experimental wells during the five-year exploration period, will get 49 percent.

The second agreement is connected with extending the accord on exploiting the (Markisin) field for five more years, beginning in 1992. The initial agreement on this project was concluded in 1973 for a 12-year period as of the start of production, which began in 1975. The first five-year renewal was made in 1987. Currently, this field produces 600,000 tons of oil annually, of which total's share is 49 percent. The rest belongs to Sonatrach.

At the end of 1989, Total concluded with Algeria two agreements in accordance with which it obtained concessions to prospect in the areas of east Harsha and west Ghrib. It also signed a number of accords with Sonatrach to revive production in some old wells and fields, especially in the Hassi Massoud area.

Circles of oil market observers in Europe believe that Algeria is trying to increase its natural gas production in anticipation of an expected increase in world demand in the coming years, and also to increase its sales to Europe and the United States. In recent days, Algeria also concluded agreements with Morocco, Spain, and Portugal to build gas pipelines to supply these countries' markets. It also concluded an agreement with Italy to increase its gas exports to the Italian markets. Algeria has similar agreements with France and the United States. These circles add that the open-door policy and partnership with international oil companies are the elements that have enabled Algeria to increase its share of the world natural gas market.

'Voice of Algeria' Begins Broadcasting

91P40304A Rabat AL-'ALAM in Arabic 19 May 91 p 2

[Text] The Algerian newspaper AL-SALAM has noted that the new Algerian international radio station "Voice of Algeria," which is aimed at the Middle East and Europe, began broadcasting from Algerian radio studios on Saturday [18 May] at 1700 hours.

Initially, "Voice of Algeria" will begin broadcasting an hour of news broadcasts and cultural programs on short- and medium-wave.

EGYPT

Minister of Interior Interviewed on Terrorism

91WR0207A Cairo UKTUBAR in Arabic 21 Apr 91
pp 14-15, 69

[Interview with the Egyptian Interior Minister, Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa, by Ahmad Mustafa: "No Differentiation Between Political Security and Criminal Security;" first two paragraphs UKTUBAR introduction; place and date not given]

[Text] Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa, in an interview with UKTUBAR, revealed important, previously unpublished secrets concerning the assassination of Dr. Rif'at al-Mahjub, the fight against terrorism, and possible confrontations with Iraqi groups, as well as sabotage operations, which Iraqi military intelligence assigned to a "group of Egyptians" to carry out inside Egypt. The minister of interior also revealed that Jordanian secret police would have taken part, in coordination with Iraq, in smuggling saboteurs into Egypt, for the purpose of assassinating certain editors-in-chief of newspapers and magazines, as well as public officials.

In his interview, the minister also dealt with problems of traffic, political security, criminal security, and the job of minister itself!

[Mustafa] Let's start with the case of Dr. Raf'at al-Mahjub's assassination. What about the number of suspects in this case, and the progress made in investigating them? What's the number of suspects still at large?

[Musa] The Public Prosecutor's Office will announce official information concerning the assassination of Dr. Raf'at al-Mahjub shortly after the feast celebrating the end of Ramadan. The number of suspects in this case totals 24. There are approximately eight others still at large, and the search for them continues.

[Mustafa] How do you interpret the quietness of extremist groups in general, since the time you assumed ministerial responsibilities?

[Musa] Extremist groups have been quiet but, some times, these groups' violence reaches a climax, and they become more violent than before. However, some of

them, of course, are more objective. There are no restrictions on ideas, nor on opinions. I am confident that no man can now say that there are restrictions on his views or ideas.

[Mustafa] How many Egyptians were arrested after their return from Iraq? What did security conclude about them?

[Musa] So far they total 74, in addition to two Iraqis. They have all confessed that they received sums of money from the Iraqi authorities. In fact, it should be noted that the money confiscated from them was in U.S. dollars with consecutive serial numbers. The amounts ranged from \$500 to \$1,000, depending on the mission assigned to them.

The confessions, given in the interrogations by the accused, confirm that the Iraqi authorities trained them in special camps on intelligence activities and sabotage. There were a total of 195 Egyptians, who had the goal of inciting the Egyptians returning from Iraq and Kuwait into joining with them. The Iraqi authorities divided these saboteurs into two groups:

One section was provided with heavy equipment—explosives inside booby-trapped equipment—in order to carry out sabotage operations inside certain places, such as metro tunnels and large hotels, especially those in which Kuwaitis and Saudis were staying, as well as government agencies crowded with citizens, such as the al-Tahrir complex and the television building. The suspects confessed some very important information, namely, that their entry into and exit from Egypt through Nuwayba'—across Jordanian territory—would have been under the supervision of Iraqi and Jordanian secret police, so that they would not be subjected to any questioning in these areas.

With regard to the second group of saboteurs, the Iraqi authorities asked each one of them to remain at home—in Egypt—until an Iraqi representative, or someone of any nationality, contacted them, and provided each one with instructions and missions, which they must carry out or fulfill. In fact, two officers from Iraqi military intelligence did come to Egypt, claiming to be Egyptians who had lost their passports. When they were arrested, they confessed to everything in detail, and said that they were Iraqis from Iraqi military intelligence.

Under interrogation, they also said that their goal was to assassinate certain public and political dignitaries, as well as senior writers, journalists, and intellectuals, and certain ministers. The minister of interior was on their list.

[Mustafa] Who are these writers and journalists?

[Musa] Anis Mansur, Salah Muntasir, Ibrahim Sa'adah, and others. There's no need to mention the remaining names, so as not to alarm them.

The accused also confessed that the instructions, issued to them by Iraqi officials, were that after the assassinations were carried out, they were to flee Egypt at once, by any means, and go to the Iraqi Embassy in Sudan or Yemen. From there, they would be transported to Iraq, and once there, each one would be given \$50,000! The accused confessed to other information as well, including the fact that in each passport, there were specific markings, which made it clear to officials in the Iraqi Embassy that they were agents.

[Mustafa] How would these agents and representatives from the Iraqi secret police have recognized each other?

[Musa] The investigation revealed that there was a phrase containing certain words, by which the two sides would recognize each other: "The date palm has produced many dates."

The interrogations also revealed that there was another group of about 70 persons, including four women, located in Cairo, who would cooperate with agents for money. A large amount of foreign cash, amounting to approximately \$14,000, has been seized. These funds were seized with those persons, and it was noted that all this money had consecutive serial numbers.

Political Forces, Terrorism

[Mustafa] What is your view concerning the role of political forces in Egypt with regard to this case?

[Musa] Unfortunately, some of those who call themselves Egyptian political parties or political forces were mistaken in evaluating the position taken by the Iraqi political leadership, both by invading Kuwait, and by insisting on not withdrawing, so as to spare the region the ruination and destruction that subsequently occurred. Those who claim that they are Egyptian political forces have embarked on a reckless course, guided by the Iraqi president. The consequence, as became clear, was ruinous and destructive events for the entire region.

[Mustafa] What is your opinion regarding the exporting of terrorism to Egypt, in light of the terrorist groups that have been arrested? It has become clear that some of these elements traveled to Afghanistan and Pakistan for training on weapons and terrorist operations, and were provided with funds to carry out terrorist operations in Egypt.

[Musa] We believe it not unlikely that the Iraqi leadership was behind these activities, as well as certain nations that follow Iraq's lead, especially since Egypt was not in range of either Iraqi missiles or attack aircraft, as was the case with Saudi Arabia. Of course, we were aware of and expected that there would be "hatred" in the hearts of those leaders, because of Egypt's firm and unshakable position, and its pride in confronting aggression, making clear the need for withdrawal. We had to expect the exporting of terrorism through individuals, whether they were Iraqis, Egyptians, or of any other Arab nationality. This forced us to be more vigilant; we could

not allow those people to penetrate our borders and our society. We thank God that we were successful in uncovering and thwarting the plots they wished to carry out against Egypt's territory and loyal people.

Despite the fact that more than a few people have been arrested, and their plots completely revealed, we don't think it unlikely that similar operations may be repeated. By that I mean, we expect terrorism to be exported again and again.

Escalation of Terrorist Operations

[Mustafa] Public opinion says that terrorism escalated over the years, before you assumed the post of minister of interior. Was this because of an erroneous security policy, which was pursued in combatting terrorism, or because various terrorist groups had become deeply enmeshed in their enmity toward society?

[Musa] Terrorism is a crime, one of the violent crimes. With development and scientific progress, crime develops like any other phenomenon. It is presumed that methods of opposing or combatting terrorism will develop to the same extent, or even to a greater extent than terrorist crime. If a deficiency occurred in the period you mentioned for certain reasons or factors, or because of different methods, it is incumbent upon us to remedy this deficiency, so that the security organization is at a level that will insure its victory, and will put an end to terrorism.

[Mustafa] I know very well that there is a security apparatus specifically to pursue terrorists. How do they get their information that these terrorists will perpetrate such crimes, especially since all of them are registered, and are under security control?

[Musa] Naturally, there is a specific apparatus to track and pursue those who commit these activities. By the nature of the case, the criminal perpetrator doesn't announce his crime beforehand. However, his activities or movements are what calls attention to his commitment of a crime. The anti-terrorist force must make arrangements to foil these acts.

Police Situation

[Mustafa] Don't you agree that, in view of the policeman's armament, he would be quite incapable of pursuing terrorists, who are armed with the most modern weapons and explosives?

[Musa] No, I don't agree, because after the crime of assassinating Dr. Raf'at al-Mahjub was committed, the Ministry of Interior took stock of itself. Weapons were changed immediately, both in type and quantity. Moreover, the user of the weapon—the individual—has certainly received appropriate training, especially those charged with guarding important persons and installations.

[Mustafa] There are many rumors circulating among Egyptian citizens, to the effect that the two youths killed

in Cairo University Street were not among the real killers of Dr. Raf'at al-Mahjub. What is your explanation?

[Musa] I think that in a few days, God willing, the Public Prosecutor's Office will announce official information regarding this crime. The information will reveal whether these rumors are true or not.

[Mustafa] Is it true that the police vehicles, used in the pursuit, only used a limited amount of gasoline? Are you satisfied about the condition of those vehicles?

[Musa] This information is incorrect. The fact is—and I speak frankly and candidly—the government is not stingy in providing the security forces with the resources they require. When we wanted to develop and modernize much of the security apparatus, especially in recent times, the government was not negligent in arranging all the funds we needed.

[Mustafa] Do you believe that extremist groups are no longer in existence or active, following the assassination of Dr. Raf'at al-Mahjub? I mean, have they been completely eliminated through arrests and the Emergency Law, or are they still pursuing their activities covertly?

[Musa] Most unfortunately, those youths held an idea that is offensive to Islam and Muslims. In the first place, all groups in the country should meet, so that the family can demand cooperation to correct this idea. In this event, one could say that this idea had been totally eliminated.

[Mustafa] The traffic problem in the city of Cairo has become so bad as to be unbearable. Do you think that, aside from its connection with the masses' awareness, or with the traffic personnel—second class policemen who are too ignorant to read, write, or recognize the names of streets on which they stand—that aside from this, there is any solution? Do you think that, some day, we will become like any advanced country, wherein drivers and pedestrians respect traffic rules and regulations?

[Musa] I agree with you that the traffic problem is very disturbing and troublesome. All that you have said about the causes of the worsening crisis—or the problem—is correct. The behavior of drivers, as well as the behavior of pedestrians, and the performance of the illiterate conscript, who is unable to read or write, in addition to the planning of bygone engineers, who did not anticipate vehicles to increase in such numbers, all of this has helped to make the problem worse.

With regard to your question about the difficulty of joining the ranks of advanced nations, I would say that, if a man wants something, he will do it!

Political and Criminal Security

[Mustafa] Many citizens reiterate that the minister of interior is concerned—above all—with political security, and criminal security comes in second. What is your view regarding that, and what is the evidence?

[Musa] This idea has been around for many years. Speaking for professional security men, I can say that security is not segmented. It does not occur to professional security officers to deal with one part or sector at the expense of another sector, or else the balance would be upset. Accordingly, the political and criminal branches of security operate systematically and in harmony, so as to attain that equilibrium that provides stability for the people.

Writer Analyzes Factors Affecting Israel's Policies

91AA0316A Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 5 Apr 91 p 6

[Article by 'Imad Jad]

[Text] Following the end of the war in the Gulf, many questions have been raised about the possibilities of starting a peace process in the region to solve the Palestinian problem. All regional and international parties have become convinced of the need to reach a peaceful solution to the Palestinian problem, because it is the essence of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and there can be no stability in the region unless it is settled. Views have differed over the best way to settle the conflict. Some believe it is necessary to use the same measures taken to liberate Kuwait to liberate the occupied Palestinian lands, beginning with a call for a withdrawal and ending with the use of force to accomplish that, as was done regarding the liberation of Kuwait. In this way, the international system could not be accused of applying a double standard in dealing with regional problems and conflicts depending on the nature and origins of the relevant parties. Others oppose this idea, emphasizing the need to settle the conflict by diplomatic rather than military means, given the difference between Resolution 678, which stipulates the use of force to liberate Kuwait, and Resolution 242, which calls for negotiations between Israel and its neighbors to reach a peaceful solution to the problem of Israel's occupation of Arab lands. The United States has adopted the latter view, which it has expressed through its permanent representative at the United Nations, Thomas Pickering.

Given the nature of the international order at present and the virtually solitary status of the United States as the manager of this order and the regional conflicts and problems that heave within it, it is expected that the process of settling the Arab-Israeli conflict will be subject to the U.S. view, which sees a need to settle this conflict through diplomatic means. Can this be achieved under the objective circumstances that currently govern the international order and the regional order?

Israel and the Supremacy of the Extreme Right

It is noted that the developments governing the domestic scene in Israel point to an increase in the power of the extreme right. The extreme right rejects a regional compromise solution and the principle of land in exchange for peace. Instead, it promotes the slogan of "not conceding one inch of the occupied territories," and it

emphasizes "peace in exchange for peace," meaning autonomy for people, not land. This becomes clear from the makeup of the Israeli, right-wing government, whose daily movement toward greater extremism recently reached a peak in the entry into the government of the leader of the extremist Moledet Party, Rehav'am Ze'evi, who advocates the transfer of Palestinians from the occupied territories to abroad. It is noted that the Gulf War and the polarizations that it has caused have led to increased support for the right in Israeli public opinion, at the expense of support for the left, which now seems unable to rally public opinion, which is gradually becoming more extremist.

In this connection, we can point to two phenomena. The first is the resumption of the policy of deporting Palestinian nationalists and leaders on the pretext of their association with commando operations or resistance actions inside the occupied territories. This policy has become clear in the formation of a bloc that has expanded the deportation policy to include family members of individuals against whom a deportation order is issued. This bloc is composed of Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon, Science Minister Yuval Ne'eman, Agriculture Minister Refa'el Eytan, Police Minister Roni Milo, Religious Affairs Minister Avner Shaki, and Minister of State Rehav'am Ze'evi.

The second phenomenon is the expansion of the activities of new immigrant citizens in the occupied territories. This was emphasized in a report submitted by the U.S. State Department to the Congress, which points to an increase in the annual growth rate of the number of settlers in the occupied territories to 10 percent, so that there were 225,000 settlers by the end of 1990, which is close to 13 percent of the total population of the occupied Palestinian lands. Among the settlers, 120,000 are in East Jerusalem, 90,000 are in the West Bank, 12,000 are in the Golan Heights, and 3,000 are in the Gaza Strip. It is noted that settlement is occurring in the occupied territories through the expansion of existing settlements rather than the declaration of new settlements.

Soviet Jews: A Possible Human Fund for the Extreme Right

A prominent issue being thrown out in the Israeli political arena concerns the political orientations of the new immigrants from the Soviet Union. All political parties are devoting special attention to this matter for numerous reasons:

1. The large number of Jews from the Soviet Union immigrating to Israel: During 1990 alone, about 200,000 immigrants arrived, and about 500,000 immigrants are expected to arrive by the beginning of the next election period, i.e., October of the coming year.
2. The delicate balance between the two large parties in Israel, the Likud and the Labor Alignment: Both parties have nearly the same number of seats [in the Knesset], which makes the votes of Soviet Jews a decisive factor in

the ability of one of the two parties to form a government without having to form a coalition with the other or submit to the extortion of the small parties, which play a pivotal role in tipping the balance in favor of either the Likud or the Labor Alignment in forming a government or in toppling that government at any time.

3. The absence of a defined political affiliation on the part of these new immigrants: Hence, the new immigrants will give their support to the party which succeeds in attracting them.

The question of which way the Soviet Jews will vote is thorny. It is well-known that Jews of Western origin, particularly those who came from the Soviet Union, form an electoral base for the Labor Alignment. This was clear from a poll conducted among them in the second half of last year, in which 31 percent of Ashkenazi Jews gave their votes to the Labor Alignment, while 18 percent gave their votes to the Likud, whereas 19 percent of the Sephardi Jews voted for the Labor Alignment, compared to 43 percent for the Likud. However, the new immigrants present a different profile at present, because their interests perhaps overlap with those of the Likud, given that the Likud, as the ruling party, is making an exhaustive effort to absorb them and provide them with appropriate employment opportunities, in contrast to the Labor Party, which opposes settlement in the occupied territories and promotes the slogan of "land for peace," which implies a willingness to remove the Jewish settlements from the occupied territories and reabsorb the settlers living in them inside the green line.

