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CONTENTS

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NEAR EAST

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Arab Reaction to Soviet Coup	1
Libyan, Iraqi Reaction [London AL-MAJALLAH 28 Aug]	1
PLO Reaction [London AL-MAJALLAH 28 Aug]	1
Jordanian Reaction [London AL-MAJALLAH 28 Aug]	2
Sudanese Reaction [London AL-MAJALLAH 28 Aug]	3
'Arafat Interviewed on PLO Relations With Arabs [Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH 28 Aug]	3
PLO Remiss on Payments; Egypt Withholds Test Scores [Paris AL-DUWALIYAH 9 Sep]	6
Ahmad Qadhaf al-Dam on Relations With Egypt [London AL-HAWADITH 30 Aug]	6

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Khalid al-Hasan on Peace Process, Provisional Government [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 2 Sep]	8
Analysis of Difficulties Confronting Intifadah [London AL-MAJALLAH 21 Aug]	12
Hamas Enforces Moral Code in Gaza [Amman JORDAN TIMES 3 Sep]	15
Poll Examines Political Opinions of Youths in Territories [Jerusalem AL-NAHAR 4 Aug]	16

EGYPT

RESALAT Interviews Foreign Minister Musa [Tehran RESALAT 13 Jun]	18
Council for Universities Suggests Constitutional Changes [AL-WAFD 9 Aug]	19
Editor Warns Against Quick Immigration to Libya [AL-WAFD 15 Aug]	19
New Private Sector Industrial Projects Outlined [AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI 28 Aug]	21
Conglomerate Dealings Reach 1.6 Billion Pounds [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 25 Aug]	21
Reporter Interviews BCCI Branch Depositors [AL-AHRAM 15 Aug]	23

JORDAN

Undermining 'Arafat, Delegation Disinformation Criticized [AL-MANAR 19 Aug]	24
Survey Provides Data on Gulf Returnees [JORDAN TIMES 28 Aug]	25

KUWAIT

Editor on Post-Invasion Status of Women [London SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI 19 Aug] ..	26
---	----

LIBYA

Al-Bishari Discusses Somali Conference, Maghreb Issues [London AL-HAWADITH 9 Aug]	27
---	----

MOROCCO

Foreign Journalists Hampered in Western Sahara [Paris LE MONDE 17 Sep]	31
--	----

SAUDI ARABIA

Ministerial Decree Issued To Ferret Out Corruption [TIJARAT AL-RIYAD Feb/Mar]	31
Jiddah Port Authorities Build Observation Tower [TIJARAT AL-RIYAD Feb/Mar]	33

SUDAN

Applications of Shari'ah Penal Code	35
Judge Says Law Lenient [AL-INQADH AL-WATANI 22 Aug]	35
Thirteen Convicts Executed [AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH 3 Aug]	35
Amputations in Sannar [AL-INQADH AL-WATANI 9 Sep]	35

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

BCCI Crisis Seen as Conspiracy Against Arab Assets [AL-BAYAN 9 Aug]	35
Banking Sector Expands; 10.6-Percent Rise in Deposits [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 20 Aug]	36

SOUTH ASIA

AFGHANISTAN

Pakistani Nuclear Power Seen as 'Great Danger' [THE KABUL TIMES 13 Aug]	38
Kabul Promises Free Wheat for Government Employees [Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL 5 Sep]	38

BANGLADESH

Zia 17 Aug Speech at Savar Meeting Reported [THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER 18 Aug]	39
Foreign Minister Meets With Iranian Counterpart [THE NEW NATION 12 Aug]	39
Rahman Returns From UAE, Iran [THE NEW NATION 15 Aug]	40
Foreign Secretary Reports on Istanbul OIC Meet [THE NEW NATION 13 Aug]	41
Bridge Built With PRC Aid Inaugurated	41
Chinese Envoy Present [THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER 18 Aug]	41
Zia Inauguration Speech [THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER 19 Aug]	41
Constitutional Amendments, Related Bills Passed	43
Parliament Session 6 Aug [THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER 7 Aug]	43
Referendum Bill [THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER 8 Aug]	44
11th Constitution Amendment Bill [THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER 11 Aug]	44
Presidential Election Bill [THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER 15 Aug]	45
Sheikh Hasina on Constitutional Amendments [THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER 8 Aug]	46
Awami League Leader Discusses Council Plans [THE NEW NATION 9 Aug]	46
NAP, CPB To Forge Unity [THE NEW NATION 2 Aug]	47
World Bank Official Confirms Assistance [THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER 6 Aug]	47
Finance Minister Defends New Budget [THE NEW NATION 14 Aug]	48
Bangladesh Bank Aware of BCCI Problem in 1988 [THE NEW NATION 18 Aug]	49
Supreme Court Orders Kader Siddiqui Release [THE NEW NATION 19 Aug]	49
Parliament Discusses University Problems [THE NEW NATION 12 Aug]	50
Fight Against Campus 'Terrorism' Urged [THE NEW NATION 9 Aug]	51
Former Government Officials Released From Jail	52
Former Communication Minister [THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER 8 Aug]	52
Former State Minister [THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER 8 Aug]	52
Reports on Prosecution of Ershad Continue	52
Illegal Activities Alleged [THE NEW NATION 12 Aug]	52
Connection With BCCI [THE NEW NATION 16 Aug]	54
Finances Examined [THE NEW NATION 19 Aug]	54
Questions on Property [THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER 8 Aug]	55

PAKISTAN

U.S. Opposition to Nuclear Program Condemned	56
Bush Stand Questioned [NAWA-I-WAQT 16 Jul]	56
Against Technology in Muslim World [NAWA-I-WAQT 29 Jun]	57
Uniting Against U.S. Pressure [AMN 21 Jul]	58

Pir Pagara Said Ready To Align With Bhutto [DAWN 5 Sep]	59
Sindhi Leader Wants Independent Sindh	60
Autonomy Requested [AMN 28 Jul]	60
Freedom From Military Rule [AMN 27 Jul]	60
Editorial Views Official's Role in Heroin Trade [MASHRIQ 26 Jul]	61

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Arab Reaction to Soviet Coup

Libyan, Iraqi Reaction

91AE0604A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
28 Aug 91

[Article: "Iraq, Sudan, PLO, and Jordan Hailed Military Coup, But Fell Silent 60 Hours Later"]

[Text] Just as they did during the Gulf war and Iraq's occupation of Kuwait, Arab presidents, leaders, and journalists exhibited the same shortsightedness, inexperience, and haste during the period of Gorbachev's ouster from, and return to, the Kremlin 60 hours of isolation later. They passed judgement on current events, not on the basis of reality and actual events, but on the basis of their interests.

For when the latest Soviet coup attempt, led by Gennadiy Yanayev, was announced—a coup clearly aimed at returning the Soviet Union to the age of the KGB and the Iron Curtain regime—cables of congratulations began pouring in from Iraq, the PLO, Libya, Sudan, and the Jordanian news media and writers. Instead of analyzing the events, they engaged in pervasive gloating, and instead of focusing on the will of an entire people who repudiate the principle of coup d'etat and are devoted to democracy, they called for the reinstatement and support of past policies and pacts.

In no time at all, messages were being exchanged, an appeal for joint coordination was sounded, and meaningless advice was being given.

Error in Analysis

Col. Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi's comments on events in the Soviet Union were contained in a long letter [broadcast] on the BBC, in which he said that Gorbachev's capitulations, prostrations, and incessant concessions caused the reactions of animated forces in the Soviet Union.

He added that in its calculations, the West relies on the presence of rulers, therefore causing its defeat in Libya, Egypt, Sudan, and Iraq, and in Lebanon as well.

He said, "The way I see it, the significant reaction will be in East Europe, where a counter-revolution will be launched against the counter-revolution to wrest the gains that have been usurped."

Iraq's Position

The most astonishing position is that of Iraq, which, in a special news flash filmed on the day of the coup, expressed its delight at Mikhail Gorbachev's downfall. AL-JUMHURIYAH newspaper, the organ of the Iraqi government, said that the Soviet Union needed the resolve for which President Saddam Husayn is known.

To be sure, a similarity does exist between Yanayev, who fell within 60 hours, and Saddam Husayn, who lost his land battle within 60 hours as well.

Besides, Baghdad focused on the idea that changes in the Soviet Union would help bring it out of its isolation. Iraqi newspapers highlighted the contents of Gennadiy Yanayev's message to Saddam in which Yanayev emphasized his intention to strengthen relations with all countries of the world.

It seems that message was a carbon copy of a note that Soviet ambassadors and charges d'affaires delivered to a number of friendly countries whose relations with the Soviet Union had cooled following its position on Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, in an effort to solicit resounding stances and glittering slogans, and this is indeed what happened.

On the other hand, the Iraqi newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH came out with the most anger-venting headlines, such as "The Gorbachev-Bush Axis has Fallen," "Gorbachev Finally Toppled and Old Guard Is in Command," and "He Who Laughs Last Laughs Longest."

It is apparent that the resounding Iraqi laughter died down when, on Thursday morning, 22 August 1991, the Iraqi mass media reported Gorbachev's return to power without comment. News of developments occurring in Moscow was reported toward the end of the morning newscast, and official Iraqi newspapers did not put out reports from Moscow, concentrating instead on domestic issues. In a report on Soviet developments, AL-JUMHURIYAH talked about the "uncertainty that settled over Moscow" the day Gorbachev was seen on world television screens returning to the Kremlin.

Iraqi Official: Iraq's Steadfastness Toppled Gorbachev

The most curious commentary on Gorbachev's downfall came in an editorial written by the Iraqi presidential press secretary and published in AL-JUMHURIYAH, which said that Iraq's firmness was one of the main reasons behind Gorbachev's downfall, because Iraq unveiled the policy of treason and intrigue he was following. The spokesman, who headed the Ministry of Defense Political Guidance Section, added that Gorbachev was a Soviet agent exploited by Washington. [All this is] at a time when Cuba (the last communist and socialist stronghold) chose to be neutral and view events in the Soviet Union as an internal affair, and in the month in which Soviet Interior Minister Boris Pugo, one of the leaders of the failed coup against President Mikhail Gorbachev, committed suicide.

PLO Reaction

91AE0604B London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
28 Aug 91 p 12

[Article: "PLO Predicament"]

[Text] The PLO position was the most astonishing and floundering position, for just as the coup was taking

place, the Voice of Palestine broadcasting station in Algiers said that Soviet President Gorbachev's downfall meant that the proposed peace conference had been brushed aside forever, adding that the Soviet Union would not be a silent witness. This commentary was the first official comment by the PLO. The PLO-run radio station, which transmits two hours a day, said in the same commentary that "Perestroika had fallen, and the army, which carried out the coup, had learned its lessons from the Gulf war." The radio station expected a "monstrous" change in the balance of power and a strong alliance between China and the new Kremlin leaders.

That same day, PLO executive committee member Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh said that he hoped events in the Soviet Union would not impede the Middle East peace process.

'Abd-Rabbuh denied media reports on the Palestinian position, saying: "There is a traditional friendship between the PLO and the Soviet Union, and we will encourage its continuation and survival."

Conflicting statements kept coming out. The Popular Front [for the Liberation of Palestine] welcomed Gorbachev's ouster because he had hurt the Arabs, while a reliable PLO media source viewed events in the Soviet Union as an internal affair that was being watched with concern.

Faruq al-Qaddumi, chief of the PLO political section, hailed the coup attempt, deeming Gorbachev unsympathetic to the Palestinian cause. This was in the early days of the coup. However, following Gorbachev's return to the Kremlin, the PLO attempted to distance itself from al-Qaddumi's statements, saying that statements hailing the coup were issued by one source only, namely Faruq al-Qaddumi, a hardliner who is to be expected to come out with such responses.

The best comment on the PLO position was uttered by President Husni Mubarak a few days ago when he was talking about PLO chairman 'Arafat's position vis-a-vis a Middle East peace conference when he [Mubarak] said: "I no longer know what he wants. Why does he say in public something different from what he says behind closed doors?"

Jordanian Reaction

91AE0604C London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
28 Aug 91 p 14

[Article: "Minister of Information Hails Coup, Jordanian Press Vents Anger"]

[Text] In their haste to comprehend the course of events in the Arab and international arenas, some Jordanian newspapers, in approximately one year, have committed two gross mistakes.

The first mistake they committed is represented in their strong stand on the side of the Iraqi regime's occupation

of Kuwait. The second was committed last week when they forcefully hailed the coup attempt that occurred in the Soviet Union. The three Jordanian dailies were the only newspapers in the world to express joy and delight with the military coup undertaken in the Soviet Union by a group of Soviet military officers seeking to turn back the clock in an attempt to revive communism, which the entire world had pronounced dead.

Jordanian newspapers failed to understand the modern reality in the Soviet Union and the rest of the East European bloc, which have decided to do away with communist thought.

AL-DUSTUR newspaper, on the morning of 20 August 1991, came out with a prominent headline, saying: "Red Army Ousts the Friend of the West in the Kremlin." The same newspaper contained special columns and editorials under the following headlines: "If We Do Not Win, We Have Nothing to Lose," "Hello! to the Tanks in Moscow," and "From Moscow with Best Wishes."

On the same day, a fellow journalist, in an article published in AL-RAY newspaper under the headline, "I Declare My Joy and My Glee," wrote: "Mikhail Gorbachev, the worst role model and the leader who has disappointed his people and betrayed his country, has received the natural punishment that he deserved." His punishment, of course, was to return to the Kremlin.

In the same newspaper, and on the same day, other headlines said: "Life Returns to Moscow," and "Gorbachev Gone, Bush Stunned," in which the writer said: "That (Gorbachev's downfall) is the reason why a new dawn will emerge in the Arab land to end the vestiges of the tripartite aggression against Iraq and the Arab nation, and it won't be very long now."

Official's Opinion

A former Jordanian media official, commenting on reports published in the Jordanian press, told AL-MAJALLAH: "A number of current Jordanian press officials have done the greatest harm to Jordanian interests and have damaged Jordan's relations with its Arab brothers, and with the other friendly countries as well."

He continued: "These leaders' behavior during the past year has hurt many Arab leaders, governments, and peoples, inflicting great damage on Jordan and its people." And here we see the same thing being repeated all over again when Jordanian newspapers declared their support for the coup attempt in the Soviet Union, in disregard for the people's desire for liberation and independence.

A seasoned Jordanian journalist accused some Jordanian press leaders, especially certain editorialists, of deliberately seeking to sever Jordan's relations with all friendly countries, emphasizing that this hostile position against Jordan's brothers and friends will not help Jordan in any way, and the only injured party is Jordan and its people.

Hailing the coup, however, was not confined to the Jordanian press, for Jordanian Information Minister Ibrahim 'Izz-al-Din, did it as well. A Jordanian official said that this stance was a hasty reaction at a time when King Husayn and other Jordanian government officials were out of the country.

Sudanese Reaction

91AE0604D London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
28 Aug 91 p 15

[Article: "Al-Bashir and Love of Coups"]

[Text] Lt. Gen. 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir was in Tripoli, Libya, when the Soviet coup occurred. His comment was to hail the coup because the "imbalance inflicting the push-and-shove formula between the two superpowers, thereby upsetting the balance of power in the world, is caused by the surrenderist policies that marked Gorbachev's regime."

He added: "We in Sudan stand on the side of the Soviet people's choices, out of our belief that changes in the Soviet Union can restore the balance."

It appears that Lt. Gen. al-Bashir gave this statement before he saw hundreds of thousands of Soviets on world TV screens defying tanks and armored vehicles with their bodies, refusing to give in to the military coup, and demanding compliance with Gorbachev's policies.

'Arafat Interviewed on PLO Relations With Arabs

91AA0627A Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic
28 Aug 91 p 4

[Interview with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat by Safwat Abu-Talib in Tunis; date not given: "My Relations With President Mubarak Are Brotherly Despite Clouds of the Crisis; Egypt Is Nation's Shield, Has Not Gotten What It Deserves"]

[Text] This interview went on for more than two hours.

My questions were like an investigator's interrogations, but in the end, they are questions that the man in the street is raising.

I met with the Palestinian president, Yasir 'Arafat, at one of his headquarters in the Tunisian capital. He had just awoke from his customary short nap.

The conversation almost came to a halt several times because of the nature of my questions and the eagerness of some of his aids to intervene to prevent me from continuing, but Abu-'Ammar ['Arafat] stopped them and maintained his right to reply to my questions; and so this interview, or trial, was held.

[Abu-Talib] Although you have not traveled to Egypt, the positions of President Mubarak and Egypt toward you personally and toward the Palestinian issue have not changed. Do you agree with this?

['Arafat] Relations between me and our Egyptian brothers, especially President Husni Mubarak, are undoubtedly brotherly, friendly relations of which I am very proud, despite all the clouds that arose during the Gulf crisis.

[Abu-Talib] The Gulf crisis has ended with the liberation of Kuwait, but its effects have not ended. To what extent has your organization been affected by the results of the crisis?

['Arafat] The whole Arab nation has been affected by the crisis. The American secretary of state, James Baker, said this recently and General Schwarzkopf, the commander of Operation Desert Storm, has also said it.

[Abu-Talib] What did you gain from your position on the Gulf Crisis, and what did you lose?

['Arafat] We ourselves gained because we were against the occupation of Kuwait. At the same time, we were against striking Iraq and against the war.

From the beginning, we tried to solve the problem peacefully. We made initiatives in this regard.

What Did You Lose?

[Abu-Talib] You haven't said what you lost.

['Arafat] Yes, we lost a lot. Any Arab loss is in reality a loss for us, as Palestinians. What is happening now in Kuwait and Iraq is a Palestinian loss, and the current Israeli conditions and stubbornness are a Palestinian loss.

Freezing Aid

[Abu-Talib] Are you now finding adequate support for the PLO, particularly material support?

['Arafat] The support we were getting stopped three months before the Gulf crisis. The last thing that arrived for the intifadah and its support was in May 1990. Aid was approved at the Arab summit conference in Baghdad, but there was no aid for the intifadah. This is something well known and public. It can be found in Arab League documents.

As everyone knows, stopping material support can be considered a form of pressure on the PLO for us to accept the Israeli conditions.

[Abu-Talib] But don't you think that your position on the Gulf crisis affected the intifadah, or perhaps even buried it alive?

['Arafat] Our position on the Gulf crisis—since you stress it in all your questions—our position, our position, you seem to be accusing me personally! But I assure you that I was expressing what was in the heart of my Palestinian people. Any official who does not express the feelings of his people does not deserve to represent that people. That is democracy.

I want to ask whether [each of] the Arab states are satisfied with the level of Arab support they have obtained and whether they are satisfied with the nonimplementation of the promises that were given them.

I demand more support for Egypt as the largest Arab state and in view of its fundamental responsibility for fostering the Arab national economy and security and the Palestinian cause.

Arabs Are Egyptians by Affection

[Abu-Talib] You always used to state that you were "Egyptian by affection." Can one say that you personally were Egyptian by affection in the Gulf crisis?

[Arafat] I consider it to be a trait of mine that I am Egyptian by affection. I was, am, and will remain Egyptian by affection. I fought three times in my life—twice to defend Egypt and once to defend Palestine, and I am still fighting to defend Palestine.

I was at the [Suez] canal in 1951, just as I was in 1956, in the Egyptian army under the command of the late Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Amir at al-Zaqaziq.

Let me ask you, brother: Am only I Egyptian by affection? All the Arab masses are Egyptian by affection.

[Abu-Talib] The PLO always prided itself on its democracy in the Arab world. Was your position during the Gulf crisis the result of a democratic decision approved by a majority of Palestinian groups?

[Arafat] Yes, there were Palestinian agreements from the Central Council, which is broader than the leadership. There was an overwhelming popular consensus in the occupied territories. The Palestinian people cheered the missiles and hoped that they would kill them along with the Israeli occupier.

At the same time, I rejected the occupation of Kuwait. The members of our Palestinian people in Kuwait refused to bear arms, though they were asked to. I would like to ask openly: Had our Palestinian people borne arms, would they have been subjected to what they are now being subjected?

Media Definition

[Abu-Talib] But the entire Egyptian and Arab people condemned your positions during and after the Gulf crisis!

[Arafat] [This is] because our positions were, unfortunately, misrepresented and did not appear as they really were, nor were our initiative and the efforts we undertook made visible.

Our attempts at a peaceful solution did not stop during the crisis. Had one percent of the military efforts been exerted toward a political solution, such a solution would have been achieved. Can Arabs accept intervention by Iran and Turkey in the Iraqi heartland?

[Abu-Talib] How do you now assess your relations with Egypt?

[Arafat] Thanks be to God! I am proud that there is continuing coordination and consultation between us and the Egyptian leadership. High-level Palestinian delegations are constantly visiting Egypt.

We can now say that there is mutual understanding between us and our brothers in Egypt. In this regard, I would praise President Husni Mubarak's recent announcement supporting the Palestinian cause and maintaining that the solution must be comprehensive and just.

Egypt's Greatness

In this area I welcome Egypt's pioneering position on the issue of destroying weapons of mass destruction. Egypt rejects restricting the destruction to Iraqi weapons and insists that the destruction must include Israeli nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons.

This official Egyptian position, which agrees with the popular position, confirms Egypt's greatness and her role, which we all respect. I here salute the Arab writers who are defending the land of Iraq and Iraq's children.

[Abu-Talib] Some say that you were able to remain in your post because you controlled enormous funds in your own name. Had it not been for these funds and other investments, your presence would not have continued despite the cutoff of material support from you.

[Arafat] I'll bear with this harsh question from you. I tell you that the one thing we pride ourselves on in the PLO is that we discuss all our private affairs in the National Council. PLO funds are controlled in the name of all by the board of directors of the Palestinian National Fund. This fund met several times in Egypt. It alone, not the Palestinian president, controls PLO funds.

As for the amount of Palestinian funds, I will tell you that a total of \$2.2 billion dollars have come to the PLO from the time of its creation till now, a period of 27 years. In other words, the yearly average has ranged between \$75 million and \$80 million.

That is the amount the PLO has obtained over a period of 27 years, while the Afghan Mujahidin have obtained \$19.5 billion in donations from the Gulf countries in 7 years, apart from the value of the weapons and the sums collected weekly in the Gulf.

[Abu-Talib] Don't you now feel that you were deceived during the Gulf crisis and that you backed a dictator who rejected the voice of truth and justice?

[Arafat] I was deceived? We did not approve of the invasion of Kuwait. We asked for the staged withdrawal of Iraqi forces. At the same time, we convinced Iraq not to insist on linking its withdrawal from Kuwait with Israel's withdrawal and that the Palestinian problem should be solved by an international conference. We

asked Saddam Husayn not to link Kuwait and Palestine in actuality and that the linkage should be political.

[Abu-Talib] You spent part of your youth on the soil of Kuwait. Don't you feel you owe the country a debt of gratitude?

[ʿArafat] Naturally Kuwait has an esteemed position in my heart. That was why I hoped they would solve the problem without war. I told them that the effects of the war would destroy the oil wells. And now they are losing \$140 million of their wealth every day! God alone knows how long the fires will keep burning in Kuwait. Therefore, I had hoped that the problem would be solved peacefully. It hurts me to see this destruction in Kuwait and Iraq.

Nonaggression Guarantee

[Abu-Talib] Some think that a return of Arab solidarity is linked to the need for guarantees that the Gulf crisis will not be repeated, so that time is not wasted in meetings while embers remain hidden underneath, ready to reignite at any time.

[ʿArafat] I would ask why they have not offered guarantees to our Palestinian revolution. We were slaughtered in more than one place, and we had no guarantees to grasp. Or do you mean that the rich are the only ones who must have guarantees? Why didn't they offer Egypt guarantees in the wake of the three Arab wars it entered? Why didn't they offer Syria guarantees in its confrontation with Israel? What Syria and Egypt offered was in the defense of the Arab nation. The only guarantee lies in strengthening "the Arab entity" and in our feeling that we are all one Arab entity. Nevertheless, we approve of establishing any guarantees; we are not against establishing guarantees so that the Gulf crisis or any other crisis does not recur.

International Conference, Optimism

[Abu-Talib] There seems to be a trend toward bringing about peace and holding the conference. Are you optimistic?

[ʿArafat] I am not in the habit of being optimistic or pessimistic about any American proposal. The year before last, we agreed to the 10-point Egyptian initiative and Baker's five points. Now we have agreed to Bush's initiative. We gave our leaders inside the country the green light to meet nine times with the American secretary of state in Washington or in Jerusalem. At the same time, we know that the American administration is subject to blackmail by Israel and is saying no to Jerusalem, no to the PLO, no to halting settlement, and no to an independent Palestinian state.

Does anyone ever appoint the party with whom he will negotiate on the other side?

[Abu-Talib] Syria has officially announced its approval of the Bush initiative. What is your position?

[ʿArafat] Those in Syria talked about the Golan. We have our own concerns, especially Jerusalem.

We have five basic points: first, Jerusalem, in terms of representation and objectively; second, the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination; third, withdrawal from all occupied Arab lands, including Jerusalem; fourth, international protection for the Palestinian people; and fifth, halting settlement.

Jerusalem Issue

[Abu-Talib] There is a view that every Palestinian inside and outside the country holds fast to Jerusalem—indeed, that no Arab or Muslim will allow it to be compromised. Why are you then afraid of not having people from Jerusalem represented at the conference, so long as every participant in it will hold fast to Jerusalem and not allow it to be ceded?

[ʿArafat] I am insisting on this because there is an Israeli condition that Jerusalem be kept out of sight. I do not accept the Israeli conditions—the condition that Jerusalem be kept out of sight in terms of representation and as a subject.

Agreement or Disagreement

[Abu-Talib] Brother Abu-'Ammar [ʿArafat], could you spell out for me the points of agreement and disagreement between you and the American position?

[ʿArafat] The American position has agreed to the Israeli "no's". We agreed to the Bush plan; we welcomed it and considered it a positive point, but Israel imposed conditions, and the American administration accepted them.

Land for Peace

[Abu-Talib] What are your points of agreement and disagreement with the Israeli position?

[ʿArafat] We disagree with Israel about everything, because they are occupying our lands. I asked for one commitment: land in exchange for peace. They should give me a commitment to implement Resolution 242 by withdrawing from all Arab and Palestinian lands, including Jerusalem, and to implement the legitimate political rights of the Palestinian people.

I am asking for a commitment in principle to implementation. The real problem is that Israel has set up conditions against the proposals of the American president himself.

[Abu-Talib] What are the appropriate means for providing these guarantees?

[ʿArafat] They must submit their promises to the Arab League or to Egypt, whom we all trust.

[Abu-Talib] If the Palestinian problem is the central problem of the Arabs, why do you not request that the Arab League or its representative be your representative at the peace conference? Why don't the Americans

represent Israel at the conference? Why doesn't the peace movement or the Jewish Agency now participate in the conference?

[Arafat] Brother, I am ready to accept a joint Arab delegation headed by the Arab League. This is a challenge that I propose before the world. We previously agreed to the formation of a joint Arab delegation when there were attempts to revive the Geneva conference.

[Abu-Talib] If you agree to a confederation with Jordan, what prevents a confederation with Israel?

[Arafat] Is there anyone who would establish a confederation with someone occupying him? Nevertheless, I am prepared to agree to the establishment of a Palestinian-Israeli state with two nationalities and two ethnic groups, like Belgium. Will Israel agree? If it agrees, we welcome it without preconditions.

[Abu-Talib] Abu-'Ammar [Arafat], after a long life, have you thought about who will succeed you, particularly since the senior leaders around you have fallen?

[Arafat] The Palestinian people are greater than their past, present, and future leaders. He who brought me can bring someone ten times better than I.

Camp David

[Abu-Talib] The old Camp David self-rule proposal and your refusal to participate in the Mena House conference—don't you think your obstinacy caused these opportunities to be lost?

[Arafat] You mean that self-rule was an opportunity? My friend, self-rule, as I see it, means that I grant legitimacy to the Israeli occupation in exchange for Palestinian management of municipal affairs. I ask you not to forget that the Palestinian flag was the cause of the problem at the Mena House conference. The conference was held only after all the flags were raised.

Egypt insisted that the flag stay. The Americans suggested that all the flags be removed to solve the problem.

[Abu-Talib] We know that Camp David was an agreement whereby Egypt regained its land without bloodshed and that it also opened the door to solution of the Palestinian problem. Why do you repeat your rejection of it?

[Arafat] I am well aware of this. President Mubarak said it to me and understood it completely. One half concerned Egypt, and it was implemented. There was also a Palestinian side. I am now for a comprehensive, just, and lasting peaceful settlement. So I find no reason for one party or another to reopen the files of Camp David. That is a stage we have passed.

The best proof of this is that Egypt itself, since signing the Camp David agreement, has continued its sincere efforts and endeavors toward a comprehensive, just settlement.

Who Killed Abu-'Ayyad?

[Abu-Talib] Have you reached any definite conclusions in your investigations of the assassination of Abu-'Ayyad [Salah Khalaf] and Abu-al-Hawl [Ha'il 'Abd-al-Hamid]?

[Arafat] Yes, we have reached conclusions and have communicated them to everyone who requested them. Abu-Nidal [Sabri al-Banna] was behind the crimes, and behind Abu-Nidal was the Mosad.

PLO Remiss on Payments; Egypt Withholds Test Scores

91P40439A Paris AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic 9 Sep 91 p 8

[Text] Despite the end of the school year in June and the immediate release of test results the following month, the education administration in Egypt has refused to announce the scores of 6,000 Palestinian students studying in Egyptian universities, institutes, and schools because of nonpayment of their educational expenses. An informed source in the Egyptian Ministry of Education said that the PLO had promised to pay these expenses, and this caused the ministry to allow these students to take the exams for humanitarian reasons. However, the announcement of the results is a political decision, because it is tied to the PLO's payment of these expenses. Thousands of Palestinian students gathered in front of the PLO's headquarters in Cairo in order to bring about a solution to this problem.

Ahmad Qadhdhaf al-Dam on Relations With Egypt

91AA0631A London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 30 Aug 91 p 24

[Remarks by the coordinator of Egyptian-Libyan relations by "Usamah"]

[Text] Cairo—It is wrong to think that close observers of Egyptian-Libyan relations were surprised by the Egyptian cabinet's recent decision to open the Egyptian-Libyan border at President Muhammad Husni Mubarak's direction after his meeting in Tripoli with Colonel Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi, the commander of the Libyan revolution. According to Ahmad Qadhdhaf al-Dam, the coordinator of Egyptian-Libyan relations, the two leaders held their first meeting in connection with the Arab summit meetings in the first half of 1989 in Casablanca. At that time, they held a profound discussion which laid the groundwork for a strategic agreement that serves the Arab nation's goals. Also at that time, an important fact was established, namely that the two countries have no disagreement regarding the past. If there were any differences regarding the lean years, border problems, or economic problems, they concerned national issues entailing a difference of opinion, not a rupture of relations. Therefore, the two countries agreed to establish offices for cooperation between them. An

agreement was reached on operating measures and well-considered programs that comprehend the different changes that have occurred in the Arab region and internationally. There was also an agreement to contain and eliminate sources of discord and to support points on which the two parties agree. Unknown soldiers worked quietly to support cooperation and activity between the two countries. We raced with time until we reached where we are now. This is the will of the masses and the people.