Another aspect that further complicates this issue is the possibility that the Likud could fail to settle and absorb these immigrants, which could compel them to vote for the opposition Labor Party in protest of the Likud's failure. Also, the Sephardim, [afroasiatic] Jews from Eastern countries, could move toward supporting the Labor Party in protest of the Likud's policy, which focuses on the settlement and absorption of the new immigrants from the Soviet Union at the expense of the deteriorating conditions of the Eastern Jews.

In general, the issue is thorny and the political tendencies of the new immigrants are still forming. However, it can be said that the ripening opportunities of the Likud are still stronger with regard to attracting these new immigrants, because of the Likud's success in providing "some" of the financing needed for settlement and absorption activities, which leads us to say that the new immigrants from the Soviet Union constitute a possible human fund to nourish and support the extreme right in Israel.

The Left's Predicament

The Israel Labor Alignment has suffered from a protracted crisis since it relinquished power in 1977, for the first time since 1949, to the right under the Likud's leadership. The Labor Party is still suffering from this crisis, which is reflected in its inability since that time (1977) to form a government by itself without the

assistance of the forces of the right. This crisis can be summarized as the inability of the party's leaders to attract new supporters to the principle of "land in exchange for peace," while the right and the small, religious, extremist parties are succeeding in attracting supporters.

The Left and "Land in Exchange for Peace"

Shim'on Peres, the leader of the Labor Party, proposed a peace plan after the Gulf War ended, which is based on a number of premises, which are:

1. The impossibility of coexisting with an Arab milieu of 250 million persons based on the application of the Likud's principle of "not conceding one inch of occupied territory" or the transfer principle of Moledet and Hatehiya.
2. There will be no peace or stability in the region unless the Palestinian problem is settled peacefully.
3. The failure to reach a peaceful settlement will lead to Israel's isolation in the world, because no country supports the theses of the Israel right regarding its unwillingness to withdraw or its support of the transfer idea. This isolation could place Israel outside the framework of the new order, just as it was outside the international alliance that was formed under American pressures to oppose Iraq.
4. Failure to exploit the opportunity that has arisen after the Gulf War to settle the conflict peacefully will compel the United States to be concerned with domestic issues, especially the presidential elections in the coming year, and will compel the Arab states to focus on arming. Hence, the military option will move up in rank among the options proposed to solve the conflict.

According to the Labor Party's view, the basic principle of a solution is "land in exchange for peace" or secure, recognized borders for Israel in exchange for withdrawal from "some" of the occupied territories. The Labor Party rejects the idea of an international conference and calls for direct negotiations between Israel and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation (the Palestinian delegation would be selected from among residents of the occupied territories). In this framework, the Labor Party is calling for the establishment of a confederation between Jordan and the Palestinian territories, from which Israel would withdraw, provided that: all other Palestinian demands, such as the right of return, would be cancelled; offensive weapons would be eliminated from the occupied Palestinian territories from which Israel would withdraw; and unified Jerusalem would remain the eternal capital of Israel (Moshe Shahal, DAVAR, 1 March 1991).

As previously stated, the Labor Party suffers from a weak base of popular support. There is thus little optimism regarding its ability to attract a considerable percentage of the votes of the new immigrants in the coming elections. We thus deem it more likely that the right will

continue to exercise sole control of the Israeli Government in the near future. This is the dilemma facing the Labor Party and the Israeli left in general, while the Labor Alignment describes the right as a representative of yesterday facing the problems of tomorrow (interview with Shim'on Peres, 'AL HAMISHMAR, 1 January 1991).

Hence, the leader of the Labor Party believes that the Likud's approach of holding onto the occupied territories comes at a time when a new world order is imposing the need to reach a "regional compromise solution," i.e., a solution based on the principle of "land for peace," while the Likud policy is leaning toward "a war for territories" [contrary to] the United States and a political settlement.

It can be said that the international order began to move, since Gorbachev's advent, toward accepting America's virtual supremacy and what that entails in the way of [intervention in] regional problems and conflicts.

That was confirmed completely during the Gulf war. The United States, as its permanent representative at the United Nations emphasized, is unwilling to apply the same measures that it took to liberate Kuwait to liberate the occupied Arab lands, and it is stressing the need to reach a peaceful solution through negotiations. Given that the Israeli right rejects the idea of a regional compromise solution or "land in exchange for peace," and given that the Israeli right is expected to continue to control political life in Israel in the coming period, a peace process is not expected to start in the region at present. This will be the case as long as Israel does not perceive any real danger that threatens its national security and vital interests, especially after the destruction of the Iraqi Army's fire power, which posed a major threat to Israel.

The reality is that the United States currently does not see its interests dictating pressure on Israel to reach a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, following its emergence as the premiere superpower in managing and settling conflicts of the region, because nothing is truly threatening its interests and consequently compelling it do so, especially, as is stated by Paul Marie de la Gers, after it has led a campaign to censure the PLO because of its support for Iraq.

The PLO has thus been neutralized, and an opportunity has opened for Israel to impose "order" in the occupied territories, by its well-known means, to inaugurate the new security order in the region.

Given the lack of a true threat to its interests, the United States will not undertake any serious intervention to impose a peaceful solution through an Israeli withdrawal from all or some of the occupied territories at present. Perhaps the United States will become enthusiastic about doing so after it reaps more fruits from its victory in the Gulf war, be it changes at the apex of the PLO's power structure or the entrenchment of changes in the

positions of some of the Gulf states regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict, perhaps in expectation of the effectuation of partial settlements shortly after the creation of greater fragmentation in the Arab position on the conflict with Israel.

Hence, we stress that the dangers that the coming days will bring regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict stem mainly from American-Israeli coordination. These dangers can be confronted only by reuniting Arab ranks, transcending the trial of Iraq's occupation of Kuwait, and reaching an Arab consensus on the general lines that govern the Arab states' positions on the conflict with Israel. The Arab states must become convinced, collectively and individually, that their national interest requires this of them, with emphasis on the fact that the absence of a solution will only elevate the rank of the military option among the available options for solving the conflict. The United States is completely aware of this and is moving toward it by coordinating with Israel and being content to make statements without starting a serious peace process. Hence, the option of "war for territories" governs the view of the Israeli right regarding the future of the occupied territories.

IRAQ

Editorial Discusses Democratization, Renewal

91AE0377A Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 2
Apr 91 p 3

[Article by Hani Wahib: "Responsible Democratic Practice and the Tasks of Rebuilding"]

[Text] Talk about democracy is not new, nor is the democracy that we are now discussing new to our course. Desiring to practice it, we cannot set out from a vacuum. But what is totally new is the nature of the period of struggle on whose threshold we stand today. New are the objective and independent constraints that make it necessary to begin a distinctive new type of responsible democratic practice that answers actively and concretely to what the tasks of reconstruction require in the way of programs, tools, means, and creative formulas for constructive democratic expression in idea and method.

Speaking with great but hopefully not excessive brevity, we can describe the nature of the coming period of struggle as one of reconstructing and rebuilding what the treacherous aggression against Iraq destroyed, strengthening the internal front, and then faring forth on the road to the strategic goals of the course of our comprehensive revolutionary renewal. One knows what this very terse description implies: how the tasks of renewal interpenetrate and interconnect. One knows the difficulties and complications—not to mention bitter agonies—that this delicate and sensitive period in the life of our people and nation enfolds. One knows the cost of the earnest and generous sacrifices that await our people's stalwart fighters and all the patriots among them. Thus, certain distinctive conditions and hallmarks are required for

committed revolutionary behavior and even for responsible patriotic behavior, so that the "responsible freedom" that Comrade Commander and Militant Saddam Husayn mentioned in his historic speech of 16 March 1991 may assume its full dimensions and proportions and its real significance. It will thereby constitute the guiding intellectual compass that defines the true and sound course for responsible democratic practice in all fields and branches of political, economic, social, and cultural life and in various areas of restoration, construction, and services. One must emphasize in this regard that responsible democratic practice should be pursued for its own sake as a progressive method indispensable for accomplishing the tasks of the reconstruction stage. For this earnest practice to bear its desired fruit, it must be based on a foundation of deep faith in the unity of Iraq and on continuing the course of the victorious revolution. It must muster all the noble efforts of proud Iraqis on the course of forward-moving, profound, and accelerating revolutionary-democratic building. Of course, deep belief in the requirements of responsible democratic practice, despite its importance, is not sufficient by itself, as long as it is not accompanied by a high degree of democratic consciousness. Such consciousness represents the guiding light of responsible democratic practice and gives it impetus toward constant development. It is like a safety valve that protects it from the dangers of excess and error.

Here we must be utterly frank. We must point out that the democratic practice that our nation seeks in this critical stage of its life does not mean extolling democratic sayings, coupled with formal exercises. In most parts of the world, democratic pretensions—if one may use the term—have had their credibility badly shaken because of the wide gap between democratic concepts, ideas, and theses and repressive, imperious, or bureaucratic practices that contradict democracy.

In our country, despite the clearly democratic orientation that characterized the course of the revolution, and despite the excellence of the leader Saddam Husayn's enlightened democratic thinking joined with the highest forms of democratic practice by him, the violations that democratic practice has suffered at many stages because of certain objective circumstances and, at most stages, because of independent factors involving weak democratic faith and consciousness and imperfect democratic practice in the work of most government agencies and many popular and some party organizations—these violations have cast negative shadows on the credibility of the democratic thesis. They have been reflected in the indifference of popular reaction to democratic slogans. This prominent objective reality we have described obliges government organs and party and popular organizations to assume the burden of the new course of democratic transformation whose features and principles Comrade Leader Saddam Husayn clearly and precisely defined in his historic speech of 16 March 1991 concerning the need to complete discussions concerning the constitution, put it to a plebiscite, and finish building

democratic institutions under it. Then we must set out on the road to practicing a multi-party system and developing freedom of the press. All this dictates that a genuine democratic spirit must begin to emerge among Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party activists and leadership cadres in state organs and popular organizations. Great scope must be given for responsible popular criticism based on concern for the future of Iraq and the course of the revolution. This is the best way to cut off the supporters of retreat, conspiracy, all forms of sectarian strife, and the cries of national schism now being raised by plotting traitors—foreign lackeys who make no effort to veil themselves, treason having become a badge of distinction to such rogues. Here we must be utterly frank and say that the lackeys who have infiltrated from across the borders to stir up sedition, sabotage, and destruction across a wide zone of our country have swept away with them a few weak spirits. This can be partly attributed to weakness in the performance of some party organizations and government agencies and to the weakness of democratic practice in the fields of their activity. Otherwise, how could the sabotage have reached the extent described by our information media in some governorates, when the party organization structure, government agencies, and specialized agencies were so extensive there—not to mention the extensive popular base of the revolution and of its intrepid leader Saddam Husayn in those governorates? Comrade Leader Saddam Husayn has already indicated the answer to this question on many occasions and in many actions and directives, such as the speech (included in the main report of the ninth national party conference) that he gave at the opening of the conference. He spoke clearly and frankly, saying among other things: "The enemy's winning over of groups that the revolution had technically reckoned to be in the ranks of the people indicates a shortcoming for which the party must bear responsibility to the relevant extent and degree. The most important shortcoming was that some party members had insufficiently unshakable principles and thinking. They were little able to express the party's principles regarding course and method. They were unable to expose the enemy's means and his nature, and they were unable to provide the necessary instruction about him among the people and at lower party levels."

His excellency added: "As one of our party responsibilities, we must measure the dedication and ability of party members in the governorates and other administrative divisions by the decrease of enemies of the revolution and party, the decrease of the negative element in popular circles, the increase of the masses' enthusiasm for the revolution and party, and the increase of their consciousness and intellectual and moral steadfastness in accordance with the party's principles and standards in every stage."

Starting from careful study of the words of Comrade Leader Saddam Husayn, we should search for the components of ideological and ethical steadfastness. We shall find them in the need to implant democratic faith and

belief in all party activists, workers in government agencies, and the public at large. We should develop a responsible democratic consciousness that will deepen the channels of interaction between the party, government agencies, and the public. As a result, the people's criticisms and their vision of ways to alleviate their everyday suffering will make their way to leaders without heavy coverings or corrupt practices. There will solidify between our people and their unique historic leadership a splendid state of unity that will be our glorious revolution's protective shield against the evils of conspirators and traitors.

Therefore, the most prominent component of intellectual and moral steadfastness in this stage is correct democratic behavior that expresses the highest degree of responsible democratic consciousness. It is the embodiment of the desired balance between, on the one hand, the requirements of caution, vigilance, strong and resolute smiting of conspirators and traitors, and blocking any impulse toward sedition and sabotage, and, on the other hand, the need to give free rein to responsible democratic practice for all well-intentioned members of the people. This will mobilize a mass guarantee for the course of the revolution, thereby speeding efforts for rebuilding, reconstructing, restoring, and then improving basic services to citizens.

On this basis, the responsible democratic practice that we desire in this critical period to facilitate the accomplishment of the tasks of the period must avoid two dangerous and incorrect tendencies in conceiving and practicing democracy:

The first distorted conception sees the democratic project and democratic practice in this period as a means for passing through a temporary bottleneck or for overcoming certain difficulties and complications that beset the course of the revolution. The foolishness of this idea becomes evident from the fact that democracy as concept and practice are at the heart of the ideology of the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party. The path of responsible democracy characterized the July Revolution from its outset. The masses of our people have experienced the authentic democratic orientation and practice of the leader, Saddam Husayn, in all fields of practice and application. Even before the events of 2 August, the leadership began to develop a democratic course by announcing the proposed constitution in the various information media and by beginning to discuss it in party and official bodies in preparation for discussion of it in the broad public forum, a plebiscite on it, and beginning to put its provisions into practice, thereby implementing party and political pluralism and affording an opportunity for apposite alternative opinion to make its mark on the course of democratic interaction that our historic leadership desires to develop and deepen.

The second incorrect position and conception finds in present and future democratic practice a routine continuation of the formulas of the past period, particularly its

procedures and methods. These would freeze democratic practice and imprison it in formulas antedating our current stage of rebuilding and reconstruction. The prevalence of this incorrect conception would entail very serious negative effects on the course of democratic application for the coming phase, because it would strip it of its effective weapon of carefully reviewing the formulas of the past and diagnosing their shortcomings. It would thus bar the way to innovating creative formulas for a responsible democratic practice that answers to the requirements of the period and carries out our people's aspirations to exercise their freedom and free choice in developing, deepening, and protecting the course of their titanic revolution.

Having reflected on the damages and dangers of the two incorrect positions we have mentioned in conceiving the democratic practice that is desired in this period, we see that the desired democratic practice should not come as something isolated from the course of democratic revolutionary building in our country. At the same time, within the course of this building it ought to be a specific developed link that answers to the tasks of defeating conspiracy and continuing our authentic revolutionary path with our people's full devotion and perseverance in building their new Iraq.

The size of the destruction inflicted on our country by the American- NATO-Zionist alliance has become clear to the eyes and minds of our people. They know the enormous efforts that await each of us in his field in order to get even with this alliance by rebuilding our country and continuing the path of scientific and cultural revival and progress that our militant leadership has charted for us. They know how this requires us to open wide the door of frankness and plain speaking to all views and sincere criticisms in all fields and areas of work and production and in all service fields. Despite the sincere and benevolent efforts being made in these fields, the agencies working in them have shown a clear decline in performance level by their slowness in setting out resolutely to confront the enemy's sabotaging of our basic services. Thus we see that party organizations and the information media are called on to exercise constructive criticism of the work of these agencies that have shown disgraceful and tangible inadequacy in their job both during the period of the aggression and since the ceasefire of 28 February. It seems that the tribulation through which our proud and generous people have passed was a touchstone for the performance of many service agencies and their managerial staffs. A people that rallied around its historic leaders and bore with steadfastness and disdain the savage flood of American-NATO bombing deserves to have its basic services restored as quickly as possible. A few small-minded persons in service agencies should stop trying to curry favor by providing services on the basis of positions and interests and discriminating between residential districts. All Iraqis from all parts of Iraq sacrificed what was dear and precious—particularly the poor, who are suffering undismayed the difficulties of daily life and the

aggressor- imposed plot to starve them. They gave their sons as martyrs on the altar of Iraq's honor and self-esteem. They deserve to have light and water restored to their homes and to be provided with the fuel and minimal necessities they need to carry on the business of their lives.

Our people can understand the real difficulties that prevent the speedy provision of certain services. They are asked to show patience to overcome all the trials and tribulations that confront them. They should imitate their intrepid leader Saddam Husayn's patience, unerring wisdom, and deep faith in the need for journalists to write their opinions regardless of whether government agencies are pleased or displeased with what they write. They should imitate his faith that all citizens should exercise their responsible freedom to criticize errors and corrupt practices. But this must be done without excess or exaggeration and without abandoning the spirit of fairness. As part of our democratic course and the practices required by the tasks of rebuilding, one must practice constructive criticism that aspires to protect the course of the revolution. Destructive criticism must not be allowed to play its subversive role under the sign of democracy. In return, we must open our hearts to every sincere criticism, even if it is harsh in some of its forms and expressions, for "Your friend is he who speaks the truth to you, not he who says that what you say is true." One of our folk proverbs says, "Follow him who makes you cry, not him who makes you laugh." It means that you should listen to the person who gives you an honest picture, despite its bitterness and darkness; you should not listen to the person who makes a somber picture seem beautiful. By this responsible democratic path and by our unique historic leader Saddam Husayn's resoluteness, enlightened democratic thought, love for the members of our people, and dedication to their reaching the heights of self-esteem and honor, we shall overcome the difficulties of the present period. We shall surge forward on the road toward our democratic, revolutionary building, as befits the position of our beloved Iraq in the course of the Arab revival that we seek.