Ahmad Qadhdhaf al-Damm continues his remarks to AL-HAWADITH: "Then, committees and operations rooms were formed in all of the ministries. High-level monitoring and contacts were continuously ongoing to nurture our efforts, which garnered the support of representatives of the Egyptian and Libyan peoples. In this regard, the Egyptian People's Assembly approved the ten agreements between the two countries. These agreements grant the citizens of one country the right to reside, travel, and own property in the other. Similarly, in Libya, after discussions, the masses assembled in the People's Committees to approve these agreements, and they did so entirely of their own volition. Subsequently, the physical borders established by colonialism between the two countries were toppled forever."

Egyptian Economy Ministry statistics indicate an increase in trade between the two countries. Egypt's exports to Libya totalled about \$75 million in 1990 and about \$90 million in the first four months of 1991. In addition, the two countries have signed an in-kind exchange deal worth \$100 million, which is to be shared equally between the two countries. Under this agreement, Egypt will export spun thread, textiles, aluminum products, leather products, and industrial engineering components to Libya. In exchange, Libya will export to Egypt steel beams, rods, blocks, and sheet metal produced at the iron and steel complex in Libya.

Regarding the extent to which differences between the two countries' political systems might affect any plan to unify them, Ahmad Qadhdhaf al-Dam stresses to AL-HAWADITH that "such differences exist only among several ailing forces that are attempting to strike a blow at this important step. We the [Socialist People's Libyan Arab] Jamahiriyah are willing to make many sacrifices, both material and spiritual, to achieve unification. Libya is a rich oil state with a small population. If it were governed by a ruler who seeks only his own stability and security, such a ruler would turn his back on all of the Arabs and their problems. However, we seek unification with them. This is the decision of the Libyans, who sat in People's Congresses and decided to raze the borders. Therefore, we do not recognize any borders with Tunisia, Algeria, Sudan, or Egypt. I believe that Libya's entry into the era of the jamahiriyah approaches a state of full merger with any Arab state. We do not have a president who wants power. Nor do we have a party conflict."

In his interview with AL-HAWADITH, the coordinator of Egyptian-Libyan relations, states: "President Husni Mubarak, after his measures and recent decision to demolish the imaginary border between what are called Egypt and Libya, has come to enjoy extraordinary respect. His popularity has risen substantially in the Jamahiriyah and the Arab homeland because he has unhesitatingly aligned himself with the people's will and has expressed their sentiments, breaking down the barrier of indecision. In this way, he has reacted positively to what Col. Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi undertook last Ramadan [May], inasmuch as both leaders, in taking this step, have ended a wretched, shameful phase in the Arab people's history. We—a small state—are a party to cooperation with a large state. We are eliminating the border between us. We are not fighting over borders, as are some Arab countries. We now offer a splendid example of Arab-Arab cooperation, a model for all Arab countries."

AL-HAWADITH has learned that an Egyptian delegation is soon to meet with 'Abd-al-Majid al-Qa'ud, the secretary of the People's Committee for Land Reclamation, and Muhammad al-Hijazi, the secretary of Cooperation Affairs with Egypt, in the framework of a general, joint, Arab-Egyptian-Libyan committee to examine an important project that can indeed be a model, namely the settling of a million Egyptian farmers in Libya. This committee will examine progress on the implementation of an agreement concluded last May, especially regarding the funding of studies on the al-Wigh area, which has been selected for the settlement of Egyptians. The committee will also discuss the progress made by various committees in examining the possibilities offered by that area's natural resources, agricultural production, and the best method for exploiting the area's agricultural land, of which 300 hectares divided into 28 farms have been set aside under the agreement. Egyptian companies have dug a number of wells, and discussions are being held on construction, road networks, energy sources in the area, and social and legal studies on the settlement of this large number of Egyptians and the method and agency to be responsible for selecting the settlers.

Cooperation between the two countries, which is regulated by the ten agreements signed by Egyptian Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi and the general secretary of the General People's Committee in the Libyan Jamahiriyah, also includes projects worth about \$1 million, which Egypt is implementing in Libya, including a railway costing 400 million Egyptian pounds to connect al-Sallum and Tubruq, a unified electricity grid, an iron and steel plant, numerous residential cities, oil well-digging and exploration operations, the start of a feasibility study of a joint petrochemical plant, and another study on a car to be manufactured in the two countries.

AL-HAWADITH asked Ahmad Qadhdhaf al-Dam whether Libya has abandoned its long-standing dream of achieving Arab unity, given the country's transition from the revolutionary purity phase to the revolutionary

maturity phase. He responds: "Following the experiences which we had and the withdrawal of some parties from unification schemes, consideration was given to other means to achieve this goal. We have not conceded this goal. As for the method, we are experimenting. However, these frustrations and attempts will not affect our determination. We will continue to promote Arab unity and rally around it throughout the Arab homeland, as we did for an entire quarter century. Col. Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi's proposed "Arab Federation" plan perhaps underscores our remarks in this regard. Discussion of this plan was scheduled to be completed at the summit that had been planned for Cairo last November. This plan preserves each country's system of government. However, the masses' interests must be unconstrained. There must be no constraints on the masses' movement and activity, the establishment of large food and oil organizations, and the unification of strategic industries in the Arab homeland. [Under the plan,] there would be a rotating presidential council and a consolidated cabinet whose presidency would also be rotated. We believe that Arab hopes lie in unification in this age of large blocs, because the unification of Europe in the northern Mediterranean in late 1992 threatens Arab existence. Unity is tantamount to "Noah's Ark," because it will protect our nation from the coming flood. We and Egypt offer a model. We were separated by barbed wire that had been placed to prevent the tribes in the Western Desert from ranging into al-Jabal al-Akhdar and 'Umar al-Mukhtar. There was no border there. We never recognized one to distinguish it. The tribes are mixed, and the customs and traditions are one. Moreover, 12 million people of Libyan origin reside in Egypt. A part of their families is still here in Egyptian cities. More than a million Egyptians live in Libya. The merger exists. What we seek is to remove the pressure from these people and to allow them to be free. This is happening in a spontaneous way that is quashing technical problems and issues. The political, economic, and social agencies will conclude their studies, and some organizations will be unified and merged with time. The main step is that we have removed constraints and the bureaucratic red tape that is pressuring the masses and limiting their movement." According to Ahmad Qadhaf al-Dam, only these masses and their vital interests can guarantee the continuation of any unification effort.

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Khalid al-Hasan on Peace Process, Provisional Government

91AE0608A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
2 Sep 91 p 3

[Interview with Khalid al-Hasan in Riyadh; "I Am Calling for New Formation of Palestinian Provisional Government From Inside, Outside Occupied Territories To End Our Isolation, Resume Our Journey"; date not given]

[Text] Mr. Khalid al-Hasan, chairman of the foreign relations committee of the Palestinian National Council [PNC], called for the reformation of a Palestinian provisional government comprised of members from inside and outside the occupied territories to focus attention on negotiation, political, and media topics.

In an interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, al-Hasan said: "Our Gulf war policy has had devastating ramifications, most notably the deadly isolation from Europe after we had broken through to the European Community, and therefore, we must reverse these ramifications by pursuing a new course." Al-Hasan expressed his regret over what he called a vast gap in thinking between Palestinians inside and outside the occupied territories. He emphasized that it does not make sense to keep the "inside" on the periphery, carrying out orders received from the outside, adding that these days the outside's legitimacy is tied to the support it receives from the inside, and not the other way around, and that if the inside were to shift its position vis-a-vis the PLO, the PLO would see its demise one minute after such a shift is made public.

About the Middle East peace negotiations and ending the Arab-Israeli conflict, al-Hasan stressed that the Palestinians will not reject negotiations because this would be in keeping with Israeli tactics. He asked the American president, Bush, to fly the banner of international legitimacy at full mast and not at half mast when he talks about peace in the Middle East, and to abide by the full implementation of all resolutions of the international legitimate authority, and not just some of them.

Al-Hasan alluded to the Soviet position on the Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict, pointing out that the Soviets have generally shifted their international policy from a balance of power to a balance of interests. He said the Soviets' need for \$150 billion in American loans is much more important to Moscow than the Palestinian people.

Following is the text of the interview:

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Are we actually close to peace and a settlement of the Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict?

[al-Hasan] Unfortunately, it is impossible to give a definitive answer to this question given the many changes that have occurred in the world, most notably America's singlehanded leadership of it. During the Gulf war, America raised the banner of international legitimacy very high and called for implementation of all UN resolutions. As a result, an international and global opinion was formed calling for the implementation and application of international legitimacy to all conflicts, to the Middle East question in particular. Unfortunately, we have noticed certain matters that make us uneasy about the way things are going. Some phenomena point to positive aspects, like America's ongoing political moves toward a political settlement. But there are also negative aspects embodied in several matters, some of

which may be tactical and some strategic, or all may be tactical or strategic. Included in such matters is the fact that, during the Gulf war, President Bush was always talking about the implementation of all the international legitimate authority's resolutions with regard to Iraq, which is generally accepted and the right thing to do. But, when the war was over and he began talking about the Palestinian issue, it became clear that he was not talking about this issue as the core of the problem, but rather about the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Therefore, he premised his contentions on Resolution 242 and not Resolution 181. In other words, he did not use or talk about all the international legitimate authority's resolutions aimed at settling the Arab-Israeli conflict as well as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

The other point has to do with the American administration's inclination, from the outset, toward convening Arab-Israeli talks and negotiations that would culminate in the normalization of Arab-Israeli relations, and after that, turning to the Palestinian question. About 241 members of Congress signed a memorandum to this effect to American Secretary of State James Baker, and America proceeded in this direction. From this sprang the idea of a regional conference that was supposed to include not only the Palestinians and Israel, but the Arabs as well, and to discuss, at the outset, not only the Palestinian question, but also Arab-Israeli relations.

The peace process was supposed to begin with the Palestinian issue because the Palestinian issue is the main cause of the Arab dispute with Israel and all the problems in the Middle East. Given the major problems and burdens they have imposed on the countries of the region, we can say that the Gulf war was triggered by circumstances stemming from the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian question. Accordingly, America started out with the beginning at the end and went in the opposite direction.

Saudi Arabia's prudence in refusing to participate in such a conference, must be acknowledged. The matter has been transformed into a regional conference, in other words, [including] the states bordering on Palestine, and will be attended by the Gulf states as observers. This means the Arabs would have a role to play in the solutions, which is not bad.

The third point is that America is thinking in terms of comprehensive security, as well as a comprehensive economic order for the region, though Israel has so far refused to recognize that it is a Middle East country and is raising its people on the idea that it is a European country and that the Middle East peoples, culturally and civilizationally, are the enemies of Zionism, and they have nuclear weapons.

Thus, the point of departure, to the American way of thinking at least, is the security of the Jews and the Palestinians, or that of Israel and of the Palestinian state, and the security of the region as a whole, and not just of Israel.

Furthermore, negotiations, in and of themselves, have become a target because Israel wants to dodge them to retain territory. That is why we should not turn them down, because this would be in keeping with Israeli tactics. The United States is applying pressure in the hope that Israel will ultimately agree to attend the conference. Therefore, no one can say that peace is imminent and that we are almost there unless Bush were to do what former American President Jimmy Carter did when he summoned the parties to Camp David to do what was done. America can impose this on Israel, and the moment it adopts a neutral position, Israel would yield to any living being in the world. We ask President Bush to take a position agreeing with this goal. We ask him to apply UN resolutions in full and to commit to them. Resolution 242 points out that it is based on "equality in sovereignty". Then why adhere to Resolution 242? If this resolution says "equality in sovereignty" for each country of the region, why distinguish Israel from the Palestinians and the rest of the Arabs? Why does Israel get priority? It is distressing that, even now, the Palestinian issue—in one form or another—is considered an American domestic question, and that it is one of the issues used in American domestic politics, and comes up in every election. In the current environment, success in these elections is more important than anything else in the world.

There may be strategic interests dictating change. I do not think that the world can put up with such arrogance, intransigence, and vainglory, represented in the Likud Party and Shamir, forever. It makes no sense at all for a human being to disdain the will of the entire world and the will of more than half the Jews in Israel, and to cling to his opinion and position so as not to lose his prime ministerial seat to his rival, Ariel Sharon, or to prove to himself, under the guise of interests, that he is the last of Israel's prophets.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] In one of his statements, Shamir said that it was possible to hold negotiations on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Do you see any Israeli flexibility on this matter?

[al-Hasan] We are facing a huge problem, namely the building of settlements and the arrival of new immigrants in the occupied territories, and firmly establishing that on the ground. The enemy occupying the land is always trying to bolster his position for fear of facing a blitzkrieg or counterattack to drive him out of there without much trouble. Accordingly, he is building the necessary fortifications for his survival. If he can go on for a period of time, during which he is able to establish his military presence, a counterattack would be nothing but an ordinary attack instead of a defensive campaign in the conventional sense of the word, because one would be attacking a new reality created by the enemy. So, Israeli policy is forever stalling, with a view to building more settlements and taking in more immigrants, thereby firmly establishing the status quo, which is difficult to change, then trying to force this status quo on the region, on America, and on the world.

Herein lies the United States' responsibility, if it truly believes that it is the leader of the world and if President Bush truly believes that international legitimacy is the primary authority in settling international conflicts, as he used to claim during the Gulf war; if he believes that the Palestinian people are like all other peoples and have the same rights; and if he believes in American political philosophy and doctrine that are based on the right to self-determination and peoples' liberation. If Bush wants to be the guardian of doctrines generated by the American experience in the political field, he must change the way he deals with Israel, because Israel cannot say no to America. This is inconceivable.

International changes that have occurred under the heading, "international detente," have generated several results in the field of politics—how we understand and employ them. For example, international detente has ended the cold war between the two superpowers, which means an end to surrogate wars fought in the Third World. That, in turn, means settling regional problems. Many such problems have been settled, the latest being the Ethiopian question. Even the impossible problem of South Africa is on its way to being solved. What is left is the Middle East question which, it seems to me, will be the last one to be settled because should international detente founder, and I do not think it will, the Palestinian question would be all set to become a surrogate war able to play the desired role in the conflict between Moscow and Washington, even though—as I have already said—I do not think so.

On the other hand, the Soviets have announced a shift in their international policy from a balance of power to a balance of interests, and have eliminated the role of ideology from their policymaking in the belief that interests are the primary guide in this respect. This means that the Soviets' support for us has not changed at all, even though they used to be more enthusiastic than America in backing the partition plan, refusing to withdraw it when America did. Andrey Gromyko, then the Soviet UN representative, attacked the plan to put Palestine under UN tutelage for five years until the partition plan was resubmitted to the UN.

Up to this stage, which was called "international detente," the cold war between the two superpowers was still going on, and it was impossible to solve the Palestinian problem amid such a war. Now that we have attained detente, there is a serious effort to arrive at a political solution to the problem.

One important point you should be aware of is that the Soviets' need for American loans—up to \$150 billion—to rebuild the Soviet economy is much more important than entering into a confrontation with the United States in the Middle East, if we look at this in terms of interests rather than principles.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] How do you view the new security order for the Middle East region?

[al-Hasan] When talking about a new security order for the region, one must realize that the Arabs cannot accept Israel, the only country in the region that has nuclear weapons, as part of this order. This is inconceivable, and the Arabs can never accept it.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Some believe that the PLO's democratic process has undergone some change and that decisions are being made individually without consulting the PLO's collective leadership. What is your comment on that?

[al-Hasan] Our base is devoted to democracy, and we believe that the greatest danger to any movement is to have a single leader rather than a collective leadership. I would like to make it perfectly clear that collective leadership does not preclude a leader. There has to be a leader because, when the leadership is in between sessions, there should be someone to oversee daily activity and deal with emergencies. Accordingly, there ought to be a leader, be he a general secretary, a president, or a leader. The title is not important, but the jurisdiction is.

The leader, as part of a collective leadership, is the one who abides by counsel and the will of the majority. If he refuses to do so, he would be nullifying the collective leadership and declaring himself an autocrat. As the saying goes, "He who acts alone goes astray," and, as al-Ghazali said: "He who thinks alone stumbles." When the leader rejects the principle of counsel and the will of the majority in decision-making, particularly in major matters, he puts the members of the organization in a very difficult position, and persistence in this leads to insubordination, which is totally inadmissible. A leader must have consideration for the conscience of the people and the organization.

The worst thing that could happen to a leadership is mental aging, namely the inability to discern the proper approach for making the right decision, either by acting alone or by listening to foolish and impudent human beings who always say "yes sir," and therefore are hypocrites and not real men. Thus, we must have a good comprehension of what democracy and collective leadership mean, for they do not negate the leader's centrality, nor do they nullify the collective nature of the decision-making process. We are now in a revolution and not in a state, notwithstanding the fact that we declared the establishment of a Palestinian state at the Algiers conference. This declaration was a moral political statement and a base for struggle for the sake of attaining this state in the form of an existing reality on the ground. Therefore, we are still using the yardsticks of struggle in our relations, which call first for conviction and then for commitment, because without conviction there can be no commitment, and conviction without commitment is a worthless philosophy.

Then comes discipline in implementation within a framework of trust, because the correctness of a leadership's decision is confirmed through implementation

and not by mere adoption. The debate over the correctness of the decision occurs before adoption, and it is a mental debate. When a decision is adopted, its implementation becomes the yardstick for its correctness based on its material results.

For example, the material results of our Gulf war policy are now clear: deadly Arab isolation that heightened our isolation from the world, Europe in particular, after we had broken through to the European Community. Our failure to debate the matter rationally and conscientiously—was it the right or wrong decision?—had devastating ramifications, and they must be reversed by pursuing a new approach. Therefore, we can finally say that leadership means making decisions. When a leadership loses its ability to make decisions, it loses its legitimate right to exist, and when it loses the ability to assess the correctness of the decision, it loses its legitimate right to power, the leadership's power. Wrong decisions cannot command allegiance, and this calls for rectification.

We return again to the position that democracy is fundamental, and that collective leadership is a necessary condition for the existence of any party or organization. Autocracy is wrong, and collective leadership does not preclude a leader. Most of all, a leader does not preclude a collective leadership.

I hope that God will lead us on the right path, because we are living in deadly isolation, and Israel may be able to bypass the PLO if this situation persists. From this came my call for the establishment of a provisional government in the form I had already outlined, in hope of emerging from this isolation and resuming our journey on the path of struggle. There is no provision opposing the reformation of a provisional government from inside and outside the occupied territories whose task would be focused on political, negotiating, and media issues.

We must realize two things. The first are the changes in the international arena that we talked about before and the ensuing issue of international legitimacy in the Gulf war and, consequently, the rush to arrive at a political solution accompanied, as of 1987, by something called the intifadah in the occupied territories. Consequently, the Palestinian people have jumped from a people resisting occupation to a people revolting against occupation. The leaders of liberation have started to emerge from this intifadah to debate and make decisions.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What do you think about the contention raised from time to time that there is a considerable gap between Palestinians inside and outside the occupied territories?

[al-Hasan] Unfortunately, there is a vast intellectual gap between the inside and the outside, and the people on the inside must not be kept on the periphery, carrying out orders received from the outside. Therefore, there has to be coordination between the inside and the outside, thus the need to form a provisional government comprised of members from both sides. We live in a material world

with no vacuum. In the first stage, people on the inside were incapable of making decisions, so we, the people on the outside, had to do it. Then the stage of balance came around, and our legitimacy became tied to the support we received from the inside, and not the other way around. Should the inside shift its position vis-a-vis the PLO, the PLO would see its demise one moment after the shift is made public. But our people on the inside are aware of the importance of a united nation, a united cause, a united people, and a united leadership, hence their suffering and endurance for the struggle's sake. In return, people on the outside must apply the same standards in dealing with them and must share the decision-making process with them.

In 1985, I told the PNC: "We used to receive cables of support from the inside. During this session, we received cables of support and proposals. In the future, we shall receive draft resolutions, and if we fail to respond, they will make the decision themselves." As I have already said, there can be no leadership, no legitimate leadership presence, and no legitimate allegiance to the leadership without the right decision. The worst kind of monopoly in the world is that of the mind and of opinion.

So, we must coordinate between the inside and the outside and must have a joint leadership represented by a joint government which, when formed, would call for holding elections on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to elect their representatives to the PNC. There has to be an actual partnership in the decision-making process between the inside and the outside.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] How do you view the occasional clashes between Palestinian factions and organizations inside the occupied territories, such as the incidents that occurred between Hamas and Fatah, for example?

[al-Hasan] This is a very painful matter caused by organizational partisanship. The organizations have not yet realized that they do not have the right, in the wake of the intifadah, to struggle for their own being and for their organizational gains. This used to be acceptable in the past until the leadership had a chance to crystallize, and it has crystallized. However, now that the Palestinian people have reached the intifadah and the weaning state, there has to be a leadership leading the people and not factions. We must not allow doctrinal partisanship at this stage to create this kind of problem. If we want to coexist with the Jews in the future, it would be a disgrace if the organizations are unable to coexist with each other for ideological reasons.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] You said that the Palestinian train in the international arena can be set in motion only by an Arab locomotive that is driven by Arab solidarity and international alliances. What did you mean by that?

[al-Hasan] Notwithstanding the fact that it is a regional Arab and a domestic Palestinian cause, the Palestinian issue is subject to an international quality. Its international quality is significant because the international

arena is its theater, since Israel is a colonialist project created by the forces of capitalist and socialist imperialism. In other words, it is the product of international policy that encroached upon the Palestinian people. Struggle in this international cause can be either through war or through negotiations. We, the Arabs, have dropped the military option, tending toward a political solution subject to the nature of conflict in international policy and based on interests. That is why we need the Arabs, and I believe that the Palestinian train in the international arena can be set in motion only by an Arab locomotive driven by Arab solidarity and international alliances.

Therefore, as far as we are concerned, Arab solidarity is a strategic necessity, and that is why our national charter and our principles provide that we avoid Arab-Arab conflict, because Arab differences can destroy any revolution that needs the Arabs. Thus, any position on the side of one Arab country against another is a departure from our principles.

Analysis of Difficulties Confronting Intifadah

*91AE0605A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
21 Aug 91 pp 32-33*

[Article by Fahmi Huwaydi]

[Text] "The National Dialogue in the Occupied Territories Reflects Frustration and Despair"—This is the title of a recent report published by AL-ISLAM WA-FILASTIN [Islam and Palestine] on the situation in the occupied territories. The report is indicative not only because of its highly pessimistic content, but also because AL-ISLAM WA-FILASTIN is closely connected to the Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement, thought to be one of the most obdurate and hardline resistance groups.

The said report should come as no surprise. People concerned with the Palestinian situation and who follow events, especially after the Gulf war, are aware of the true state of affairs in the crisis. The actual dimensions of this crisis, though almost unseen in the Arabic media, are clearly evident in the occupied territories and in interior newspapers, where discussion of the crisis has been growing at least since March 1991.

Anyone monitoring this discussion would note that the Gulf crisis—with its profound economic and social effects on the occupied territories, as well as the policies of the PLO which accompanied it—has "shocked" the Palestinian situation. This shock has reverberated in different directions and unleashed a dialogue entailing self-criticism and review which embraces all fields and strata in the realm of Palestinian action.

In particular, these discussions have focused on two basic issues, the intifadah and the mechanisms of Palestinian political action.

Before we review the content of this dialogue, we should note that, if this dialogue reveals the depth and dimensions of the crisis, it also indicates health and vitality. It is no exaggeration to say that the Palestinian arena is almost the only arena in the Arab world where a dialogue involving self-criticism and review is still being conducted in the wake of the Gulf crisis. Regardless of the surrounding conditions of this dialogue and the motives for it, we must recognize its positive aspects: 1) It reflects participation in [shaping] the Palestinian destiny; and 2) It is reviving hopes of correcting the course over the long or short term.

We say this while noting that the critical review discussion that emerged and grew in the Arab arena during the crisis has abated and even ceased in some cases. If all agree that the crisis is essentially Arab and not just Palestinian, the abatement of Arab discussion of the crisis is a negative development that wounds the vitality and hope of Arabs. It even seems as if the Arab attitude dealt with the crisis by means of the emotion and anger that prevailed during Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. However, when emotions abated after the occupation ended, spokesmen stopped talking, and the intellectuals took a long vacation. Thus, we have passed the "anniversary" [of Iraq's occupation of Kuwait] without having learned anything or corrected any mistakes!

From that standpoint, the continuation of the Palestinian dialogue, with all of its faults, appears as positive, admirable behavior.

Three Problems Facing the Intifadah

Palestinian discussions of the intifadah focus on two issues: The abatement of the intifadah, and the behavior of the elements participating in it and associated with it.

No one disputes the fact that the intifadah has abated. This abatement has not occurred as a result of an increase in Israeli repression, which actually feeds an escalation. Rather, it is attributed to the economic straits being experienced in the occupied territories and the Arab political situation.

There is a consensus that the intifadah has lost the popular character that marked it at its outset. Popular participation in the intifadah has declined over time, and intifadah-related activities have become the purview of a few thousand youths known by the occupation authorities as "primary nuclei"—youths who have formed groups now engaging in activities that are more deviant and violent.

The strangling economic crisis has played a role in the decline of popular participation in the intifadah. The population in the occupied territories, which depends almost entirely on the Israeli labor market, is suffering economic hardships stemming from the disruption of life and the scarcity of financial sources. Many Palestinians have returned from Kuwait and have stopped providing assistance to their families, and the Gulf states, mainly Kuwait, have stopped providing aid to the

Palestinians. For example, 30,000 Palestinians in Kuwait had been sending \$120 million per year to their families in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. One can imagine the effect of a sudden cutoff of this source. Moreover, the disruption of this source was concurrent with the occupation authorities' imposition of a curfew during the entire Gulf crisis, which prevented about 100,000 Palestinian workers from going to their jobs and cut them off from their sources of livelihood.

Thus, thousands of Palestinian families, especially in the camps in the Gaza Strip, are now suffering from a deterioration in their standard of living. Some are now even on the verge of hunger, which explains why a significant percentage of Palestinian workers did not respond to calls made by intifadah groups to honor a general strike.

More than 18,000 Gazan workers went to their jobs in Israel, despite the strike called by the Intifadah Command and the Hamas [Islamic resistance] Movement to mark the intifadah's 42nd month. Moreover, intifadah elements did not try to stop these workers' buses or threaten to burn them.

This is thus a situation where these workers—when faced with no alternative sources of livelihood, the depletion of their resources, and imminent hunger in their families—felt compelled to go to their jobs and disobey the Intifadah Command's orders, which reflects one aspect of the despair and profound suffering.

These economic straits have been paralleled by a feeling of frustration among the masses of the intifadah over the Arab political situation. This frustration stems from the attempt to exploit the intifadah to close the book on the Palestinian problem, and from the state of Arab fragmentation which has resulted in armed combat (as happened in the occupation of Kuwait). As a result of these factors, the intifadah and the Palestinian problem in general have been given less priority in Arab and international political discourse.

There are three salient points concerning the behavior of intifadah groups and elements:

- The disparity between the respective political visions of the Islamic, nationalist, and Marxist currents, and these groups' inability to crystallize clear political ideas and proposals for achieving their demands or establishing a political entity that defends the Palestinians' legitimate rights. These factors were given particular prominence when forces involved in the intifadah began demanding a role in this phase as efforts toward a political settlement have begun to get underway in recent months.
- With the decline of mass participation in the intifadah, and the movement of groups and organizations into the forefront of the uprising, the door was opened wide to a struggle for leadership and control between different Palestinian groups. In time, this struggle began to assume the form of armed clashes. One such bloody episode was the clash that occurred in the Kasba quarter in Nablus between Fatah [Palestine Liberation Movement] and the Hamas Movement.

- The third important point is the phenomenon of the "veiled ones," who have been responsible for liquidating persons who collaborate with the Israeli occupation authorities. This phenomenon, which emerged in the intifadah's first year as a way to protect it from internal enemies, recently evolved into internecine warfare aimed at settling political, personal, and perhaps moral accounts. In the last two years, 400 Palestinians have been killed for allegedly collaborating with the Israeli occupation authorities. In April and May 1991, 45 Palestinians were killed for allegedly collaborating, compared to 18 killed in confrontations with the Israeli Army.

The Jerusalem-based AL-FAJR (No. 8, June) published an article by two Palestinian journalists entitled: "Who Has the Right To Inflict Punishment?" In that article, the two journalists, Sirhan al-[Salayimah] and [Nubhan Khurayshah], state: "We have opened wide the door to the uncontrolled liquidation of anyone suspected of collaborating with the authorities. The intifadah has opened the door and placed a sign on it which reads: 'The Cleaning of the Palestinian House of the Dirt of Agents.' As for the other (Israeli) side, it has raised aloft a banner that reads: 'Let us Protect Palestinians from Palestinians.' And the collaborators' banner reads: 'Let Us Form Our Own Militias To Protect Ourselves.'"

Al-Salayimah and Kharishah ask: "Who has the right to inflict the death penalty on an innocent person accused of collaborating with the authorities as long as that person has not been convicted? Who shall determine whether or not that person has fallen into the trap of collaboration? How low has the decline sunk?"

The two writers relate how an ordinary citizen, who sometimes fears dealing with himself, now trembles in fear whenever he hears a knock on his door or his neighbor's door in the night. His fear grows when he discovers that the knocker is not a soldier, but a veiled person covered in black clothing from head to toe and armed with an axe or a sword!

According to AL-ISLAM WA-FILASTIN, this article reverberated throughout the occupied land: "Thus, nothing was taboo any longer in the realm of conversation." Successive conferences were held and articles were published on numerous issues, starting with the intifadah's position, and not ending with the issue of money and when it is distributed.

A conference entitled "The Intifadah: Between Reality and Expectations" was held at the al-Hakawati Theater in Jerusalem on 12 June. Participants included two journalists and two university professors. During the conference's opening, journalist 'Adnan al-Damiri stated that errors and negative aspects are natural, but "hiding them under the bed to prevent others from seeing them will only cause them to fester." He added: "We are not

concerned with putting the intifadah on trial. It is not on the docket. Airing one's dirty laundry is part of cleaning it."

Dr. Yusuf Abu-Samrah, a lecturer in psychology at Birzeit University, criticized the phenomenon of Palestinian youths no older than 15 gaining control of the Palestinian scene. He called on these youths to return to school and stay away from the political arena of the intifadah.

According to a report published in this regard, "the prevailing atmosphere at the conference was one of criticism toward groups belonging to the national movement, condemnation of the tight control by Palestinian groups over the national movement, and condemnation of the absence of democracy in the PLO's dealings with the masses, which has helped weaken the masses' participation in the intifadah. Questions were also raised about the distribution of funds sent from abroad to organizations and individuals in the occupied territories. The conference also strongly and vehemently criticized the growing phenomenon of killing collaborators or persons suspected of collaborating with the occupation authorities."

The PLO Is Facing a Test

This and other conferences held subsequently on the same topic are tantamount to an open dialogue series, which began to emerge after the Gulf crisis ended. These conferences have focussed on the mechanisms of Palestinian action.

The most prominent, and perhaps the first to raise the topic, was Radi al-[Jara'i], a leader in the Fatah Movement in the occupied land who has spent 13 of his 40 years in Israeli prisons. Al-Jara'i published an article in AL-FAJR in late March 1991, in which he calls for "a new mechanism for Palestinian action" to emerge from the post-Gulf war situation.

As if to pour salt on the wound, AL-FAJR published successive articles supporting or opposing al-Jara'i's call, prompting al-Jara'i to issue a response on 22 April, in which he criticizes his critics. In his response, he adheres to his recommendation to dissolve and re-form the Palestine National Council [PNC] "in order to give proportional representation to Palestinians living in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip" through UN-supervised elections.

He also recommends, after elections are held, the formation of "a provisional government or a government in exile," which would include persons from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to oversee national organizations and which would announce a willingness to negotiate with Israel based on UN resolutions.

In his article, he advocates basing the relationship between the Palestinian interior and the Palestinian leadership abroad on "interaction more than direction [by the leadership abroad]."

Other Palestinians raised objections to this call, describing it as "deference to U.S. proposals for a solution." Hilmi Hannun, the elected mayor of Tulkarm asks: "How are the proposed elections related to the alleged opportunities for a peaceful solution? What utility is there in the presence of a representative of the Palestinian people in the arena who enjoys broad, public support?" Hannun rejects the idea of holding elections in the occupied territories. He states: "If elections for the PNC are needed, they should be held in the interior and abroad."

The scope of the discussion expanded, clearly becoming charged with a good deal of criticism of the PLO and the practices of its leadership. The National Unified Command issued a communique on 1 May with the aim of subduing the dialogue and defending the PLO. The communique states: "Despite [differing] political judgments inside and outside the occupied land on engaging with the fast-moving political initiatives, the proponents of these judgments are nonetheless committed to the need for action to protect the PLO's role as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and to defend our people's unity in the interior and abroad. To prevent deviation from these goals, we must act to consolidate the democratic base and unify our political vision through responsible dialogue governed by objective, constructive criticism and through an open mind that is aware of the nature of this phase."

AL-BAYADIR AL-SIYASIAH, a magazine that is subordinate to the PLO, published two articles in its 25 May issue that express the same attitude on the part of the unified command. The first article states: "Palestinian constants and principles are between the past and the present. Democracy and the freedom to put forth plans and proposals do not entitle one to infringe upon general constant facts." The second article is entitled: "Palestinian Democracy and Free Speech Are Constrained by Constant Facts."

The second article attacked, in particular, advocates of elections and the participation of the population of the occupied territories in Palestinian decision-making. It stressed that "the public has agreed that the PLO's legislative institutions are the most practical formula. Even if democracy has not been perfected in them due to compelling circumstances, they nonetheless provide an appropriate climate for entering into an intellectual debate over the problem, and for the participation of all viewpoints."

The article in AL-BAYADIR responded to critics of the PLO's institutions, stating: "It is positive to discuss the development of democratic Palestinian institutions. However, for these discussions to arouse doubts about these institutions, and for them to attempt, in one way or another, to contain these institutions in the difficult circumstances being experienced by the PLO is neither negative or positive, but rather follows the logic of

trapping and conspiring against the Palestinian leadership, which derives its legitimacy from these institutions."

In a commentary on the call to hold elections in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, AL-BAYADIR states that "all plans that speak of the Palestinian people gaining freedom as a result of Palestinian elections are cause for wonder. The international (and other) parties advocating elections would do better to call for granting the Palestinian people its rights and freedom."

The echoes of this dialogue appeared on the pages of a limited number of Arab newspapers, including the London-based AL-HAYAT. On 16 March 1991, it published an article by Birzeit University lecturer Prof. Ghassan al-Khatib entitled "Palestinian Profit and Loss Account From the Gulf War." In this article, al-Khatib calls for a critical dialogue within the framework of the PLO and for the strengthening of democratic and collective Palestinian action. A month later (on 20 and 21 April), AL-HAYAT published two articles by another Birzeit University lecturer, Prof. Musa al-Badiri, entitled "The Palestinian Cause After the Gulf War and Its Self-Deceptions." Al-Badiri states in his article that al-Khatib's remarks are lacking. He also passes judgement on the issue of reviewing Palestinian political performance in the previous stage and criticizing the PLO's role. Finally, on 27 July, AL-HAYAT published an article by Shafiq al-Hut, a member of the PNC, entitled "The Palestine National Council and the Age of Majority." This article is based on an assessment of the role of the PLO, which, al-Hut states, has become a national independence movement after being a national liberation movement. He advocates reviewing current Palestinian institutions and the system of "quotas," which restricts Palestinian representation to specific groups and classes. This is to allow the emergence of representation that is more universal and more expressive of the changes in the current Palestinian arena.

The Palestinian dialogue is still continuing. We do not know how it will end. Its mere existence indicates vitality, which is lacking in many Arab arenas. We hope that this dialogue will produce results conducive to a true, positive change in the Palestinian reality in the interior and abroad.

The question is: Can this occur in the current Arab climate?

Hamas Enforces Moral Code in Gaza

91AE0624A Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
3 Sep 91 p 2

[Article by Ghadeer Taher, special to the JORDAN TIMES: "Gaza—A Big Prison With Unbroken Prisoners"]

[Excerpt] [passages omitted] After the Gulf war, remittances from relatives in Kuwait and the Gulf have been

almost reduced to a trickle and funds from the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) are less than one third the pre-Gulf war level.

According to PLO sources, the organisation used to channel almost \$300 million in assistance to the West Bank and Gaza before the Gulf crisis. Now the PLO sends about \$50 million annually. The figures could not be verified.

Alongside the intense pressure from the occupation forces and a moribund economy, some Gazan groups, including Hamas, have imposed Islamic codes on the inhabitants and banned any type of entertainment. Theatres, cultural centres and the only public garden are now closed to the public.

Women are forbidden from walking in the street without covering their hair. The retribution from the self-appointed guardians of the faith can be severe, including stabbing and stoning.

"I never used to wear a veil before the intifada and now I am forced to," said a young college-educated woman. "I am scared of the fundamentalists." She refused to give her name.

Women branded as "loose," gamblers and alcoholics do not survive in Gaza. They are considered security risks, on the grounds they can be used as informers to trap activists.

Some justify the enforced adherence to Islam and ban on entertainment by saying that all of Gaza is in mourning because every family has a story to tell of a son or relative who had either been killed, wounded or arrested.

Opponents say that Hamas is using pressure tactics to show it controls the Gaza Strip but in fact it does not and people only comply to their orders out of fear.

The tension in Gaza has turned inward as the Israeli army deliberately reduced its presence relying on local informers.

Since 1989, a total of 388 Palestinians have been killed for allegedly spying for Israel's security services in the occupied territories. Suspected collaborators are forewarned with beatings and tough interrogation sessions.

Many Palestinian leaders concede that many of the dead were not collaborators. But they say the killings have declined in the last few months.

Some have given up the struggle and have escaped Gaza's misery. Gazans recount stories of women and men who have committed suicide or have tried to "accidentally" burn themselves with paraffin oil.

According to a health official suicide rates among men and women have more than tripled since the start of the intifada. [passages omitted]

Poll Examines Political Opinions of Youths in Territories

91AE0596A Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 4 Aug 91
p 4

[Poll prepared by Ibrahim Salamah and Ikram Sha'ban of the Arab Center for Research and Studies in Jerusalem]

[Text] For years, Palestinian society in the occupied Arab lands has been living in a state of evolution that has led to complex and confused basic political and intellectual concepts, which, in turn, has led to the emergence of a different and distinctive political structure that cannot be denied or ignored when studying the prevailing situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Therefore, the Arab Center for Research and Studies carried out a poll of the political views of persons over 18 years of age in the West Bank, Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip before and after the Gulf war. This was published in AL-NAHAR on 14 April 1991. It was necessary to complete the poll in order to cover the second generation, almost the sole master of the future, which represents the population category ranging from 10 to 18 years old.

The following poll, which aims to find out the degree of change in the views of this generation on all the political subjects in the Palestinian arena and, consequently, to determine the current trends and the actual changes that have taken place in the Palestinian frame of mind, as well as the real dimensions of the living conditions. Which means soul-searching, diagnosing the malady, treating it before it is too late, and not hiding one's head in the sand. Moreover, the fact that this poll, which is based on field studies and on analyzing them, will be a new documentary source for all those looking for the truth and concerned with radical solutions for the Palestinian society's problem without factional or sectarian bias.

General Outlines

In 1988, the number of the inhabitants of the West Bank, including Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip was about 1.624 million people, according to Israeli census. This number excludes the Palestinians who are temporarily abroad, which means that the actual number of permanent inhabitants is about 1.996 million people in the year in question. These figures have increased substantially, but the exact number after that year is unknown.

The West Bank and Gaza Strip are distinguished by relatively high population growth. The average population growth in 1988 was 3.1 percent in the West Bank, about 3 percent in Jerusalem, and about 4.2 percent in the Gaza Strip. Those aged between five and 19 years old represent 40 percent of the total population in the West Bank (excluding Jerusalem) and about 27.32 percent in the Gaza Strip.

The volume of the sample used in this poll was 998 field interviews, which all have been certified despite the

refusal by some people to answer certain questions. Thus, the percentage of interviews involved in the poll is 100 percent of the total original interviews.

Geographic Distribution

Distribution according to location: The sample which participated in this poll is distributed among three locations:

- Jerusalem: The total number of the sample taken from it was 90 persons, representing 9.02 percent of the total sample.
- West Bank: The total number of the sample taken from it was 541 persons, representing 54.21 percent of the total sample.
- Gaza Strip: The total number of the sample taken from it was 367 persons, representing 36.77 percent of the total sample.

Distribution According to Districts

The sample was distributed among all the districts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The percentage in Jerusalem was 9.02 percent, 8.82 percent in Ramallah district, 9.92 percent in Nabulus district, 9.32 percent in Tulkarm district, 8.42 percent in Janin district, 9 percent in Jericho district, 6.01 percent in Bethlehem district, 10.82 percent in Hebron district, and Gaza district had 36.77 percent of the total sample.

Age

This poll has been restricted to the category of residents aged 10 to 18 years, in view of the importance of this category of residents in determining the course of events, particularly since the beginning of the intifadah. This category of residents has been divided into three age groups, which are:

- The 10-to-12 age group, which constituted about 4 percent of those who answered this question in the specialized questionnaire.
- The 13-to-15 age group, which constituted about 32.8 percent of the total number of people who answered this question in the specialized questionnaire.
- The 16-to-18 age group constituted about 63.2 percent of the total of those who answered this question in the specialized questionnaire.

Gender

The percentage of males in this poll was about 68.9 percent of the total number of people who answered the questionnaire, while that of females was about 31.1 percent.

Educational Qualifications:

The group selected to fill out this poll questionnaire attained only a primary levels of education due to its young age. The group arbitrarily selected for the study is divided according to its educational qualifications as follows:

- Illiterates: 3.6 percent of those who answered this question in the specialized questionnaire.

Elementary level: 10 percent of those who answered this question in the specialized questionnaire.

Preparatory level: 40.3 percent of those who answered this question in the specialized questionnaire. Secondary level: 46.2 percent of those who answered this question in the specialized questionnaire.

The number of those people who participated in this study and were not arrested [by the Israeli authorities]

was 66.5 percent of those who answered this question, while those who were arrested but not tried were 17.3 percent, and those arrested and tried were 17.2 percent.

Dates of the Interview:

Work on filling out the specialized questionnaire for this poll began on 28 May 1991 and was completed on 3 July 1991.

Results of Complementary Poll

Question	Jerusalem (percent)	West Bank (percent)	Gaza Strip (percent)
With the intifadah entering its fourth year, do you believe that:			
It will continue on a larger scale and will eventually achieve just peace for the Palestinian people?	25.6	12.2	11.3
It is a means of pressure to solve the Palestine problem?	37.8	41	27.8
Palestinian sacrifices have been much greater than gains?	34.4	44.4	51.8
No opinion	2.2	2.4	9.2
Do you believe that, three years after the intifadah, that Palestinian political and diplomatic action has been:			
Insufficient, and the leadership must work faster and in a better manner?	50	37.2	16.6
Excellent and adequate?	8.9	6.8	18.3
Incapable of benefitting from changes caused by the intifadah?	15.6	27.2	19.9
The intifadah should move into the Palestinian leadership so that it will understand what is happening?	22.2	25.7	35.7
No opinion	3.3	3	9.5
After three years, are the intifadah programs, statements issued during strikes, escalation of actions, and boycott and other measures:			
Good and should continue the same way?	35.6	18.1	19.3
Weak and new ways should be found?	56.7	64.1	65.7
The intifadah should stop.	3.3	15.2	4.9
No opinion	4.4	2.6	10.1
Is the money the PLO gives to the intifadah:			
Excellent and reaches everybody?	3.4	3.1	3.8
Insufficient and reaches only few?	54.4	26.6	19.6
Reaches only the favorites?	24.5	55.6	38.7
Does not reach anyone?	13.3	12.6	28.6
No opinion	4.4	2.1	9.3
What do you expect to happen in 1991?			
A year of real peace?	7.8	3.3	1.1
Abound with consultations and peace initiatives of no avail?	73.3	73.2	65.7
The beginning of direct Palestinian-Israeli talks?	8.9	11.8	13.9
A year of war?	6.7	9.1	10.1
No opinion	3.3	2.6	9.2
What is your preferred solution for the Palestinian problem?			
A Palestinian state from the sea to the river?	58.9	31.6	26.2
An independent Palestinian state only in the West Bank and Gaza?		46.4	51.5
Any form of unity with Jordan?	6.7	18.7	2.2

Results of Complementary Poll (Continued)

Question	Jerusalem (percent)	West Bank (percent)	Gaza Strip (percent)
Any form of unity with Israel?	3.3	1.5	0.8
No opinion	6.7	1.8	9.3
What solution can be achieved for the Palestine problem at this stage?			
A Palestinian state from the sea to the river?	17.8	5.6	21.3
A Palestinian state only in the West Bank and Gaza?	30	23.1	46.9
Confederation with Jordan?	24.4	31.6	15.3
Self-rule?	18.9	33.8	7.1
No opinion	8.9	5.9	9.4
What would you prefer to be done with the existing settlements in Arab territories in case of peace?			
Israeli residents remain under Palestinian sovereignty?	7.8	10.2	0.00
Israeli residents remain under Israeli sovereignty?	3.3	3.7	0.5
Keep them and put Palestinian refugees among them?	58.9	37.0	45.8
Remove them completely?	24.4	46.8	43.6
No opinion	5.6	2.3	10.1
What is your preference for the future of the city of Jerusalem?			
To be international in both east and west sectors?	21.2	18.7	16.1
To be Arab with both its sectors united?	65.6	31.4	41.4
Redividing it into Arab and Jewish as it was before 1967?	1.1	28.6	27
Internationalized only in the Arab sector?	4.4	3.5	0.3
Placing it under religious authority of the three religions?	13.3	4.8	6.0
No opinion	4.4	3	9.2

EGYPT

RESALAT Interviews Foreign Minister Musa

NC2406105091 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 13 Jun 91
p 16

["Exclusive" interview with Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Muhammad Musa by unidentified correspondent in Cairo, 12 Jun]

[Text] [RESALAT] What is your opinion on the establishment of relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Egypt?

[Musa] Relations between Iran and Egypt are based on various grounds. Both countries have deep, longlasting relations with historic roots. Offices that watch the interests of the two countries have reopened in Tehran and Cairo, and this is proof of improved relations. Therefore, we think relations between the two countries are treading their normal course.

[RESALAT] When do you think full diplomatic relations will be established between the two countries?

[Musa] A specific date cannot be given, but we hope the improvement of relations will continue to pursue its correct course so full relations in all fields can be established at an opportune time.

[RESALAT] Public opinion in Iran feels Israel always has been an obstacle to the unity of Islamic countries in the region, and that the more this obstacle is removed, the better relations among Islamic countries will be. What is your view on this?

[Musa] Our positions on Israel are clear; that Israel should withdraw from the occupied Palestinian territories—namely Jerusalem—the Palestinian nation should be granted the right to determine its fate, and that Israel should gain its rights on the basis of Resolution 242. If Israel's intentions are correct when it participates in the peace talks and this leads to the fulfillment of the rights of the Palestinian nation, then there will be no problem. But Iranian-Egyptian relations have nothing to do with this, because the relations between the two countries date back to before the Israeli Government was established. If a plot is hatched by Israel or any other country to upset relations between us, then it can be dealt with intelligently and cautiously. The expansion of Iranian-Egyptian relations should not be conditional.

[RESALAT] In view of Israel's opposition to peace in the Middle East, do you think the Zionists will attack an Arab country?

[Musa] No. I do not think this is possible. What I consider likely are the problems Israel has created for the

establishment of peace. We hope to bring all the interested parties to the peace negotiations. In this case, it will be difficult for Israel to aggress against any country. It is true that recently Israel attacked south Lebanon. But we condemned this, and we will strongly condemn any aggression that will lead to the expansion of the territories under occupation, such as the housing of Jews and the creation of towns in the occupied territories.

[RESALAT] Assuming that Israel attacks a country such as Lebanon, is Egypt ready to help this country [Lebanon] in the same way it helped Kuwait vis-a-vis Iraq?

[Musa] We have nothing to do with assumptions, and we cannot talk about imaginary scenarios. We follow general rules that govern the world. Any Israeli attack against neighboring countries, including Lebanon, is unacceptable to us and we cannot be indifferent. If Israel commits an aggression and others exacerbate the atmosphere on this pretext, it is the Security Council that will deal with it. In that case, our position will be in coordination with international law.

[RESALAT] What were the outcomes of your last round of talks with the Syrian officials in Damascus?

[Musa] During my meeting with Mr. Hafiz al-Asad and the Syrian foreign minister, we discussed regional problems, peace, and arms control in the region. These discussions were extremely constructive. We actually are moving toward more coordination between Egypt and Syria.

[RESALAT] Does the Egyptian Government favor the formation of a Palestinian government?

[Musa] We confirm the right of the Palestinian nation to determine its fate and namely to form a Palestinian government.

[RESALAT] Within what boundaries do you think that such a government will be formed?

[Musa] On the West Bank of Jordan, in Gaza, and in the territories occupied since 1967.

[RESALAT] How can one government be formed in areas that are not adjacent to each other?

[Musa] On the West Bank of Jordan, in Gaza, and in the territories occupied since 1967!

Council for Universities Suggests Constitutional Changes

91AA0607A Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 9 Aug 91
pp 1, 2

[Report by Zaki al-Sa'dni]

[Text] The Higher Council for Universities has called for amending the constitution in order to cancel the article providing for the allocation of at least 50 percent of seats in the two parliamentary assemblies to workers and peasants. The council also proposed amendment of the

rules governing membership of the People's Assembly and Consultative Council in order to ban combining public jobs with assembly membership. The council also called for lifting restrictions on establishing parties.

The council affirmed in its report, which was prepared by a special committee in order to be submitted to the president, that there is no justification for maintaining the constitutional article which provides for allocating half the parliamentary seats to workers and peasants. The report points out that education has become widespread and that new generations of children of workers and peasants are now holding key positions in the state. The report affirmed that the constitutional provision in question is no longer valid after the passage of 40 years since the agrarian reform laws, which set a maximum for agricultural land holdings, came into effect.

The report has called for revising the People's Assembly law should amending the constitution prove impossible.

The report, which was drawn up in connection with the draft plan of the "1000 Days for the Liberation of the Egyptian Economy," points out that the People's Assembly law contains a Marxist definition of the farmer and the worker that no longer exists. The report calls for defining the farmer as one whose basic profession and occupation is agricultural, regardless of whether he possesses or owns land or not. The report calls for revising the terms of membership in the People's Assembly and Consultative Council with a view to banning combining public jobs in the government or public sector with assembly membership, which prevent members from carrying out their parliamentary duties in the best manner. The report points out that the present constitutional provisions are useless in light of the policy of economic liberation, stressing the need to allow the freedom of party formation. It points out that the law on parties contains certain regulations relating to the establishment and formation of parties during the transitional period between totalitarian and the liberal systems.

The report also called for revising relations between the judiciary and the executive authority in order to maintain a reasonable balance between them. The report reveals the growing role of the executive authority in dealing with the legislative authority, in light of the practical application of the principle of sovereignty of the law as the basis of government.

Editor Warns Against Quick Immigration to Libya

91AA0607B Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 15 Aug p 1

[Article by Jamal Badawi]

[Text] It is natural to forewarn and to voice apprehension over some of the negative effects that could result from allowing free border crossing between Egypt and Libya. It is our duty to listen carefully to these views, to which we should give due consideration in order to avoid mistakes and avert setbacks. We all—Egyptians and

Libyans—wish this progressive step to succeed, flourish, and become a model of relations between Arab countries.

Those who warn of the consequences of free border crossing have previous experiences in mind, when the door of immigration of Egyptians to Iraq was wide open. They recall the financial and human disasters that befell them and which left deep scars in the Egyptians' soul that are difficult to heal. What makes these disasters even more painful is the fact that they took place despite the pacts and agreements concluded between the Egyptian and Iraqi governments. The latest of these was the quadrilateral agreement that included Yemen, Jordan, Egypt, and Iraq. The agreements were signed in a propaganda fanfare that gave the Arab masses the impression that this agreement will make the four countries one in body and soul. It transpired later that the Iraqi ruler had devised this agreement as his means to rule, control, and lead the Arab world. It also transpired that Egypt was cheated by this agreement and was drawn to it by its good intentions. Had the Egyptian leadership sought consultation and advice, it would have been able to form a comprehensive view of all aspects of the case before getting involved in it. It would have been possible to spare Egypt the consequences of getting involved in failed experiments. It would have also been possible to deprive the Iraqi ruler of the justification that enabled him to launch a mad military adventure from which the world is still suffering.

This is the importance of seeking advice and consulting with all other views. The Egyptian leadership's failure to consult with the opposition over the arrangements being made at the summit level between Egypt and Libya is yet another mistake it should have not committed, especially after the lesson of Iraq. This, however, does not mean that the opposition should remain silent because nobody has asked for its views or consulted it. National interest calls upon every individual with an opinion to express his views on this step that concerns all Egypt. There is hardly a home in Egypt where there is not a young man who is packing his bags to go to Libya to look for a job. In all the Egyptian towns, transport stations are packed with lines of laborers, peasants, and skilled workers going to Libya as if they are just leaving for Asyut, al-Mahallah, or Shubra al-Khaymah. It costs no more than a taxi or bus fare. All bankers and business people are now talking about the future of the Egyptian pound vis-a-vis the Libyan pound. Car dealers are now looking for ways that would enable them to bring cars from Libya without paying customs.

Thus we can see that the problem has social and economic aspects, not to mention the political aspect. This concerns the well-known views held about Col. al-Qadhafi and his old desire to merge with Egypt so that he will have the opportunity to dominate it. The idea stems from a historic perspective that Egypt's greatest rulers were not Egyptians, and that Egypt becomes a great central power in the Middle East if a foreigner sits on its throne, such as the Libyan [Shishunq] Alexander

the Great, the Greek Ptolemy, 'Amr Ibn-al-'As, Salah-al-Din al-Ayyubi, or Baybars. The latest of these was Muhammad 'Ali, founder of modern Egypt.

However, we are not discussing here al-Qadhafi's political ideas or views contained in his "The Green Book." But we are discussing the significance of this merger step out of the desire not to squander it or detract from its positive effects. We also wish to provide it with maximum guarantees so that it will bear fruit on both sides of the border, and the Libyans will benefit from it as much as the Egyptians. If, at any moment, either party feels that its losses outweigh its gains, it will get out, in which case the tragedies of secession and disruption will recur and the Libyan experiment will be added to the previous experiments—with Iraq recently and with Syria in the late fifties.

Talking about profits and losses does not detract from principles and values, because relations between peoples are entirely based on interests. It is the same basis on which ties between individuals in society and within the same family are found. Interests, therefore, are man's driving force that pushes him toward standing in solidarity with others. They are also the force that prods him to turn against his own brother if he senses any danger from him. This was what the Syrian merchants did when they felt the burden of nationalization resolutions hurting them, and so they turned against the unity [with Egypt] which they themselves had sought and demanded.

With regard to Libya, we are still standing on the ground [before taking the plunge]. Therefore, we should act cautiously and carefully to avoid failure. In my view, failure could come about through the loophole of chaotic immigration from Egypt to Libya. This matter should be viewed objectively, free of emotions and passions. The Libyan society is relatively small and is considered to be one of the oil societies with high income. There is no question that the Libyan people have the strongest of Arab ties with the Egyptian people; there are ancient and deep-rooted ties, especially in the Matruh and Barqah areas. But this does not prevent the Libyan people from warily watching this Egyptian human onslaught if it goes beyond reason and threatens the livelihood of the indigenous people.

Yes, chaotic immigration poses the greatest danger to the relations between the two countries; I mean the immigration that is a mixture of the good and the bad, the useful and the worthless. We must ask ourselves: Is the Libyan labor market capable of absorbing these enormous numbers that come across the border? Are there guaranteed work contracts for all these immigrants, or will the matter be left to brokers and labor contractors?

I would frankly ask: Will the tragedy of the Egyptians in Iraq be repeated, when the Iraqi streets were crowded with the worst types of the unemployed, the corrupt, and those willing to sell their honor and dignity cheaply. We can imagine how the Libyan people would react when

they find themselves overwhelmed by this multi-colored, multi-shaped, and multi-classed human wave. Shall we ask the Libyans to be hospitable to their guests beyond reason? Shall we expect them to welcome the Egyptian workers even if they were in excess of their need, ineffectual, or more harmful than useful? Or shall we leave the matter to destiny until one day we are surprised by groups of Egyptians returning from Libya like the remnants of a defeated army thrown out in the cold, after their rights have been denied, after which we begin lodging complaints with the United Nations, the ILO, and the Arab League?

So far, we are still in control of the situation and we must maintain this control so that things will not get out of our hands. We must deal with this issue with reason and firmness, away from emotions, pressures, and misleading slogans.

Since we want this step to succeed, we want it to cook on a slow fire, to be on a firm ground, and to be studied thoroughly and carefully.

New Private Sector Industrial Projects Outlined

*91AA0622A Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI in Arabic
28 Aug 91 p 5*

[Article by Ahmad al-'Attar]

[Text] The private industrial sector has been very active recently, inasmuch as in the past year (1991-1992) it was agreed that a total of 1,235 industrial projects would be established for the private sector. They have investment costs of 3,497 billion Egyptian pounds, and an annual production valued at 8,661 billion pounds. These projects offer 99,000 new jobs with annual wages of 194 million pounds.

Dr. Muhammad 'Abd al-Fattah Munji, vice president of the General Authority for Manufacturing, stated that these projects include 273 food-industry projects with investment costs of 1.159 billion pounds, annual production valued at 2.901 billion pounds, and offering 9,030 jobs with annual wages of 32 million pounds; 348 spinning, weaving, and leather projects with investment costs of 742 million pounds, production valued at 1.697 billion pounds, and providing 21,421 jobs with annual wages of 56 million pounds; and 241 chemical projects with investment costs of 361 million pounds, production valued at 562 million pounds, and providing 7,153 jobs with annual wages of 21 million pounds; in addition to 236 projects for engineering industries and electronics, with investment costs of 1.132 billion pounds, annual production valued at 3.311 billion pounds, and offering 59,737 job opportunities with annual wages of 82 million pounds; and 28 metals projects with investment costs of 71 million pounds, annual production valued at 160 million pounds and providing 1,065 jobs with annual wages of 3 million pounds.

Three Hundred Eight-Six Projects in the New Cities

Of the projects that were agreed upon last year, it was agreed that 386 would be established in the new cities through the Office of Industrial Investment. Their investment costs are up to 4.731 billion pounds, with production valued at 1.934 billion pounds, and providing 69,267 jobs with wages of 119 million pounds. These projects include 53 food projects with investment costs of 564 million pounds, production valued at 1.134 billion pounds, and providing 2,483 jobs with annual wages of 15 million pounds; 90 projects for spinning, weaving, and leather with investment costs of 421 million pounds, annual production valued at 1.139 billion pounds, and providing 10,669 jobs with annual wages of 31 million pounds; 85 chemical projects with investment costs of 200 million pounds, annual production valued at 312 million pounds, and providing 3,029 jobs with annual wages of 10 million pounds; and 146 projects for engineering industries and electronics with investment costs of 720 million pounds, annual production valued at 2.104 billion pounds, and providing 52,767 jobs with annual wages of 62 million pounds, in addition to 9 metals projects with investment costs of 13 million pounds, and annual production valued at 23 million pounds.

Conglomerate Dealings Reach 1.6 Billion Pounds

*91AA0622B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
25 Aug p 10*

[Interview with Muhammad 'Abd al-Muhsin Shatta by Jamal 'Anayat and Mustafa 'Abd al-'Al, place and date not given; first three paragraphs are AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT introduction]

[Text] The volume of the dealings of the International Conglomerate for Investments in the Egyptian and international commercial market is up to about 1.655 billion Egyptian pounds. This conglomerate is headed by Egyptian businessman Muhammad 'Abd al-Muhsin Shatta, and it includes six companies whose total capital is 125 million pounds.

In an interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Shatta talked about economic reform and the areas open to foreign investment, the negative aspects of recent economic decrees, and he concluded by talking about the future of Arab investments in Egypt.

The text of the interview follows:

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] When was the conglomerate established, and what is the size of its capital, the volume of its dealings, and the areas in which it invests?

[SHATTA] The International Conglomerate for Investments began its activity 20 years ago with the establishment of the [Income] company, dealing in import and export, petroleum, equipment, machinery, chemicals, fertilizers, minerals, and woods. It started with a capital

of 8 million pounds and the volume of its dealings reached about 900 million pounds by 1990.

As for the largest company in the conglomerate, it is the [BARFICO] company, which is the largest company dealing in the manufacture and production of perfumes, cosmetics, and consumer staples such as soap, commercial cleaners, toothpaste, insecticides, and aromatic oils and compounds. This company has about 1,200 employees. Its total capital is 100 million pounds and the volume of its transactions is 240 million pounds, of which about 80 million are for the local market and 160 million are for export.

The third company is Datacom, and it deals in the field of importing and marketing office products such as computers, microfilm, typewriters, VCRs, tapes, and projectors. The company's capital is up to 7 million pounds, and the volume of its transactions is up to 20 million pounds.

In the field of planning and construction, the company formed the [Kunitron] construction company with a capital of 5 million pounds, and its capital is [now] up to about 15 million pounds.