ISRAEL

'New Deal-Type' Projects To Stem Unemployment Planned

TA1250829A Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST
in English 12 May 91 pp 1, 10

[Report by Alisa Odenheimer]

[Excerpt] The government will invest NIS [new Israeli shekels] 1.9 billion over the next year in New Deal-type development projects, as part of the Finance Ministry plan to stem unemployment, a spokesman for the ministry announced on Friday.

The projects will concentrate on building and improving roads, railroads, airports, communications infrastructure, energy and electricity plans, water and sewage systems, and 12 new industrial parks.

Funding for the projects will come, in part, from the state budget, but will also be shared by state-owned companies, which will participate in the projects. The state budget's share in the project will come to NIS 400 million.

The plan also calls for state-funding of "industrial ulpans" at 10 large companies, that will absorb thousands of jobseekers and train them at government expense.

The two programs will take some 40,000 people off the unemployment lines, according to Finance Ministry projections.

The ministry is planning a number of other steps to ease the growing unemployment crisis, such as government participation in high-risk investment, more on-the-job training programs, encouraging state-owned companies to hire more workers, and additional government aid for marketing exports. The ministry spokesman added that the government plans to create jobs by encouraging foreign investment in Israel and sub-contracting by Israeli firms for foreign companies, but did not say how this would be accomplished. [passage omitted]

LEBANON

Obstacles to Solution of Crisis Called Surmountable

91AE0403A London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
12 Apr 91 p 12

[Article: "Solution in Lebanon Is Under Way After 16 Years of War; Nothing To Stand in Way of Solution; Obstacles To Be Surmounted in Two Years"]

[Text] The 16th anniversary of the war in Lebanon, which will be this week, differs from any preceding anniversary because it marks the onset of a solution to the crisis which was created on 13 April 1975 when the 'Ayn al-Rummanah bus incident occurred. It was that incident which set off the crisis.

A solution is underway, and its characteristics this time are taking shape clearly on the ground and not somewhere out there. The al-Ta'if Agreement is like a train, traveling on schedule and stopping periodically to rest a little and to be refueled before traveling once again to a new stop. The al-Ta'if Agreement will continue on this course until it reaches its ultimate destination, when the legitimate government can establish its sovereignty over all the territory of Lebanon and the process of putting back the parts of the country together and repairing all the cracks and rifts in it is completed.

The six months' period set by the Council of Ministers, from 20 March to 20 September, will be decisive regarding the application of extremely important and extremely sensitive articles in the al-Ta'if Agreement, especially those which have to do with disbanding the militias and appointing people to parliament. Although these appointments in principle are tantamount to a mortal blow to the democracy which gave Lebanon its life, they have to be accepted in the provisions of the al-Ta'if Agreement as the less of two evils. These parliamentary appointments are like the term extensions which members of parliament gave themselves several times when safe, quiet, free, and honest elections could not be held in the country. When the capability for holding such elections is restored, the Lebanese people will regain their sacred, inherent right to choose their representatives and to hold their place as the source of power and authority.

The plan for Greater Beirut, the deployment of the army in some areas of south Lebanon, and the decision to disband the militias represent what has been achieved to date. Although these achievements are the product of a regional and an international wish to close the Lebanon file, other steps which are required for a complete solution will undoubtedly be taken gradually. International and regional wishes will press for these steps to be taken, and Lebanese leaders will take them with unswerving determination. Although what remains to be done to bring about a solution to this crisis is more dangerous and more difficult, especially those steps which have to do with implementing Resolution 425 and restoring the Lebanese government's control over the border strip, all obstacles can be surmounted when the international organization insists that its resolutions be carried out and that its prestige be affirmed. All obstacles can be surmounted when all the Lebanese are united under the rubric of national unity, which is the most important foundation for a healthy Lebanon that has learned the lesson of a cruel crisis.

A maximum period of two years was set by the Council of Ministers for the return of people who were forced to leave their homes. These people can return to their homes during that period, and it is important that they do, so that the coexistence formula which has characterized Lebanon throughout its long history can be reinstated. Lebanon's experiences have shown that coexistence is Lebanon's inescapable destiny.

A more telling indicator that an end to the predicament will come soon is the fact that Arabs and the world have not been and will not be able to do without Lebanon's distinguished experience. For 16 years they have not been able to find an alternative to the Lebanese experience, which asserts itself with its uniqueness, its quality, and its superior, humane, and civilized nature.

What will remain is the reconstruction of Lebanon, and that will be carried out by the Arab and International Fund. An announcement is expected soon about the establishment of that fund whose initial venture into

Lebanon will do its part in the effort to build a new Lebanon by utilizing Lebanese expatriates who are scattered all over the world.

That is why we can actually be optimistic this time that the file on the crisis will be closed. That is why we can envision a radiant future for Lebanon. By the summer of 1993 or 1994 at the most, Lebanon will once again become the Arabs' summer resort. Once again it will become an oasis for the Arab nation, and a platform for their causes. Lebanon will be encouraged to reclaim itself, and those who left the country as well as those who were forced to leave it, especially those whose departure from Lebanon was caused directly by the war, will be encouraged to return to the homeland and to put their expertise, their experience, and their brains to good use for the purpose of reviving the glory of Lebanon and participating in the process of development and the establishment of peace.

What the Lebanese want most is that there be no setbacks in the effort to rescue Lebanon. What is required today is that all the Lebanese agree to wage war against the war. The Lebanese are being asked to make reason, dialogue, and affection prevail in all their disputes. They are being asked to turn their backs on the past, to put an end to narrow interests, and to put Lebanon's supreme interests above any interest and any consideration.

Every Lebanese, whatever his position, is responsible for making a contribution to the process of healing Lebanon's wounds and restoring Lebanon's beauty, health, and vigor so that we can celebrate in the future the anniversary of the restoration of peace, stability, and sovereignty rather than that of the outbreak of war. We do not want this war to become anything more than a mere bilious chapter in the history of Lebanon.

Reports Optimistic on Solution of Problems

91AE0403C London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
12 Apr 91 p 9

[Article by Ahmad Zayn: "Lebanon Sets a Timetable for What Is To Be Accomplished by the al-Ta'if Agreement; Al-Husayni Tells AL-HAWADITH That Parliamentary Appointments Will Be Made Before the End of This Month"]

[Text] Brian Crocker, the U.S. ambassador to Lebanon invited a top authority figure to "iftar," the evening meal which is served to Muslims at sunset during the month of Ramadan to break the fast. That "iftar" banquet, which was attended by politicians and members of parliament, was held after Ambassador Crocker returned to the embassy in 'Awkar following his contacts with senior officials and political leaders.

It seems that serving the meal was delayed for a few minutes, so a member of parliament from north Lebanon told the top authority figure, "Now that the gun which tells everybody that it is time to break the fast has

been fired, those who have been running late during this holy month have to set their watches properly."

The top authority figure said, "Yes, I would advise everybody to set his watch in Lebanon to make it conform to the dates which have been set for applying what is left of the national reconciliation document. No one will be able to turn back the clock, not even for one minute, and no one will be able to move it ahead, not even for one minute."

After meeting with senior Syrian officials and with Ambassador Crocker, official authority figures told AL-HAWADITH, "After the war in the Gulf the reconciliation agreement turned into a timepiece for regulating time. There is a time for everything, and no one will be able to delay [this process]."

Speaker Husayn al-Husayni believes that the amendment to the parliamentary elections law, on whose basis members of parliament will be appointed, will be ratified later this month. Statutes appointing 40 members of parliament will have been issued before the end of the month.

Prime Minister 'Umar Karami thinks that the program which was established by the Council of Ministers to set in motion the process of disbanding the militias and collecting the illegal weapons will be completed on schedule. Illegal weapons will not be permitted on Lebanese territory after today. The sovereignty of the state on its own territory is non-negotiable.

Prominent government sources tell AL-HAWADITH that "weeding out" the obstacles and problems that stand in the way of implementing these two steps which the government has placed at the top of its priorities will not be easy. Some of these obstacles and problems are internal and some are external. The sources report that the American official is aware of these obstacles and problems that are facing the application of these two steps. They also report his assertion that all efforts are devoted to overcoming these obstacles and that these efforts will ultimately be successful.

The sources identify three topics which have been timed to constitute the regime's and the government's main focus of attention at this stage. They are:

- A. Carrying out the decision to disband and disarm the militias.
- B. Appointing members of parliament and members of the Socio-Economic Council.
- C. [Implementing] some articles of the reconciliation document which constitute boundaries for the stage which is to follow the two first steps.

Regarding the first topic, government sources think that setting in motion the process of carrying out the decision to disband the militias is being handled in light of decisions made by the ministerial committee which was entrusted with the task of looking into the matter.

Committee sources say that the committee's policy in this regard will apply "a long leash" approach, which would then turn into a policy that spares the rod and applies searing heat.

The sources think that the main difficulty regarding implementation of the decision inside the country, that is, regarding disbanding the Lebanese militias, is the link between disbanding and disarming these militias and disbanding and disarming non-Lebanese militias or those militias which are on Lebanese territory.

In this regard the sources pause at the complicated problem of "Palestinian weapons," the complicated problem of "the army of south Lebanon" and that of Major General Lahd's followers.

As far as Palestinian weapons are concerned, leading authority figures think that this matter has to be settled in light of the two following rules:

[1.] That there be no illegal weapons on Lebanese territory [and]

[2.] That the Lebanese state guarantee Palestinian presence on Lebanese territory in accordance with Lebanese laws which are in effect.

Speaker Husayn al-Husayni has this to say about this matter: "Since the state has the right to collect illegal weapons from the Lebanese, it stands to reason that it would also be collecting those weapons from the non-Lebanese."

Speaker al-Husayni thinks that this subject involves the intra-Lebanese reconciliation which has become an accomplished fact. In this regard Mr. al-Husayni called attention to a document that was prepared about two years ago. The substance of that document was approved by most Lebanese political tendencies and received the blessings of Patriarch Nasrallah and other spiritual leaders.

Parliamentary authority figures believe that "stonewalling" about keeping weapons in the hands of Palestinians will not continue. If it does, it will be brought to an end by the use of force.

Reliable Lebanese diplomatic sources are saying that Lebanon asked the United States of America to remove any of the difficulties which may stand in the way of any request Lebanon makes to Syria, asking it for assistance in establishing its legitimate authority over Lebanese territory in south Lebanon. AL-HAWADITH had referred to that matter in previous issues when it talked about the meeting between Faris Buwayz, the minister of foreign affairs, and James Baker, the U.S. secretary of state. John Kelly, Mr. Baker's assistant for Middle East affairs, participated in that meeting which took place in Damascus.

Diplomatic sources are telling AL-HAWADITH that preliminary information which has become available about this Lebanese request indicates that so far the

"results are positive." Some observers are interpreting that as an inclination by the PLO to abide by the decision to disband the militias. That decision was previously rejected outright by Zayd Wahbah, the PLO's representative in Lebanon.

Just as the subject of disarming Palestinians is linked to that of disarming some Lebanese militias, the sources think that this matter is linked to that of having the army of South Lebanon disarmed, at least by one of the parties.

Prominent government sources tell AL-HAWADITH that this matter was brought up at official meetings and that the following measures were taken in that regard:

First, those who had joined Maj. Gen. Lahd are to be given an opportunity to join the legitimate forces. The same procedures which were applied to similar cases are to be applied to them.

Second, the measures that will be sanctioned are to be applied to the remaining militias. This applies to those militia members who refuse to join the legitimate forces within the set period of time.

Regarding the appointment of members of parliament, informed parliamentary sources are saying that the international attitude toward appointing members of parliament boils down to what may be considered "a tempest in a teapot."

Sources revealed to AL-HAWADITH that Americans conducted effective communications with some countries, especially France, to settle positions on this subject.

The sources say that American and French diplomats met recently in Washington and that the Americans told French diplomatic representatives during that meeting that the subject of appointing members of parliament was an internal matter and that no one but the Lebanese was to talk about it or take positions on it.

And yet the same sources expressed their belief that the meeting ended in a deal on the matter that was worked out between the Americans and the French. One of the principal articles of that deal involved an effort by U.S. diplomats to resolve the difficult problem that was created when General Michel 'Awn, former commander of the army, sought refuge in the French Embassy in Lebanon. This was to be done in accordance with some face-saving conditions for France. In return, France was to become neutral on the matter of parliamentary appointments.

That is why the sources think that the steps leading to the appointment of members of parliament will accompany other steps which will bring about an end to the question of Gen. 'Awn. Both matters will then be resolved at the same time, sometime during the month of April this year.

Regarding the third topic which is manifested in determining the boundaries of the stage following the onset of

the process to disband the militias and appoint members of parliament, government authority figures say that there are files which are being activated. The most important of these files are:

A. The one on the distinguished relations between Lebanon and Syria

B. The one on defining the frameworks for administrative decentralization and for the new administrative division based on the province.

C. The file on establishing the constitutional council to monitor the constitutionality of the laws [and]

D. That on defining the education policy and standardizing the textbooks for civics and history.

That is why authority figures and sources are affirming that the quest for solutions will not stop. Whereas Ambassador Crocker's return to Lebanon is one of the factors supporting this assertion, it becomes everyone's duty "to set his watch" according to what is due to happen in Lebanon so that no "banquets" would be delayed beyond the time that was set for them.

Reports on Security Issues, Disbanding of Militias

*91AE0403B London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
19 Apr 91 p 9*

[Article by Ahmad Zayn: "Weapons Held by the State To Be the Only Weapons To Remain; Superficial Obstacles Standing in the Way of Proposed Resolutions"]

[Text] While the ministerial committee entrusted with the task of implementing the decision to disband and disarm the militias was following through on its contacts, the committee which was entrusted with the task of looking into the implementation of administrative decentralization started holding its meetings, and a committee was organized to draft a plan for a constitutional council that is to monitor the constitutionality of the laws. The lines of communication between Beirut and Damascus were open and clear in both directions, and the way was clear for holding bilateral meetings between the ministers of the two countries. These meetings were to pave the way for the effort which is to be made to start looking into the case on the distinguished relations between Lebanon and Syria. The plan to amend the parliamentary elections law on whose basis deputies were to be appointed to parliament was still being studied by authorized parliamentary committees in preparation for its adoption.

As seen by political circles, this energetic "effort" to implement the remaining articles of the national reconciliation document was countered by a security phobia whose aim was to hinder this effort and put an end to the feelings of optimism which were prevailing as a result of the opportunity that became available internationally and regionally to stabilize the process of ending the war in Lebanon.

Security sources who are knowledgeable in this area call attention to information which became available to them about a "wicked plan" whose aim was to attack the existing peace and interfere with the steps which are being taken to bring about a reconciliation. The booby-trapped cars in Antilyas were the early signs of this plan which involved reaching top official authorities and leaders.

The sources say that they warned a number of authority figures about the need to take maximum precautionary measures at this stage. As a result of this warning, official cars were barred from the area around the president's temporary office in al-Ramlah al-Bayda' and from the area surrounding the parliament building in al-Nijmah Square. That is why the speaker of parliament has to get out of his car before the entrance to the parliamentary building and walk the rest of the way. Ministers and members of parliament must also walk some distance when they are going into the president's temporary office or into the parliament building.

The sources believe that adoption of this measure is attributable to the fact that information available to specialized security forces indicated that the attempts which were being made to interfere with the reconciliation process had a collective purpose and that more than one leader or authority figure was targeted in one operation.

These sources who think that this plan has to be backed by people outside the country refuse to acknowledge that they know who is behind this plan inside or outside the country. They do not think, however, that those who devised this plan will succeed because the precautions which have been taken will be effective, and international as well as regional political coverage opposed to this plan might serve as an adequate warning to them. That is why the sources say that the effort which is being made to implement the remaining articles of the reconciliation agreement will continue unabated and that a way will be found to carry them out.

Regarding this effort, informed political and government sources tell AL-HAWADITH that the contacts which are being made to overcome the obstacles which are standing in the way of implementing the decision to disband the militias are making it possible to count on the fact that this decision will be implemented and carried out on schedule to meet the deadlines which were set for it.

The sources say that after the contacts which were made reached the point at which practical details for implementing the resolution were set forth, no serious obstacles remained with regard to the Lebanese militias. According to a member of parliament who spoke to AL-HAWADITH, a top authority figure says in that regard that an agreement was reached on the duration of the process of implementing the decision to disband the militias. But the matter of finding jobs [in the army] for members of the militias seems to have been deliberately

blown out of proportion by some in the media. On the basis of its resources the state is not contemplating taking [into the army] more than 2,000 militia members of all tendencies.

The source reports that the authority figure is affirming that to date contacts with the Palestinians, which are still underway, reflect feelings of relative satisfaction. It is true that attempts are being made to delay the process and to put it off, but the general climate will not allow such attempts to continue. The source indicated that a PLO delegation will visit Lebanon immediately after the Bairam Feast, which follows the month of Ramadan. This PLO delegation will meet with officials to explore with them some of the issues which are still unresolved.