There are also two new companies, the first of which is the Intertech company which deals in the manufacture, sale, and export of all electronic products, such as space antennae, children's games, televisions, and computers. Its capital is 5 million pounds, and the volume of its transactions for 1991 is 30 million pounds. The second company is [Dynatrade] in Geneva, and it specializes in all international trade activity between Europe and the Eastern bloc markets. The volume of its transactions this year is about 450 million pounds. And there is a conglomerate being formed called Interfood Food Products; [Internation] Advertising, and Interagro Agricultural Reform and Agricultural Products Company, and [Ivtours] for tourism projects.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What is the role that must be played by Egyptian investors and businessmen in the current course of economic reform?

[SHATTA] As for economic reform, it depends mostly on Egyptian businessmen for their response to and confidence in the new investment climate in Egypt will get them out of the shell where they have been in past years, to see the positive aspects in the area of investment, especially production. Thus, in spite of existing fears about the effect of reform on economic stagnation and the banks' tightening credit, the private sector currently views the stages of economic reform positively, and that will reflect on its prominent role in adapting to its various aspects.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What areas of investment are open to businessmen and investors?

[SHATTA] There are principal activities in which investment is needed, which at the same time represent an addition to the domestic product and an appropriate

return to the investor. They are in the areas of industrial production, land reclamation, agricultural processing, and tourism establishments.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] How would you evaluate the recent economic decrees in light of the reform decrees that were issued?

[SHATTA] The problem with the recent economic decrees is that they came with a large number of measures and laws that aimed to straighten the course, but at the same time, they raised customs and applied a sales tax, the price of the dollar rose, and the banks set credit ceilings and nearly doubled the interest rate. That is a big mouthful that we will need a while to digest and adjust to, but after a few years, I imagine that the results of economic reform will bear good fruit, if, at that time, the currently strong, committed businessmen remain and succeed, the market will reject the elements that look for quick profits without productivity.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] The problem of the food gap still forms the cornerstone of Egyptian society's problems. What are the proposed solutions for escaping this crisis?

[SHATTA] The food gap in Egypt is serious, especially with the very high population growth rate. I believe that the solution lies in serious land reclamation and the development and mechanization of agriculture, for with these measures it will be possible to develop our agricultural production.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Why do large investors not participate in solving this problem, instead of turning to luxury industries?

[SHATTA] Indeed, the large investors used to prefer to direct themselves towards areas of quick profit, without paying attention to diverse areas of production, but as we mentioned before, this was an aberrant period as a result of the infitah [opening up Egyptian markets to outside investors], and now most are turning to productive investment and national projects, and I hope this tendency will grow in the coming years.

[AH-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Do you believe that the investment climate in Egypt is right for creating new Arab investments, especially in light of the recent decrees?

[SHATTA] Arab investments have not yet concentrated on Egypt as much as hoped, in spite of all the recent events that proved that, with respect to climate, laws, and capability, Egypt is a market that should be the principal target of these investments. We believe that just the establishment of a strong Egyptian private sector that does not fight itself will be the main incentive to Arab investors to enter into large projects, either by themselves or jointly with Egyptian businessmen.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] There are some industries, such as ladies' clothing and accessories, and children's

toys that depend on imports, and local production does not match export capabilities. What is the reason?

[SHATTA] Ladies' clothing recently began to take a positive turn, and I believe that it will develop quickly. As for accessories and children's toys, many do not approach them because the electronic industries in Egypt are still in their infancy, and face cost and price difficulties because of competition from Asian imports such as those from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Korea.

Reporter Interviews BCCI Branch Depositors

91AA0613A Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 15 Aug 91 p 9

[Article by 'Abd-al-Rahman 'Aql]

[Text] Ever since the crisis of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International [BCCI] occurred, statements and comments have been continuously conveyed by the newspapers and news media. It can be said that the content of these statements are of two kinds: either they arouse waves of pessimism, as is done in the Western press; or else they invoke peace of mind, and that is what comes from officials about the Egyptian banking system.

Whatever the case, pessimism or optimism, what concerns us now are the depositors, as the sole group having an interest which might be harmed by what is happening, especially since they are following the news and they hope that this crisis will be solved. What is strange is that they [the media] are not listening to the depositors to learn their opinions of the problem, for a bank without depositors is not a bank.

With this in mind, I was eager to talk with a group of depositors in keeping with their request: that I hear them out, and they hear me out.

So an interview took place between me and them in this context. There were eight of them: they held degrees in science, belonged to the elite strata of society, and most of them worked abroad.

That meant that we could not avoid being frank about what is happening to the future of the bank, because the truth of the situation was obvious. The interview went as follows:

I said, "It seems to me that the treatment of the situation at the Bank of Credit and Commerce in Egypt has been intent on protecting depositors' money."

Depositor: "I might differ with you a little. Since the crisis began, we have seen that the conduct of certain officials has not invoked optimism, especially since we have not seen that the situation is being dealt with quietly. My evidence for that is what happened the day after the announcement of BCCI's situation, whereby officials at the Bank of Credit and Commerce in Egypt, along with officials from the Egyptian banking system, came out with statements to the effect that the Bank of

Credit in Egypt had no relation to BCCI and that any depositor or account holder could, so they said, withdraw his money.

"It seems that the depositors believed these words, so in the first days of the crisis the rate of withdrawals increased, but the bank did not stand up to the strong waves of withdrawal and it quickly announced that withdrawals would be controlled. It is my belief that what happened represents a contradiction between what officials are saying and what actually happened. This is in addition to the circulation of rumors that these controls are being disregarded by these officials. For example, we heard that \$25 million had been withdrawn in a single day, something which further clouded the crisis and added to its complexity."

Another depositor: "To confirm what the doctor said, every day conflicting news items are published. One day we read that exchange is being done on the basis of priorities, the next day that it is on percentages; a third time we read that exchange will be in foreign currency, and a fourth time that the exchange of foreign currency will be in Egyptian pounds! I believe that such behavior causes confusion and instability."

Another depositor: "I am not interested in what is going on with regard to the steps and measures that are announced every day, but as a depositor I feel that I ought to be able to go to the bank to get my money whenever I want."

I said, "But you must know that when such crises happen to any bank, whether in Egypt or abroad, it is natural that you would not get all your money at once in a single day. It takes some time until the bank makes contact with other banks to arrange the liquidity needed to meet the withdrawal. In fact, I will say to you that if such a crisis occurs in the banks of America and England, the depositor takes a maximum amount in accordance with the deposit insurance system."

Depositor: "We would like to understand whether what is rumored is true—that the shareholders sold their shares in the bank—which reminds us of the captain of a ship who jumped from it to save himself."

"Another question is: Who are the new buyers? And will they be better qualified to run the bank than the previous administrators?"

Another depositor: "Personally, I am afraid because what is happening now has no connection to banking activity, in the sense that the bank does not carry on banking activities. It devotes itself solely to exchange, that is, it plays the role of a money changer, as well as paying the employees' salaries. Thus, it will never make a profit and it will never get back natural liquidity, and that means that it is on the verge of bankruptcy. Another point I would like any official to explain to me is the banking system's plan for saving this bank. Will Egyptian banks buy it or will they join in increasing its capital?"

Another depositor: "Why does the Central Bank not clearly announce that it will guarantee the workers' deposits in this bank?"

I said, "There is no central bank in the world that would guarantee deposits at 110 percent. In spite of that, the Egyptian Central Bank has taken some measures that would guarantee the protection of depositors' money. They include appointing a commissioner to oversee and administer the bank's activity, and to direct other banks to pay a portion of their deposits to support the Bank of Credit and Commerce and make contacts abroad on unfreezing the deposits of the Bank of Credit and Commerce in Egypt."

Another depositor: "I have deposits in the Bank of Credit and Commerce in Egypt, and I have deposits in BCCI, and frankly, I do not fear for my deposits in BCCI because I am sure that what will happen to me there will happen to everyone."

I said, "Let us go back to President Mubarak's meeting last Saturday, in which he demanded that no violations or intercession be allowed, that all be equal, that the principle of fairness be applied, and that there be no discrimination between one depositor and the next on the basis of his position and social standing."

The interview with the depositors came to an end. They asked that they express their opinion and demanded that the bank's commissioner speak with a group representing depositors in order to explain to them the future of the bank and the next plan of action. I believe that the end of the interview had evoked optimism, since it included a telephone conversation with a senior banking official who gave assurances that Egyptian banks had already begun to pay a portion of their deposits to support the banking system, and there was also talk about Egyptian banks buying the bank's portfolio of banknotes. All that should end the problems of 40,000 depositors, both large and small, within days. They will only have to wait a while, but not for long, for solutions are on the way that will contain the entire crisis as much as possible.

When the depositors calm down they will remember that they are Egyptians. They will say: "We do not want the bank to go bankrupt because, ultimately, it is a bank that operates in Egypt, and we will not forget its previous services to us."

I said, "These are good words, and what you say is true, since President Mubarak has announced that we will not allow any bank operating in Egypt to go bankrupt."

JORDAN

Undermining 'Arafat, Delegation Disinformation Criticized

91AE0610A Amman AL-MANAR in Arabic 19 Aug 91 pp 1,16

[Article by editor in chief: "Dangerous Phenomenon Calls for Vigilance and Circumspection"]

[Text] At this critical stage, every word is measured, snares are cast everywhere, and adversaries are escalating their designs to mislead and sow discord. So, it is incumbent upon us to be aware of all these matters and do away with them. In the meanwhile, we must avoid their perils, and ought to reject anything that is likely to distract us from the primary issues and key questions.

To illustrate this presentation, we are raising two crucial issues which, because of their negative impact, fill us with alarm. We are calling for efforts to overcome and heed them in an attempt to avoid their pitfalls and predicaments. We would not have delved into these matters had it not been for the determination of well-known parties to bring them to the surface in an effort to divert attention and to wrongfully and cowardly defy people's gains, accomplishments, and sanctity.

Issue No. 1

It has to do with reports published in foreign and Israeli media and, unfortunately, also in some Palestinian "fellow publications" about the composition of the delegation and the names of its members. We regret to say that behind some of these willful and deliberate fabrications that fall under the heading of "disgruntlement," "gloating," and "showing-off" are people from our arena who, for unknown reasons, leak these fabrications about the delegation and the names of its members.

In several of its issues, AL-MANAR has cautioned against the cheap machinations a small band of people practice through Hebrew and Western newspapers, warning that such machinations have done great harm to our people's cause, and calling upon the leaders to put a stop to this kind of slander, provocation, and fabrication, on which they base some of their decisions. We said that this small band of people sends false news reports and dubious allegations to the opposition newspapers to be translated and sent to decision-making centers. We cautioned, but to no avail. We made an appeal to restrain these beneficiaries whose actions are based on personal interests and grudges.

Today, some of these people are taking part in a dangerous game, the game of spreading lies about the delegation and the names of its members, quoting other mass media that receive these lies from them to begin with. Regarding the Palestinian delegation, we would like to say that its formation is not a key issue at this stage. Before forming the delegation, which is not a problem, the Palestinian leadership is concerned with the substance and goals of the conference, with the peace process, with the topics to be discussed, and with the delegation's jurisdiction and authority. The delegates' identities continue to be an internal affair, and when the central and basic issues are resolved, the names of the delegates will be made public, and the only one who has the right to announce them is Yasir 'Arafat. Anything else is unacceptable.

As for the publicity and machinations related to this issue, namely the publication of certain names and

groups as part of the Palestinian delegation, they are definitely meant to distract, preoccupy, and do harm. This is unacceptable, and we ought to be aware of them and guard against their dimensions and designs.

Issue No. 2

In recent times, leaflets distributed all over the place via facsimile machines coincided with biased attacks by the malevolents and outcasts in the form of statements or masquerades urging vigilance and caution, with the aim of discrediting Yasir 'Arafat, who heads the Palestinian people's leadership. At this stage, such "activities" are dangerous, cowardly, and subversive, and their perpetrators are no more devoted to the Palestinian people's cause than Yasir 'Arafat. So, their timing and substance are meant to distract and subvert. It is incumbent upon us to be alert and cautious, especially since some parties have assumed the names of highly-respected leaders.

Some issues may have to be discussed and deliberated, and some individuals around Yasir 'Arafat may engage in unsavory practices. This, however, does not justify 'Arafat's vilification and slander. Some time ago, AL-MANAR presented on its front pages some of the unsavory practices to Yasir 'Arafat, because he is the only one who can deal with them and resolve the situation to safeguard our march. But, for malice and vilification to go as far as to attack 'Arafat, this is surely another episode aimed at hurting the leader with a view to spreading confusion and mistrust. This is impermissible, notwithstanding our belief that unsavory practices ought to be brought forward so that 'Arafat may judge and resolve them, because, God forbid, he is not the cause.

Let us end such vilification and slander, and enough of this obstruction and devastation. We believe—indeed, we are sure—that our people know the truth about these topics and issues and, therefore, they give their vote of confidence to their leader to carry on with the peaceful initiative.

Survey Provides Data on Gulf Returnees

91AE0623A Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
28 Aug 91 p 3

[Article by Nidal M. Ibrahim; special to the JORDAN TIMES: "Survey Provides Comprehensive Data About Gulf Expatriates"]

[Text] Amman—The high unemployment rate and an inability to find affordable housing are among the major worries of expatriates who have recently returned from the Gulf states, according to the first comprehensive study conducted on the returnees.

The survey, conducted by the National Centre for Educational Research and Development, was requested by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, who felt that a better understanding of the returnees and their problems

would aid government agencies in addressing their grievances. The results of the survey, according to Dr. Victor Billah, president of the centre, provide the first detailed look into the demographics and characteristics of returnees from the Gulf states.

Among the survey's findings:

- Unemployment topped the list of major problems facing returnees with over 50 percent of families surveyed listing it as their major concern, Dr. Billah said. Lack of funds, the high cost of living and the housing shortage—problems ranked two through four, respectively—were viewed by Dr. Billah as being interconnected to the high unemployment rate, currently at about 20 percent.
- Forty-three percent of returnees are students. Of that number, 80 percent enrolled in government schools, 7.5 percent registered in schools run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and 12.5 percent enrolled in private schools.
- Forty-seven percent of returnee families live in buildings they own while 42 percent reside in rented housing. Ten percent live with other family members and friends. The survey also found that 57 percent of returnees reside in the Amman Governorate, 24 percent live in the al-Zarga' Governorate and 13 percent reside in the Irbid Governorate.
- Forty-four percent of the returnees are under the age of 15. This is especially significant because it represents the number of people who would use government services without being able to contribute to the economy, Dr. Billah said.
- Gulf returnees swelled the nation's unemployment ranks by 19,000, of which 3,900 were able to find jobs as of April, Dr. Billah said.
- Economically, the study found that 33 percent of families surveyed live below the poverty line, considered to be 150 Jordanian dinars [JD] per month per household, Dr. Billah said.
- More than 3,000 families, with capital ranging from 1,000 JD to 500,000 JD would like to establish some kind of business venture in the Kingdom. Fifty-five percent of these indicated they were interested in a commercial enterprise, 12 percent in industrial and 15 percent in agricultural projects. The other 15 percent mentioned either a service sector project or other types of businesses.

"The majority of people that indicated a willingness to establish (businesses) were talking about small scale projects," said Dr. Billah, who defined "small scale" as being of an average of 10,000 JD.

However, about 200 families are willing to invest more than 50,000 JD, considered a major income-generating, job-creating project, he said.

Conducting the survey presented some unique problems to the centre because of difficulties in having the estimated 200,000 to 300,000 returnees fill questionnaires, Dr. Billah said.

Specifically, problems in geographically locating the returnees made it difficult to conduct the survey "because no one really knows where the returnees are living or are located and because we do not have exact figures on how many people stayed in Amman," Dr. Billah said. "Some left to the West Bank. Others maybe left to other countries abroad but the bulk of the population stayed in Jordan and we are noticing the increased exodus of these people."

Assuming that most of the returnees would have children, officials decided to issue the questionnaires to newly-enrolled students in schools, community colleges and universities, asking them to provide information about their families.

"In effect, we really used the schoolchildren as messengers to reach the parents and households to get the information," Dr. Billah said.

The response rate, he said, surpassed the centre's expectations as over 90 percent (42,500) of students returned the questionnaires. The high return rate means the survey covered over 100,000 individuals in 16,500 families, a large enough number to make the survey statistically significant, Dr. Billah said.

"The response rate was very high and very satisfactory," he said.

Still, one of the problems with the survey was that it used students who were officially enrolled in school, meaning that they had been in the country for some time. Because of this, the latest wave of refugees did not fill out questionnaires when they were distributed near the end of April and were not included in the study, which was completed in July, Dr. Billah said.

"The returnees included in the study were here before the crisis developed," he said.

Information on the recent wave of refugees, he added, is now being gathered as they stream into the country.

While the survey provided new data on returnees, it is not yet clear how that information will be used to address their problems, Dr. Billah said. "At least we have a database," he said. "We now know what kind of people we have."

Interested agencies—national and international, governmental and non-governmental—will be given access to results of the survey, he said.

It is expected that the bulk of the information, however, will be used by various Jordanian institutions in formulating responses to returnees' problems. For example, data on the large number of students returning from the Gulf will be provided to the Ministry of Education.

KUWAIT

Editor on Post-Invasion Status of Women

91AE0586A London SAWT AL-KUWAYT
AL-DUWALI in Arabic 19 Aug 91 p 1

[Commentary by Muhammad al-Ramihi: "Kuwaiti Women Have a Cause"]

Text] Women in Kuwait have a cause, and their cause differs from that of men.

This cause of the women in Kuwait differs from that of the men not only on political rights, but on social rights in all forms and aspects.

The women's cause in Kuwait differs from that of men because they gave as much as the men did, but without taking what men take and have taken. The reason is simply that some of the men placed the accomplishments of women in Kuwait within parentheses, then closed them and pretended to forget them.

The Kuwaiti woman who went out on the fourth and fifth of that terrible August facing bullets in stormy demonstrations, tearing down the banners and flags of the occupier with her fists to raise the images and symbols of the nation, calling for sovereignty and independence and falling as a martyr anointing the nation's soil with her sweet blood: she has a cause.

The Kuwaiti woman who stood fast, a giant tree extending its roots into the soil of the land in order to shelter with her branches the men of the resistance, supporting them, strengthening their steadfastness, and ensuring them provisions and treatment; she has a cause.

The Kuwaiti woman who bore arms shoulder to shoulder beside the men, took part in transporting ammunition and supplies, gathering news of the enemy and observing their movements, and moving across their barricades to carry letters and pass information; she has a cause.

The Kuwaiti woman who would pull her cloak to her chest when she would hear the boots of the invading troops pounding at the door, and who fought with tooth and nail to defend her honor after having proven herself in defending the honor of her nation, and who stood firm, resisted, defied death and fought in the ranks under the usurpation; she has a cause.

The Kuwaiti woman who left with her children, bearing the burden of exile in [foreign] cities and capitals, leaving her heart with her husband, father, brother, or son, to undertake alone the care of her children, lessen their agony, and dress their wounds with the touch of her kindness; she has a cause.

The Kuwaiti woman who went out shouting at the top of her lungs in the cities and capitals of the land, "Kuwait is free," organizing seminars, setting up exhibitions and soirees, sending the message of the occupied nation to

the four corners of the earth by continuous demonstrations, who was able to mobilize behind her thousands of people, and to impose her presence and that of her nation into the arena of the international media; she has a cause.

Kuwaiti women have a cause. Their accomplishments since the first day of the occupation until the liberation and the start of the course of rebuilding are too great for anyone to put women in parentheses and to forget about them.

The Kuwaiti woman is a martyr, the mother of a martyr, and the sister of a martyr. She is a prisoner, the mother of a prisoner, the sister of a prisoner, and the daughter of a prisoner.

She has a cause which we do not want her to consider less important than that of men, because she did not give less than them, and she was no less faithful and loyal, and because the nation can only fly with two wings.

LIBYA

Al-Bishari Discusses Somali Conference, Maghreb Issues

91AA0611A London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
9 Aug 91 p 24, 26

[Unattributed interview with Ibrahim al-Bishari, secretary of the General People's Committee for External Liaison and Cooperation, in Djibouti; date not given]

[Text] Libyan diplomacy nowadays is exerting intensive efforts and moving toward Arab and Islamic solidarity.

In Djibouti, Ibrahim al-Bishari, secretary of the General People's Committee for External Liaison and Cooperation, attended the Somali reconciliation conference where Libyan diplomacy exerted persistent efforts to achieve reconciliation and to provide aid and support for Somalia. Al-Bishari also attended meetings of the Arab Maghreb foreign ministers in Rabat where they discussed developments of the situation in the area in light of a plan to deal with the growing fundamentalist trend. They also studied a joint plan for coordination in the field of regional defense and reviewed ways to mend the rift in Arab relations. He also took part in the Islamic foreign ministers' meeting in Istanbul in order to discuss means of strengthening Islamic relations.

[line missing] former president Mohamed Siad Barre, yet his followers insist that he is still around and carry arms against other tribes. [as published]

Although the conference granted the northern region (former British Somaliland) all its demands, including the prime ministership, Abdirahman Ahmad Ali, leader of the Somali Nationalist Movement [SNM] insists on secession and reiterates that Djibouti conference resolutions are inapplicable.

Therefore, the problems are still outstanding and Ali Mahdi Mohamed, the interim Somali president, is still consulting with Somali factions, parties, and organization leaders regarding forming a transitional government.

AL-HAWADITH met Djibouti Prime Minister Barkat Gourad Hamadou on the question of the Somali reconciliation conference and issues of the Horn of Africa and had the following interview with him:

[AL-HAWADITH] What is your opinion in the reconciliation conference, its outcome, and how do you view the implementation of its resolutions into facts.

[Hamadou] First, I would like to stress that Djibouti's role in the conference was restricted to ensuring that it is convened and to help it without interfering in it [line missing].

Libyan diplomacy is also preparing for the Maghreb-European summit, or what is called the "five plus four summit", that is the five Maghreb countries and France, Italy, Spain, and Portugal. The conference is to be held in Tunisia in early 1992. It will be preceded by a meeting of foreign ministers of these countries in the EC headquarters in Brussels in November.

AL-HAWADITH met with Libyan Secretary of the General People's Committee for External Liaison and Cooperation in Djibouti and had the following interview with him:

[AL-HAWADITH] Why did Libya take part in the Somali reconciliation conference?

[Al-Bishari] Libya took part because our country cares for the unity of the Somali people because they are a fraternal Arab Muslim people to whom we are linked with strong ties. Moreover, it is a member of the Arab League and the OAU. We are taking part also in order to reaffirm our solidarity and support for the restoration of this unity and for respecting the territorial integrity of the Somali Republic and to enable its people to overcome the serious crisis they are experiencing. At the conference we made this support clear. We also supported efforts of Djibouti President Hassan Gouled, who has been exerting great efforts. He came to Tripoli and met with brother Mu'ammarr al-Qadhafi to discuss his good intentions. We expressed support for him, support that will continue until the goal is achieved. We are concerned about the integrity of this Arab people, lest the breaking of its unity become a precedent. If we allow secession in Somalia, then tomorrow we will face bigger problems in Sudan, or in the Arab Maghreb, or in Iraq. There are [secessionist] indications that sometimes are strong and other times weak. But if we allow such a thing to happen in Somalia, then we will have similar problems in more than one Arab country. The world now is tending toward big entities rather than small ones. It is our duty to participate, bless, and support national

reconciliation and to combine our efforts with those of other sisterly and friendly countries in order to achieve this objective.

[AL-HAWADITH] Will you, if reconciliation efforts succeed, give them aid?

[Al-Bishari] Yes, if the unity of Somalia is achieved we will offer them financial and other aid so that they will be able to rebuild the infrastructure of their country, which has been shattered. During the past week, Libya offered food and medicine, which we transported to all parts of Somalia. Libya pledges to support Somalia financially in order to rebuild its unity.

[AL-HAWADITH] You said at Djibouti conference "hands off Somalia." What did you mean by that?

[Al-Bishari] I meant any non-Somali party that is seeking to disrupt Somalia's unity. I do not want to specify any country or quarter, but what I said was that this Arab people has a right to determine its future with its own free will and that its sovereignty should be respected.

[AL-HAWADITH] Do you see any significance in holding an extraordinary ministerial session of the Arab League? Do you not believe that the present rift in Somalia needs a joint Arab force to preserve security and peace in this area?

[Al-Bishari] The Arab League Secretary General has decided to set up a six-man committee from the Arab League member states in order to enable the Somalis to restore their unity. We should not counter acts of violence in Somalia with violent countermeasures on the grounds of preserving of peace.

The Arabs should not intervene with Arab forces. This split is not deep-rooted. We must admit that the Somali people suffered injustices. The Somali people have suffered from dictatorship, torture, and hunger. Military intervention is not the solution; rather, they should be enabled to have a dialogue among themselves. On this occasion, I would like to call on the Arab six-man committee to meet in order to deal with Somalia so as to help its people to complete the process of development. If the situation calls for convening a summit, then why not? This is an important Arab concern.

[AL-HAWADITH] Do you not believe that there has been an Arab indifference toward Somalia?

[Al-Bishari] The fact is that the Arab nation is in a wretched and difficult situation. We have come out of the Gulf war suffering from wounds which we cannot ignore. During our meeting in Egypt, we tried to restore for the Arab League, not its role, but at least its cohesiveness. Agreement was reached on electing a secretary general and we decided to hold a session in September in order to cleanse the Arab skies and hearts. Secretary General 'Isamat Abd-al-Majid was charged with carrying out contacts and making a tour for this objective which

should be our main concern. Also, the question of Somalia will be one of the topics which the coming session will discuss.

Perhaps there is laxity on the part of the Arabs in supporting Somalia, but this is not a sufficient excuse for what happened. There is an oppressor and an oppressed, and there is a conflict of a tribal nature. These tribal factions developed into political bodies that clashed with one another. This resulted in violence, destruction, and bloodshed. I believe that we, as Arabs, are still able to solve one of our problems. We must realize that the disintegration of Somalia will be a real blow to the Arab nation.

[AL-HAWADITH] Do you believe that the time has come to conclude integration and unity agreements between countries of the Horn of Africa?

[Al-Bishari] The Horn of Africa is a very sensitive region, and for a long time has been the area of conflict between major powers. Until the recent past, the area was the subject of conflict between Italy, France, and Britain, and more recently between the United States and the Soviet Union. Ultimately, the United States was able to oust the Soviet Union from the area. At one time, Somalia stood with the Soviet Union, at another time it stood with the United States. What is important now is to let the people of the region to decide their own fate and define what they want. This sensitive area is suffering from drought, shortages, and strikes. The quantity of arms available in it is sufficient to burn the whole of Africa. The area does not need to pour more oil on its fire. I believe that the situation in Ethiopia is quiet after Mengistu Haile Mariam's dictatorship was eliminated. We hope that the same thing will happen in Somalia after the reconciliation conference succeeds. It is only just and fair that everybody should let the peoples of the area come to understanding between one another through positive dialogue and reasoning. External foreign parties should be kept away from these people.

[AL-HAWADITH] Some people say that the Libyan Jamahiriyyah had a hand in the separation of North Somalia, since it supported the SNM.

[Al-Bishari] I believe that this is not true. The Jamahiriyyah has good contacts with all the Somali factions and we have long-standing relations with them. Some of them receive aid and support from us on the condition that they should conduct dialogue among themselves in order to solve the national problem from which the Somali people are suffering. As for the question of the secession of the North, I am not sure whether it is serious or not. I wonder if a new state can survive in a troubled area? With what resources is it going to survive and by what means is it going to make its people happy and prosperous, or even provide it with enough food? How can it launch a development process, achieve human rights and democracy, or build an infrastructure? The area is a semi-desert. The world no longer encourages such political thinking. We now see Canada and the

United States getting closer economically; the people of Eastern Europe are saying that they are of the same culture as Western Europe, and we prefer to live in a united European house. There are also China, Japan and so on. Somalia was created to be one single state.

[AL-HAWADITH] Will Libya recognize Eritrea when it becomes independent?

[Al-Bishari] Yes, if Eritrea declares its independence then Libya will recognize it immediately. There is no comparison between what the SNM calls "Republic of the Somaliland" and the anticipated Eritrean state. In Eritrea, the people and land are considered to be the oldest political entity in Africa.

[AL-HAWADITH] Is the Western Sahara problem affecting plans of the Arab Maghreb Union?

[Al-Bishari] The Sahara problem is about to be solved with the acceptance of a referendum by all the parties. We now have a big entity called the Arab Maghreb Union. This union has become a major factor in our Arab world. In a few year's time, the whole region will, God willing, become one entity with its own borders, with unified customs tariffs and full economic unity, which would give the Maghreb citizen the freedom to move, reside, and own property.

Incidentally, integration is now strongly and effectively underway with Egypt and Sudan. Now the Egyptian and Libyan citizens have the right to reside, work, own property, and move in either country. At present, there are 10 integration agreements between the two countries as well as other agreements with Sudan. We are making steady progress toward uniting the Egyptian, Libyan, and Sudanese entities and linking them to the Arab Maghreb Union. If this program does not falter, we would find after some time—say 10 years—that we have built a major Arab entity in this area.

[AL-HAWADITH] It has been said that Libya is mediating between Egypt and Sudan. What has been achieved in this regard?

[Al-Bishari] During our recent visit to Sudan we discussed this subject at length. The Egyptian-Sudanese relations are of great interest to us. There are Sudanese doubts regarding Egypt's intentions, and Egyptian suspicions toward Sudan, but we believe that what links both countries is greater than what separates them. Geographically, they are one and they have common interests. They are linked together by the Nile river. Egypt cannot do without Sudan nor can Sudan do without Egypt. They are linked by deep-rooted historical, geographic, and racial ties. I believe that the present problems between the two countries should not be overblown. We have discussed these matters during our recent visit to Egypt. I am certain that the situation between the two sisterly states will be restored to normal shortly. Many positive elements in this direction.

[AL-HAWADITH] What is Libya's position toward the Sudanese opposition? It used to support al-Mahdi's movement. Does it still do so?

[Al-Bishari] Our relations with Sudan are intertwined and intermingled. We are the sons of the same people and history. We are proceeding on the path of integration together with Egypt; I repeat, together with Egypt. We will, God willing, achieve this objective.

[AL-HAWADITH] What vital topics has Libya prepared for the agenda of the conference of Islamic foreign ministers in Istanbul?

[Al-Bishari] Yes, we have prepared many topics to be discussed there. We are extremely interested in our country's Islamic dimension, foremost of which is Islamic solidarity, the Islamic common market, and how we can quickly achieve it. Libya is also interested in the question of Arab solidarity. For this reason, we have called for an Arab summit to be held in Cairo to discuss matters frankly and to put all the cards on the table in order to clear the air and restore the Arab stand which we achieved before 2 August 1990. Therefore, I believe that the future Arab summit will be a historical event in the full sense of the world and by all standards. I am optimistic about the success of this summit, its ability to restore things to normal and strengthen Arab solidarity. In the Istanbul meeting, like in any international Islamic conference, the Arab foreign ministers, or at least the foreign ministers of each regional group, such as the Arab Maghreb Union and the GCC, will be anxious to hold sideline meetings.

On this occasion, I would like to raise my voice to say that the voice of the Arabs now is weak because they are divided. Therefore, strengthening joint Arab action is a basic matter in Libya's policy. Together with other Arab countries, we have submitted a proposal to amend the Arab League Charter. During the Gulf crisis, the charter proved to be totally inadequate and the Arab League was similarly weak. The Arab summit within the Arab League should be strengthened and should meet periodically. There should be a rotating chairman. The secretariat general should be strengthened; we should establish an Arab court of justice and economic institutions on the basis of sound integration, so that wealth can be equitably distributed among all children of one Arab nation. We have called this project the Arab Federation. We hope that this project will be accepted at the next Arab League meeting in September.

[AL-HAWADITH] Will Libya respond to the call for nuclear and chemical weapons disarmament in the Middle East, or what is known as President Bush's plan?

[Al-Bishari] The question of nuclear disarmament or disarmament of weapons of mass destruction should include all countries of the area. Why should the plan apply to one country and not apply to another? If we are to be fair in implementing resolutions of international legitimacy, then we should apply them to everybody. These are evil weapons that kill human beings without

discrimination. The plan should therefore be applied to the Israelis as well. One just standard should apply to all.

[AL-HAWADITH] How do you view the current political efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East and resolve the Palestinian issue?

[Al-Bishari] The Israelis do not want peace because they are in a position of strength. They have sufficient weapons and they have the U.S. backing, a comfortable situation for them. Israeli threats against the Arabs are continuing, the most recent of which was the Israeli prime minister's war threat against Syria. In my view, the Palestinian issue is becoming more complicated every day because of Israeli intransigence. The Israelis do not want peace and they believe that it is not to their advantage.

[Al-HAWADITH] The Egyptians are apprehensive about a repetition of their experience with Iraq in Libya. The [proposed] immigration of one million Egyptians to Libya is causing concern for the Egyptians. Are there any constitutional controls on this matter?

[Al-Bishari] Integration projects with Egypt are a scientific program which is being implemented precisely and effectively. We fully believe in it. There are specialized committees for the purpose of precise preparation and immediate implementation according to integration measures contained in agreements between the two countries. It is not a fancy program. We have water and agricultural land. Libya is a vast country, extending 2,000 km north to south and 2,000 km east to west. Its area is 1,754,000 square km. It has vast water resources and tremendous agricultural potential. There is a very serious population shortage that must be filled with Arab citizens. Libya can absorb an additional 15 million people. There is no reason for fear. It is just an Arab moving to another Arab land. This is something wonderful. After these agreements come into effect, it will become the right of every Egyptian citizen to enter Libya without a passport just like a Libyan. He can own a house, get a job, own farmland, transfer money any time according to the same rules that apply to a Libyan citizen. We say that Libya is the land of all the Arabs.

[AL-HAWADITH] Are there any specific guarantees for those who relocate in Libya to settle there?

[Al-Bishari] The integration agreements are endorsed by the two peoples and the two Libyan and Egyptian governments. Nobody can change them; they are binding to both countries. We have exchanged the instruments of ratification during Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi's visit to Libya. We are now making arrangements to receive more than one million Egyptians. We need three to four million Arabs from Sudan, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and any other Arab country. You know that the project of the Great Man-made River will provide us with great potential for irrigated agricultural land. We have excellent modern agricultural resources that need people to

utilize them. We will not use the Arabs as laborers; rather, they will be land owners and will be treated like Libyans.

[AL-HAWADITH] Will the Libyan people accept that?

[Al-Bishari] The Libyan people are genuine Arab people who want the Arab citizen to share their land so that everybody will be more capable of exploiting these vast resources, which will be a source of strength, invincibility, prosperity, and wealth for their country. Development work is a continuous activity supplementing the rest of the sectors, thus achieving economic and social prosperity in general. The Libyan people are pro-Arab-unity people who believe in and strive for unity with all their strength. As you know, the Egyptian people and the Libyan people are of the same temperament. The geography is one and the nature of the land and its characteristics are one. God willing, there will be no obstacles.

[AL-HAWADITH] Analysts believe that the future war will be over water and its scarcity. What have we done in order to avoid this?

[Al-Bishari] Unfortunately, the sources of Arab water are not in Arab hands. This is a serious problem. The small area which the Israelis have occupied contains no subterranean waters or rivers. Therefore, they are looking for water in the neighboring countries. With their intensive immigration plan, the situation becomes tragic. New immigrants are arriving daily from the Soviet Union and the [Ethiopian] Falashas have arrived in Israel by the thousands. They are now looking for Jews in India. For this reason, they have stolen the Jordan River waters, but this is not enough for them. They are now moving toward major Arab rivers such as the Nile, the Tigris, and the Euphrates. Therefore, I am not just expecting, but rather, certain that a fierce war will break out over water. They [Israelis] will try to control water resources in the other countries in the Nile basin. The Arabs must watch this situation carefully and make their calculations correctly before this thing happens, in which case we will lose yet another opportunity. But this time it will be a historical and fatal one.

[AL-HAWADITH] What is your opinion in the arrangements being made between the eight Arab countries regarding Gulf security?

[Al-Bishari] Arab national security is an important Arab concern. If the Arabs agree to establish an Arab force to defend Gulf security and to adopt integrated economic measures, it will be a right and sound step in the direction of acquiring strength and serving Arab history and joint interests. We encourage the setting up of an Arab group to protect the security of its neighboring countries. The agreement between the eight countries is the right step toward ensuring the security of Kuwait and the Arab gulf.

[AL-HAWADITH] Why hasn't Libya established a multi-party system yet? Are there any difficulties in this?

[Al-Bishari] Africa is one single social class, a poor class with an agricultural or simple parochial society. It consists of communities ruled by tribalism. As for the multi-party system, it grew in developed industrial societies in Western Europe after the industrial revolution. As for us in Africa, we still live in the pre-industrial-revolution age, while they have entered the computer age and have gone beyond it. For this reason, the multi-party system was a success. If we look at what is happening in Somalia and Algeria because of this pluralism, we can see its serious consequences for a society that is not yet ready for it. What is good for Africa is not good for another society, and vice versa. The idea of pluralism was injected by Europe into these simply stratified societies with simple economic structures. It resulted in disasters in the full sense of the word. I am certainly not advocating an autocratic rule, rule by a one-party system, or military and absolute government. All these forms of rule are rejected. In Libya, we have our own successful democratic experiment which stems from true Islamic consultation [shura].

MOROCCO

Foreign Journalists Hampered in Western Sahara *91P40444A Paris LE MONDE in French 17 Sep 91 p 4*

[Text] On Sunday, 15 September in Casablanca, the information director in the Ministry of Interior and Information informed LE MONDE special correspondent Jacques Barrin that Moroccan authorities "were not willing for him" to go to Western Sahara where a referendum for self-determination is being held. This decision was taken in response to this newspaper's systematic "mistreatment" of the sherifian kingdom.

Many foreign journalists have recently arrived in the Western Sahara and have encountered difficulties working on location. For example, a Spanish television crew was criticized for its filming methods.

In an editorial that appeared a week ago in the progovernment daily LE MATIN DU SAHARA, which reflects palace opinion, Minister of State Ahmed Alaoui once again vehemently berated the French media for "displaying a visceral and unhealthy hostility toward Morocco, whereas the Polisario Front finds in them a sympathetic forum." The procommunist daily, AL BAY-ANE, more royalist than the king himself, took it upon itself to remind the regime that it was its "duty to warn these people not to exceed the limits of news broadcasting lest it become intelligence for our enemies to use."

Almost a year ago, when French-Moroccan relations were suffering after the publication of Gilles Perrault's book *Notre Ami Le Roi*, TV 5-Europe satellite broadcasting was interrupted, never to resume. As for the print medium, it is generally not available to the public when its contents displease the regime. This is the case for all

Parisian newspapers in the wake of the liberation-expulsion of Abraham Serfaty.

SAUDI ARABIA

Ministerial Decree Issued To Ferret Out Corruption

*91AE0602A Riyadh TIJARAT AL-RIYAD in Arabic
Feb/Mar 91 pp 10-11*

[Article: "Minister of Interior Issues Ministerial Decree Governing Harboring, Employing Undocumented Aliens"]

[Text] His Royal Highness the Interior Minister issued a ministerial decree containing specific rules and regulations governing enforcement of the law on harboring and employing undocumented aliens [henceforth referred to as "the anti-harboring law"]. The decree calls for the creation of anti-harboring committees nationwide, including rules governing the creation of such committees, their jurisdiction, and the measures to be adopted in performing their duties. The decree also defines methods to be used in investigating, sentencing, and filing grievances in such cases, in addition to rewards granted to informants. Following are the full details and verbatim text of this decree.

The Minister of the Interior:

In accordance with Article 8 of the anti-Harboring Law enacted by Ministerial Decree No. 110 dated 14/7/1409 Hijra [21 February 1989], and ratified by Royal Decree No. 49/M, dated 16/10/1409 Hijra [17 May 1989], pertaining to the issuance of necessary measures to enforce the anti-harboring law; and in agreement with the Minister of Commerce; and by virtue of the power invested in him, decrees the following:

Ratification of the following rules and regulations:

Article 1: Several anti-harboring committees shall be created in every large city and one or more in small cities, according to actual need. The committees shall be based at the Ministry of Commerce and branches thereof. In places where the ministry does not have a branch, they shall be based in the principality.

Article 2: Anti-harboring committees shall be comprised of two fully-qualified and capable members, one from the Interior Ministry and one from the Ministry of Commerce. This is provided that neither of them is lower than a grade six, except in exceptional cases where a member may be a grade five. Members shall be named by a decree issued by the concerned minister, and the committees may call on the police for help when necessary.

Article 3: Each anti-harboring committee shall be provided with an adequate number of aides and inspectors, and with sufficient office supplies.

Article 4: The anti-harboring committees shall be vested with the following powers:

- 1. Investigation: In important cases, the committees may, as deemed necessary in cases of suspected harboring, ask the interior minister or the chief of a principality to commission a security agency to keep suspect places or persons under surveillance, and to collect information and raw evidence that proves or disproves the case.
- 2. Notification: Everyone, without exception, must report harboring cases that come to their attention, including employees who learn of such cases through their job, such as labor inspectors, municipal superintendents, business fraud inspectors, and others.
- 3. Arrest and investigation.

Article 5: The powers of the anti-harboring committee members shall include: looking for anti-harboring law violations; collecting and evaluating evidence; instituting regular measures to bring forth evidence to verify the committing and the site of the violation; arresting violators; identifying the names and addresses of witnesses and taking their statements; and conducting the necessary investigation and recommending penalties.

Article 6: Members of the anti-harboring committees shall have the capacity of arresting officers in the conduct of their duties, as stipulated in the bylaws and in these rules and regulations.

Article 7: Reported cases shall be recorded in an official report containing the place and time of the reported violation, the full name of and complete biographic data on the informant, the names of the defendants, and a full and clear description of the violation site.

Article 8: Arrest and Seizure: All anti-harboring committee members shall seize and hold all items found at the site of the violation and all corroborative documents, and shall record these items in an official report. They also shall have the right to apprehend and hold the defendants whenever necessary, and to release them on a presence or surety bond, or both, within a period of no more than 24 hours from the time of arrest, and to bar them from leaving the country if all valid rules and regulations and bylaws are observed, or if the arrest is supported by the principality where the committee is operating.

Article 9: Persons under arrest must be interrogated within 24 hours after the time of arrest, and should a decision be made to detain them, they may not be held for more than three days. But if the charge against them is disproved, they shall be released without delay.

Article 10: Should the investigation be completed within the period specified in the previous article and there is enough evidence to indict the defendant, or should there be a need to continue the investigation beyond the aforementioned three days and there is no other offense that calls for detaining the defendant, the defendant shall be released on a presence or surety bond, or both, and

shall be barred from travel abroad. Should the investigation fail to uncover sufficient evidence or a conviction, the bond and travel ban shall be dropped.

Article 11: Should there be cause to detain the person beyond the specified three days on another charge, the anti-harboring committee shall turn him over to the relevant party.

Article 12: The interior minister shall issue the order to include or remove the name of the defendant from the list of people banned from travel abroad.

Article 13: Should the investigation require the disclosure or sequestration of the defendant's bank accounts or remittances, the matter shall be referred to the chief of the region and valid directives shall apply.

Article 14: Investigation: The investigation report shall be prepared with the knowledge of all the anti-harboring committee members and the report shall begin with the names and positions of two committee members; the place and date of the report, including the hour, day, month, and year; the content of the information and the time of receipt, including the hour, day, month, and year; the subject's 4-part name and nationality, including the number, date, and issuer of his identity card; the subject's role in the case, whether he is a defendant, a witness, or an expert; and the subject's residence, where summons may be served or statements taken. All members of the investigating committee and the subject under questioning shall affix their signatures at the end of every page of the report. Should the defendant refuse to sign, this shall be duly noted at the end of the report and signed by the committee members.

Article 15: The investigation shall be conducted with the defendant present and shall be recorded in a paginated report. The report shall be written in clear handwriting, free of erasures, deletions, omissions, insertions, or blank spaces. In the event that erasure is required, the investigators and the subject under questioning must initial the beginning and the end of the scratched-out passage. The arrest and interrogation report may be typewritten.

Article 16: Penalties:

- 1. After the investigation is completed, the committee shall issue its recommendations in a memorandum containing the facts of the case, the conclusive evidence, the applicable article [of the law], and the recommended penalties.
- 2. Recommendations for punishment shall be based on admissible causes, and the penalty shall vary in severity, depending on the type, attendant facts, circumstances, and gravity of the offense, as well as the personal circumstances of the perpetrator.
- 3. The committee shall submit its recommendations for punishment to the commerce minister, who shall forward it, along with his opinion, to the interior minister.

- 4. The interior minister shall have the power to determine the fine imposed, as stipulated in the anti-harboring bylaws. Should he deem the penalty inadequate, the violator, along with a memorandum citing the reasons for the interior minister's decision, shall be referred to the grievance office to look into the violation by virtue of a court action brought by the prosecutor.
- 5. Legal action shall be instituted by a prosecutor assigned to the case by order of the interior minister.

Article 17: Grievances:

- 1. Fine penalties may be contested by filing a grievance with the grievance office within 60 days of the date of notification.
- 2. If the case is referred to the grievance office, valid rules and regulations related to the case shall apply.

Article 18: The defendant shall be notified of the judgment against him by the police station in the precinct where he resides, and he shall acknowledge receipt by signing an original and a copy of the order containing the number, date, issuing party, and the sentence, as well as the defendant's name and his identification number, date and place of issuance, and the place of residence. The defendant shall keep the copy, and the original shall be kept on file. If the defendant is not found at his place of residence, he shall be notified of the judgment in the official gazette, and the 60-day period stipulated in Article 2/B shall apply as of the date of notification or the date of publication in the official gazette.

Article 19: Enforcement of penalty: Penalties prescribed by the anti-harboring law shall be carried out in accordance with valid rules and bylaws. Harboring cases with a final guilty verdict shall be published in the chambers of commerce publications and some local newspapers, without mentioning the name of the parties involved and the site of the offense. Aliens convicted of harboring shall be expelled from the country after serving their sentence, and their name shall be included on the list of people barred from entering the country.

Article 20: Liquidation:

- 1. Perishable items shall be liquidated in the presence of all parties involved, or in the presence of one of them or an appointed representative. Should any one of them abstain from attending, a report shall be made in this regard and the abstainer held responsible. Liquidation shall be carried out by the anti-harboring committee as soon as they take charge of the case, and the proceeds shall be deposited in a bank under the committee's name, and evidence to this effect shall be attached to court records.
- 2. Real estate shall be liquidated by the treasury in court after a guilty verdict is finalized, and valid rules and regulations shall apply.
- 3. With the exception of the preceding, liquidation shall be carried out when the guilty verdict is finalized under the supervision of the area's principality.

Article 21: Subject to the provisions of Article 4/B of the statute, liquidator fees shall be taken out of the liquidation proceeds, and shall have priority in litigation.

Article 22: Rewards: By order of the interior minister, and in accordance with rules and regulations, rewards no greater than 30 percent of the value of the penalty shall be granted to persons who report violators of Article 1, if they can furnish evidence that can be used to open the investigation, and if a final judgment substantiating the violation is reached, provided that these persons are not the harborers or the harbored. Rewards shall be granted as follows:

- 1. Persons who report a violation and furnish evidence to this effect shall receive a reward no greater than 10 percent of the value of the penalty if the violation is uncovered and a final judgment substantiating the violation is reached.
- 2. Persons who report a violation, furnish evidence, and lead the competent authorities to the violators shall receive a reward no greater than 20 percent of the value of the penalty if a final judgment substantiating the violation is reached.
- 3. Persons who report a violation, furnish evidence, and lead the competent authorities to the violators and assist in their apprehension, shall receive a reward no greater than 30 percent of the value of the penalty.

Article 23: Should there be more than one person reporting the same violation, as defined in the previous article, the reward shall be split among them equally.

Article 24: Employees authorized in accordance with Article 21 are:

- 1. Members of the anti-harboring committees.
- 2. Persons empowered in accordance with Article 4/1 of these rules and regulations.

The competent authorities shall enforce and observe these rules and regulations.

This decree shall be delivered to the competent sides as necessary for implementation.

[Signed]

Minister of the Interior
Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz

Jiddah Port Authorities Build Observation Tower
91AE0602B Riyadh TIJARAT AL-RIYAD in Arabic
Feb/Mar 91 pp 26-27

[Article: "Sea Observation Tower at Jiddah's Islamic Port: The Epitome of Technological and Architectural Innovation"]

[Text] Our beloved country has taken a tremendous developmental leap forward and raised its growth rates in the various fields to levels rarely matched by any

country in the world. These accomplishments stand as a lofty testimony to honest and sincere efforts that have made labor an increasingly enthusiastic contribution to achieve more gigantic accomplishments. Saudi ports are a symbol of these lofty and visible accomplishments, for they are the vibrant lifeline between massive exports and essential imports.

After several years of silent efforts to upgrade them, Saudi ports can now rival the most efficient ports in the world and are superior to them in capacity. Some may imagine that a port is only a harbor where ships anchor or set sail. This is a mistaken view of ports, the giant ones in particular, because, on the inside, ports are another world bustling with perpetual and tireless activity. Saudi ports are distinguished by their full service and preparedness aimed at preserving their outstanding stature among other ports of the world. The General Ports Authority has furnished enormous facilities and installations that have played a key role in getting the Saudi ports to the advanced positions they now occupy. Jiddah Islamic Port is one of the most important ports along the Red Sea coast. It embodies the enormous accomplishments, and gets its fair share of the ongoing developmental projects sponsored by General Ports Authority officials.

Thus, the idea of building a high-technology sea observation tower equipped with a state-of-the-art maritime and marine traffic control telecommunications system.

The tower building, with all its components, is the key element of the project. It overlooks the sea at the northwest side of the port at an altitude of 134.8 meters, in addition to the lighthouse [atop it] which is 5 meters high. The entire building is made out of reinforced concrete, up to above the 122-meter level, and the rest is made out of metal construction. The tower building is composed of:

- A central (axial) column made up of two 17.5-meter diameter pillars. The northern pillar holds one of the two elevators and service facilities, and the southern one contains the other elevator and a concrete emergency exit staircase. The concrete part of the column ends at the 101-meter level.
- A cone-shaped first level with a base 40 meters in diameter. It contains the entrance.
- A glass dome 38.5 meters in diameter. It is attached to the central column at the 79-meter level and holds seven levels, from two to eight.
- An upper part made of reinforced concrete (levels nine and 10) and steel structures from level 11 to level 13.

Following are the project's construction specifications:

- The tower building's foundation surface area: 4,800 square meters.
- Concrete used for the mat and the base of the central column: 6,000 cubic meters.
- Concrete used for the structural framework: 13,500 cubic meters.

- Floorboards: 36,500 cubic meters.
- Reinforced steel: 4,400 metric tons.

The pillars are the most important parts, and are of a special nature in this project. Due to the huge size and height of the building, and the results of the soil test that showed gaps and soft areas under the ground, it was necessary to inject the soil at the project site, and especially the areas at the bottom of the pillars five meters down, with a substance made up of a mixture of cement, bentonite, and high-pressure water (up to 20 atmospheric pressures) to reinforce the soil surrounding the pillars and the area under them.

- The 132 one-meter support pillars are made of reinforced concrete that was cast at the site using state-of-the-art equipment.
- 12 pillars, 33 meters deep and having a compression potential of 20 meganewtons to hold the two sides of the tower.
- 44 pillars for the center of the building, 48 meters deep and having a compression potential of 4.4 meganewtons.
- 54 pillars for the building's exterior, 50 meters deep and having a compression potential of 5.8 meganewtons.

All these pillars are tied to the building via the reinforced concrete mat which, in turn, moves all loads and forces from the building to the pillars.

The observation building has:

- Two main elevators, one of which starts at the first level and goes to the fifth level, and the other that rises to the eighth level, in addition to an elevator that goes from levels eight to ten.
- A concrete emergency staircase and firefighting system, in addition to moving carriages for cleaning and maintaining the dome's glass facade.
- A five-meter high lighthouse unit mounted atop the building at the 134.8-meter level to guide ships, especially in the evening and during the day when visibility is poor. Its illumination range is 27 nautical miles and its illumination capacity equals 2 million candles.
- A modern navigational traffic-control system comprising a maritime radar located in the port area and a data processing system. These are used to control maritime traffic and provide the navigational traffic controller with all maritime data. The system can be programmed to monitor no less than 1,000 targets.
- A modern maritime communications system, a compass, and an audio-visual recorder. The last two are used to determine the location of the vessel in communication and to record the communication.
- A video monitoring system for round-the-clock observation of maritime traffic directly under the tower.

SUDAN

Applications of Shari'ah Penal Code

Judge Says Law Lenient

91P40448A Khartoum AL-INQADH AL-WATANI
in Arabic 22 Aug 91 p 5

[An interview with 'Ali Yusuf al-Wali, supreme court justice and chief of the judiciary system for the province of Khartoum, by 'Abd-al-Mun'im Qutbi; place and date not given]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Qutbi] The Islamic Penal Code of 1991 has come into effect now. As a legal scholar, would you address the differences between it and the earlier law, and also give your evaluation of the attempt to apply Islamic law [shari'ah] in the past?

[al-Wali] The Penal Code of 1991 is just and in harmony with the principles of Islamic shari'ah, in contrast to how it is viewed by malicious critics, the ignorant, and those who boast about human rights. These people take the grave penalties (amputation, crucifixion, execution, and stoning) as a pretext for slandering this code and, furthermore, slandering the Islamic shari'ah. But they fail to see that these laws differ from the earlier code, known as the September [1983] Laws, in that they give the defendant ample opportunity to defend himself, applying all known defenses to escape those penalties.

The law allows a judge to probe deeply into the opinions of Islamic jurists to base his judgment upon those less rigid, less constricting opinions, in order to keep his sentencing free from doubt and to do everything in his power to avert the punishment for the defendant.

It has been said that judges are bound by the Penal Code of 1991 more than the less rigid opinions of Islamic jurists at variance with it, because the jurists' opinions might eventually lead to the judges not applying the law firmly and unequivocally. However, if a judge has not found a loophole or a rebuttal in the penal code, he holds off on the sentence before him so as to be above all doubt, and he then hurries to the opinions of the Islamic jurists, wherein he might find a lighter penalty in accordance with the book [Qur'an] and the sunnah [Islamic legal precedents].

This does not mean that we have been indifferent to the application [of the law], because the principles of shari'ah themselves require the judge to be firm in entering the penalty for serious crimes by nonbelievers, but only after he has been found guilty beyond any doubt. Still, the principles of the shari'ah require the judge to avert the penalty where there is a way around it, in accordance with the traditions of the Prophet (may peace be upon him).

I base my opinion of this on Article 3 of the Code of Principles of Judicial Decision of 1983, which stipulates that if there is no precise definition in the law, the judge

must seek recourse in the opinions of Islamic jurists in accordance with the Qur'an and the sunnah.

As for our not finding the manifestations of Islamic shari'ah in the street, where there is disorder, unveiled women, and moral depravity in contravention to the application of Islamic shari'ah—what is the role of the courts in this phenomenon? The answer is that the job of arresting, investigating, and prosecuting crime is not the purview of the courts, but the purview of other justice agencies who are required to perform their function to the full extent. It is not the function of the courts to prosecute crime in the streets, because that would lead to a distorted application [of the law] as has happened in the past. [passage omitted]

Thirteen Convicts Executed

91P40448B Khartoum AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH
in Arabic 3 Aug 91 p 1

[Text] Executions were carried out last Tuesday evening into the morning of 13 September of 13 inmates sentenced to death under Article 251 of the Penal Code of 1983 (premeditated murder).

The director of prisons in North Khartoum, the chief of police, and the director of prison medical services and his assistants were present at the execution.

Amputations in Sannar

91P40448C Khartoum AL-INQADH AL-WATANI
in Arabic 9 Sep 91 p 8

[Text] The principal court of Sannar, presided over by the resident judge, the Honorable Fawzi Muhammad Wadi'atallah, issued its judgment upon two defendants, Adam Muhammad Adam and Husayn 'Abd-al-Karim. [The court ruled] that their right hands be amputated at the joint, after finding them guilty under Article 20/171 of the Penal Code of 1991 of breaking into a shop in the village of Kandawa, east of Sannar, and stealing quantities of flour, sugar, and other things. They had previously broken into the same shop last January and each had been sentenced to prison for two years. However, they managed to escape and return to perpetrate more crimes. Their case files were forwarded to the High Court for confirmation. It is worth noting that this is the first judgment issued for amputation since the Penal Code of 1991 came into effect.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

BCCI Crisis Seen as Conspiracy Against Arab Assets

91AE0601B Dubayy AL-BAYAN in Arabic 9 Aug 91 p 2

[Text] Hasan 'Abdallah al-Nawman, the chairman of the board of the al-Shariqah Chamber of Commerce and Industry, called for cooperation, coordination, and integration in the Arab banking sector. He said, "Recent unfortunate events surrounding the fabricated crisis of

the Bank of Credit and Commerce International [BCCI], and the malicious conspiracies surrounding it, which are aimed primarily against Arab assets, have raised an extremely important issue regarding Arab banking activity—the issue of Arab cooperation and solidarity to face the foreign challenges being posed to Arab banking activity and Arab assets domestically and abroad because the conspiracy that has tried to undermine BCCI is not the first of its type, and will certainly not be the last, as long as solidarity in the Arab banking sector, both in the Arab world and internationally, is non-existent or lacks an effective presence.

Choice Imposed by Present and Future

“Current circumstances and future needs dictate Arab cooperation, coordination, and integration in the political, social, cultural, etc. spheres. But the most urgent need is in the economic realm. The banking sector has an effective role in organizing and developing economic activity. The relationship between financial mediation (banking organizations) and the economy is at once organic and controversial. Each influences and is influenced by the other's strengths and weaknesses and positive and negative aspects. Hence, if banking cooperation in the Arab world is needed in normal times, it is particularly urgent now amid the complicated conditions in the world, and the regional and international economic and financial challenges facing the Arab world.

Intentional Depletion of Arab Sources by Foreign Banks

“Among the phenomena that accompanied the oil boom in the seventies and early eighties is the rush, by a large number of European and American banks, to establish a presence in the Arab region, especially in the oil countries, most of which are Arab Gulf countries. These foreign banks limited their activity to channelling Arab interest to their own sources to stimulate the economies of their home countries and to realize quick, unreal earnings. These foreign banks did not participate in developing the Arab economy.

“During the oil boom, several Arab banks opened branches in countries in which financial centers are located, saying that the domestic Arab market was too narrow and had a meager absorptive capacity. Such an orientation is not objectionable. It reflects these banks' awareness of the importance of maintaining a presence in the economic activity arena of regions witnessing an upsurge in the activity of Arab businessmen and stable or transitory concentrations of other Arab elements. What is objectionable is that these banks rely on foreign banks for most of their operations, but refrain from cooperating with Arab banks located abroad.

Reasons for This Shortcoming

“This shortcoming and the weak performance of Arab banks abroad stem from a lack of cooperation and coordination between the Arab banks in competing with foreign banks, which have advanced investment capabilities and offer many incentives to Arab clients. These

banks have even gone so far as to establish special units that operate according to Islamic banking principles.

Only Solution

“Arab banks in the Arab world face similar difficulties, such as the drop in banking activity, losses on loan defaults, potentially non-performing loans, etc. However, the causes of these difficulties differ from those pertaining to difficulties abroad. These causes include the drop in oil prices and the deficits of several Arab countries due to weak output and export rates, a high volume of imports, and the indirect effect of circumstances in the oil-exporting countries on the Arab manpower-exporting countries.

“We believe that the Arab banking sector can emerge from the crises and address the various challenges only through real cooperation and full coordination at the general, Arab national level. Such cooperation guarantees the security and well-being of the banking sector's activity and protects it from the designs of foreign conspiracies or attempts to harm or destroy it.

“Arab banking's recent bitter experience—whose sparks emanate from several European capitals that have concentrated their fire on BCCI with the aim of attracting vulnerable Arab assets—should serve as resounding call for officials and others throughout the Arab world, especially banking leaders, to realize that the fortress which they must fortify and defend to protect their vital interests is the fortress of solidarity, cooperation, and cohesion in confronting all of the evil wished upon them and all of the conspiracies aimed against their assets.”

Banking Sector Expands; 10.6-Percent Rise in Deposits

*91AE0601A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
20 Aug 91 p 10*

[Report by 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sidqi and Taj-al-Din 'Abd-al-Haqq]

[Text] Abu Dhabi—After having maintained a stable level in May and April 1991, the aggregate balance of the commercial banks in the United Arab Emirates [UAE] has begun to rise again, increasing in June 1991 by 5 billion dirhams to 131.8 billion dirhams, compared to 126.8 billion dirhams in May and 129.7 billion dirhams at the end of December 1990, i.e., an increase of 2.1 billion dirhams.

At 123.2 billion dirhams, the June 1991 balance was 8.4 billion dirhams higher than the June 1990 balance.

Sources of the aggregate balance developed at different rates in different periods.

Cash and quasi-cash deposits increased by 3 billion dirhams, or 3.5 percent, to 59.3 billion dirhams [in June 1991], compared to 57.3 billion dirhams in May 1991.

At the end of the first half of 1991, cash and quasi-cash deposits had risen by 10.6 percent, or 5.7 billion dirhams compared to December 1990.

Government sector deposits dropped by 0.7 billion dirhams to 10.2 billion dirhams in June 1991, compared to 10.9 billion dirhams in May 1991.

Government deposits in June 1991 were 3.8 billion dirhams higher than in June 1990.