The sources believe that if everyone yields to common sense and reason, the matter of Palestinian weapons will be settled without fail, especially since positions on this matter are clear-cut. In this regard the sources call attention to President Ilyas al-Harawi's assertion that the decision to disband and disarm the militias involves collecting all the weapons from all the militias and from all the camps. But the Palestinians know what the outcome will be if they reject the state's decision. Brian Crocker, the U.S. ambassador to Lebanon, has also affirmed that the only weapons in Lebanon should be those that are held by the state.

Informed sources say that the Syrians, who are communicating with non-Lebanese forces for the purpose of implementing the decision to disband the militias, have asked Palestinians who were living in some areas of al-Biq'a' and Mount Lebanon to withdraw from those areas. These sources say that the Palestinians did in fact withdraw from those areas.

The sources say that communications regarding implementing the decision to disband and disarm the militias remained active in the four capital cities: Beirut, Damascus, Tunis, and Algiers. These communications continued until the eve of 20 April, the day all militias were to turn in their weapons.

The sources think that counting on an intra-Lebanese dispute about how the question of Palestinian weapons is to be dealt with is a losing proposition. Someone in the Lebanese Forces told AL-HAWADITH that the forces will not use the question of Palestinian weapons to make a mountain out of a molehill as long as the facts on the ground affirm that what the state ultimately wants is to establish its authority over all Lebanese territory and that it is determined to do so. If some people want to foil the state's efforts by suggesting that when we start turning in our weapons we take advantage of some loopholes which may still exist regarding Palestinian weapons, [we can tell them] that the suggestion will not work. We understand the motives behind such a suggestion quite well.

As far as appointing members of parliament is concerned, referring the bill to amend the parliamentary

elections law to parliament and to the competent parliamentary committees for their consideration in preparation for convening a general session of parliament to ratify the bill revealed whose position on the question of having members of parliament appointed to their seats was right and whose position on that question was not. Parliamentary sources told AL-HAWADITH that a preliminary survey they conducted following the deliberations which took place between members of parliament in al-Nijmah Square after the text of the bill was distributed to them, revealed the following facts:

A. Passing the bill as drafted by the government was impossible.

B. So far, 31 members of parliament support amending the elections law. That is the number of supporters if there is a quorum when parliament meets in a general session that has this bill on its agenda.

C. Failure was the outcome of several plans which were proposed to secure agreement on the bill among members of parliament in return for an agreement in advance to shorten the members' term in office. That term was to end on 12/31/1991.

That is why parliamentary sources opposed to the plan to appoint members of parliament say that they realize the truth about the outcome of this survey. It is that realization which is making them change the strategy of their action to oppose the bill.

In this regard the sources say that those who oppose the plan are not devoting their attention to changing people's positions on the bill, but that they are concentrating their attention now on efforts to ensure that a session to amend the parliamentary election law not be held. If they are assured that such a session will not be held, the bill will be facing only one of two alternatives:

A. The bill amending the elections law would be considered a pressing bill and enacted by statutory decree. This can happen after the bill is read in a general session.

B. [The second alternative involves] suspending parliamentary appointments indefinitely. Doing that would bring the entire legislative branch to a standstill and would require all parties to reach an acceptable political settlement on the matter of appointments.

The sources justify the need to pursue this course of action to work against passage of the bill that would have members of parliament appointed to their positions by saying that a member of parliament can be absent from a session and not attend it for health or security reasons. He may be traveling abroad, or he may miss the session for other similar reasons. And that would not pit those who miss the session for political reasons against figures of authority inside and outside the country.

And yet, notable parliamentary sources believe that what they describe as a very well-considered possibility requires precision in its implementation. They believe that such precision is lacking among sponsors of that

tendency in Lebanon. Since only 34 members constitute a quorum for Lebanon's parliament, the effort to avoid having a quorum is reduced to seeing to it that only three members of parliament who do not support the amendment to appoint members of parliament miss the meeting.

That is why the sources find it unlikely that the opposition can carry out its plan, particularly since most elements outside the country, international as well as regional ones, and most official and political leaders in Lebanon have "placed their stamp of approval" on the position supporting parliamentary appointments.

Notwithstanding the two bills which the government has placed on the front burner, namely, the bill to implement the decision to disband the militias and that to have members of parliament appointed, prominent government sources think that preparations for other matters will be completed by the end of next May. These matters include a bill on a constitutional council to monitor the constitutionality of the laws and a bill on administrative divisions and the boundaries of the process of administrative decentralization. Another matter involves suspending part of the bilateral agreements which are part of the process of implementing the distinguished relations between Lebanon and Syria.

That is why the sources think that the obstacles which stand in the way of implementing the decisions which have been proposed are superficial ones because their success does not mean only that a resolution or a bill is being aborted, but it also means that the implementation of an integrated program for a solution is being hampered. If what has been determined as the first step in that program is not completed, no one will be able to take the second step. According to the sponsors of the al-Ta'if Agreement, herein lies the credibility of the process to implement that agreement. This is the agreement whose supporters can outmaneuver its opponents: whenever efforts are made to shackle and restrain that agreement over Lebanese and territorial waters, divers stand ready to keep it from sinking and blimps are on standby to keep it floating.

KUWAIT

Oil Workers Union Freezes Relations With Iraq Supporters

LD1505135791 London KUNA in Arabic 1009 GMT
15 May 91

[Text] Kuwait, 15 May 91, (KUNA)—The Petroleum and Petro-Chemical Industry Workers' Union in the State of Kuwait today announced a freeze on its relations with Arab workers unions which supported last August's Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. A statement issued here said the Kuwaiti petroleum and petro-chemical industry has decided to stop proceeding with all the agreements that

had been signed with workers' unions in Jordan, Yemen, Tunisia, and Algeria, in addition to the Palestine workers' union.

The statement of the Kuwaiti workers' union said that the decision was made in view of the "disgraceful stances" of the unions which supported the Iraqi invasion that led to the killing and homelessness of thousands of Arab youths in Kuwait; the stealing of monies, violation of honor, and burning of the resources of the Arab people generated by this "barbarous invasion;" and the solidarity and support expressed by the workers unions in the aforementioned states for the regime of the tyrants of Baghdad, a matter which contradicts the principles, aspirations, and aims for which workers unions throughout the world were set up.

The union announced a "boycott of any meeting or conference held under the auspices or in the premises of these organizations." It stressed its pre-Iraqi invasion stance on the need for the return of the Arab petroleum workers' union to its previous headquarters in Cairo. The union's statement said that this stance was adopted in "cooperation with workers' unions in each of Egypt, Syria, and Lebanon." The petroleum and petro-chemical industry workers' union in the State of Kuwait called on the international federation of Arab workers' unions to work for the return of the assets of the Kuwaiti workers unions that had been stolen by the Iraqi regime through the superficial union of workers in Iraq."

The head of the petroleum workers' union in Kuwait, Muhammad Salim Suwayyan, and a delegation from the union is on a visit to Egyptian and Syrian trade unions to make arrangements for joint action aiming at distancing trade unions deviating from the correct trade unionist course in the Arab world.

TV Previews British Foreign Secretary's Visit

LD0205210791 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1958 GMT 2 May 91

[From the "Kuwait Message" program]

[Text] British foreign secretary Douglas Hurd will be arriving in Kuwait tomorrow on a brief visit within the framework of his tour of the region. He is expected to be received by His Highness Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, and His Highness Shaykh Sa'd al-Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, crown prince and prime minister.

Official sources state that Mr. Hurd will hold further talks with a number of Kuwaiti officials and will extensively tour the country to acquaint himself with the extent of havoc and destruction caused by the aggressive Iraqi Army. The British foreign secretary will hold a press conference at 1700 tomorrow before leaving the country the same day.

LIBYA

Cooperation Protocol Signed With Ghana

LD1505103991 Tripoli JANA in English 1707 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] Tripoli, Al Ma' [May] 13, JANA—Arab Maghreb Union's Pool—The Great Jamahiriya-Ghana protocol for cooperation in various fields was signed this morning, in Tripoli. The protocol was signed by the assistant under-secretary for international cooperation affairs of the Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation Bureau and by Mohammed Ben Shampas, the under-secretary of [the] Foreign Ministry in Ghana.

The protocol enhances the development of joint cooperation between the two countries in various fields including economic, financial, oil, joint investment, refining, and processing oil products. The protocol stated, as well, fixing the dates for the next meetings of joint Arab Libyan-Ghanian Committee, in the coming month of al-Tumur, in Tripoli.

The signing was attended by Kojo Tsikata the member of Ghana's National Provisional Defense Committee.

MOROCCO

ONA Shows 13.9-Percent Profit Increase for 1990

91P40295A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 3 Jun 91 p 10

[Text] The Omnium Nord-Africain [ONA] conglomeration, which is considered the largest private business conglomeration in Africa, had net profits totalling nearly 567.4 million dinars in 1990, an increase of 13.9 percent over 1989. The conglomeration's total transactions rose by 25.4 percent to 12.6 billion dinars.

OMAN

Chinese Trade Delegation Visits

91P40294A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 24 May 91 p 11

[Text] Muscat—AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—A large Chinese trade delegation will visit the Sultanate of Oman on 28 May to open new markets for Chinese goods and to strengthen commercial relations between the two countries. Cui Yushan, vice chairman of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, will head the delegation.

Included in the delegation's membership are a number of trade officials and representatives of the chamber of commerce, industry, and technology [as published].

The delegation will meet with Maqbul Sultan, president of Oman's Chamber of Commerce, and a number of Omani businessmen to discuss the strengthening of

commercial and economic relations. The visiting delegation will have discussions with officials in the Ministries of Commerce and Industry and Petroleum and Minerals. They also will visit a number of industrial facilities in the Sultanate.

SAUDI ARABIA

Pros, Cons of Duty Free Zone Discussed

*91AE0362A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
12 Apr 91 p 10*

[Article by Muhammad al-Salum: "Would Duty Free Zone Experiment Be Good for Saudi Economy; Businessmen Cautious, Fear Its Impact on Industry; Study Proposed in Context of Gulf Economic Agreement"]

[Text] Businessmen and industrialists express caution about the idea of establishing free zones in Saudi Arabia. This concept has been around a while, and is controversial within business circles. There is some enthusiasm for the idea and, while the majority does not definitely oppose it, they do express reservations regarding its benefit to the kingdom's economy, in view of the size of the investment that would be required to prepare the necessary infrastructure, as well as its benefit to an open economy, in which high customs fees are not levied. Some fear a negative impact that the creation of free zones could have, unless a conclusive study is made.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT sought out the views of selected officials from the economic sectors and prominent economists, and asked them two principal questions about their opinions concerning the advantages of creating free zones. The questions pertained to stimulating the economy, and the repercussions of establishing these zones on the future of the Saudi economy, after having achieved giant leaps and measurable growth rates during the past two decades.

Faysal Muhammad al-Suhayl, general president of the Saudi Railroad, did not disagree over the advantages of the zones with regard to stimulating port activities. If he had to express a reservation, it would be with respect to the need to achieve effective control from the operational and security aspects. However, its harmfulness to the economy would overshadow its benefits.

He pointed out that customs fees in Saudi Arabia were few and low, compared with other countries, and there are no harsh restrictions on the entry or exit of goods from and to the kingdom. This fact might not be encouraging to the creation of free zones in Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, in his opinion, their presence would not be damaging. The presence of ports, equipped with the most modern methods, many piers, expansive areas and beaches extending for hundreds of kilometers, adjacent to countries, with ease of communications with all corners of the world, all of that would encourage the

establishment of free zones. However, there must be in-depth studies made with regard to all circumstances involved.

Dr. Muhsun Jalal, head of the National Manufacturing Company, noted that there would be huge costs, which would have to be borne by the state, with regard to establishing and equipping free zones, and managing them by methods that would attract foreign capital. Therefore, there must be a well-studied and logical justification for beginning to establish this type of free zone.

In general, with regard to setting up free zones, countries aim at achieving goals, such as employing and training national labor, and gaining national expertise, through working on projects that are undertaken in free zones. They also aim at striving for the transfer of technology and increasing their hard currency resources.

Dr. Jalal said: "It is not easy to answer with a yes or no with regard to creating free zones, because a comprehensive evaluation and detailed analysis must be made, in order to compare the costs of this type of free zone with the possible profits to be made. Therefore, a precise evaluation must be made of the experiences of other countries, so as to learn about the reasons for the experiences in some of those countries. Moreover, I don't want us to rush into setting up this zone, merely to imitate what others have done. What is good for others might not be good for the Saudi economy, and vice versa."

Dr. Jalal added: "I believe it necessary to answer several questions and study a number of options, and compare them. For example, would it be preferable to work for a transfer of technology, by means of the system in use at the present time (joint projects with a foreign partner, and projects of economic balance), or through establishing a free zone? What kind of technology is being planned for transfer? The products of free zone projects are usually earmarked for foreign export. In light of that, how would these projects be tied in with Saudi Arabia Basic Industries Corporation [SABIC] projects destined for export? What raw materials would be needed for these projects, in as much as they could result in enlarging and increasing the added value? To what degree would establishing this zone lead to diversifying sources of national income, through attracting national investment, in participation with the foreign partner?

"Finally, to what extent would free zone projects lead to training and polishing the skills of the national work force? Or, would foreign labor be depended upon to operate and manage these projects? To what degree would the national economy need to obtain hard currency, after having had to invest enormous sums to build the free zone?"

Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Dukhayl, chief of the Investment and Finance Center in Saudi Arabia, calls for a comprehensive look. He said that free zone policies are tantamount to an economic policy, or a specific economic

tool, aimed at putting an end to commercial obstacles, which usually are between one nation and another, or a group of nations. The purpose of this policy is to overcome barriers, attempt to avoid them, and make a kind of so-called free zone, which would be devoid of restrictions on trade difficulties that put an end to commercial traffic among nations. Dr. al-Dukhayl added that before one jumped into the discussion about free zones as such, one should not isolate them from a comprehensive look at the national economy as a whole and, consequently, foreign trade as well.

He emphasized that a study would reveal matters to be avoided, without having to establish the free zone first. He went on to say: "If the study's results show that we cannot liberalize trade, and cannot reach our goals, without moving toward a free zone, then in this case we can have recourse to that free zone." Dr. al-Dukhayl stressed that creating a free zone without a detailed study, might have a negative impact on economic movement in other sectors, within the nonfree zones which, as he says, are the rest of the national economy's sectors. However, it is not impossible that there are positive aspects to creating a free zone. For example, this zone could draw on primary resources located in the area, such as labor and raw materials.

Dr. al-Dukhayl added that the free zone is not all good, nor all bad. It might succeed in a country that has no local industry, but might not succeed in another country.

Dr. al-Dukhayl stated that in spite of everything, a free zone could result in liberalizing trade and freedom of economic action, but "we must also be realistic, and study the repercussions of this step on the present situation." Therefore, he says that the principle of creating a free zone is unobjectionable, but he asks, "Why not make the entire economy free, before we jump to create the free zone?"

Dr. al-Dukhayl adds: "It is true that these questions will clash with several things, including customs tariffs, etc. In a case like this, I say let's study customs tariffs. Are these tariffs profitable for the national economy, or are they a burden on the national economy? If we know what the profit is, and what their cost is, then we can be persuaded as to their usefulness or not."

In this regard, Dr. al-Dukhayl says that he only supports imposing customs protection on industries for a limited time only. He explains that no industry can protect itself over the long term. Customs tariffs will not protect it and, in this case, are a burden on the national economy. He also says that he is not a supporter of walls and barriers, which are constructed in the national economy to protect industries that can only exist with these barriers protecting them from competition. This does not mean, as he says, that all matters are free, because there are winds that blow in from abroad that are unfairly directed such as, for example, flooding the market. In this case, and in the midst of unfair circumstances like these, as he describes them, one is convinced

that industries should be protected from unfair competition. He adds: "If goods produced by Saudi Arabia cost much less to be produced in other countries, it would be more advantageous economically to import them from abroad, rather than manufacture them domestically. This is true, even if I am one of those who say we must strive for self-sufficiency, because in economics, there is nothing called self-sufficiency."

Dr. al-Dukhayl goes on to say that the free zone is a good thing for countries that exist on taxes, and with hard financial restrictions. Citing Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria as examples of that, he said that establishing a free zone in such countries might bring about economic freedom, which would prevail within a given zone, and could extend to other sectors, influencing the economy in general. He added: "If we look at Singapore, which is an advanced country in certain ways, and which has a free zone, we would find that the free zone constitutes 90 percent of its economy. This means that all the country is a free market, as is Hong Kong. The success of that supports my contention of having the entire economy free." He referred to the free zone experience in Jabal 'Ali in Dubayy, and said that the lesson was not in the Jabal 'Ali zone, but rather in the Emirate of Dubayy, where this zone is located. The activities pursued in the Emirate were free and open, which helped in the success of the Jabal 'Ali zone.