The incomes of foreign banks rose [in June 1991] by 18.4 percent, or 3.3 billion dirhams to 21.3 billion dirhams, compared to 18 billion dirhams in May 1991.

However, these incomes declined by 1.3 billion dirhams, or 7.1 percent, in May 1991 compared to April 1991, and by 3.6 billion dirhams, or 14.6 percent, compared to December 1990.

The aggregate balance in June 1991 was 3.9 billion dirhams, or 22.1 percent higher than that of June 1990.

Foreign uses were the most significant uses of commercial banks operating in the UAE during June 1991. These uses rose by 4.2 billion dirhams to 64.5 billion dirhams in June 1991, compared to 60.4 billion dirhams in May 1991.

Compared to December 1990, the balance rose by 1.6 billion dirhams, or 2.6 percent.

Compared to the same period in 1990, it rose by 7.9 billion dirhams.

Regarding reciprocal accounts in the balance, regular accounts declined by 2.9 billion dirhams to 100.3 billion dirhams, compared to 103.2 billion dirhams in May.

The decline was concentrated in the deferred currency-exchange contracts item, which dropped by 8.1 billion dirhams to 45.7 billion dirhams in June 1991, compared to 53.9 billion dirhams in May 1991.

Letters of credit increased by 800 million dirhams, the "guarantees and other endorsements" item rose by 1 billion dirhams, and other regular accounts declined by 3.5 billion dirhams.

Compared to December 1990, regular accounts increased significantly in June 1991 by 26.7 billion dirhams, or 36.2 percent.

Compared to their level last year [in June 1990], regular accounts increased by 12.8 billion dirhams, or 14.6 percent.

AFGHANISTAN

Pakistani Nuclear Power Seen as 'Great Danger'

91AS1435C *Kabul THE KABUL TIMES in English*
13 Aug 91 p 3

[Text] (Afzal)—The U.S.-Pak differences over the nuclear issue remain unresolved and Pakistan's efforts to persuade the Bush administration to resume military and economic aid have not succeeded as yet.

It has been clear for some time now that Pakistan is a covert nuclear weapon state. Pakistan reportedly possesses five to ten Hiroshima type bombs. It also has air delivery capability and is developing its own missiles.

An Islamabad report dated 5 February 1989 confirmed that Pakistan had test-fired surface-to-surface (SS) missiles and General Aslam Beg, the then chief of Pakistan's army, said that two SS missiles with ranges of 80 to 300 km respectively had been test-fired recently.

It has been authoritatively stated that the control of nuclear weapons in Pakistan does not rest with the prime minister. The military establishment exercises this control.

The U.S. State Department officials recently told a group of journalists that differences with Pakistan on its nuclear programme remained despite recent high-level talks.

The United States stopped military and economic aid to Pakistan this year after the U.S. president, George Bush, expressed his inability to certify to the congress that Pakistan did not possess nuclear weapons.

The Bush administration and the U.S. congress have shown a strong and persistent interest in Pakistan's nuclear activities and their implication for Washington's non-proliferation policy.

In a bid to soften the U.S. stand on nuclear issue, Pakistan suggested convening of a conference of the United States, the Soviet Union, India, China and Pakistan to settle the nuclear issue on regional basis.

The announcement preceded the visit of high-level Pakistani delegation, led by Wasim Sajjad, the senate chairman, to Washington in June.

According to a U.S. Congressional research service report, many claim that Pakistan can now produce or is producing weapon-grade uranium, which apparently it continued to do despite U.S. pressure.

"There are news reports that Pakistan is working on the non-nuclear parts of atom bombs. All this raises concern that Pakistan can make or may have made a few nuclear weapons," the report said.

The report emphasised that this would endanger U.S. interests in South Asia and would be a defeat for the U.S. policy of avoiding the further spread of nuclear weapons.

Moreover, Pakistan's nuclear weapons are not only against the U.S. interests in South Asia but also is a great danger to the neighbouring countries and the region as a whole.

It can jeopardise, at any time, the security of the region and will have tragic consequences for all the world.

Kabul Promises Free Wheat for Government Employees

91AS1565A *Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL*
in English 5 Sep 91 p 7

[Text] Kabul (Dispatches)—Afghanistan, bracing itself for a hard winter following a cut in vital Soviet food and fuel supplies, pledged on Tuesday to resume free wheat allowances to government employees.

Food Minister Anwar Dost said that it would make up for what he described as slackness in the past three or four months during which wheat has not been distributed.

But he denied rumours that the Soviet-backed government would stop wheat distribution next month to about 100,000 coupon-holders in the capital.

Government workers in Kabul receive essentials through a coupon system—when these are available. Ordinary residents rely on private bazaars where they can find expensive grain, sugar and cooking oil smuggled across the mountainous border with Pakistan.

Dost's assurance, in a statement published by the government-run *Hewad* newspaper, came two days after businessmen and diplomats in Kabul said food and fuel supplies from the Soviet Union had all but dried up since last month's failed coup in the Kremlin.

Last week Dost said the government had acquired only one-third of its wheat requirements for the current Afghan year which began in March.

The government, fighting a 13-year-old war against Islamic Mujahideen guerrillas, is facing increasing difficulties meeting its obligations now that flow of supplies from the Soviet Union has been virtually cut off.

Many coupon-holders say they do not think the government will ensure a smooth food supply during the coming winter.

Kabul is desperately seeking alternative sources of supply from Iran via the private sector, the Soviet central Asian republics, Turkey and even from as far as Australia.

BANGLADESH

Zia 17 Aug Speech at Savar Meeting Reported

91AS1508A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 18 Aug 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] Savar, 17 August—Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today said the people of Bangladesh would never allow any conspiracy to foil the national progress and development, reports BSS.

Addressing a huge public meeting at Savar College ground here this afternoon, Begum Zia said "the people of this country do not believe in conspiracy."

She said the autocratic Government of Ershad had come to power through conspiracy but the people evicted him.

Presided over by Mr. Dean Islam, vice-chairman of BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party], Savar Upazila, the meeting was addressed, among others, by Mr. Sadek Hossain, state minister for youth and sports, Mr. Abdullah Al-Noman, state minister for fisheries and livestock, Mr. M.A. Mannan, state minister for civil aviation and tourism, Mr. Nazmul Huda, state minister for food, Mr. Neyamatullah Sabu, MP [member of Parliament], Mr. Amanullah Aman, MP, Mr. Harum Mollah, MP, Mr. Saad Jaglul, principal, Savar College and Mr. Moniruzzaman Monir, vice-president of JUCCSU [expansion not given].

The prime minister said a section of people has been hatching conspiracy to foil democracy. So their tall talks about democracy become mere lip service, she added.

She said the present government would not tolerate any law and order situation created by any quarter to disrupt the normal civic life. She said violence would be resisted.

Begum Khaleda Zia said the BNP Government believes in the welfare of the people and it would take all possible steps to change their lot.

In this connection, she urged the people to cooperate with the government in building up a self-reliant Bangladesh through increasing production in the fields and factories.

She said, "If you cooperate with us, Inshallah we will make Bangladesh a happy and prosperous country."

She said discipline has to be restored in every quarter, including the educational institutions so that our children can pursue their study without any problem.

Begum Zia said the BNP government would restart the canal digging programme of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman to attain self-sufficiency in food.

She said the past autocratic regime had scrapped all the people and production-oriented programmes of the BNP Government and virtually turned Bangladesh into an import-based country.

Referring to the election pledges of her party, Begum Zia said "we are fulfilling our commitments to the people one by one." She said a government could not solve all the problems overnight unless the people cooperate with it.

She called for building up national economy by mobilising the human force. She said the huge human force has to be transformed into human resources. She also stressed the need for eradication of bribery and corruption from society.

Regarding smuggling along the border, the prime minister said if this menace was not checked, the country's economy would be crippled, production in the mills and factories would suffer and the number of unemployed would continue to increase.

She said some parties wanted to hamper production through violence. "We have to launch a movement against this through mobilising public opinion," she added.

Begum Zia said "we have struggled for a long time to achieve democracy, and now we have to fight to preserve it."

Earlier, Begum Zia visited the Bengal Fine Ceramic industry here. She went round various sections of the industry and evinced keen interest on the products.

Foreign Minister Meets With Iranian Counterpart

91AS1516A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
12 Aug 91 pp 1, 9

[Text] Tehran (BSS)—The official talks between Bangladesh and Iran was [as published] held here on Saturday with Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati and Bangladesh Foreign Minister Mr. A.S.M. Mostafizur Rahman leading their respective sides.

During the meeting, Mr. Mostafizur Rahman said the present government under the leadership of Begum Khaleda Zia would follow the policies and guidelines of late President Ziaur Rahman who worked relentlessly for the cause of unity of the Islamic Ummah.

The Bangladesh Foreign Minister suggested that an Islamic common market might be created to facilitate exchange of goods and services for the benefit of the Islamic Ummah. A re-insurance scheme under the auspices of OIC [Organization of the Islamic Conference] would protect business and assets of the Islamic countries, he added.

The Iranian Foreign Minister reciprocating the views of Bangladesh Foreign Minister said that Iran was also keenly interested in adopting all measures for improving relations with Islamic countries.

Earlier, on arrival Saturday morning Mr. Mostafizur Rahman was received by Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati.

On bilateral matters, Mr. Rahman said that Bangladesh as the second largest Muslim country of the world could help Iran in its reconstruction and development efforts by supporting with skilled and semi-skilled manpower in sectors like manufacturing, construction, farming, animal husbandry and fishing. He said that proposed air services agreement between the two countries would pave the way for further trade exchange. Mr. Rahman urged his Iranian counterpart to use his good offices so that the Bangladeshi nationals, who had been working in Iran without legal status, could stay and work in this country.

The Iranian Foreign Minister said Iran would continue to endeavour to further improve bilateral relations in all sectors.

The Bangladesh Foreign Minister also called on the Iranian Commerce Minister, Mr. Abdul Hossain Vahaj, Saturday evening and discussed matters of mutual interests including expansion of trade between the two countries.

Rahman Returns From UAE, Iran

*91AS1511A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
15 Aug 91 pp 1, 8*

[Text] Foreign Minister A.S.M. Mustafizur Rahman said his visits to Iran and UAE [United Arab Emirates] would further strengthen the relations of Bangladesh with the two Muslim countries.

The Foreign Minister, who returned to Dhaka yesterday morning after his five-day official visits to Tehran and Abu Dhabi, told newsmen he had exchanged views with the leaders of the two countries extensively on bilateral relations with a view to expanding trade and cooperation in other fields besides regional and international issues of common concern with particular reference on the Gulf and Middle-East situation.

"Both the fellow Muslim countries responded positively showing tremendous goodwill and warmth," Mr. Rahman said adding necessary steps would be taken in this regard as follow-up actions by the officials of these countries soon.

The Foreign Minister said he had talks with Sheikh Hamadan bin Zayed Al Nahyan, State Minister for Foreign Affairs and son of the UAE president on the BCCI [Bank of Credit and Commerce International] matters as Bangladeshi depositors and creditors are facing serious problems following the closure of the operation of the bank branches.

A team from UAE would come to Dhaka soon to look into the problems of the bank branches in Bangladesh, he said and added necessary steps for operation of the BCCI might be taken during the visit. The BCCI (Bank of Credit and Commerce International) has its headquarters in Abu Dhabi where the UAE President holds the lion shares of the Bank.

The Bangladesh-UAE Joint Economic Commission at the foreign minister-level is likely to take place in near future after a long gap of nine years as both Mr. Rahman and Sheikh Hamadan felt the imperative of holding the Commission's meeting for expanding economic and trade cooperation between Dhaka and Abu Dhabi.

The Foreign Minister said officials of the two countries would meet soon to prepare the ground for the upcoming ministerial-level joint commission meeting presumably in Dhaka early next year.

He had talks with the UAE leaders also on the possibility of exporting more manpower from Bangladesh to the Gulf States after the serious overall adverse effect on Bangladesh economy with the particular reference on manpower in Iran and Kuwait following the Gulf crisis. The UAE side assured the Foreign Minister of taking more manpower in the coming days with a view to expanding bilateral cooperation.

In Tehran, the Bangladesh Foreign Minister had extensive talks with his Iranian counterpart Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati on various aspects of the bilateral relations as well as international and regional issues of common concern.

An Iranian Civil Aviation team is expected to visit Dhaka shortly to finalise and sign an air traffic agreement for opening direct flights between capital cities of the two countries by their national airlines.

The Foreign Minister said he also had discussions with the Iranian Commerce Minister during his visit for a possible joint shipping company between the two countries.

Mr. Mustafizur Rahman paid call on Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and conveyed to him verbal message from Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia. He also conveyed greetings of Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed to President Rafsanjani.

During his talks in Tehran, Mr. Rahman said Iran showed its keen interest to make arrangements for taking manpower from Bangladesh so that they can take part in the development programmes there.

The Foreign Minister mentioned the prospect of wider cooperation in the field of trade as Iran can import its main bulk of jute from Bangladesh. There is good prospect for export of fruits and more tea to Iran as Iranians like blending of Bangladesh tea with their own variety, he remarked.

As regards the OIC [Organization of the Islamic Conference], the Foreign Minister who could not attend the just concluded OIC foreign ministers' meeting in Turkey, the Iranian Foreign Minister apprised him of the outcome of the meeting.

Foreign Secretary Reports on Istanbul OIC Meet

91AS1512A Dhaka *THE NEW NATION* in English
13 Aug 91 p 12

[Text] Bangladesh played an active role in the just concluded 20th conference of the Islamic Foreign Ministers at Istanbul, Foreign Secretary Abul Ahsan said here yesterday reports BSS.

He told newsmen that the conference had a special significance since it was for the first time since the Gulf crisis that leaders from Islamic countries met to discuss the subsequent developments along with other issues.

The Foreign Secretary, who led the Bangladesh delegation to the conference, said the meeting discussed the challenges before the Islamic Ummah and resolved to overcome the problems and strengthen Islamic solidarity.

Mr. Ahsan said the conference took note of the disaster caused by the catastrophic cyclone in Bangladesh this year and set up a task force to evaluate the extent of devastation.

The conference authorised the Secretary General to urge specialised agencies to extend all possible assistance to Bangladesh in the wake of the disaster, he said.

The Foreign Secretary said assistance to the Islamic University in Bangladesh also came up in the conference.

Mr. Ahsan said the meeting discussed greater cooperation among the Muslim countries in the commercial and other fields the need for a greater interaction was felt by all members, he said.

The Foreign Secretary led a five-member delegation to the conference and the team included among others Mr. Ruhul Amin, Director General in the Foreign Ministry.

In reply to a question, Mr. Abul Ahsan said he discussed in Abu Dhabi on his way to Istanbul about Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman's coming visit to the UAE [United Arab Emirates] and the problems of the BCCI [Bank of Credit and Commerce International] Bank in Bangladesh.

Bridge Built With PRC Aid Inaugurated

Chinese Envoy Present

91AS1503A Dhaka *THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER*
in English 18 Aug 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia on Saturday expressed the hope that the existing cooperation between Bangladesh and China would further increase in all sectors, including social and economic fields, reports BSS.

The prime minister was talking to Madame Chen Muhua, Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of

the National People's Congress of China, who called on Begum Zia at her residence.

Madame Chen is in Dhaka as a special envoy to represent the Chinese government at the inaugural ceremony of Shambhuganj Bridge, also known as Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge-2. Begun Zia will formally open the bridge for traffic today (Sunday).

During the call-on, Communications Minister Oli Ahmed, Chinese Ambassador in Bangladesh Chen Song Lu and members of Madame Chen's entourage were present.

Prime Minister Begum Zia said the three bridges constructed with the Chinese assistance would remain as a permanent embodiment of sincere friendships between the two countries.

She said the friendship between China and Bangladesh was traditional but the present stage of closer relationship between the two countries had begun during the time of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman.

Begum Zia extended her sincere thanks to the people and Government of China for their concern and assistance to Bangladesh after the last cyclone. She also thanked China for taking initiatives to carry out a joint study with Bangladesh for flood control in Bangladesh.

The prime minister recalled her recent visit to China and requested Madame Chen to convey her best wishes to the president, the premier, and the secretary general of the Communist Party of China.

Madame Chen thanked the people and Government of Bangladesh for providing medicines as relief to China after it was hit by floods.

She conveyed the good wishes of the premier and the president of China and the secretary general of the Communist Party to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and people of Bangladesh.

Madame Chen said China was ready to support Bangladesh in all possible ways in its development efforts.

She expressed the hope that the development programmes of the present government would be implemented successfully in a peaceful and stable atmosphere.

Zia Inauguration Speech

91AS1503B Dhaka *THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER*
in English 19 Aug 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] Shambhuganj, Mymensingh, 18 August—Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today inaugurated the Chinese-aided Shambhuganj Bridge over the River Old Brahmaputra saying that the bridge would remain as an embodiment of ever lasting friendship between peoples of Bangladesh and China, reports BSS.

"This is yet another milestone in the history of growing friendship between Bangladesh and China," Begum Zia said.

Madame Chen Muhua, special envoy of the Chinese Government and vice chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress also addressed the inaugural ceremony of the bridge which is known as Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge-2. Madame Chen came to Bangladesh to represent her government at the inaugural ceremony of the bridge.

The bridge has been constructed at a cost of about Taka 72 crore of which about Taka 44 crore has been provided by the Chinese Government. The construction of the 463.80 metre long and 14.40 metre wide bridge was started in March 1990. The bridge has been completed five months ahead of schedule.

Communications Minister Oli Ahmed, LGRD [Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives] Minister Abdus Salam Talukdar and local MP [member of Parliament] AK Fazlul Huq and secretary, Roads and Highways Division Nazim Ahmed Chowdhury addressed the inaugural function, among others.

Thousands of local people from all walks of life thronged the areas near the bridge despite scorching heat to witness the historic moment. The construction of a bridge over the river Old Brahmaputra was a long-standing demand of the people. The commissioning of the bridge now makes the communication of Kishoreganj, Netrakona and Sherpur with Mymensingh and capital Dhaka easier.

Reiterating the significance of communication in the national development programme of the present government Begum Zia hoped that all the upazilas of the country would be brought under greater communication network within next few years.

The prime minister extended her hearty congratulations to the concerned officials and workers especially the construction and consulting firms for completing the bridge five months ahead of schedule.

Begum Zia said the Chinese aided Buriganga Bridge and Shambhuganj Bridge would bear the testimony of deep friendship and cooperation between Bangladesh and China.

The prime minister said the present friendly relationship between Bangladesh and China was initiated by Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman. She also expressed her happiness for the presence of Madame Chen and the members of her entourage in the inaugural function.

Begum Zia recalled the recent visit to China and said the hospitality and cooperation shown to her and members of her entourage was still fresh in her memory. She hoped the friendship and cooperation would increase in manifold in the coming days.

Turning to the overall development efforts Begum Zia said her government was pledged bound to improve law and order, control price hike of essentials, construct roads and bridges, supply electricity and fuel in all parts of the country besides controlling population boom. She said "we will be able to fulfill all of our commitments with the overall support and cooperation of country-men."

The prime minister said Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman had taken bold steps to improve the lot of the rural people. During the last nine years of autocratic rule all base of the development initiatives had been destroyed.

Begum Zia called upon all the patriotic forces to identify the real perspective of development to revitalise the ruined economy on the present auspicious occasion of democratic transition. She underscored the need for innovating the ways to establish the socio-economic infrastructure through implementation of proper economic programmes by maximum utilisation of limited resources.

She said "we need foreign aid but this has to be property utilised for achieving self-reliance. It is much more disgraceful to live as dependent then to remain under dominance."

The prime minister also expressed her deep sorrow and concern at the loss of lives and property due to flood in China. She thanked Madame Chen and her entourage members for attending the inaugural function at the hour of their distress.

Madame Chen said the inauguration of the friendship bridge by the prime minister of Bangladesh was the manifestation of how significantly the people and government of Bangladesh regarded the friendship and cooperation of China. She termed Shambhuganj Bridge a result of friendship between Bangladesh and China.

She hoped that newer dimension, would come in the development efforts of Bangladesh which would achieve immense success. She said the people and government of China would continue to extend its friendship and cooperation on the basis of mutual benefit and development.

The communications minister said the present government was determined to set up a modern communication network in the country. She also termed the bridges construction in the country with the Chinese assistance as a milestone in the history of friendship between the two countries.

The LGRD and cooperatives minister also underscored the prime need for developing the communication network in the country to achieve success in all sectors including industrialisation.

Earlier the prime minister unveiled the plaque of the bridge and offered munajat. After the inauguration she crossed the bridge in a motorcade.

Constitutional Amendments, Related Bills Passed

Parliament Session 6 Aug

91AS1504A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 7 Aug 91 pp 1, 10

[Article by Nurul Huda: "Bangladesh Returns to Parliamentary System"]

[Excerpts] The nation started its sojourn to parliamentary system of government with the passage of the 12th Constitution Amendment Bill in the Jatiya Sangsad [JS] on Tuesday late night amidst thunderous applause. All the 306 members present in the House voted in favour of the Amendment Bills.

Since 1975 the country was under presidential system of government. With the passage of the 12th Amendment Bill the pledge of the three Alliances made in their joint declaration during antiautocracy movement is fulfilled.

Earlier, the 11th Constitution Amendment Bill paving the return of the Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed to his previous office was also passed by 278 votes out of 306 members present in the House.

With the passage of the 11th and 12th Amendment Bills, the House witnessed a rare atmosphere of joy and cordiality. The members belonging to the Treasury and Opposition Benches wholeheartedly greeted each other. The visitors galleries were jam-packed to witness the historic event.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and the Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina went to the lobby to vote for the 12th constitution Amendment Bill together. Both of them greeted each other. It was another rare occasion witnessed by the House.

Both the women members of the Parliament belonging to Jammat-e-Islami greeted the Leader of the House Begum Khaleda Zia and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina. Both the Burqa-clad Jamaat women members were for the first time seen smiling from the gallery.

Out of 306 members present in the House excepting 27 Jatiya Party members and lone National Democratic Party leader Mr. Salauddin Kader Chowdhury all voted for the passage of the 11th Amendment Bill. It may be recalled here that Jatiya Party had note of dissent to certain aspects of the Bill. So the Jatiya Party members abstained from voting while Salauddin Kader Chowdhury is opposed to the return of the Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed to his previous position of the Chief Justice. Mr. Salauddin Kader Chowdhury also did not participate in the voting.

Eleven seats are vacant. Former President H.M. Ershad, former Prime Minister Kazi Zafar Ahmed, former Minister Sardar Amjad Hossain and former Minister Anwar Hossain who are under detention were absent from the House.

The 12th Constitution Amendment Bill, 1991 was passed amidst cheers and jubilation after five weeks of debate and deliberations since its introduction in the House on 2 July by the Leader of the House, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia. The Deputy Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali declared the Bill as amended with no vote cast against the Bill. [passage omitted]

Out of 174 amendments moved by the Opposition members, three amendments of Mr. Shahjahan Siraj (JSD) [Jatiyo Samajtantrik Dal] and Mr. M. Nasim (Awami League) were accepted by the House unanimously while the rest were rejected. [passage omitted]

The Treasury Bench had moved two bills on 2 July—the 11th Constitutional Amendment Bill for ratification of appointment of the Chief Justice as the Vice President and all actions taken by him as the acting president, and the 12th Amendment Bill for switching over to the Parliamentary system. Later on 4 July, the deputy leader of the Opposition, Mr. Abdus Samad Azad brought a private member's bill on the same subjects.

The Workers' Party Member Mr. Rashed Khan Menon, introduced four other private members' bills relating to fundamental rights and treaties with foreign countries also on 4 July.

All the seven bills were referred to a 15-member select committee, headed by Law Minister Mirza Gholam Hafiz, on 9 July. The committee reported back to the Sangsad on 28 July the two treasury bench bills incorporating amendment proposals of the opposition. The House took the two bills for immediate consideration on 29 July. General discussion on the two bills was held on 30 and 31 July and 3 and 4 August.

Under the 12th Amendment, chapters one and two of part four of the Constitution have been substituted by one, two and three chapters stating, inter alia, the powers of the president and the prime minister and abolishing the offices of vice-president and the deputy prime minister.

After the bill becomes an act, the Executive power of the republic shall be exercised by the prime minister and the Cabinet shall be collectively responsible to parliament.

The president who will be the head of state shall be elected by the members of Parliament in accordance with the advice of the prime minister. The president shall hold office for two five-year terms "whether or not the terms are consecutive."

The president shall appoint prime minister, the member of Parliament who appears to him to command the support of the majority of the members of Parliament.

Besides the prime minister, other ministers, ministers of states and deputy ministers will be appointed by the president, as may be determined by the prime minister, "provided that not less than nine-tenths of their number shall be appointed from among members of Parliament and not more than one-tenth of their number may be

chosen from among persons qualified for election as members of Parliament." The technocrat ministers shall not be entitled to vote but can make statements relating to ministries only.

Referendum Bill

91AS1504B Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 8 Aug 91 p 1

[Text] The Jatiya Sangsad [JS] Wednesday night passed the Referendum Bill, 1991, providing for laws to conduct a referendum whether the president shall give assent to a major Constitution Amendment Bill, after its passage by the House, reports BSS.

A referendum is needed to decide whether the president shall assent or not to a bill passed by the House amending the preamble or any provision of seven articles of the Constitution including the system of the government.

Presided over by the Speaker, Mr. Abdur Rahman Biswas, the house which saw Wednesday night the passage of the 12th Constitution Amendment Bill to switch over to the parliamentary system rejected all the amendments to the Referendum Bill.

Piloted by deputy leader of the House, Prof. Badruddoza Chowdhury, the statement of object and reasons of the Referendum Bill said, under the Constitution the responsibility to conduct the referendum had been entrusted with the Election Commission. But, no law had been enacted to conduct such a referendum.

The statement said under the Article 142 (1) (B) of the Constitution if a bill passed by parliament to amend the preamble of the Constitution or any provisions of Article 8, 48, 56, 58, 80, 92A or 142, is presented to the president for assent, the question whether the president shall give assent or not should be decided through a referendum.

Besides the preamble, the seven articles are respectively related to the fundamental principles of state policy, executive, executive authority of the republic, the council of ministers, legislative procedure, authorisation of expenditure in certain cases and power to amend any provision of the constitution.

The amendment provisions of the Constitution relating to the restricted seven articles or the preamble say when a bill passed by the House is presented to the president for his assent he shall, within a period of seven days refer it to a referendum on the question whether the bill should or should not be assented to.

According to the Referendum Bill, 1991 passed by the House the Election Commission, after receiving the presidential order will fix a date for the referendum by a gazette notification, provided the date should be fixed in such a manner that the referendum could be held within 40 days of the gazette notification.

The Election Commission will make necessary arrangements like appointment of a Returning Officer, necessary number of Assistant Returning Officers, polling centres and others.

Those who are enlisted in the voter lists will be eligible to cast their votes in the referendum.

The voting will be held in secret balloting.

The Election Commission has been empowered by the Referendum Bill to issue necessary orders and requisition service of any individual and any authorities to ensure the conduct of the referendum with honesty, neutrality and sincerity.

11th Constitution Amendment Bill

91AS1504C Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 11 Aug 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] The ratification of appointment of the chief justice as vice-president, all actions taken by him as the acting president and his return to the office of the chief justice has become part of the Constitution following the assent given by the acting president Saturday to the 11th Constitutional Amendment Bill reports BSS.

The Constitution (11th Amendment) Bill, 1991, in amended form, was passed by the Jatiya Sangsad [JS] on 6 August by 278-nil votes.

The period between 6 December 1990, the day Mr. Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed took over as the acting president, and the day he resumes duties and responsibilities as the chief justice after the new president elected under the Constitution enters upon his office, will be considered as the "period of actual service" within the meaning of the Supreme Court judges (leave, pension and privileges) Ordinance of 1982.

Now the following new paragraph 21 shall be added after paragraph 20 in the fourth schedule of the Constitution.

"21. Ratification and confirmation of the appointment of vice-president, etc.—(1) the appointment of, and the administration of oath to the chief justice of Bangladesh as vice-president on the 21st day of Agrahayan, 1397 BS corresponding to the 6th day of December 1990, and the resignation tendered to him by the then president and all powers exercised, all laws and ordinances made and all orders made, acts and things done, and actions taken, or purported to have been made, done or taken by the said vice-president acting as president during the period between the 21st day of Agrahayan, 1397 BS corresponding to the 6th day of December 1990 and the date of commencement of the Constitution (Eleventh Amendment) Act, 1991 (...of 1991) (both days inclusive) or till the new president elected under Article 21 (2) of the Constitution has entered upon his office (whichever is later) are hereby ratified and confirmed and declared to have been validly made, administered tendered, exercised, done and taken according to law."

“(2) the said vice-president shall, after the commencement of the Constitution (Eleventh Amendment) Act, 1991 (...of 1991), and after the new president elected under this Constitution has entered upon his office, be eligible to resume the duties and responsibilities of the chief justice of Bangladesh and the period between the 21st day of Agrahayan, 1397 BS corresponding to the 6th day of December 1990 and the date of which he resumes such duties and responsibilities shall be deemed to be the period of actual service within the meaning of Section 2(A) of the Supreme Court judges (leave, pension and privileges) Ordinance, 1982 (Ordinance No. XX of 1982).”

The 11th Constitutional Amendment Bill—as amended by the 15-member Select Committee—was passed in amended form incorporating the amendment of Barrister Aminul Huq (BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party]-Rajshahi) giving legal cover to all actions of the acting president till the new elected president enters upon his office.

The Constitution (Twelfth Amendment) Bill, 1991—as amended by the Select committee—was unanimously adopted in amended form by Parliament incorporating three amendments moved by two opposition members belonging to Awami League and JSD [Jatiyo Samajtantrik Dal] (Seraj) parties.

Of the three amendments, two were of the chief whip of Opposition, Mr. Mohammad Nasim (Serajganj) relating to the president's power to appoint the prime minister and the chief justice under Article 48(3) and the provision to amend the Constitution under Article 142.

The other amendment of (JSD-S) member from Tangail, Mr. Shahjahan Seral was related to the holding of presidential election under article 123 of the Constitution to fill vacancy within the period of 90 to 60 days prior to the date of expiry of the term in case of a vacancy in the office of president.

Presidential Election Bill

91AS1504D Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 15 Aug 91 p 1

[Text] The presidential Election Bill, 1991, was adopted in an amended form by the Jatiya Sangsad [JS] in the early hours of Wednesday providing for the procedure of election of the president after re-introduction of the parliamentary system in the country through open ballot, reports BSS.

Piloted by the minister for law and justice, Mirza Gholam Hafiz, the bill was passed by the House at 02.45 a.m. Wednesday after an hour of the adoption of the national Budget for the current fiscal year.

The Presidential Election Bill will come into force immediately after the Constitution (12th Amendment) Bill is assented to by the acting president following the 15 September referendum on the amendment bill which

was passed by the House to switch over to the parliamentary form of government after long 16 years.