Tawfiq Ibrahim Tawfiq, undersecretary of the Ministry of Commerce for supply, stated that the advantages of creating free zones stem basically from investing in a distinctive geographic location, which is the center of rapid and easy communications with a number of countries, and which has excellent facilities and services, at a suitable cost. An example of that is Singapore. It has an important location in Southeast Asia, with a natural harbor capable of receiving the largest ships, and offers the usual shipping services. The development of commercial exchange with the British Commonwealth is augmented by the transient trade, making Singapore among the most important ports in the world, and the largest commercial and financial center in the region. Moreover, the colony of Hong Kong has played an important role in international commerce. Its main activity was in the reexport trade, since it was a vital outlet for Communist China's foreign trade until recently, when it changed to reliance on exporting its local industries.

Tawfiq said: "Creation of a free zone is done either for the purpose of establishing specific industries, in accordance with what its system would allow, or to import commodities, with the intent to store and resell them, either as is, or after doing minor operations with them, such as sorting, grading, repacking, etc. The free zone system could basically be aimed at attracting capital, through tax exemptions, investment facilities, assistance to countries, whose production is based on producing and exporting raw materials to be finished, to obtain foreign currency, employ labor, and attract technical expertise. Free zones operate as centers through which

commercial movement can be accelerated, and industries established that can enjoy excellent facilities and services, as well as developing the reexport trade, attempt to absorb unemployment, and obtain an important source of foreign currency. Nevertheless, one cannot hide the fact that the principle upon which the free zone is based is already the basis of economic activity in Saudi Arabia. The growth achieved by the national economy was—in fact—the fruit of the government's economic policy, and its attention, encouragement, and support for all economic sectors, without imposing any kind of restrictions. Moreover, the foreign capital and expertise needed to share in industrial growth receives incentives and encouragement, on the basis of foreign financial investment. Therefore, one could say that the characteristics, which the free zone could offer to investors and to the national economy, are those that are in fact based on following the principles of free economy. However, this should not prevent one from considering this idea, within the framework of the economic agreement that joins together the members of the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states."

Dr. Ibrahim 'Abdallah al-Munif, deputy chairman of the board of the Arab Commercial Projects Corporation in Saudi Arabia, believes that: "The principal object for which nations establish free zones is to encourage exports, by means of giving incentives and privileges, which investors outside of free zones normally do not enjoy. One uses the word 'normally' because of the restrictions and laws, which impede obtaining the profit desired by the investor and, consequently, the free zone compensates by giving him the opportunity to export.

"It is possible for free zones to result in stimulating economic activities in countries with restrictive economies. If restrictions do not exist, there is no advantage to creating a free zone, because it would be a burden on the national economy due to unforeseen costs in constructing the infrastructure, apart from its competitive impact on existing local industries. These industries were established by the efforts of investors, who did not enjoy the advantages granted to new investors, who have obtained advantages not achieved by industrialists before them." Dr. al-Munif also pointed to the negative impact on domestic industries, and added: "Negative repercussions on existing industries, and their existing equipment, are greater than any profit some might see as being earned from free zones."

He believes that expansion in the use of production capacities provided to local industries, and the utilization of these capacities in main and peripheral expansion, is more advantageous than creating free zones. He pointed out that proposing this idea might involve imitating Jabal 'Ali in the United Arab Emirates [UAE], but that the UAE's circumstances are different from those of Saudi Arabia. "Industries are nonexistent in Jabal 'Ali, and the industries that do exist in the UAE are not competitive. This is the principal matter for us to consider, before doing a feasibility study like this proposal. We must be aware that many foreign industries

can profit from free zones in competition with existing local industries." Dr. al-Munif fears that creating a free zone would lead to a decline in morale of existing local basic industries, in terms of principal and peripheral expansion, and that that would result in malaise in existing industries which, in turn, would lead to adverse effects on the progress that Saudi Arabia has achieved during the past five years.

Sultan Ahmad Ibn-Salim, chief of the Free Zone Authority for Jabal 'Ali in Dubayy, which is considered to be a successful model for free zones in the Gulf region, defends the concept, saying:

"At this point in time, the world is dominated by the concept of major economic groupings, together with a general trend toward reviving the philosophy of free enterprise. This situation is a natural result of rapid changes in circumstances of the international economy, from the Industrial Revolution to the Information Revolution.

"Concepts have changed. Information is subject to different rules than agricultural and industrial goods. You produce data, and sell it, without losing it. It remains in your power to resell it. Whenever that happens, the information has not been consumed, but rather, it has multiplied, as a result of its being disseminated, and so on.

"With this expanding horizon, the idea of free zones found itself within a climate suitable for growth. The number of free zones increased in the world, from 160 zones in 1976, to 650 this year, and the future will welcome more. Companies will try strenuously to reduce their costs, and consolidate their international marketing ability."

Sultan Ibn-Salim stated that state enterprise with regard to creating a free zone on its territory is an economic decision, which must be supported by a group of factors. Some countries might consider free zones, in order to exploit their geographic location with regard to trade routes. They establish the free zone in the harbor, in order to receive and export goods. Some countries consider free zones, in an attempt to regain national capital that has been drained abroad, or to stop emigration of capital, or to attract foreign capital.

Sultan Ibn-Salim pointed out that the importance of Dubayy's decision to create a free zone in Jabal 'Ali stemmed from the special nature of the circumstances and location of Dubayy, which expended \$2.5 billion to create the free zone. There are several kinds of free zones, including the commercial one that is aimed at stimulating trade, and the commercial-industrial free zone, which includes both activities, as well as service sectors. It can go so far as to have entire cities constructed within the free zones.

Concerning the opportunity for success with regard to establishing similar free zones in Saudi Arabia, Sultan Ibn-Salim pointed out that, before evaluating the idea, it

would be appropriate to distinguish between two types of zones: industrial zones and free zones.

Industrial zones are places that the state, or one of its agencies, or a private company, prepares for the purpose of establishing specific industries, subject to all regulations, laws, and industrial policies of the state.

In this context, Saudi Arabia has made great strides in terms of industrial zones, such as Yanbu or Jubayl, which are among the largest industrial complexes in the world.

Sultan Ibn-Salim stressed the need to provide means to assure industrial growth in the GCC states, either through creating free zones or industrial zones, in order to bolster economic integration among the GCC countries. The free zone in Jabal 'Ali, for example, benefits today from integration among the petrochemical industries in Saudi Arabia (both Yanbu and Jubayl), while the industries established in Jabal 'Ali benefit from the raw materials produced by Saudi industries. Therefore, the decision to create a free zone within the boundaries of each country, aside from existing industrial zones, remains a decision subject to many considerations, which the government of that state can see for itself.

Sultan Ibn-Salim does not fear competition for the Jabal 'Ali zone from the creation of free zones in the Gulf region. He says: "Creating more free zones in the Arab Gulf region will undoubtedly help to strengthen Jabal 'Ali's position, because it will increasingly focus the business community's attention on this region of the world. In that regard, it will help to provide encouraging international conditions.

"The European economic unit will lead to establishing a unit for a broad, local market in Europe, patterned after the American model. As you know, American and Asian companies eager for foreign investment have gradually gone to Europe to establish companies there. However, in 1995, European doors will be closed to these companies, and they will be forced to search for new areas. At that time, Europe will be self-integrated, and will not welcome foreign investors. Where will those investments go?"

Sultan Ibn-Salim said that the advanced, industrial nations of East Asia have reached the saturation point, and must surely search for alternate zones. This highlights the importance of establishing alternate zones in the Gulf region, in order to attract these investments.

TUNISIA

Al-Zu'bi, Tunisian Minister Discuss Agricultural Ties

JN1705133091 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 17 May 91

[Excerpt] Damascus—At 1200 today, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi received Tunisian Agriculture Minister Mouldi Zouaoui. The meeting was attended by

Agriculture and Agrarian Reform Minister Muhammad Ghabbash and the Tunisian ambassador in Damascus. They spoke about developing trade and economic cooperation between Syria and Tunisia. They agreed on the need to exchange expertise and boost bilateral cooperation in the spheres of agriculture, water, and agriculture-based industries. Both stressed the need for approaching agriculture as a mainstay of the economy and food security. [passage omitted]

RCD Secretary General Comments on Extremist Elements

LD1205155591 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Mr. Chedli Neffati, secretary general of the Constitutional and Democratic Rally, pointed out during his meeting yesterday with the cadres of the Rally, as well as teachers and parents in Ouardia region, that President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali has laid down ethics and new principles based upon our Arab and Islamic authenticity and noble values. These principles include work to allow the citizen to contribute spontaneously and enthusiastically to the consecration of pluralism and to instill in him the spirit of zeal to look after and develop the country's gains in order to pursue a civilized relationship between the authority and the masses, as well as between it and other political and social strata.

A small group, however, could not bear to see such achievements being realized in a short period, and it therefore started to attack them by using deception without any concern for the values, principles, human, and ethic deterrence which abound in this country and in its sons. It proceeded to carry out acts of riot, sabotage, and terrorism in the university as well as in a number of secondary schools; its aim is to sow chaos and trouble and wrest from the citizens their right to education as well as to transform the beacons of science and progress into places for expressing inherent rancour, casting doubts, and hindering the majority of students from exercising their right to means of progress, in addition to the use of the true Islamic religion as a means for political aims—notwithstanding the fact that our religion is one of tolerance and love.

The secretary general of the Constitutional and Democratic Rally praised the responsible stance which stems from the nationalist spirit of the students, pupils, teachers, and parents who have refused to follow those who have been calling for sedition and who confronted terrorism and sabotage.

Chedli Neffati pointedly asserted the woman's role to protect society from violence and security breaches and to care for its balance, praising President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's eagerness to consolidate women's presence in the forefront positions of the Rally and the society.

He called upon the teaching profession to remain a struggling, generous, and principled family.

Information Official on Media Freedom, University Unrest

*LD1105144591 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic
1300 GMT 11 May 91*

[Excerpts] Presiding over a meeting of cadres of the Democratic Constitutional Rally [RCD], Hedi Grioui, member of the RCD's Central Committee and secretary of state to the prime minister in charge of information, highlighted the correct and honest policy adhered to by the media sector in Tunisia since the change [overthrow of Bourguiba in November 1987]. He stressed the importance of the principal task it has assumed by enlightening public opinion and making it aware and perceptive, freely and objectively, avoiding deviation and misguidance, in line with the aspirations of 7 November which has provided a climate that is characterized by democracy, political pluralism, and respect for opinions. In this context he emphasized the need to maintain that climate, particularly in the special internal and external circumstances through which our country was passing—in view of the important changes experienced in the Arab world, particularly in the Arab Maghreb. [passage omitted saying the state will continue to improve working conditions in the media]

The secretary of state denied claims about lack of freedom in the media, stressing that they are fabricated and untrue. He said: "We are committed to the principles of democracy and the sovereignty of the law. As a state and a ruling party, we have been entrusted with the destiny of the people, and we are required to protect them from all destructive tendencies and from slipping into the labyrinth of deviation, and to confront the manifestations of wrong-doing and deceptive methods; thus, [the state and ruling party] gaining the credibility and candor which have moulded our party and people."

In the course of his statement on terrorist acts in educational and university institutions, the secretary of state noted that many parties which harbor hostility toward the regime and ruling party contributed to those criminal acts, and that they must be confronted by all ways and means until the action of those extremists is stopped and their manoeuvres are aborted.

Opposition Parties Issue Statement on Student Unrest

*LD1005223691 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic
2100 GMT 10 May 91*

[Text] The Party for Popular Unity, the Tunisian Communist Party, the Unitarian Democratic Union, the Progressive Socialist Rally and the Movement of Social Democrats have issued the following statement:

The national parties which met on 9 May 1991, after having examined the political situation in the country as well as its latest development:

First, condemn the Ennahdha Movement's decision to escalate the struggle by relying on attacks carried out by

masked commando groups and the use of incendiary devices against educational and administrative institutions with the aim of harming the country's vital interests, its security and stability, paying little attention to the serious repercussions as well as the material and human losses by targetting the gains, foremost of which is the university and the educational system as a whole.

Second, they express their deep concern over the recent deterioration of the situation which has resulted in the fall of victims among students and the threat of a boycott for a year, a matter which would lead to dangers and perilous grounds that might lead the country into the whirlpool of complete violence.

Third, the opposition considers itself fundamentally concerned with everything that is taking place in the country and, therefore, it urgently call for national interest to be put before any other consideration and to consecrate the national reconciliation by allowing all dynamic forces to deal with all pending problems so that every party can wholly shoulder its responsibilities.

Fourth, the national opposition reiterates that the crisis of the university cannot be resolved apart from other problems brought about by the general situation in the country or through the adoption of security arrangements and nothing else. Their solution lies in allowing the participation of all parties in educational institutions to search for a suitable solution which takes into consideration the sanctity of the university, saving the school year and allowing the civil society, with all its political, cultural, and union formations, to defend its gains and confront everything that might threaten its entity, security, and balance.

UGTT Denounces 'Conspiracies,' 'Organized Violence'

*LD1605151291 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic
1300 GMT 16 May 91*

[Text] The enlarged executive bureau of the Tunisian General Union of Workers [UGTT], following its periodical meeting yesterday in Tunis under the chairmanship of Secretary General Ismail Sahbani, released a communique which says:

The enlarged executive bureau, after reviewing the general trade union and political situation in the country and various aspects of the organization's activity, expresses its deep preoccupation with the dangers looming over the country, and the various attempts aimed at shaking its security and institutions in the form of intrigues, conspiracies, and organized violence. The bureau denounces these practices and opportunist and suspect alliances by those who have been challenged by the UGTT. Trade unionists realize the extent of their historic enmity to the working class and trade unionist activity. The bureau also denounces the practices and opportunist and suspect alliances by the representatives of those who worked for undermining the UGTT and striking at it in 1985.

In this respect, the bureau urges trade unionists, workers, and all the national forces to be more vigilant and more aware of the depth of these dangers, and it requires the competent authorities to further strengthen the democratic course and work for settling the problems likely to bring about tension. It calls on all the national and democratic forces to find solutions likely to strengthen the domestic front, and bolster the march of the country toward more freedom, democracy, and social justice.

While denouncing all these practices and manifestations, the enlarged executive bureau expresses its deep preoccupation with the situation experienced by Tunisian universities and some secondary schools, and the attempts at sabotage and terror they have been subjected to. These acts against students, teachers, and all those working in these educational institutions aim to divert them from their natural role in spreading science and knowledge, and performing their mission in training and shaping the sons of the people, and also to involve them in the circles of organized violence that have led to deaths.

The bureau urges the authorities to be careful and cautious in dealing with such a situation. It calls on all the dynamic forces in the country to bring their efforts together in order to put an end to such a situation. In this respect, the bureau appreciates the initiative to set up a national fact-finding committee at the university level and to find solutions—a matter that will affirm support for it [the university] and facilitate its activities so that it can perform its role fully.

Trade Union Leaders Condemn Disturbances

*LD0905202291 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic
1700 GMT 9 May 91*

[Excerpts] The secretaries general of general federations and trade unions held a meeting yesterday at the Tunisian Labor Federation hall under the chairmanship of Mr. Ismail Sahbani, the federation's general secretary, in order to examine the progress of trade unions and to assess the events that took place during the May Day celebrations in the capital. [passage omitted]

The meeting said that the disturbances of 1 May 1991 in the meeting hall at the labor exchange confirm that the elements involved tried to take advantage of the celebrations to assert certain political attitudes which are incompatible with the union's objectives.

The secretaries general reaffirmed in this respect the need for implementation of the stipulations of the union's statute in the case of any person whose participation in those events has been proven, whatever that person's rank within the union, in accordance with the results of the investigations being carried out by the inquiry committee set up for that purpose.

Labor Union Rejects University's 'Severe Crisis'

*LD1105153491 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic
1300 GMT 11 May 91*

["Text" of statement by the Executive Bureau of the Tunisian General Union of Labor (UGTT); place and date of issue not given—read by announcer]

[Text] The Tunisian University is experiencing serious events and a severe crisis these days, among the results of which was that colleges, higher institutes, and university premises became an arena for violence, terrorism, and the use of forces. This threatens the deviation of the Tunisian University from the objectives which were entrusted to it by our society, namely to spread knowledge and culture and to prepare for the future of the homeland. While expressing its deep dissatisfaction at the chaos into which the situation at the Tunisian University has developed and its regret at the human and material losses that resulted from the violent incidents, the UGTT Executive Bureau, meeting on 9 May, condemns the attempt to involve the university in political conflicts which are not in any way connected to the students' financial and educational interests. It calls for confronting any attempt to marginalize the role of the university in the country, to lead it away from its real tasks, or to use it for objectives other than those for which it was founded.

Violence, Sabotage Reportedly Increasing

*LD1605114991 Paris International Service in French
0530 GMT 16 May 91*

[Excerpts] Acts of violence and sabotage are on the increase in Tunisia, acts that in each case are attributed to the Islamists. The latest to date took place yesterday. Rida Boughezi reports:

[Boughezi] In its main news bulletin the [Tunisian] television showed pictures of a warehouse ravaged by arson. The warehouse in question was situated at the building site of the future television center. According to an official source, the fire was started at dawn by a commando group of three masked people. Before starting the fire, they are reported to have tried to attack the security man at the site, who succeeded in escaping. [passage omitted]

Commentary Condemns Attacks on Schools, Colleges

*LD1005165391 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic
0600 GMT 10 May 91*

[Excerpts] We want to devote this commentary to the important arrangements and measures which have been adopted by the Council of Ministers in order to develop education programs and back the institutions of education and vocational training at the various levels. However, the painful events which have taken place in the precincts of some of these education institutions force us to pause for some time in order to warn the national

public opinion about the danger of those criminal acts which aim to strike against the dearest acquisitions of the people, disrupt the course of studies, and deprive the masses of students and pupils of the fruit of their work, assiduity and suffering for the sake of science, knowledge, social, and economic progress, being committed by a group of corrupt people. It is the right, even the duty, of every citizen in this good land to wonder why a group of corrupt people have chosen this very period to stir up acts of disturbance and terrorism against some education institutions and to commit crimes of destruction, burning, and aggression against students and education cadres, against laboratories, offices, and houses of science and knowledge, as well as against the security men who preserve security and order.