Within five days the 12th Constitutional Amendment Bill becomes effective, the schedule of the first presidential election will have to be announced along with invitation to the MPs [members of Parliament] for nominations through gazette notifications.

The president of the Republic will be elected by the members of the Jatiya Sangsad through open ballot. One MP will have one vote.

The Chief Election Commissioner as the Returning Officer will conduct the presidential election at a meeting of the members of Parliament in the House under his chairmanship.

If the election is necessitated during the session of the house of Chief Election Commissioner in consultation with the Speaker will announce the election date through a notification at least seven days before polling.

When the house is not in session and the presidential election as necessitated the Chief Election Commissioner in consultation with the Speaker, will call a meeting of MPs through a gazette notification at least seven days ahead of the election day.

At any time between the fixed date and time for depositing nomination papers to the Returning Officer any member of Parliament may nominate for election of president a person qualified for such election. The nomination paper should be signed by himself as proposer and by another member as seconder. Together with a statement signed by the person nominated that he consents to the nomination.

Provided that no person shall sign, whether as proposer or as seconder, more than one nomination paper.

A candidate may withdraw his candidature at the date and time fixed for withdrawal by delivering a notice in writing to the presiding officer.

If all but one of the candidates have withdrawn, that one shall be declared by the returning officer to be elected.

At the end of polling the Election Commissioner will count the votes openly and the candidate who will obtain highest number of votes will be declared by the Election Commissioner to be elected.

In case of any tie the decision would be taken through holding a lottery. The decision of the Election Commissioner on the results of presidential election would be final.

Sheikh Hasina on Constitutional Amendments

91AS1505A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 8 Aug 91 pp 1, 10

[Text] The Chief of Bangladesh Awami League said that with the passage of the Eleventh and Twelfth Constitution Amendments Bills in the Jatiya Sangsad on Tuesday the election commitments of Awami League to the people were fulfilled.

Addressing a huge public meeting at Bangabandhu Avenue, organised by Dhaka City Unit of Bangladesh Awami League, Sheikh Hasina said that the passage of the amendments bills was the victory of her party which she remarked could be achieved due to long dedication and struggle of the masses. [sentence as published]

The Awami League chief reminded that it was proved that the barrel of a gun was not the source of power but it was the people who were source of all power.

Presided over by Mr. Muzzaffar Hossain Paltu, president of Dhaka City Unit of Awami League, the meeting was addressed among others by Mrs. Abdus Samad Azad, Mrs. Sajeda Chowdhury, Mr. Amir Hossain Amu, Mr. Salahuddin Yusuf, Mr. Jalil, Mr. Mostafa Mohsin Montu and Mofazzal Hossain Maya.

Sheikh Hasina asserted that Bangabandhu wanted to establish the people's rights through the establishment of an exploitation free society but before fulfillment of his (Bangabandhu's) dreams, he was assassinated along with his family. The Awami League chief asserted that after the assassination of Bangabandhu the people had to face various humiliation, deception and torture.

She opined that the passage of Eleventh and Twelfth Constitution Amendment Bills would help the people to get their lost rights and she hopes that from henceforth there would not be any autocratic rule.

Praising the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) for its support after accepting the political reality for the passage of the bills, Sheikh Hasina reiterated that "we do not want martial law but we want to maintain the constitution provision." [sentence as published]

She noted that her party was always ready to make any understanding and extend support to the greater cause and welfare of the people. Awami League will always remain with the people and will not be lagging behind to sacrifice blood, Sheikh Hasina observed.

She mentioned although Awami League got 38 percent votes it could not form the government, on the other hand, the Awami League chief observed that BNP formed the government getting 31 percent votes in the last Jatiya Sangsad polls.

Expressing her concern at the soaring prices of daily essentials and deteriorating law and order situation of the country, Sheikh Hasina urged the government to

accept the five and ten point charter of demands of the Sangjukta Karmachari Oikkya Parishad and student community immediately.

She demanded stoppage of armed violence on the campus, opening of all closed educational institutions. Withdrawal of VAT [value-added tax] and release of all workers of Chhatra League.

Sheikh Hasina also called upon the acting president to arrest all armed persons who made the vice-chancellor of Chittagong University hostage and ensure congenial educational atmosphere there. The Awami League chief was critical about the dependence on foreign aid and pleaded for setting up of more mills and factories.

Giving warning to the government officials, Sheikh Hasina said that they should change their attitude as they were the servants of the people. The Awami League chief reminded them that they were answerable only to the government not to any individual.

Referring to the repeal of the Indemnity Act ratified through the Fifth Constitutional amendment providing immunity from trial by any court of law those responsible for the killings of her parents, other family members and four other national leaders, she hoped that B.N.P. [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] would extend its support to the passage of the bill which would be introduced in Jatiya Sangsad on Thursday, the private members day.

In this context, she regretted that when the killers of a person was held as per law of the land why the trial of the killers of her parents would not be held. She remarked that though Awami League had some reservations against some provisions of the 12th Constitutional Amendment Bill, it had voted for the passage of the bill for switching over to parliamentary form of government in the greater interest of the nation. For the same reason Awami League also voted to the passage of the bills for the elections of the president through open ballots instead of secret ballots, she added.

However, Sheikh Hasina said that her party would continue its struggle for the economic emancipation of the people and giving the democracy an institutional shape. Awami League would also continue its efforts to remove the undemocratic provisions of the bills.

She called upon the people to observe the mourning day on 15 August and make the public meeting at Panthapath on 16 August a success. She also demanded fair and wide coverage of the programmes of 15 August.

Awami League Leader Discusses Council Plans

91AS1510A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
9 Aug 91 pp 1, 8

[Text] The biannual council session of Awami League [AL] is likely to be held in the later part of this year, a top party leader indicated. The decision to hold the council at convenient time was discussed at the recent extended

meeting of the party where all district leaders stressed the need for holding council session and the unfinished district conference to strengthen and step up the organisational activities. Accordingly the central leaders of the organisation are now contemplating to hold the council session of the party. The last council session of Awami League was held at the Engineers Institute in January 1987. It was again due in 1989, but the conference, party insiders said, could not be held timely for various reasons like anti-Erhad movement, parliamentary polls etc. In 1987 conference, Begum Sajeda Chowdhury was made the party's General Secretary as compromise candidate while the other two leaders Tofael Ahmed and Ameer Hossain Amu were in the fray to win the office. The inner conflict of the party, however, was minimised though both the leaders felt discouraged.

The schism in the party over the post of General Secretary is again widening, party insiders said. Informed sources hinted that Ameer Hossain Amu, Tofael Ahmed, Muhammed Nasim and Abdul Jalil might be the aspirants of the post of General Secretary of the party. Referring to the recent development as regards merger of BAKSAL [Bangladesh Awami Krishak Sromik League] with Awami League, some activists of the party had shown their interest to make Abdur Razzak again the General Secretary of the party. The merger of BAKSAL led by Mohiuddin Ahmed and Abdur Razzak would formally take place on 13 August on the occasion, a special council session would also be held at the Engineers Institute on 13 August.

Sources close to the party signalled that Mohiuddin Ahmed MP [member of Parliament] might be included in the Presidium of the organisation but it would be a difficult task for Abdur Razzak to get back his lost position. Party sources also stated that some new faces, young in age and trusted persons of AL Chief Sheikh Hasina would be included in the central leadership instead of old-guards to keep the absolute hold over the party.

NAP, CPB To Forge Unity

*91AS1448A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
2 Aug 91 pp 1, 8*

[Text] A closed door meeting between the top leaders of CPB [Communist Party of Bangladesh] and NAP-M [National Awami Party-Muzaffar] was held on Wednesday last to rally on a single platform on the basis of identical programmes. The leaders of both the parties discussed the issue at the meeting at NAP central office.

Ajoy Roy and Mujahidul Islam Selim of CPB and Pankaj Bhattacharya and Dr. Malek from NAP represented their respective parties. The meeting reviewed the latest political situation in the country and came at a consensus to chalk out an identical programme to solve what the leaders said socio-economic and political problems facing the nation. The series of exchange views between

the like-minded organisations, professional groups and individuals would also be held in course of time, party insiders indicated.

A top NAP leader said that after finalising the programme they would start holding dialogue with the democratic and progressive forces to forge a broad-based unity.

Meanwhile, many activists of both the parties felt that there was no alternative to forming an alternative platform comprising the progressive democratic and liberation forces for upholding the ideals of the liberation war and resistance to fundamentalists.

NAP leaders, meanwhile, made it clear that the Awami League-led Eight-Party alliance has miserably failed to achieve the desired political goal due to "big brotherly attitude" and "narrow partisan interests" of a party. NAP leaders, however, told the NEW NATION that CPB, NAP, United Communist League, Shammaybadi Dal of Dilip Barua, Abdus Samad led Gano Azadi League, and Janata Mukti Party would be probable partners of the proposed front.

World Bank Official Confirms Assistance

*91AS1451A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 6 Aug 91 p 1*

[Text] The World Bank Vice-President, Mr. Attila Karasmanoglu, had a meeting with Finance and Planning Minister M. Saifur Rahman in Dhaka on Monday, reports BSS.

Several issues involving World Bank operations in Bangladesh were discussed in the meeting.

The Finance Minister appraised the World Bank Vice President the reform measures initiated by the present democratic government to revigorate the economy of Bangladesh. "We want to bring balance in our economy through implementation of the reforms programmes" the Minister told the Vice-President.

The Finance Minister also listed the steps taken by the government to improve the macro-economic management, restructure the financial sector, liberalise trade and industry and for poverty alleviation. The Government, he said, emphasised on education particularly on primary education, women development and overall economic discipline of the country. [sentence as published]

The Finance Minister said additional loan courts were set up to deal with the bank defaulters cases speedily.

The World Bank Vice President assured World Banks continued assistance in the development effort of Bangladesh.

The Vice-President said, the programmes of primary education, women development and overall economic management were progressing in Bangladesh.

Principal Finance Secretary Khorsed Alam, ERD [External Resources Division] Secretary Enam Ahmed Chowdhury, Alternate Executive Director of World Bank M.A. Sayeed and ERD Additional Secretary Dr. F.H. Yousuf, among others, were present in the meeting.

The World Bank Vice President was assisted by the local Mission chief Christopher Willoughby and other senior World Bank officials.

Earlier, the visiting World Bank Vice-President Mr. Attila Karaosmanoglu called on ERD Secretary Enam Ahmed Chowdhury at his office on Monday.

The discussed matters of mutual interest and reviewed the major ongoing World Bank Programmes in Bangladesh.

The problems of the on-going World Bank aided projects were also discussed in the meeting.

Finance Minister Defends New Budget

91AS1507A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
14 Aug 91 pp 1, 8

[Text] Parliament passed the 16,000 crore taka [Tk] national budget for fiscal 1991-92.

The House passed the budget at 1:40 am (Wednesday) after a marathon late night sitting.

The budget provides for development expenditure of Tk 7,500 crore. The revenue earning is estimated at Tk 8,503 crore.

The House also passed the Appropriations (Vote on Account) Bill, 1991, moved by Finance Minister M. Saifur Rahman.

The budgetary amount comes under the head of 126 demands passed in voice vote.

Finance and Planning Minister Muhammad Saifur Rahman strongly defended the new national budget that he placed before the Parliament two months ago, saying it truly reflected the government's policies and programmes aiming at achieving self-reliance in all fields by accelerating the process of development throughout the country.

He was winding up the general discussion in Parliament on the budget for 1991-92 fiscal year last night. Speaker Abdur Rahman Biswas was in the chair.

During his 85-minute winding-up speech, Mr. Rahman asserted that the BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] Government was determined to put the national economy in order after removing the mess created by the autocratic Ershad regime in long nine years past and lead the nation towards the path of progress by generating internal resources and making the nation less dependent on foreign aid.

He, however, mentioned the time-constraints on the part of the new government for preparing the budget almost in a haste since the BNP returned to power in March after the general elections and in the backdrop of catastrophic cyclone and the economic depression due to the Gulf crisis. Even then, the new government accommodated its policies in the national budget giving a clear sense of direction towards achieving welfare of the nation.

The finance minister following instructions from the Leader of the House and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, who was present in the House, announced exemption of some more items from the Value-Added Tax (VAT) proposed earlier. Finance Minister M. Saifur Rahman said that Valued-Added Tax would be withdrawn from 19 more items under 10 heads in view of the public demand and the directive of the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia. Making this announcement in the Jatiya Sangsad amid thumping of desk by the members of the Treasury Bench, the minister said, bon ruti and similar other bread and mustard oil would be exempted from VAT.

He said there would be no VAT on hand sprayers used for agricultural work, hurricane lamp, fodder, wire nails, spade, frying pan, weighing metal mass (batkhara) huller, tubewell, irrigation pumps and other spares manufactured in the country's foundries.

He said the other items from which VAT has been withdrawn are: wood pencil, plastic utensils and chappal and shoes made of plastic and rubber and pasturised milk processed in the country.

Giving comparative figures the price of essential commodities, he did not agree that there was price hike after the presentation of the new budget and introduction of Valued Added Tax system this year. "Whatever is the rise is due to usual inflationary increase," he remarked.

He strongly supported the introduction of the VAT, which, he said, "is very progressive and uniform tax system" now being practised everywhere in the modern world. He cited the example of Thailand where it was introduced even after Bangladesh and said ultimately other countries of South Asia like India and Pakistan would also have to follow us for introduction of VAT. "It is export-biased and not import-biased tax system," he added.

The Finance Minister said, Bangladesh being a developing country would have to take loans and aids from the donors for its various development purpose as other countries are doing the same. The World Bank and the International monetary fund as recommending bodies would definitely have the supervisory role to see whether the funds provided are used. He said, the government wants to reduce the dependence on foreign aid and tried to reduce dependence at least 14 to 15 per cent during the current fiscal year. Giving broad outline, he said his government would bring down the dependence on foreign aid to 50 percent by 1995.

In this regard he mentioned how the ousted autocratic regime made the country hundred percent dependent on foreign aid for the development programmes.

The finance minister regretted how jute sector was ruined by the ousted regime, but the golden fibre once used to contribute to country's export income. He proposed to set up one parliamentary committee comprising members from all parties to look deep into the jute affairs and recommend ways and means for restoring its lost glory.

He said, there are other sectors like the energy, railways, where losses must be cut down and these organizations would have to be run efficiently for earning profits. By removing the system losses, we can reduce the rate of electricity and go for other big projects like the Jamuna bridge with our own resources, he said.

He sought constructive suggestions and responsible criticism from the Opposition Bench when parliamentary system is going to have a firm root in the country following the historic constitutional amendments passed by the House.

The House was in session till writing this report till zero hour to pass the annual budget for the new fiscal year.

Bangladesh Bank Aware of BCCI Problem in 1988

*91AS1513A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
18 Aug 91 p 1*

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] The Bangladesh Bank withdrew all its deposit money from the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) as early as 1988 when the Central Bank of the country became aware that the BCCI was being used as a conduit for transfer of capital.

The Bangladesh Bank could not take any effective steps which were normal to plug the hole because "the highest authority" in the country intervened, Bank source said on condition of anonymity.

The sources said the Bank could have done nothing to prevent the BCCI activities which were conducted on behalf of the highest office. They did not name Ershad but admitted that the details given by Fairfax officials in a recent information had 'substantial foundation.'

Despite the pressure, the Bangladesh Bank withdrew its deposit money from BCCI only to protect national interest as far as possible, the sources said.

The sources would not say the amount of money which the Central Bank lent to BCCI under normal banking practices.

The U.S.-based investigative firm, Fairfax's Chief Philip Stern recently disclosed in New York that a BCCI branch

in Dhaka "served as the conduit for years for the stream of money that flowed out of the country on ousted President Ershad's behalf."

It may be recalled here that the Fairfax in its initial report to the Bangladesh Government in May last informed that Ershad kept U.S.\$50 million worth of capital certificate in the New York BCCI branch and has got assets worth millions of dollars in Maryland, California and New York.

Fairfax was commissioned by the Bangladesh interim government in December through the Bangladesh Embassy in Washington to find out the secret money Ershad funneled out of Bangladesh and amassed wealth abroad during his nine years of autocratic rule.

According to official sources in Dhaka, Fairfax is yet to submit its final report to the Bangladesh Government though eight months elapsed.

The firm earlier sent its team to Dhaka soon after it was commissioned by the Bangladesh Government for its investigations.

The Fairfax firm, which earned fame for its investigations into India's Bofors arms scandal in which slain Premier Rajiv Gandhi was involved, figured in the just concluded budget session of Parliament for its failure in submitting its report though it was paid 2.5 lakh U.S. dollars for commissioning.

Meanwhile, a number of informants have claimed that the BCCI was also conduit for illegal transfer of capital by a group of big business houses which were also provided with huge amount of loans, running into crores of Taka.

Banking sources suggested that Government, which has now all documents at its disposal, should move fast to recover the loans to repay the genuine depositors.

According to a statement made by the Finance Minister on the floor of the House, BCCI extended loan of about Tk 463 crore till 1989. The Bank is stated to have gone in aggressive banking under which flight of capital accelerated during 1990, sources said.

Supreme Court Orders Kader Siddiqui Release

*91AS1514A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
19 Aug 91 pp 1, 8*

[Text] Kader Siddiqui who was under treatment at the PG [Provincial Government?] Hospital in detention was released yesterday evening following the order for his release issued by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court earlier in the day, reports BSS.

According to the hospital sources, Mr. Siddiqui was admitted there on Thursday last for medical treatment.

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday ordered the release of Mr. Kader Siddiqui.

The verdict was given by the full bench of the Appellate Division after hearing the appeal petition for five days of arguments from 11 August by both the sides.

The acting Chief Justice Mohammad Habibur Rahman was in the chair. Other judges were Justice A.T.M. Afzal, Justice Mustafa Kamal and Justice Latifur Rahman.

Allowing the appeal the court in its judgement said, the detention of Kader Siddiqui was without lawful authority and he is to be released, the court ordered.

Mrs. Nasrin Siddiqui, wife of Kader Siddiqui filed the petition before the Appellate Division against verdict of the High Court Division.

Earlier, a two-judge bench comprising Justice Mohammad Abdul Jalil and Justice Kazi Shafiuddin on 6 March rejected the writ petition on the ground that the detenu was convicted and sentenced to suffer rigorous imprisonment for seven years and with a fine of Taka three lakh, in default, to suffer RI [rigorous imprisonment] for three years.

The conviction was given by the Chairman, Special Martial Law Court No. 1, Ganabhaban, Dhaka, under Regulation 11/9 of the Martial Law Regulation 1975.

Barrister Amir-Ul-Islam and Kazi Shahbuddin, among others appeared for the petitioner while Mr. Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan, Additional Attorney General and Mr. Sharifuddin Chaklader, Assistant Attorney General appeared for the state.

His elder brother Abdul Latif Siddiqui and a large number of Awami League workers and admirers who thronged there in small processions from different parts of the city received him at the hospital gate.

Siddiqui crossed into India following the political changeover on 15 August 1975, and with a group of his followers organised armed resistance against the Bangladesh Government.

Immediately after release, Kader Siddiqui went straight to the Central Shahid Minar and placed wreath there.

Popularly known as Bagha Siddiqui, Abdul Qader Siddiqui returned home 16 December from 15 years of self-exile in India. He was taken into custody on 17 January under the Special Powers Act.

Siddiqui failed to return in the 27 February parliamentary elections contested from his home constituency in Tangail. He was then in Jessore jail.

Parliament Discusses University Problems

*91AS1515A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
12 Aug 91 pp 1, 8*

[Text] The much-awaited discussion on gun-running and violence that gripped the campus and educational institutions throughout the country began in Parliament

rather in a free and fair atmosphere yesterday with a view to finding a solution to the grave problem facing the nation.

Deputy Leader of the House and Education Minister Prof. A.Q.M. Badruddoza Choudhury initiated the general discussion giving a broad outline when opposition Awami League MP [member of Parliament] Tofael Ahmed sought the Treasury bench for the outline.

Prof. Choudhury described the issue of campus violence as a "national problem" and said it is a slur on the face of the whole nation which is watching helplessly the deplorable situation in country's educational institutions one after another. "We are far away from an ideal situation that is required on the campus so that our boys and girls can go for studies," he said and added emphatically "we want to and we will have to finally solve this issue for creating a congenial academic atmosphere."

In this regard he mentioned about his recent visits to Rajshahi University and the Chittagong University to see for himself the situation prevailing on the Campus and said we should not blame the students in general but some teachers and the political parties concerned as well are to be blamed for their direct and active role in instigating such violence on the campus.

"Some teachers are involved even in student politics directly and whenever there were violence, political slogans were raised," he remarked.

The Education Minister said in all four to five student organisations involved in violence and gun-running on the Campus have got direct links with political parties and their leaderships.

He reminded the members of Parliament of their responsibilities in dealing with this delicate situation involving the students with a view to resolving the issue of terrorism and violence with collective efforts particularly at the time when this National Parliament is going to be sovereign and accountable to the nation.

Prof. Choudhury urged all to consider the issue dispassionately to find out the root causes of the gun-running and violence in educational institutions and Campus and help the government weed out the terrorists of which most of them are from outside. "What is the scene everywhere on the campus is nothing but a slur on our face," he said and added Parliament would have to find the solution to these and make the campus free from gun-running and violence.

The Deputy Leader also mentioned the University ordinances which he said have become outdated to cope with the situation in running the universities properly.

He requested all the members who would participate to come out with specific suggestions in which they wanted to resolve the problem by discussing the root causes of the violence on the Campus.

Speaker Abdur Rahman Biswas who was in the chair also made brief statement stressing the need of a violence-free campus and a congenial academic atmosphere for studies by the students.

In all 12 MPs from both the Treasury and the opposition benches took part in the general discussions on the situation on Campus yesterday till the House was adjourned at 6:45 pm. The discussion will continue today when the House resumes at 11 am.

Those who spoke on the issue are Abdur Razzak (Bak-sal), Maulana Matiur Rahman Nizami (Jamaat-e-Islami), retired Lt. Col. Akbar Hossain (BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party]), Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim (AL [Awami League]), Mrs. Farida Rahman (BNP), Maudud Ahmed (Jatiyo Party), Syed Mujibur Bashar (AL), Dr. Abdul Moin Khan (BNP), Enamul Huq (Jamaat-e-Islami), Akhtaruzzaman Choudhury (AL), Rashed Khan Menon (Workers Party) and State Minister Lutfar Rahman Khan.

Bak-sal MP Abdur Razzak was the first to take part in the general discussion and said the government would have to find out the source wherefrom arms are supplied to the students. He also urged the Government to take stern steps against gun-running on the Campus and set up example first by taking action in this regard.

Jamaat parliamentary Group leader Maulana Matiur Rahman Nizami said some political forces influenced their student organizations to dominate the campus and did not show tolerance when Islami Chhatra Shibir, the student front of Jamaat-e-Islami wanted to hold any functions in the University campus. He narrated how democratic values were suppressed on the campus when Shibir students who won landslide victory in the Chit-tagong University student union election were not allowed to hold installation ceremony in 1981.

Maulana Nizami felt that some political guidelines and norms should be followed by all so that democracy can run smoothly for overall development of the country and the nation.

Former BNP Minister retired Lt. Col. Akbar Hossain held the post-Bangladesh period from 1973 responsible for the campus violence after seven students were gunned down at the Mohsin Hall of the Dhaka University.

The Treasury bench member was frank enough to mention how a fellow MP like Aoranga of Awami League who is wanted by police could not be arrested because of political shelter. He also named some of the wanted persons like Liaqat, Hanna, Ovi and Niru who were ousted from an organization have joined another organization in presence of a top political leader who is now Leader of the Opposition.

He said these students should not be blamed because they were derailed under the evil influence of political leaders and were being used to meet their political ends.

Awami League MP Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim said the Government would have to bear the responsibilities for closure of 70 to 80 educational institutions including some universities in the country. He lent his total support so that stern actions should be taken by the Government against those terror elements responsible for violence and gun-running. The role of police is also responsible in this regard, he added.

Jatiya Party parliamentary group leader Maudud Ahmed said the campus violence was reflection of overall socio-economic situation prevailing in the country now.

Mr. Ahmed suggested an immediate meeting of the top leaders of the BNP, AL and the Jamaat-e-Islami—the student fronts of which remain locked in fighting in different institutions for finding permanent solutions.

BNP MP Mr. Abdul Moin Khan recalled his bitter experiences as university teacher and said the eruption of violence on the Campus was reflection of existing socio-economic and political situation in the country. He said how students were misguided and being used by different political parties to meet their selfish ends.

The government alone can't resolve the issue unless other political forces come forward with sincere move to resolve it.

Jamaat MP Enamul Huq who was former Islami Chhatra Shibir President, said the Jamaat and Shibir do not believe in terrorism and did not attack anyone and all the time they were attacked first. He also felt that terrorists should not be given any political shelter by anyone.

Workers Party MP Rashed Khan Menon said a consensus must be reached to resolve this grave issue facing the nation. He held some teachers responsible for getting involved in student politics.

Mr. Menon also mentioned collection of money or extortion of money by students in different city areas as also root causes for campus violence. He put forward some suggestions in this regard.

Fight Against Campus 'Terrorism' Urged

*91AS1509A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
9 Aug 91 pp 1, 8*

[Text] Leaders of the central Five-party Alliance yesterday called upon all political parties to make a joint declaration against terrorism on the educational campus, and make specific statements to the nation through all media, including radio and television, in this regard, reports BSS.

They also called upon the political parties to expel the terrorist elements from their respective parties and stay away from issuing any statement in favour of such elements.

The leaders were addressing a press conference at the JSD [Jatiyo Samajtantrik Dal] office at Bangbandhu Avenue in the city. Five-party leaders Nirmal Sen, Rashed Khan Menon MP [member of Parliament], Bimal Biswas, A.F.M. Mahbubul Haq, Haider Akbar Khan Rono, Khaliquzzaman Bhuiyan, Hasanul Haq Inu, Abdullah Sarkar, Nayeem Jahangir and Fazley Hossain Badsha were present at the press conference.

The leaders said they had also decided to discuss the issue with teachers, students and guardians and added that social movement would be launched against terrorism in the country.

They urged the government to take all necessary measures to stop terrorism in the educational institutions and said the government would be responsible for any failure in this respect.

Calling upon the members of the law enforcing agencies to remain neutral and influence free, the leaders hoped that they would seize all illegal arms and plug all sources of procurement of arms in the greater interest of the nation.

The Five-party leaders observed that terrorism on the campus was related to politics and it stemmed from present socio-economic condition of the country.

They said repeated attempts were made by the autocratic ruler to foil the student movement and tarnish the image of the student community. They said that trend must come to an end and the politicians should initiate a healthy and democratic atmosphere in respect of student politics.

The Five-party leaders also put forward some suggestions which include fulfilment of the 10-point demand of the students, increasing the number of seats in educational institutions and residential halls and ensuring admission and seat distribution on the basis of merit. Filling up of the vacant posts, creating new job opportunities and introduction of unemployment allowance were also suggested.

The leaders also called for engaging the students in voluntary services like mass literacy programmes and ensuring autonomy for the educational institutions.

Speaking about the constitutional amendment switching over to parliamentary system the leaders congratulated the countrymen on the occasion and said one more pledge of the three alliances' declaration had been implemented by it.

They criticised introduction of VAT [value-added tax] system.

Former Government Officials Released From Jail

Former Communication Minister

91AS1506A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 8 Aug 91 p 1

[Text] Former Communication Minister Anwar Hossain Manju was released from Dhaka Central Jail on Wednesday afternoon. After releasing from Dhaka Central Jail Anwar Hossain Manju visited his father's mazar and offered fateha there.

Anwar Hossain Manju was shifted from P.G. Hospital to Dhaka Central Jail on Tuesday night. He was taken to the court where he was granted bail on Wednesday.

Former State Minister

91AS1506B Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 8 Aug 91 p 1

[Text] A Division Bench of the High Court Division Wednesday ordered release of the detenu former State Minister Khaledur Rahman Tito, if he is not wanted in connection with any other case, reports BSS.

The bench comprising Mr. Justice M. Abdul Jalil and Mr. Justice M. Badruzzaman delivered the Judgement on a writ petition filed by Karima Khatun challenging the detention of Mr. Khaledur Rahman Tito.

Mr. Khaledur Rahman was a former State Minister of Ershad regime. He was given detention under the Special Powers Act 1974.

Mr. Moudud Ahmed appeared for the petitioner while Syed J.R. Modasser Hossain, deputy attorney general and Obaidur Rahman Mostafa, assistant attorney general appeared for the state.

Reports on Prosecution of Ershad Continue

Illegal Activities Alleged

91AS1517A Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
12 Aug 91 pp 1, 8

[Text] Former President H.M. Ershad yesterday told the court, trying him in a corruption case, that he would "commit suicide" if he did not get the facilities he enjoyed earlier in jail, reports BSS.

Ershad complained before the Dhaka Divisional Judge's Court that he was not allowed to meet friends and relations and even lawyers and was not getting more than one newspaper. He further alleged that none talked with him in the jail and added that if the situation continued like this "ultimately I will commit suicide."

Ershad who ruled the country with iron hands for nearly nine years was sentenced in May to 10 years rigorous imprisonment for keeping unauthorised arms.

"I will not come to the court, you give me punishment," the former President told the court of Special Judge Mohammad Ali Khan while submitting petition for restoring the facilities.

On accusation that he issued many cheques from jail, Ershad retorted: I'm not a rickshawpuller that nobody will know me. I have no accounts excepting in Rupali Bank.

The Dhaka Central Jail authorities have restricted visitors to see the deposed President and curbed some other facilities since 22 July for violating jail discipline.

Attorney General Aminul Haq told him that suicide is a "crime."

He also informed the Court that a number of persons, maybe not of Mr. Ershad's status, were looking after him in the jail.

Mr. Haq said since the former President had violated the jail code by making clandestine communication and keeping money with him, some facilities were withdrawn for two months. Besides, attempts were also made earlier to encash FDR [expansion not given] money collecting his (Ershad's) signature.

Mr. Haq said he had no hold on the jail administration and it was up to them to do whatever they thought to be proper from security point of view.

The Attorney General said, "I cannot interfere with the jail administration." He, however, assured that he would try to see that Mr. Ershad might meet his lawyers.

Chief Defence Counsel, Serajul Haq, earlier in a prayer, said the lawyers were required to consult Ershad before crossing the witnesses. Since his (Ershad's) account had been frozen, Mr. Ershad, who has about Taka[Tk]80 lakh in "white money," cannot pay his lawyers, the Chief Defence Counsel said.

Attorney General Aminul Haq said the accused had sent out from jail a series of secret letters. He issued 17 cheques including one for Tk 48 lakh that was intercepted by the authorities. A substantial amount of money was found in his possession in jail.

Because of his illegal activities, the administration apprehended the deposed President was trying to destabilise the government, the Attorney General added.

"He (Ershad) has written very sensational letters and resorted to very unpleasant acts. I have appeared before court in many important cases including the Agartala Conspiracy case but never heard the accused acted like him (Ershad)."