It is not difficult for any citizen who wants good for his country to understand the real motives of this extremist group which stands behind all these student incidents, when one remembers that only a few days ago students, pupils, and teachers confronted these corrupt people when they attempted to disrupt lectures in some institutes and endeavored to attack the institutes; thus they failed badly and were turned back on their heels. However, instead of abandoning acts of terrorism and taking into account the decisive stance adopted by students, pupils, and teachers against this abominable attack, they reverted to inciting sedition, thus exposing their premeditated intention and their determination not only to disrupt lectures and the education process, which is proceeding along the correct path, but also to hamper the democratic march which the country is adopting and has been adopting since the 7 November change with firm steps and with concord between the government and the opposition parties, as well as the social organizations which previously stood in a decisive way against the odious terrorist operations, the target of which was the headquarters of the Coordination Committee of the Rally [Constitutional Democratic Rally] in Bab Souika. Through that act, it became clear to all that the group of corrupt people use religion as a cover in order to mislead the flowers of Tunisian people and drag them into the blind inferno, which harms the country and the people. [passage omitted]

The state has worked and will continue to work on its part to protect the acquisitions of the people and is fully determined to seriously fight these terrorist acts and to implement the law justly and decisively on anyone who commits a crime against the homeland and attempts to hamper its successful march toward a better tomorrow. The choice between right and wrong and between good and evil is a clear matter and there is no place for leniency in its severest confrontation and when adopting a decisive stance in the face of the group of corruption. The law clarifies the means with which their abominable acts are met. [passage omitted]

Masked Students Start Fires in Al-Qayrawan Faculty

*LD1205135591 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic
1300 GMT 12 May 91*

[Text] TAP [Tunis Afrique Press] has learned that at 0335 [local time] this morning, three masked students set fire to the administration premises of Riqadah faculty at al-Qayrawan University. The fire destroyed two doors of offices belonging to the dean and the secretary-general and also destroyed some carpets. The perpetrators used gasoline. A firebomb was also thrown at the office of the director of the girls dormitory window, destroying part of this window and its curtains.

After dismantling the exterior door and attacking the caretaker—who was afterwards taken to hospital—the perpetrators entered the administration premises.

State Properties Ministry Renamed

*LD2305201691 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio
Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 22 May 91*

[Text] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali had a meeting this afternoon at the Palace of the Republic in Carthage with Mr. Mustapha Bouaziz, minister of state properties, who said that the president of the republic has decided to rename the Ministry of State Properties as the Ministry of State Properties and Real Estate Affairs. The president has called for preparing a draft law providing for the annexation of the real estate administration to the Ministry of State Properties and Real Estate Affairs.

The president decided to appoint Mr. Mustapha Bouaziz as minister of state properties and real estate affairs.

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Zindani Interviewed on Gulf Crisis, Constitution

*91AE0373A Sanaa AL-SAHWAH in Arabic 4 Mar 91
pp 4, 6*

[Interview with Shaykh 'Abd-al-Majid 'Aziz al-Zindani, on occasion of return from visits to Sudan and Afghanistan, by Hammud Mansur; place and date not given: "Gulf Crisis Merely Finishing Touch on Garment Tailored in America in 1975"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted]

Our Besetting Sins

[Mansur] The current Gulf crisis has caused a great division in the Islamic and Arabic world. What is your opinion in brief about what has happened since 2 August?

[Al-Zindani] One of the best expressions I have read and heard from the politicians who are following the causes

and roots of this crisis is their saying that this Gulf crisis merely sets the finishing touches on a garment tailored in 1975.

In 1975, or even earlier, America decided to occupy the Middle East region and seize the oil wells. It formed a force called "the rapid intervention force" for this purpose. Rulers in the Middle East know this; it is public knowledge. These forces asked for bases in the Middle East and joint exercises and were looking for a formula to enter the region.

This crisis was just such a formula. It made it possible for this force, which had been ready since 1975, to be moved onto the scene of activity which had been prepared for it. The division among the Arabs shows their lack of consciousness. They should have taken notice since 1975, or even since 1973. For when the West saw that the Arabs had used the oil weapon in their battle with Israel, it ordered the formation of committees to study the effect of this new weapon that had come into the Arabs' hands. They took the matter seriously. They decided that they would not leave this new weapon in the hands of the Arabs. They would have to seize it. Since they deem us weak, they announce their goals and plans and are not afraid of us. The division in the Arab world occurred because the Arabs did not take the matter seriously from the beginning. They did not study it among themselves, and they did not get ready. In one way or another they even aided and helped to realize the desire of these foreign forces to reach the land of the Arabs.

This force announced its purpose clearly. It came to seize the oil wells. It came to smash the Arab economy and Arab military might, to fight Islam and Muslims under the slogan of "fighting fundamentalists," and to establish and protect the state of Israel.

Establishment of the state of Israel means in their terminology, "Greater Israel"—from the Nile to the Euphrates, and from Alexandria to Medina.

Our sins have encompassed us, so that God has given our enemies sway over us. There is no way out for us except by repentance.

These imperialistic forces now threaten the Arabs in their homeland. What is there to prevent what happened to Iraq from happening to any country?

The matter is in earnest:

Awake, O Arabs!

Awake, O Muslims!

Make ready, and prepare yourselves for it!

I Preferred To Keep Quiet Temporarily

[Mansur] You have led people to expect that you would voice your opinion on important issues. What is your position on the Gulf crisis?

[Al-Zindani] The crisis occurred while I was representing my country in the World Islamic League in Mecca and acting as secretary of the Committee on Scientific Inimitability in the Koran and Sunnah. When the crisis occurred, I felt that I was in a country with a definite position on the crisis. Although the media wanted to find out my view on the subject, I thought it best to keep quiet and not speak, because frank and true words would not have pleased many people. So I preferred to keep quiet temporarily when I was in that country.

When I saw matters coming to a head, I went to Afghanistan—before the outbreak of fighting. Some Arab young people in that country asked me about this. I answered them and spoke about it. As is normal, the tapes circulated. I have told you my opinion that the issue is merely a question of setting the finishing touches on a garment that the Americans tailored in 1975. The Arabs are being driven into it against their will. There is no salvation for us except in our repenting of our sins, uniting our ranks, and not widening the split between the Arabs or working to exacerbate it. That would be to the enemy's advantage. We must work and be sufficient to ourselves, without the others who lay in wait for us.

Who Is Supreme: God or Man?

[Mansur] People have learned what you think about the proposed constitution. Do you have any additional or important words that you wish to address to readers on the subject, particularly as the date of the plebiscite approaches?

[Al-Zindani] The most important issue relating to this constitution is that we should know its position on the Book of God and the Sunnah of His Messenger. Is this constitution intended to be above the Book of God and the Sunnah of His Messenger, so that if it violates the Book and the Sunnah there can be no opposition to it? Or must it be under the Book of God and the Sunnah of His Messenger, with supreme legitimacy belonging to God, who is praised and exalted, and with judgment belonging to God, who is sublime and majestic? As God has said, "Judgment belongs only to God" [Koran, 6:57, 12:40, 12:67]. Whose word is to be supreme: God's word, or man's word? God's guidance, or man's ideas?

Therefore, as the ulema have stated in their recent fatwa, the constitution must explicitly provide that "the Book of God and the Sunnah of His Messenger (may God bless him and his family and grant them peace) are above the constitution and law, and all that opposes the Book and Sunnah is null and void."

This is the condition that cannot be waived, if this constitution is to remain acceptable to Muslims. Muslims have no choice whether to obey God or disobey him. As the Almighty has said, "It is not for any believer, man or woman, when God and His Messenger have decreed a matter, to have the choice in the affair" [Koran, 33:36].

The infidel countries have constitutions that they set above everything and that they make the highest ceiling, above which there is nothing!

But we Muslims have the Book and the Sunnah. They are above everything, because God—may He be praised and exalted—is above everything. Insisting that provisions of the constitution not be changed to agree with the Book of God and the Sunnah of His Messenger means that the position of this constitution is above the Book of God and the Sunnah of His Messenger. No Muslim can accept this. The ulema therefore decided in their fatwa to boycott the plebiscite and demand that the constitution be amended and clearly state that the Book of God and Sunnah of His Messenger are above the constitution and the law, and that all that opposes them is null and void.

[Mansur] Some officials of a ruling party have issued orders to ban talk about politics in mosques. Others have demanded that the mosques be made neutral—as they claim—and be restricted to holding worship services for those who desire them. Of course, some of these officials never set foot in the mosques! What is your response to them?

[Al-Zindani] The function of mosques cannot be defined by government decree. They are God's mosques. Their function is defined in God's religion and by revelation from God. They are houses of God, not houses of parties, organizations, agencies, associations, or personalities. They are the houses of God, the Sublime and Majestic, built for the worship of God, who is praised and exalted—in the full and complete meaning of worship. Prayer is a pillar of the faith and one of the greatest religious duties. Study in mosques is also a religious duty. Enjoining virtue and forbidding vice are religious duties. Mosques are the fortresses that protected and preserved Islam over the centuries. Indeed, the blessed intifadah that we see in Palestine is an effect of the mosques.

It is the Jews in Palestine who are interested in neutralizing the mosques, curbing their role, and putting pressure on their message. But Muslims know that mosques are the source of radiance, light, and guidance to protect the faith, summon to every virtue, and warn against every vice. The mosques are places where God is worshiped. The worship that people should have in mind is worship in its full sense, which the ulema have summed

up in the definition, "[Worship] is a general term designating everything that God likes and that pleases Him."

"Everything that God likes and that pleases Him"—learning and instruction, enjoining virtue and prohibiting vice, opposing infidelity, atheism, polytheism, error, and corruption, calling to unity and brotherhood, and promoting all the noble qualities that Islam commands—mosques must be pulpits for all this. What should be banned in the mosques are appeals that violate the Islamic religion. They have no place in the mosque and no room in the houses of God, who is praised and exalted.

Those who speak using such concepts have been influenced by the Christian concept of the role of the church, the role that the priests affirm when they say, "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's, and unto God that which is God's."

For us, there is not a thing that is God's and a thing that is Caesar's. For us, everything is God's. The mosque is the foundation for upholding this religion. The ideas of these people have been influenced by the ideas of the Jews and Christians about the role of worship. They are imitators in their understanding and their ideas—God save us!

The person saying these things does not attend the mosque. The fact that he does not attend the mosque is a sign and proof that he does not adhere to his religion and is not interested in promoting it. This refutes him and invalidates every claim he may make.

Praise be to God, the Lord of the Worlds!

Editor's Note

Shaykh 'Abd-al-Majid 'Aziz al-Zindani is a major figure of the Islamic movement not only in Yemen, but in the Islamic world.

The Gulf crisis occurred while the shaykh was in Mecca. The enemies of Islam used his absence and the fact that they were not hearing what agreed with their whims as an opportunity to spread lies and suspicions about him. Now he has returned and is speaking the truth about the Gulf crisis from an Islamic perspective. He is speaking for God's sake alone, not to please a ruler, party, or group. The sincere religious scholar is above flattering or currying favor for a worldly purpose.

BANGLADESH

Zia Given Home Ministry; Speaks at Meeting

91AS0927A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
7 Apr 91 pp 1, 8

[Text] Acting President, Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, yesterday allocated the Ministry of Home Affairs to the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, an official announcement said.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday underlined the paramount importance of stamping out smuggling which was eating into the vitals of the national economy and destroying the industrial base.

Addressing the high officials of Rajshahi and Khulna divisions at a meeting at the Uttara Gono Bhaban here, the Prime Minister said, "Smuggling cannot be allowed to continue because it will not only affect our economy but the independence and sovereignty would also be at stake."

Begum Zia termed smuggling as a curse for the society and the national economy and said, many of our small and cottage industries had to be shut down because of smuggling.

The meeting was attended, among others, by divisional commissioners, deputy commissioners, deputy inspector general of police, superintendents of police, sector commanders of Bangladesh Rifles and collectors of customs.

Commerce Minister Keramat Ali, Industries Minister Shamsul Islam Khan, secretary of the BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] parliamentary party, Fazlur Rahman Patal, MP [member of Parliament] Raushan Elahi, MP, BDR [Bangladesh Rifles] Director General, Major General M. A. Latif and Inspector General of Police A.M. Chowdhury were present at the meeting. [sentence as published]

The Prime Minister stressed the need for identifying the main culprits behind smuggling and directed the members of law-enforcing agencies to bring to book those criminals and award them exemplary punishment.

Begum Zia said: "My Government is determined to eradicate smuggling and corruption from the country and shall not spare anybody, however strong or influential he might be, in our attempt to stamp out smuggling and corruption."

She urged the officials to be courageous in implementing anti-smuggling measures and discharge their duties with sincerity and honesty.

The Prime Minister said officials who would perform their responsibilities faithfully and honesty would be rewarded. On the other hand, stern action would be taken against those who were found to be indulging in corruption, she added.

The Prime Minister appealed to the officials to continue to work for the welfare of the people and advised them to work freely and fearlessly in delivering goods to the teeming millions.

The Government, she said, would extend full support to the officials in the discharge of their duties. She emphasised each and every official has to be accountable and must function with credibility.

Dwelling on the law and order situation in the country, the Prime Minister stressed the need for checking the incidents of terrorism and recovering unauthorised arms and ammunition.

Begum Zia asked the officials and personnel of the law enforcing agencies to strengthen the measures against social vices including smuggling, corruption and terrorism.

In this connection she urged the people to extend whole-hearted cooperation to the Government officials in establishing a healthy society through curbing smuggling and corruption.

About the economic development, the Prime Minister stressed the need for proper utilisation of local resources for speedy industrialisation. Industrial development could help lessen the dependence on foreign assistance, she pointed out.

Referring to the conditions of the country's sugar mills, the Prime Minister said: "If we fail to stop, smuggling of sugar, it would not be possible to protect the sugar mills."

The Prime Minister called for rounding up the main culprits behind smuggling and said actions against those ordinary people involved in smuggling for sheer survival would not lead to eradication of smuggling.

She emphasised Government actions against those persons who were enjoying luxurious life with illegal income acquired from smuggling.

Referring to the important role of the national media, the Prime Minister said, the media could play a significant role in motivating and encouraging the people to buy and use local products.

The Prime Minister urged the Government officials to play their important role of service to the people with hard work and sincerity to bring about a qualitative change in the administration within a month.

Begum Zia assured that there would be no undue harassment in checking corruption and smuggling. She, however, advised them to take care so that no innocent people were harassed.

The Prime Minister said the past government was isolated from the people and so it could not take any welfare-oriented programmes.

"Ours is a people's government, so we want to go into the depth of the problems for finding durable solution. We want peace and development," she added.

Later Begum Zia addressed a cross section of people who gathered in front of the Uttara Gano Bhaban.

She urged the people to work hard for increasing production in fields and factories.

She referred to her election pledges and said her Government had already taken a number of steps including waiving tax on holdings up to 25 bighas, increasing the age-limit for entering government service to 30 years and exempting the recovery of defaulting agriculture loans up to Taka 5,000.

Zia on Steps Against Natural Disasters

91AS0929A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 8 Apr 91 pp 1, 8

[Text] Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Sunday emphasised the need for working out long-term programmes and appropriate actions to combat natural disasters in the country, reports BS.

She was speaking at a function as the chief guest in observance of World Health Day at Osmani Memorial Hall in Dhaka Sunday morning.

Begum Zia said disasters constituted one of the impediments on the way to economic emancipation of the people in a developing country like Bangladesh.

The Prime Minister called for all-out cooperation from the government, semi-government and private organisations as well as from the members of public in implementing disaster preparedness programmes.

She hoped that the disaster preparedness programmes and management would ensure fruitful results for the people.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf, Health Secretary Khandaker Azaduzzaman, Director General of Health Services, WHO representative in Bangladesh also spoke on the occasion.

The Prime Minister distributed prizes among the winners of essay competition on the World Health Day and opened an exhibition on health education on the occasion.

The Prime Minister said like many South-East Asian countries, Bangladesh becomes the victim of various natural calamities. Quoting statistics, she said there were 121 different kinds of natural disasters hit Bangladesh since 1960 to 1989 claiming lives and properties.

Begum Zia pointed out though different programmes were taken to mitigate the sufferings of the disaster-stricken people but they were too inadequate.

Dwelling on the importance of taking up immediate programmes to save the people in the disaster-prone area, the Prime Minister stressed the need of creating mass awareness on health education and preparedness to combat disasters. She also pleaded for giving training to the disaster preparedness volunteers and officials.

Begum Zia gave importance on the early warning system against calamities and said timely warning system could help avert the extent of loss of life and properties.

She said the government would take effective measures in implementing the recommendations of the socio-economic committee towards tackling disasters and floods.

She said natural disaster was one of the impediments on the way to economic emancipation in the developing country like Bangladesh. If we fail to take appropriate measures in tackling disasters, uncertainty would prevail in our economic activities, she added.

The Prime Minister underlined the necessity of developing early warning system against disasters, she said: "We shall also have to take necessary steps to stop road accidents after surveying the reasons of such accidents."

Removal of mechanical problems, training to the drivers, repairing of roads and proper application of traffic rules could greatly reduce accidents, Begum Zia said and hoped that the concerned ministries and departments would take necessary programmes in this connection.

The Prime Minister said that the flood and cyclone shelter centres should be developed to improve the pre-disaster and post-disaster situations.

Begum Zia pointed out that the World Health Organisation had in the meantime undertaken gradual programme for disaster preparedness in many countries.

The WHO is also providing technical and financial cooperation to Bangladesh in implementing the disaster preparedness programmes.

The Prime Minister referred to the WHO slogan, "Should disaster strike be prepared" and such a theme would help the people in averting loss of life and properties.

Reports on Visit of PRC Foreign Trade Official

Zia Addresses Panel

91AS0923A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 9 Apr 91 pp 1, 8

[Text] Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia on Monday hoped that the close and friendly relationship between Bangladesh and China, the foundation of which was laid down by late President Ziaur Rahman, would grow in all dimensions for mutual benefit of the two nations, reports BSS.

She said her government would work for broadening and cementing the traditional ties between the two countries in all aspects including the fields of economic, trade, cultural, education and technical.

Begum Zia said this while talking to Mr. Wang Wen Dong, Chinese Vice-Minister for Economic Relations and Trade who called on her at the Prime Minister's office at the Jatiya Sangsad.

Mr. Wang is now in Dhaka, leading his country's 12-member delegation to the sixth session of Bangladesh-China Joint Economic Commission which began in Dhaka on Monday morning.

The Chinese Vice-Minister conveyed the greetings of Premier Li Peng to Begum Khaleda Zia on BNP's [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] victory in the last parliamentary elections and on her assumption of the office of the Prime Minister.

He expressed his happiness that Bangladesh attached importance to the broadening of friendly ties with China.

Mr. Wang recalled the role of late President Ziaur Rahman in founding the relationship between Bangladesh-China and said Zia's visit to China had contributed immensely to strengthen the ties.

The Chinese Vice-Minister expressed his confidence that Bangladesh would flourish under the competent leadership of the present government. He also gave a brief resume on the progress that China had made in socio-political and economic fields.

Reciprocating the sentiment of Chinese delegation, Begum Zia requested Mr. Wang to convey good wishes to the people and Government of China on her own behalf and on behalf of the people of Bangladesh.

The Prime Minister also appraised [as published] the Chinese team about the programmes of her government for socioeconomic development of the common people particularly peasants, youth and women.

She said her government would work for implementing her party's 19-point programme with a view to meeting the basic needs of the people.

Begum Zia wished the success of the current session of the Joint Economic Commission of the two countries.

Secretary of the External Relations Division Mr. Enam Ahmed Chowdhury, Bangladesh Ambassador to China Farooq Sobham, Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Mr. Chen Song Lu were present.

PRC Visitor's Speech

91AS0923B Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 9 Apr 91 pp 1, 8

[Text] The Chinese Vice-Minister for Foreign Economic Relations and Trade, Mr. Wang Wen Dong, said in

Dhaka Monday that his country would extend all possible cooperation and assistance to the democratically elected new government of Bangladesh, reports BSS.

Addressing the plenary of the sixth session of Bangladesh-China Joint Economic Commission, which began in Dhaka Monday morning Mr. Wang expressed the hope that economic and trade relations between the two countries would be further widened and diversified to the mutual benefit of the two countries.

The Chinese Vice-Minister hoped that efforts would be made during the current session of the Joint Commission meeting to identify new areas of cooperation and rectify the imbalance in trade.

Mr. Wang arrived in Dhaka Sunday to lead a 12-member delegation of his country at the three-day Joint Commission meeting.

The 16-members Bangladesh delegation to the meeting is being led by Secretary of the Economic Relations Division (ERD), Mr. Enam Ahmed Chowdhury.

Three working committees comprising officials of the two countries on Economic and technical cooperation, commerce and trade, and industry including joint ventures were set up at the plenary.

The committees will identify, formulate and finalise concrete proposals for further cooperation between the two countries in the respective fields.

An agreed minute [as published] is also expected to be signed at the conclusion of the Joint Commission meeting.

Mr. Wang said the current session would review the developments that had taken place since the last meeting the commission, held in 1989.

Referring to the transition to democracy in Bangladesh, he said people in China had watched with great interest the positive developments that had taken place in this country in recent times.

The Chinese Vice-Minister said he and the members of his team were very happy to be in Bangladesh at a time when the country was ruled by a popular and democratically elected government.

Earlier welcoming the Chinese delegation, the leader of Bangladesh team, Mr Enam Ahmed Chowdhury, said this was the first official economic delegation of a foreign country to visit Bangladesh after the assumption of office by an elected government.

Mr. Chowdhury expressed the appreciation of the government of Bangladesh for continued cooperation between the two countries. He hoped that the current session of the Joint Commission would explore new areas of cooperation and identify new projects which might be taken up for implementation under joint venture.

The ERD Secretary also referred to the inherent difficulties in development of trade between the developing countries in view of the similarities of products.

Mr. Chowdhury expressed the hope that concrete efforts would be made not only for expansion of trade but also to remove the balance of trade position.

Another report adds:—The visiting twelve-member Chinese delegation led by the Vice-Minister for Foreign Economic and Trade Mr. Wang Wen Dong called on the Finance and Planning Minister Mr. Saifur Rahman at his office in Dhaka Monday.

During the meeting, the Finance and Planning Minister recalled the firm foundation of friendship between China and Bangladesh laid by late President Ziaur Rahman. He said the BNP government under the leadership of late President Ziaur Rahman had in fact initiated the first meaningful contact and development cooperation with China and established diplomatic relation for mutual benefit of the two countries.

Mr. Rahman also said the initiative was followed by him (the Finance Minister) for further strengthening of the bilateral relation between the two countries.

Agreement Signed

91AS0923C Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 12 Apr 91 pp 1, 8

[Text] The sixth session of the Bangladesh-China Joint Economic Commission concluded in Dhaka on Thursday with both the sides agreeing to expand and diversify the cooperation to the mutual benefit of both the nations, reports BSS.

An agreed minute was signed at the end of the four-day meeting of the Commission Thursday morning, envisaging wider economic and technical cooperation.

The leader of the Chinese delegation and Vice-Minister for Foreign Economic Relations, Mr. Wang Wen Dong and Secretary of the Economic Relations Division (ERD) Mr. Enam Ahmed Chowdhury, who led the Bangladesh side signed the agreed minute on behalf of their respective countries at the concluding session of the meeting, held at ECNEC [expansion not given] building at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

Under a protocol China has agreed to finance the construction of a 250-bed modern hospital at Dhaka.

It was also agreed that China would provide a complete set of equipment for a bicycle chain manufacturing industry with an annual capacity of producing five lakh pieces of chains.

China will also finance the construction of Mahananda bridge at Chapainawabganj after the completion of the on-going Shambhuganj Road bridge at Mymensingh. The construction work of the Mahananda bridge is expected to start in November this year as per the schedule.

Both the sides discussed the mutual economic cooperation and expressed satisfaction over the successful implementation of decisions reached earlier.

The two sides also reviewed with satisfaction the progress of bilateral trade between the two countries and agreed to take steps for further increasing the volume of trade.

While reviewing the implementation of the Barter Protocol No. 12 both Bangladesh and China expressed the hope that both the sides would make concerted efforts to fully implement the protocol before its expiry.

It was agreed during the meeting, held in an atmosphere of cordiality and friendship and understanding, that the seventh session of the Joint Economic Commission would be fixed at a date to be mutually agreed upon through diplomatic channel.

Bangladesh Ambassador to China Mr. Farooq Sobhan and Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Mr. Chen Song Lu were present.

Pakistani Special Envoy Calls on Zia

91AS0928A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 8 Apr 91 pp 1, 8

[Text] Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Sunday expressed her conviction that the existing friendly relations between Bangladesh and Pakistan would grow from strength to strength in the coming days, reports BSS.

A Foreign Office Spokesman told newsmen that, Begum Zia was talking to Mir Hazar Khan Bijrani, Special Envoy of Pakistan Prime Minister who called on her at the Prime Minister's Secretariat at the Jatiya Sangsad in Dhaka on Sunday.

Mr. Bijrani, who is also the Railway Minister of his country, arrived in Dhaka Sunday night at the head of a five-member delegation carrying a personal message from Prime Minister Newaz Sharif for Begum Khaleda Zia.

Prime Minister Newaz Sharif in his message said the visit of his special Envoy is an expression of deep personal esteem for Begum Khaleda Zia and a symbol of Pakistan's abiding solidarity with Bangladesh.

The Pakistan Prime Minister said "We in Pakistan are immensely pleased at the successful conclusion of parliamentary election in a free and fair atmosphere which had led to the establishment of a representative government in Bangladesh." He said that the people of Bangladesh had given her party a popular democratic mandate.

"This is a tribute to your courageous leadership and a vindication of policies of late President Ziaur Rahman

who was the main force of SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] and pillar of Islamic unity," Mr. Sharif said.

The Pakistan Prime Minister in his message referred to the similarities of views on regional and international issues and proposed for regular consultations between the two countries at various levels.

The spokesman said the Special Envoy extended an invitation to Begum Khaleda Zia on behalf of Prime Minister Newaz Sharif to pay a visit to Pakistan.

Begum Zia said the delegation was visiting at an opportune moment when the people's parliament was in session. She said her government would work to bring welfare for the people and achieve economic development.

She said late President Ziaul Rahman had initiated the SAARC to solve the economic and social problems of the countries in the South Asia region.

The Prime Minister took up the issues related to repatriation of stranded Pakistanis and sharing of assets between the two countries. She said the matter was discussed during late President Ziaur Rahman's visit to Pakistan in 1977 and progress was made.

Begum Khaleda Zia requested the Special Envoy to raise the two issues with the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

She also stressed the need for mutual visits of parliamentary, ministerial, religious and cultural delegation to further consolidate the friendship.

Mr Bijrani said the two issues were under consideration and described the issues of stranded Bisharis as humanitarian which has great implications in both countries.

He said the problems could be settled in a friendly and brotherly atmosphere.

Jamaat-e-Islami Working Council Meets

*91AS0936A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
5 Apr 91 pp 1, 8*

[Text] The Central Working Council of Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh yesterday said the principal responsibility of the newly elected Parliament would be to bring about necessary amendments to the constitution to pave the way for accountable parliamentary democracy, reports BSS.

The Council which met here yesterday with Acting Ameer of the party Mr Abbas Ali Khan in the chair, said the responsibility of achieving this objective lay with all parties though the majority party has the main responsibility in this respect.

Reviewing the post election situation in the country the meeting opined that the newly elected Jatiya Sangsad would have to play a bold role for the establishment of a truly representative politics in the country uprooting all

traces of autocratic rule. The pledge of the people's nine-year long struggle against autocracy was to establish accountable representative government ending the system of concentration of all powers in the hands of a single person, a resolution adopted at the meeting said.

Jamaat felt that expectations of the people and for that matter objective of the anti-autocracy movement could not be realized by retaining the present constitution in toto.

Maulana Mattur Rahman Nizami, leader of Jamaat-e-Islami Parliamentary party, yesterday said his party would sit in the opposition bench in the Jatiya Sangsad.

Maulana Nizami was talking to the Acting President, Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, at the President's Secretariat yesterday. He was accompanied by two party MPs [member of Parliament], Maulana Abdus Sobhan and Sheikh Ansar Ali.

Maulana Nizami said, his party had extended support to the BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] for a "very limited purpose" in order to ensure a stable government "so much needed in the present situation." This support, he said, will not change the character of the Jamaat as one of the opposition parties in Parliament.

Reporter Interviews Muslim League Leader

*91AS0924A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
9 Apr 91 pp 1, 8*

[Text] Muslim League chief Muhammad Ayenuddin has urged the Prime Minister and leader of Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia to take necessary steps for establishing a sovereign Jatiya Sangsad as desired by the people during the anti-Ershad movement.

Talking to THE NEW NATION correspondent Muhammad Ayenuddin said that under the present Constitution the sovereign parliament was not possible. If the same constitution is maintained without any amendment the sacrifice of the people and the student community as well would go in vain, he observed. The Muslim League leader made it clear that keeping the present constitution intact no sovereign parliament could be established.

Referring to Articles 56 to 141 of the Constitution the Muslim League leader said that the present system of Government is a one-man-rule in the country. According to these Articles of the Constitution, all legislative, executive, and judicial powers are vested directly or indirectly in the President, he said.

Though the President is elected by the people under Article 48 of the Constitution, there is no provision in the constitution whereby he was answerable to Parliament or to the people for his actions, he added.

Former Parliamentary Secretary Muhammad Ayenuddin further said that the Council of Ministers were also not answerable to the Parliament under the present

constitution. Only a sovereign parliament can, therefore, make the government accountable to the people directly or indirectly, he added.

The Muslim League leader pleaded for introducing the parliamentary form of government to make parliament sovereign and said that though the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution was done deleting one party system, multi-party democracy could not introduce a sovereign parliament.

He said that spending of about one crore taka in the presidential polls would push the country into economic bankruptcy. There is no alternative to parliamentary form of government to give democracy an institutional shape, he added.

Government Reviewing Upazila System

91AS0939A Dhaka *THE NEW NATION* in English
5 Apr 91 pp 1, 8

[Text] The newly formed BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] Government begins to analyze and review the issue of the present upazila [subdistrict] system introduced by former President H. M. Ershad. Sources close to the present Government said the issue would be taken up in cabinet meeting for deciding what its future should be.

However, the issue has already been informally discussed by some high-ups of the Government. Most of the key persons in the government expressed their views in favor of the upazila system but it might be reframed with some new features. Some favoring the existing system said that it would be dissolved soon pending a new election. Significantly, BNP has practically no representation in the existing parishads and BNP never participated in any upazila elections since its inception.

BNP always opposed it saying that it was installed by the illegal government of ousted President Ershad. However, Awami League contested the two previous upazila elections and won considerable representation in both.

The BNP Government considering their present wave gives the issue a fresh thought as they, if fresh elections to this local government (Upazila chairman) are held, would do, no doubt, better than other political parties.

According to Election Commission, there is no signal for dissolution of the present upazila system or its present tenure. The Election Commission said that 25 posts of upazila chairmen are now lying vacant in the country and elections to those seats are expected to be held some time in July next.

The Election Commission has already issued necessary instructions to the concerned returning officers to hold by-elections for those 25 upazila chairmen.

The Election Commission further said that Additional Deputy Commissioners of those districts under the jurisdiction of which the concerned upazila lies, would act as the returning officers.

Out of these 25 upazilas, 11 are under Rajshahi division, 5 each are under Dhaka and Khulna divisions and the rest four are under Chittagong division.

It is learnt that these posts of upazila chairmen lie vacant following resignations by some chairmen and some were relieved of their duties on charge of misappropriations of government funds and misuse of powers.

Some chairmen resigned for contesting the parliament elections the commission added. [sentence as published]

'Alarming' Rise in Youth Unemployment

91AS0938A Dhaka *THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER*
in English 6 Apr 91 pp 1, 8

[Text] The number of educated persons still unemployed is increasing alarmingly creating imbalance in social, economic and political spheres of the country. The number of applicants for a vacant post in the cadre services rose to 151 in 1990 while it was 21 in 1984 against the same.

According to the annual report of the Public Service Commission released on Friday, the number of applicants against a vacant post rose incredibly high following the shrinking of jobs in the cadre services. The number of applicants against a vacant post in the cadre services was 85 in 1989.

The report of the Public Service Commission said the number of applicants in the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examinations in 1990 was 30,677. The number of BCS examinees since 1984 increased in huge number. Very recently, the number of applicants for BCS examinations increased alarmingly while the vacant posts against them did not rise proportionately. The number of candidates for a vacant post in 1990 rose to 25 from what it was 9 against the same.

In 1990 the Public Service Commission interviewed 4,669 candidates for 418 posts and recommended appointments for only 351. No recommendation was made for 67 posts as there were no candidates for the posts.

According to statistics, the number of applicants in the BCS cadres was 14,272 against the vacant posts of 1,597 in 1984, the number of applicants rose to 24,272 in 1985 against 4,263 jobs. In 1986 the number of applicants was 33,504 for 2,498 vacancies while it was 37,348 for 1,629 posts. In 1989, the number of applicants for the cadre service jobs was 28,419 against the vacancies of only 1,247 and in 1990, the applicants were 30,677 for only 1,228 jobs.

The Public Service Commission in its report suggested for changes in the reserved quota system in the government services. [sentence as published] The government at present fixed the age limit of the freedom fighters for government job at 32 years. Since the freedom struggle of the country was held 20 years back, the freedom fighters now available for jobs ranges between 8 and 12 years old from 1984 to 1990.

The reserved quota for the freedom fighters in the government jobs was 30 percent. But in 1989-90, the availability of the freedom fighters against the reserved quota for government jobs was only 1.1 percent. The Public Service Commission suggested that there was no justification for keeping 30 percent reserved quota for the freedom fighters in the government jobs.

The Public Service Commission also suggested for increasing the reserved quota for women taking into consideration the increasing number of educated women as well as their better performance in the examinations. The Commission forward reducing the number of reserved quota for freedom fighters from the existing 30 percent to five percent and raising the reserved quota for women to 25 percent splitting 10 percent for gazetted and 15 on merit basis. For non-gazetted jobs, the Commission suggested 10 percent jobs in the reserved quota for women and the rest 15 percent on population quota.

The Commission also suggested for changing of district or regional quota saying that it was against the merit. Under the system it would not be possible for the total development of the nation. The Commission feels that the district quota should be abolished, in the greater interest of the nation.

INDIA

Missiles in Pakistan Threaten India's Security

91AS0886A Madras THE HINDU in English 10 Apr 91 p 6

[Article: "India Is Now Vulnerable to Pakistan Missile Attack"]

[Text] New Delhi, April 9. The detection by Western intelligence of Missile launchers in Pakistan capable of delivering the Chinese made M-11 missiles has raised suspicions that the missiles may be already in Pakistan's possession. There is serious disquiet in New Delhi over this as Pakistan's access to these weapons significantly increases Islamabad's ability to strike with both conventional and nuclear warheads on targets deep inside India.

According to the authentic JANE'S WEAPON SYSTEMS, the M model Chinese tactical missiles are dual use weapons, i.e. delivery systems capable of carrying both conventional and nuclear payloads up to a range of 650 km.

Moreover India's vulnerability increases greatly since this class of unguided ballistic missiles, are relatively

inaccurate, favours their use for delivering nuclear weapons rather than conventional ones. Conventional weapons because of their limited destructive range can be effective only when delivered with precision.

In addition, the risk to India's security posed by the transfer of M-11s can be gauged only when the transfer of missiles is seen in combination with Islamabad's nuclear capability. If Pakistan already possesses nuclear weapons, it may now have a delivery system to home them on chosen targets.

With the M-11s in its missile arsenal, Pakistan's long range strike capabilities have been upgraded significantly. The M-11s add to the missiles which Pakistan has already developed with extensive Chinese backing. These are the surface-to-surface Hatf-I (80 km range) and Hatf-II (300 km).

In fact, the influential JANE'S DEFENCE WEEKLY claims that China had been involved in developing the guidance system for both these missiles. In addition, according to the NEW YORK TIMES, Pakistan had test fired on April 25, 1988, a missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead as far as New Delhi and Bombay.

China's involvement in Pakistan's missile programme became evident when Pakistani officials acknowledged that while 70 percent of the development of their surface-to-air missile, Anza, was indigenous, 30 percent had been achieved with Chinese assistance.

No surprise: The suspected transfer of M-11s from China to Pakistan has not come as a surprise to most defence analysts. The recent report follows a series of confirmations regarding China's involvement in missile proliferation in West Asia and South Asia.

In early 1988, China had sold the surface-to-surface Dong Feng-3A (or East Wind CSS-2) which has a range of 2,600 kms to Saudi Arabia, a country with which it then had not even established diplomatic relations.

Moreover, Beijing has been involved in Iran's efforts to build and develop its short range Oghab, Shanin and Nazeat missile and upgrading the Soviet designed Scud missiles. In addition, China is inclined to sell its modern M-9 missiles—negotiations for which, Syria claims, have already begun.

Extremely difficult: Containing missile proliferation will be an extremely difficult task. Missile technology leaders, enjoying unequal global influence, often compete for political and economic influence and use missile/missile technology transfers to promote their respective political and commercial interests.

In fact, there is an absence of a consensus on the terms within which missile proliferation should be contained. Both China and the Soviet Union have refused to join the seven nation Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). The MTCR, (includes Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan) had been constituted to restrain transfer of delivery systems of dual capability.

Given the missile threat from across the borders, India has little option but to advance its missile programme and build an effective deterrent. Special attention in this regard may be required to strengthen missile defence. Consequently, the development of Surface-to-Air Akash missile whose initial command guidance and terminal radar homing are being tested to gauge its capability to destroy incoming missile warheads has become urgent.

Sweden Not To Reopen Bofors Case

91AS0883A New Delhi PATRIOT in English 3 Apr 91
p 1

[Article: "India's Request on Bofors Rejected"]

[Text] Stockholm, April 2 (PTI)—Sweden's National Prosecutor, Torsten Jonsson, today declined to reopen Swedish investigation into the Bofors gun deal, turning down a request from India, according to the Swedish news agency, TT [Tidningarnas Telegrambyra].

The Indian authorities had requested Swedish help in the interrogations and seizures in Sweden but Mr. Jonsson declined to reopen the Swedish investigation, TT reported.

"The (Swedish) Secret Act makes it impossible for us to get hold of certain information," Mr. Jonsson told TT. "We can't question a banker or a lawyer working under the Secret Act and we can't question an employee at Bofors who doesn't want to answer our questions," he said.

Mr. Jonsson said it would have been possible to question those people during a preliminary investigation. "But then you have to have a clear suspicion of a crime, you would have to know where the bribes went."

The Swedish attorney Mr. Gunnar Berg, who has represented India during the discussions described the national prosecutor's decision as "stingy."

"I do not understand why they have to make it so complicated," he said. "It would have been better if they had shown some will to comply with requests to eventually get somewhere in this dragged out conflict," Mr. Berg said.

"It is regrettable a friendly nation has requested some assistance in gathering material to an investigation and then they reply by putting up a row of complicated conditions for its rather simple request," Mr. Berg said.

Mr. Berg may request that Mr. Jonsson makes a new assessment into the decision by Mr. Ringberg and his superior Mr. Uno Hagelberg not to reopen the preliminary investigation, TT said.

PAKISTAN

Government-Opposition Talks Commended

91AS0828A Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English
2 Apr 91 p 6

[Article: "It's a Matter of Grace"]

[Text] The government and Opposition leaders had what appeared [to be] heart-to-heart talks until late into Sunday night over the latter's boycott of parliamentary proceedings. Our parliamentary correspondent's impression is that both sides brought a fairly reasonable attitude to bear on the subject but the session failed to produce any concrete results. Nor was such a quick resolution of the rather knotty affair to be expected. Happily, both sides have left the door ajar, if not wide open and another meeting is scheduled for today. The note on which the talks were left provides more ground for hope than despondency. Let's hope for the best.

While there is at least one more round of talks to look forward to, why not be optimistic. There is plenty of good reason to sustain a rosy outlook. The Opposition's terms present no insuperable obstacles because they are by no means asking for the moon. The basic point is one that relates to the obstacles which physically prevent more than a dozen MNAs [members of National Assembly] from attending their duties as lawmakers because they are obliged to make personal appearances in the string of special tribunals. It is a universally accepted principle in all democracies that anything obstructing legislators from performing their duties is deemed to have been automatically removed. Legislators are also afforded immunity from detention and arrest during the periods legislatures are in ordinary or specially summoned sessions. The Opposition is asking for no more than an inherent and inviolable right. All the government leadership has to do is to honour a basic right and a legitimate privilege of elected lawmakers.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has spoken so often about his commitment to democratic culture that it would be only fair to expect him to see his way to accommodating the Opposition when what they ask for cannot be withheld without needless disregard of time honoured and universally respected parliamentary legality, traditions, customs and conventions. As for the rest of the Opposition's demands, which may be seen as more political than legal or moral in nature, there would be time to sort them out. For the moment let us just say that there is no justification for keeping the Opposition under a handicap amounting to little less than a lockout. To say the least, the Opposition has often been receiving a sort of treatment which is not always elegant.

New Elections Announced for AJK

91AS0828B Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English
2 Apr 91 p 6

[Article: "At Last a Democratic Decision"]

[Text] The Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir [AJK], Mr. Mumtaz Hussain Rathore, has announced

the dissolution of the State Legislative Assembly and the cabinet saying that fresh elections would be held on July 2, 1991. He announced the decision in Islamabad at a crowded press conference on March 31. Although the announcement hardly came as a surprise to journalistic circles, the timing was unexpected. The step taken by the AJK chief executive cannot be faulted on any grounds. Azad Jammu and Kashmir President Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan has accepted the position saying that fresh polls in the territory would bring about a stable government. That Mr. Rathore was within his constitutional right in dissolving the assembly is unchallengeable. The sagacity of his action can only be lauded since he felt that it was impossible for his coalition government to operate smoothly. With 21 members of the 40-member House going around in flag bearing cars and pressure to elevate a few more, Mr. Rathore just had no option. In fact the position reported was that certain members had not been above attempting to blackmail the prime minister into accommodating them in the top slots of the government. This would have convinced Mr. Rathore that the situation was not conducive to the progress of democracy in the State.

In stark contrast to what is happening in AJK, the doings in the Occupied part of Kashmir just do not bear scrutiny. Right from the time of the late Mr. Jawahar Lal Nehru, elections whenever held in Indian-held Kashmir, have been anything but aboveboard. Installation of New Delhi puppets as chief executives has been the invariable norm and when these nincompoops have failed, as they had always been expected to, Governor's rule was imposed. Even today, the administration in Srinagar is hardly a civilian one with strings being pulled from New Delhi, which has assigned powers to its security forces to unleash whatever kind of bestial atrocities they think fit on the hapless people of Occupied Kashmir. Not so long ago this newspaper printed some photographs of the untold horrors visited on a people whose only crime is that they wish to exercise their right to self-determination—an inalienable right! It has, indeed, been a case of a husband manhandling his wife into staying with him though she is utterly unwilling to do so.

It is highly gratifying that Mr. Rathore has taken a bold step in dissolving an assembly which he headed. There has been no attempt whatsoever to continue in office when the situation on the ground demanded that he exercise the only constitutional option open to him. Such an exercise although going contrary to the interests of his Party and to a lesser extent his own, is courageous to say the least and can only serve to strengthen and promote and democratic process. There will be the proposed election on July 2 and many more to follow in which every party will have the right to prove that it deserves the right to rule the territory. So long as the democratic path is scrupulously adhered to, the sailing cannot be anything but smooth.

Jatoi Discusses Sindh With Nawaz Sharif

91AS0810B Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English
4 Apr 91 pp 1, 16

[Article by Ashraf Hashmi]

[Text] Islamabad, 3 Apr—The former caretaker Prime Minister Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi who has become focus of attention on account of meetings with some of the PDA [People's Democratic Alliance] leaders and MQM [Muhajir Qaumi Movement] federal ministers during the last two days had an hour long meeting with the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif here on Wednesday morning.

Although nothing was told officially he reportedly discussed with the Prime Minister a number of issues including the deteriorating situation in Sindh.

Mr Jatoi, who left for Karachi after the meeting, earlier had refused to answer any questions about his meetings with the MQM ministers, which took place in the National Assembly chamber of the federal minister for Housing and Works.

Later in the evening he also met a PDA representative in his hotel room.

Meanwhile rumours of Jam Sadiq's resignation continued to circulate throughout the day in the capital. However, official sources when contacted described them as baseless and without any substance.

What in fact gave rise to these rumours was the widely reported agreement between the PDA and the Treasury Benches, which would pave the way to end the PDA's boycott of the proceedings of the National Assembly. The Sindh Chief Minister is said to have strongly resented the agreement and reportedly described it as interference in the provincial matter. The Treasury Benches in the National Assembly by reportedly accepting the PDA demand to constitute a six-member house committee to investigate into the PDA's charges of intimidation and harassment of political opponent by the Sindh Government has damaged Jam's position and he took it as an expression of no-confidence in him by Islamabad.

Sources said Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, whose group in Sindh has a big stake in Jam Sadiq's government, has left for Karachi to consult his party colleagues there. He would return to Islamabad on Saturday to continue his dialogue with the like-minded MNAs [members of National Assembly], commented one of his close associates.

Mian Zahid Sarfraz, a member of the ruling IJI [Islamic Jamhoori Ittehad], who had been a minister in Jatoi's caretaker cabinet, is reportedly in touch with members of the National Assembly in his attempt to form what have been described as a "forward bloc" in the ruling party.

When asked to comment on press reports that the federal government was planning to send a reference against him he is said to have told some of his friends "let them bring this reference and then they will have it, as he was fully prepared to expose a number of people."

Nawaz Sharif Starts Dialogue With Press

91AS0810A Islamabad *THE MUSLIM* in English
4 Apr 91 pp 1, 16

[Article by A.B.S. Jafri; italics as published]

[Text] Regardless of what the press and the Prime Minister [PM] hurled at each other, the most wholesome aspect of the encounter of 2 April was the fact that it took place. And, at the instance of the PM himself. Not even his most relentless antagonist should have the heart to deny him distinction marks for this. Mr Nawaz Sharif has started a dialogue. From the tone of it, one can be fairly certain it was quite frank, if not a trifle too frank.

Inevitably perhaps, the tenor of the exchange was set by the keynote address from the press side. All but one of the proponents of the press case appeared to be in no mood to pull their punches. They delivered lively mouthfuls. Some of the stuff was spicy to the point of being pungent. No harm. Where the declamations sounded a touch strident was when moral superiority was claimed or self-pity was carried a step too far.

There is absolutely no doubt that all but two governments in the history of Pakistan have been uncaring and not unoften downright hostile to the press. The exceptions (so far) include the present government and its predecessor. The rest have been nothing short of brutally contemptuous of the press. Within months of the attainment of freedom, the government of the day would start the squalid process of snuffing out inconvenient newspapers. In the first kill, the personages who came out red in tooth and claw included Mr Altaf Husain of DAWN, Mr Faiz Ahmed Faiz of the PAKISTAN TIMES and Mr Hameed Nizami of NAWAI WAQT. The casualty was the oldest and at the moment of suppression easily the best English newspaper in the country: THE CIVIL AND MILITARY GAZETTE of Lahore.

What you see here is the most incredible of phenomena—three pillars, pioneers, fathers and saints of Pakistan's journalism in collusion with the hangman!

The moral of the story is that when you find the government and some of the tallest on the press side engaging in a holier-than-thou contest, the spectacle is more than a trifle funny, if not hypocritical. The governments' record down the years has been a disgrace; the conduct of the press big-wigs has quite frequently been far from exemplary. Empires are seldom built without spilling blood. The past of both, by and large, smells.

But why shed tears over the past? Why not turn a new page, start a new equation? If the government is well-meaning and the press upright and self-respecting, there

should be a lively combat, but strictly according to the rules. In a reasonably civilised democratic society, the press is the voice of the people, the government, the will of the people. There should be no inherent or inevitable disharmony between the two. Mutual respect should be the basis of the equation.

There was a time when a great newspaper editor in Britain was obliged to state that government works in secrecy and the press lives by disclosure. Hence the twain shall ever be in conflict. This need not be necessarily so anymore. Now we are entering the culture of democratic governance. That should mean increasingly open and responsible government. As governments become more open, more responsive, points of friction should progressively diminish.

When the spokesmen of the press went hammer and tongs for governments, they might have avoided giving the impression of gunning away at *the present* government. It has been around for so short a time yet that heaping four decades of pent up ire upon it was a little uncharitable.

The PM's hint about the 'Ads weapon' sounded indelicate. Even so, it does not add up to a point of much consequence. What really matters is that the PM invited the top crust of the country's press and offered to open his heart to them. By all standards, it is a fair beginning. And that is what should really matter.

Article Probes Shari'ah Implementation

91AS0810D Islamabad *THE MUSLIM* in English
4 Apr 91 p 5

[Article by Arif Jamal]

[Text] Islamabad, 3 Apr—In Islam distributive justice comes first and the retributive justice is applied only after distributive justice has been given. This was stated by Mian Mohammad Attaullah, former Federal Minister and a member of newly formed forum for implementation of the Quran [Koran] and Sunnah, while talking to THE MUSLIM.

Mian Attaullah said that is why he thought the political system of the country should be turned into an Islamic system in which the rulers are directly elected by the people and not indirectly as in the case in the present system adding that only those have the right to rule the country who follow the tenets of Islam and are prepared to offer themselves for accountability.

He told THE MUSLIM that the members of the Forum had agreed on many issues to evolve a consensus policy to force the government for the implementation of Islamic system.

"Wherever the differences exist, they will be resolved in the meeting to be held on 4 April, he said.

He said it was the first time that leaders and ulema from different schools of Islamic thought had gathered on the same platform. He said this Forum had not been constituted under any political or public pressures. He said the Islamic laws [*shari'ah*] had to be implemented as this was the very reason for its creation. He said nobody is above law and its implementation starts from the top and not from the bottom. He regretted that there had not been any coherence in the internal or external policies of the country. The nation remains directionless ever since its creation. Different governments gave different ideologies and they have all miserably failed.

"The time has come now for all un-Islamic system to go once for all," he said and added, "and the body politic of this nation should be cleared from the menace of any man-made laws." He also said that there was no contradiction between religion and politics and in Islam they complement each other. He said there was no difference of opinion regarding the basic tenets of Islam among various schools of thought and the interpretation of some laws could be left to the Islamic Ideology Council. He warned all those who are trying to create hurdles in the implementation of Islamic laws that they will not succeed and their evil designs will be thwarted by the power of the people.

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5285 FORT ROYAL RD
SPRINGFIELD, VA

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