On allegations of solitary confinement, he said, the accused had been provided with a jail mate who remains with him from 5 am to 6 pm. The authorities cannot give him a companion of his status.

Earlier, a petition submitted by the defence counsel on behalf of the accused sought permission for regular consultations with his counsels relating to the case, allow visitors including wife and children to meet him, supply newspapers and magazines besides a companion in jail.

Chief defence counsel Advocate Sirajul Haq, moving the petition, said solitary confinement might drive the accused to madness. He should be given the minimum facilities in accordance with the law, Advocate Haq pleaded.

Cross-examination of Shamsheer Alam by Advocate Sirajul Haq went as follows:

Question: Have you opened the trunks during those four days?

Answer: Trunks were mostly opened by Mustafizur Rahman. All members of the committee examined the articles inside while Major Saif did the major part of it.

Question: How many trunks you opened?

Answer: I have opened some.

Question: How much money was in those you opened?

Answer: Tk 10 lakh was found in one.

Question: Was there money in all the trunks or was it in those you opened?

Answer: Money was found in all the trunks.

Question: Have you ever discussed among the committee members the probable owner of the money and how it came there?

Answer: We have not discussed the source of the money.

Question: Have you met Ershad during the period you prepared the inventory?

Answer: Yes, several times.

Question: Did you discuss or enquire about the source of the money with the ex-president?

Answer: No.

Question: Have you ever met Mustafizur Rahman?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Have you ever discussed with him the money or the source of the money?

Answer: No.

Question: You have made him representative of the accused, but why have you not discussed with him?

Answer: We didn't think it necessary.

The prosecution witness replied in the negative to queries if he was aware of Works Ministry's sale of an

abandoned house to Jatiya Party and the price fixed at Tk 1.34 crore, and the party money was lying with its Chairman, Ershad.

Tayabubul Bashar of Rang (car dealers) told the court Ershad imported a Pajero from Japan, duty free, price of which was 3,55,967. Duty-paid price of the vehicle would come to Tk 8.50 lakh.

He agreed with the defence counsel that Ershad was entitled to import car free of duty.

Another prosecution witness, Mohammad Mazhar, arms salesman at Baitul Mukarram, said he provided the prosecution with current price of arms recovered from Ershad.

ABM Nurunnabi, Inspector of Anti-corruption Bureau, deposing in the court, said he only recorded the price of enlisted goods. He had no contribution in fixing the price, he only wrote it.

Another witness, Major S.M. Badiuzzaman, of the Log Area Logistic Department, Dhaka Cantonment, was tendered by the prosecution.

Hearing of the case was adjourned till 13 August.

Connection With BCCI

91AS1517B Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
16 Aug 91 p 1

[Text] New York, 15 Aug—Former Bangladesh President Hossain Mohammad Ershad took millions of dollars from foreigners doing business in his country, then channelled it out via the Bank of Credit and Commerce International, a private investigator hired by the current Bangladesh Government charges, reports Reuter.

“No work, no contract, no sale was concluded in Bangladesh unless something was paid to Ershad or his family,” said Philip Stern, Managing Director of New York-based Fairfax Consultancy, an investigative firm.

Ershad seized power in a 1982 bloodless coup and resigned last December after a stormy opposition campaign.

He is now serving a 10-year jail term in Bangladesh for holding illegal weapons. He also faces trial for having about 600,000 dollars worth of Bangladeshi currency, which the Government said is far beyond his known sources of income.

The Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) was shut down around the world last month by banking regulators and charged with massive fraud. It has also been linked to prominent political figures around the world, the latest being Ershad.

Stern told Reuters in a telephone interview that in Bangladesh a BCCI branch in Dhaka served as the conduit for years for the stream of money that flowed out of the country on Ershad's behalf.

He said the money was paid by well-known U.S. and foreign companies seeking business in Bangladesh but would not name the firms.

The money travelled to accounts in London and Hong Kong, and possibly to offshore banking centres where BCCI operated, Stern said.

“Who controls the money now? We don't know. The accounts are frozen and he (Ershad) may have gotten the money out or part of it out, or it may be there,” Stern said.

He said Ershad's second wife stated the President took 200 million to 300 million dollars out of the country during his rule. Stern's firm represented Mariam Mumtaz in a divorce action in 1989 in New York.

Fairfax, which previously investigated these between Indian Government officials and BCCI, was hired in January 1991 by the Bangladeshi Government to probe Ershad's affairs.

Stern said Fairfax has discussed the case with U.S. authorities and has been asked to appear next month before one of the congressional committees investigating BCCI.

BCCI was shut down by regulators around the world on 5 July and was charged by a New York grand jury on 29 July with orchestrating the biggest bank fraud in history.

The Luxembourg-based Bank, founded by Pakistani Agha Hassan Abedi in 1972, operated in 69 countries. It has been tied to drug money-laundering, arms deals, influence-peddling and bribes.

The bank had four branches in Bangladesh that were frozen on 6 July. Depositors have demonstrated in front of the main branch in Dhaka's Motijheel Commercial District demanding their money back.

Finances Examined

91AS1517C Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English
19 Aug 91 pp 1, 8

[Text] The Dhaka divisional special judge's court was informed yesterday that the former President H.M. Ershad had ordered in January 1988 to stop payment of salary of the people engaged by the President's Secretariat to provide services in the house of Begum Khaleida Zia, wife of late President Ziaur Rahman, reports BSS.

Mr. Mokhlesur Rahman, Accounts Officer at the President's Secretariat, during cross examination said he received the verbal order of the former President through Abdul Hye Sarkar, Deputy Secretary at the secretariat.

Six prosecution witnesses including the two recalled ones were produced before the court which resumed hearing yesterday after four days of recess. Special judge Mr. Mohammad Ali Khan presided over the court trying

former President Ershad on charges of amassing wealth beyond his known sources of income.

Mr. Rahman told the court that the facilities (services of seven employees) enjoyed by Begum Zia were as per standing order prior to August 1975 applicable to former President's family or dependent and became effective during President Zia's time. It was gathered that three former presidents are receiving similar facilities.

The Accounts Officer, during deposition, said Mr. Ershad received Taka [Tk] 5,11,925/40 as presidential salary for 51 months 6 days after his retirement from the armed forces. He said out of that amount, Taka 4,40,000 or 44 months salary (at the rate of Taka 10,000 per month) was donated by the former President to Ershad-nagar Shishu Hospital at Tongi. Being crossed, Mr. Rahman said though he (Ershad) used to live at Senabhaban, he took all the facilities from Bangabhaban free of charge.

Earlier, Mr. Farid Ahmed, Deputy Assistant Controller of Military Accounts, during deposition said the former President till December last year drew Taka 14,45,992/72 as salary and other benefits as army officer since 1973 till his retirement in 1986. Giving a break-up, Mr. Ahmed said Taka 6,19,998 drawn as salary, Taka 1,44,051 as provident fund and Taka 6,81,950 as pension and commutation of pension. He said the retired general was also getting pension at the rate of Taka 3,625 directly till February last year, after which the amount was sent to his bank account.

At the beginning of yesterday's hearing, two bank officers Motaleb Shah and Ayub Ali, who were recalled, gave their deposition. They were also examined by chief defence counsel Serajul Haq.

Mr. Nurul Huda, District Anti-Corruption Officer of Rangpur and Mr. Yar Ali, caretaker of Bangabhaban's toshakhana, submitted their depositions. They were cross examined.

At one stage of the hearing, the chief defence counsel objected to the continuation of the case. Attorney General Aminul Haq said that such objection should have been raised earlier. Judge Mr. Mohammad Ali Khan disallowed the objection of the defence.

A large part of the court's working hours yesterday was used to identify 31 gift items given to the former President by organisations from both home and abroad.

Mr. Yar Ali said the gifts presented at the court were not registered with the toshakhana and were given to the toshakhana by inventory committee member A.T.K. Ismail.

The court rose at 4:05 and was adjourned till 20 August.

Took TK 20 Lakh as TA [Travel Allowances] Advance

Former President H.M. Ershad took advance of over Taka 20 lakh as travel allowances in about five dozen trips he made during his stay in power.

Revealing this information, the Attorney General Mr. Aminul Haq said the former President in 65 trips made to foreign countries took Taka 20,35,890 as travel advances. He added that 43 TA bills were yet to be adjusted.

Talking to newsmen informally after yesterday's hearing, Mr. Aminul Haq said the prosecution has computed cash and wealth of former President to be Taka 2,94,86,765. He, however, pointed out that Mr. Ershad's assets and salary (without deducting any expenditure of his salary) stood at Taka 73,21,527.

The former President is being tried in the Dhaka divisional special judge's court on charge of possessing wealth beyond his known source of income.

The inventory committee formed to take stock of the belongings of his Senabhaban residence after he left the place, found Taka 1,90,81,565 mostly in Taka five hundred denomination notes.

Questions on Property

91AS1517D Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 8 Aug 91 p 10

[Text] More prosecution witnesses were examined in the special tribunal Wednesday in a case against the former President Hussain Muhammad Ershad amassing wealth beyond his known sources of income, reports BSS.

Ten prosecution witnesses were brought before the court with four tendered and bringing the total to 24 in the corruption case. The court comprised Divisional Special Judge of Dhaka Mr. Mohammad Ali Khan.

During the examination by Attorney General Aminul Haq, Lt. Col. (Retd) Nurul Haq, an officer of estate and land in "Rajuk," said the accused got a one-bigha plot of land in 1980 in Gulshan at a cost of over Tk[Taka]five lakh eighty-one thousand.

He said Ershad built a house in 1981 with a plinth area of 2,342 square feet. In mid-1984 he made a gift of this house to his wife, Raushan Ershad and son Shad Ershad. Mutations were also made in their favour.

Cross-examined by defence lawyer Sirajul Haq, Nurul Haq said Ershad was the Chief of Army Staff when he was given the plot. The same year, several bureaucrats got plots measuring two bigha to two bigha and a half, he said.

Mr. Abdur Rashid, Executive Engineer of Mahakhali division, told the court in reply to a question of the Attorney General that Ershad spent Tk 15,33,624 to build the house. It was estimated at the then official rate.

Cross-examined by Mr. Huq, Rashid said he had visited the house along with his departmental colleagues and anti-corruption officer. The value was determined on 16 May 1991. To another query, he said Tk 185 per sq. ft. was the prevalent rate.

Director of Procurement of Telephone and Telegraph Department M.A. Wadud told the court in reply to a question by the Attorney General that he went to Sena Bhaban and found a dish antenna there. He said it would cost around Taka two lakh.

Cross-examined by the defence lawyer, Huq, he said he did not know if it was given by Kuwait crown Prince and if Kuwaiti people installed it. Dish antenna is mostly imported under grants, he said.

The Secretary of the National Tea Company said Ershad bought shares of the company worth Taka 25,000 in 1978. He got over Taka 60,000 as dividend in 1989. The defense lawyer also cross-examined him.

Mr. Shah-Jahan Ali of Family Planning Department said he rented the house of Ershad's mother at a rent of Taka 400 in Rangpur town. She used to take the money as long as she was alive. She maintained an orphanage of 20 people.

Prosecution witness Shamsher Rahman of Public Works Department of Rangpur said the price of the house would be nearly taka 12 lakh. There are two units, each unit having 1,473 square feet.

Four prosecution witnesses were produced in the court one after another, who were declared tendered by the Attorney General. One of them was Abdul Malek, a Senior Section Officer of the Home Ministry.

Attorney General Aminul Huq said he would try to arrange more than one newspaper for Ershad; he is now getting one newspaper replying to a request. Huq said he is undergoing punishment for two months for violating jail code.

The court resumes hearing on 11 August.

PAKISTAN

U.S. Opposition to Nuclear Program Condemned

Bush Stand Questioned

91AS1340A Lahore NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 16 Jul 91
p 11

[Article by Nisar Fatima Zehra: "An Open Letter to President Bush"]

[Text] Pakistan has always been friendly toward a far away country like the United States and has done its best to maintain this friendship. One person, Bashir Shatrian, has played an important role in this friendship. He wrote a letter to President Nixon and was invited to visit the United States because of this letter. The people of

Pakistan considered this invitation an indication of true friendship. There always has been a group of Pakistanis who believe that we automatically make the Soviet Union our enemy by being friendly with the United States and that it hurts us. This argument has its place and so does our friendship. We were hurt in 1971 because of it and lost half of Pakistan. Our friend did not help us and its naval fleet stayed in the ocean and the enemy succeeded in doing what it wanted. However, our true friendship did not alter even after this defeat.

Pakistan's nuclear program has been a thorn in the side of the United States ever since its inception. The United States, which has made nuclear bombs and has stockpiled other murderous weapons, is worried that Pakistan's nuclear energy program might result in such weapons. The United States thinks that it is all right for it to commit any kind of crime. It can occupy Panama, attack Libya, wage war in Vietnam, control the Gulf region, and use Iraqi leaders to destroy Muslims. When did the United States help the oppressed? It went to the Gulf uninvited because of the riches there and its armed forces were on lease there. Now, after the destruction caused by the war, it has received building contracts worth billions. Why didn't these armed forces assist the helpless Kashmiris to get their independence? Doesn't President Bush read about these Kashmiri Muslims in the newspapers? Atrocities and barbaric acts are being committed there. Muslim women are becoming prey to brutal acts of the Hindus. Why should the rich nations be interested in these poor Muslims? If some oil wells were in Sri Nagar, then all the attention would be focused there. Pakistan needs nuclear power because the whole country suffers from power interruptions for eight hours [daily] throughout the year. The roads become dark. Thank God, it happens in Pakistan! In the United States all stores in a city would be looted during such a situation and everyone would act uncivilized. Here, the young, the old, and the sick spend whole nights suffering during the summer. They cannot sleep in the hot weather and surgeries in hospitals are postponed for weeks because of power interruptions.

A poor woman visited me once and told me that her son had been in a hospital for a month and needed heart surgery. The doctors were postponing the operation. I went with her to the hospital and met with the doctor. I learned that all surgeries were suspended because of insufficient electricity. The hospital was installing its own electric generator and they were going to perform surgeries as soon as the generator was installed. In another hospital, patients scheduled for surgeries were being wheeled out of the operation room because the electricity in the operation rooms was not appropriate for this purpose. These surgeries were rescheduled. A patient, who is scheduled for surgery in the morning, spends the night worrying along with his family who follows him to the operation room praying for him. Mr. Bush, only those who experience it can understand it. They have to suffer all over again just because of inadequate electric supply. Numerous students in my

country are adversely affected during examinations because of these power interruptions! They study by candle light. Numerous are the farmers in my country who cannot sow seeds after working so hard in the fields because there is no electricity to run the water pumps! The industrialists in my country are suffering because they cannot get electric power after they build their factories. How can a nation prosper without nuclear power in this era? Does friendship mean stopping friends from meeting their needs and increasing their problems?

Mr. Bush, I am telling you respectfully that friendship is usually based on the principle of equality. If one uses friendship to make another a slave, then it is not friendship. We may be poor and a small country, but we know how to be friends and keep friendship. However, we will be friends on the basis of equality. If you want to be friend with Pakistan, the people of Pakistan will forget their sick and be friends with you. Pakistan will let its fields be barren and be friends with you. It will be friends with you by closing its factories and leaving its unemployed youth lying in the hot sun. It will do its duty as a friend by pushing its roads and cities into the tunnel of darkness. A friend pushes another friend ahead; it does not push it back. Please rethink your decision. India has blasted atomic bombs several times, however, no restrictions are levied on it. Why is Pakistan being subjected to all the restrictions?

The people of Pakistan have decided to turn their deprivations into successes. Our peaceful nuclear program will light up our rural areas and make our fields green and productive. It will enable our factories to run and provide light during the nights so that our students can study hard. It will help the sick to be cured and end unemployment in our country. Why should our friends object to it and what is their objection?

Against Technology in Muslim World

*91AS1340B Lahore NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 29 Jun 91
p 12*

[Analysis by Ziaul Islam Insari: "Atomic Program: Situation Pushing Pakistan to Last Resort"]

[Text] Since the Gulf war, the United States is making sure that no Muslim country in the Middle East obtains destructive nuclear or chemical weapons. These include mid-range ballistic missiles with a range over 300 km. The United States has imposed restrictions on China for providing high technology because of this policy. China has signed some agreements or started deals with Pakistan, Algeria, and Syria for selling such weapons including the Chinese M-11 missiles. Although China has already said that the range of these missiles is only 280 km and they do not fall in the category of mid-range missiles, the United States has objected to the sale of these missiles to Syria and Algeria. The reason for the U.S. objection is clear: Israel could be hit with these missiles and the U.S. Government considers protecting Israel its duty. Israel is an exception to the rule that bans

the supply of destructive weapons to the Middle East nations. This policy should not be applied to Pakistan since its 280- or 300-km-range missiles cannot harm Israel. However, U.S. standards about Pakistan are very different. The objection to the sale of Chinese M-11 missiles to Pakistan is because Pakistan has already made atomic bombs and, according to the information or imagination of U.S. experts, these bombs have the right weight for the M-11 ballistic missiles. Since these bombs are light, the range of these missiles can be increased beyond 300 km bringing some important cities and points in India within their range. There is another assumption that China has already supplied missile launchers to Pakistan. If these are mobile launchers like those Iraq used for launching Scud missiles on Israel and Saudi Arabia, then there is the increased possibility of some very critical regions in India becoming targets. Because the United States wants to protect South Asia from the dangers of war, it opposes the sale of M-11 missiles because of these alleged assumptions.

Against this background the most important news is that West Germany has refused to sell a nuclear power plant to Iran. The deal for this sale was agreed upon between the two nations a long time ago. Iran has already paid some advance money for the \$10 billion electricity plant. It is important to mention here that Iran is one of the countries that has signed the international treaty, known as the NPT [Nonproliferation Treaty], to stop the spread of nuclear weapons. According to this pact, and the sale agreement, this nuclear power plant comes under the safeguards and monitoring of the international nuclear agency. In other words, there was no danger of Iran using the technology associated with this plant for making nuclear weapons.

The news about West Germany's cancellation of this deal with Iran is surprising and points to a very dangerous policy that the United States and its allies will follow in the future. We shall discuss later why West Germany took such an unethical step. It would be better just to limit the discussion to the unfairness toward Pakistan over the nuclear power plant issue. The agreement that was signed between Pakistan and France for the sale of atomic reprocessing plant 16 years ago, and under which Pakistan had already paid \$80 million to France, was cancelled by France because of U.S. pressure in 1976-77. Pakistan was accused of doing research in an area of nuclear technology that can be used for making atomic bombs. The French Government had shown its helplessness against U.S. pressure at that time and cancelled the supply of this plant at a time when its design and some of the parts had already reached Pakistan. One reason for the U.S. pressure and objection was that Pakistan had not signed the NPT agreement and it had required that India should also sign it. They did not want Pakistan to obtain a plant or technology that it could use for enriching uranium and other nuclear elements and then transfer them to a place out of the international nuclear agency's reach. The United States also pressured Canada to stop supplying nuclear fuel to the Kannup

power plant in Karachi. Both France and Canada submitted to this pressure. France backed out of the agreement to sell the atomic reprocessing plant and Canada stopped supplying nuclear fuel for the Kannup power plant. However, the French Government apologized for not fulfilling the conditions of a commercial deal. Later, all Western nations declared under the U.S. pressure that they will not cooperate with Pakistan in the area of nuclear technology. In this context, international tender notices issued by Pakistan for installing a nuclear power plant at Chashma were totally ignored. Pakistan was unable to procure technology and parts for nuclear development because the United States had objected to Pakistan's program in this area.

There are people within Pakistan who believe, and advice was given from abroad, that if Pakistan had opened its atomic program for international inspection and signed the NPT agreement then the hurdles in getting the nuclear technology would have been removed. It would have received nuclear power plants from industrialized nations and the serious problems of electrical shortages would have been solved. The refusal by West Germany to sell that nuclear power plant to Iran shows that Pakistan would not have received the permission to buy a nuclear plant even if it had become "a good boy" in the eyes of the United States, accepted all its conditions, signed the agreement for the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons, and abandoned its whole nuclear program by locking the research facilities in Kahuta. There is no Kahuta in Iran and it has also signed the NPT. Still, a nation like West Germany retracted from the agreement to sell nuclear power plant to Iran.

It was the United States that had pressured West Germany for it, however, the main reason for this pressure was Israel, which after destroying the military power of Iraq is making Iran the target of its hatred campaign. One proof of Israel's involvement is that it has placed order for two nuclear submarines with West Germany and has already paid \$500 million for these. In other words, it has tried to make good West Germany's loss incurred due to the cancellation of the Iranian deal with this order. However, it will be Iran that will lose. The same thing had happened to Pakistan. The money that Pakistan had paid for the reprocessing plant to France is still with France, which should also pay interest on it for the last 16 years. However, nothing has been done so far. Instead, the French president offered to sell a 900-MW power plant to Pakistan during the time of Benazir Bhutto's government. An agreement was also signed for this deal but France is breaking this agreement, too. Now, after West Germany cancelled the Iranian deal, it is obvious that France would not fulfill its agreement.

The present state of affairs clearly indicates that Israel, the U.S. choice to become the boss in this region of Asia and Africa, has not limited its sphere of interest to the Middle East. It has crossed the Persian Gulf and has started to interfere in Iran's affairs.

Meanwhile, it was learned that Israeli commandos were present in Kashmir dressed as tourists and some Israeli officials visiting India and also Israel's consul in Bombay have announced that India and Israel need to establish closer and more cooperative relations. The way the Israeli deputy minister indicated how effective such an action can be, clearly points towards Israel's designs to include Pakistan under its regional leadership.

Pakistan has to decide on a clear position on its nuclear program. It is true that Pakistan is technically unable to carry out a subterranean nuclear blast, the kind that India carried out in 1974. Even if Pakistan could do this, India and Israel will find out about such a blast and either of these two countries can interfere in such a situation. However, Pakistan can announce that it has developed capability for an atomic blast. Such an announcement would simply mean officially confirming the allegations of the U.S. experts about Pakistan having atomic bombs.

On the surface such an action would be considered dangerous and the United States will openly oppose Pakistan and will try to use its pressure, which is limited to suspending U.S. aid to Pakistan now, to force all Western countries to stop helping Pakistan. However, this has already begun. The Iranian-West German affair points to this trend. Such a development will benefit Pakistan because the U.S. Congress has already imposed the Pressler Amendment on India demanding that materials for producing nuclear bombs should not be increased.

The pro-India Congressman, Stephen Solaraz, had said in his speech during the proceedings on U.S. aid to Pakistan, "This is the best and the last opportunity to stop Pakistan from becoming a nuclear power. We (the United States) should not miss this opportunity and must take advantage of it."

Similarly, Pakistan also has the best and the last opportunity to attain capability to use its nuclear technology for defensive purposes and declare its right to become a nuclear power. Of course, there are many dangers and risks in it. However, nations should be prepared to make sacrifices for their existence and pride. As for depriving Pakistan of this capability, it does not matter since the powerful nations have already made decisions about it and will implement them now or in two years. However, the opportunity that exists for Pakistan to get out of this trap now will not exist in two years. This is the right time for making the right decision and the situation is pushing Pakistan to make it now.

Uniting Against U.S. Pressure

91AS1340C Karachi AMN in Urdu 21 Jul 91 p 6

[News Report: "Political Parties Should Unite To Counter U.S. Pressure on Nuclear Program"]

[Text] Karachi, 20 July (Staff Reporter)—Mr. Agha Poya, secretary for information for the Islami Jamhoori

Ittehad (IJI), met today with Ilama Shah Ahmed Noorani, president of Jamiat-i Ulema-i Pakistan (JUP). Mr. Shah Faridul Haq, JUP's senior vice president, and several other leaders were present there at that time. Both leaders agreed that Pakistan's peaceful nuclear program was essential for the nation's existence and safety. They suggested that all political parties should unite to counter the U.S. pressure because it is not possible for one political party to do it by itself. They said that the United States hated Islam and Pakistan and was busy in conspiring against all Islamic countries. Turkey had ignored its Islamic identity and supported the allied forces during the Gulf war. Now, the United States is demanding that Turkey reduce its military forces. Similarly, Syria has also submitted to the U.S. pressure and has agreed to participate in talks with Israel. Mr. Poya said that Mr. Nawaz Sharif was pushing the country toward forming a confederation because of his undemocratic actions. Maulana Noorani expressed concern over the present economic condition of the country and said that the present government was destroying the economy under the pretext of privatization.

Pir Pagara Said Ready To Align With Bhutto

91AS1571A Karachi DAWN in English 5 Sep 91 p 6

[Article by Shaheen Sehba: "Significant Change in Sindh Likely"]

[Text] Islamabad, 3 September: A significant change in the political scenario of Sindh may be in prospect with the hint dropped by Jam Sadiq Ali's closest and hitherto dependable ally, Pir Sahib of Pagara, the influential Senator from the interior of Sindh, that he may cooperate, though conditionally, with Ms. Benazir Bhutto and her Opposition allies.

The Pir, now pitched in Punjab until what he calls the "Qul ceremony" of the present IJI [Islamic Democratic Alliance] Government, recently met a delegation of close Benazir aides and advised them to change their political strategy if they wanted his cooperation. He told them, and later made the advice public as well, that the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] should pick one of the two prime targets—either the President or the Prime Minister—and he was with them if they picked the latter.

Pir Sahib's advice, according to his close circles, was taken by the PPP team with a pinch of salt but they could not brush aside the argument that if the Prime Minister fell, they would not need any extra effort to neutralise the President. Hard thinking must now be going on in the PPP high command to re-formulate their strategy as support of Pir Pagara could turn out to be crucial for the hard-pressed Bhutto ladies and the jailed Mr. Asif Ali Zardari.

But for Sindh, this "grand alliance" between the Pir and the PPP could mean a world of change. Pir Sahib has been the main pillar of strength for Jam Sadiq Ali whose loose coalition government could suffer a severe setback

if Pir Sahib withdrew his men. Even personally, Jam Sadiq Ali has been provided a strong contingent of Hurs to ensure his security and the Jam is known to depend on these volunteers more than his official agencies or Irfan Marwat's police.

Pir Sahib has also been advising the third centre of feudal power in Sindh, the House of Hala, to maintain a low profile as a supporter of the Nawaz Sharif Government. So while Makhdoom Amin Faheem has been openly declaring his support for Jam Sadiq Ali, he seems still undecided on whether or not to join the expanded cabinet of Mr. Nawaz Sharif. It was apparently his reluctance that occasioned the postponement of cabinet expansion on 31 August—a date which almost everybody in Islamabad had been told would see new faces in the cabinet.

With the ball now in Ms. Benazir Bhutto's court, Jam Sadiq Ali would be a worried man because if the PPP agreed to Pir Sahib's terms and called off its tirade against the President, there may be a flurry of initiatives by the combined Pir-PPP alliance to attack the Government.

One dimension of this renewed onslaught could be the taking over of the Muslim League by the Pir himself. He has been repeatedly saying that his was the only genuine PML [Pakistan Muslim League] and that he did not recognise Mr. Nawaz Sharif as even an ordinary member of the PML. The Junejo PML, he declares as "paralysed" and informed PML circles know that Mr. Junejo would never challenge the Pir's leadership. The only question is of the timing, when Pir Pagara announces that his PML had become "functional."

Pir Sahib says he already has the support of most of the old and genuine PML leaders including Malik Mohammad Qasim, Iqbal Ahmed Khan, Mian Zahid Sarfraz, Fida Mohammad Khan of NWFP [North-West Frontier Province], Mohammad Hussain Chattha of Punjab, and even Mr. Junejo. "Whenever the Muslim Leaguers are thrown out of power or face a crisis, they come to me. It happened during the PNA [Pakistan National Alliance] days, it happened when Mr. Junejo's government was dismissed and it will happen again."

The PPP, on its part, has already embarked on an agitational course, capitalising on the woes of hundreds of thousands of families that have been hit by the Cooperative Societies scandal, mainly in Punjab. Its plan to step up demonstrations against the Government and bring lakhs of people to the Parliament House in Islamabad, is fraught with serious consequences for the Government. If Ms. Benazir Bhutto succeeds in ensuring a massive turn-out, it will certainly be a blow to the Government's prestige.

But before joining hands with Pir Sahib, it is obvious that Ms. Bhutto would specify her own conditions which she would expect Pir Sahib to meet. And first among these would be the treatment she, her family and her party is getting at the hands of Jam Sadiq Ali in Sindh.

Any rolling back of Jam Sadiq's offensive against the PPP would mean so many things. Firstly, it appears almost impossible for Jam Sahib to undo what he has already done. He is so deeply committed against the PPP that he has not left himself with any opportunity to back track. For him to accept any such pressure from Pir Pagara would mean allowing his coalition to break up. For PPP that would be the first major success.

Secondly, if Jam Sadiq Ali, with all his skills in political jugglery, succeeds in keeping his government intact while at the same time easing the pressure on the PPP, it would mean washing off a lot of dirt that he has been throwing at the Benazir Bhutto Government. Where would the cases against PPP stand? What happens to the referendums? What about the Unnar case and Mr. Asif Ali Zardari's detention and trial?

But the key question that would decide the whole issue would be what happens to the MQM [Mohajir Qaumi Movement]. Jam Sadiq Ali, without the backing and physical protection of Pir Pagara, would stand exposed to his enemies and he would not like to become a hostage in the hands of the MQM. If Pir Sahib, the PPP and the House of Makhdooms all go in one direction, Jam Sadiq will have little choice left except to fall in line or quit his office.

The MQM, as things stand today, is isolating itself from all the centres of real power. The Jamaat Islami-Nawaz Sharif patch-up is not in their interest and Government insiders are already worried about the implications of MQM ending its political alliance with IJI. Sources say the Interior Minister, Choudhry-Shujaat Hussain, who recently negotiated with MQM leaders, was not very happy with the scenario presented to him by some MQM hardliners, who threw light upon their party's capacity to immobilise Sindh and some of the rest of the country.

Likewise the row over the detention of some army officers during the Landhi disturbances between MQM dissidents and its supporters and the failure of the authorities to nab the culprits, have not been liked by the men in khaki. They want the MQM minister and the MNA [Member of National Assembly] who disarmed the army officers and his men. This is fast becoming a sore point between Jam Sadiq Ali and the army authorities.

Thus a Pir-PPP alliance, which de-stabilises Jam Sadiq Ali, would emerge as a potent threat for the MQM, and Mr. Altaf Husain will have to look up to the Government in Islamabad to come to his rescue. Islamabad only has one way to control a province if the elected government is not stable. It can impose Governor's rule and that can be done only with the consent of the President. If a Governor of the President's choice is appointed, the political government at the Centre can hardly keep him under its discipline.

PPP insiders have already started whispering about a ceasefire between the PPP and the President if the initiative came from the President's House because, PPP

high-ups claim, "Benazir Bhutto had tried once and adopted a soft line but that had not worked."

This initiative could be in any form or shape and one likely move could be the despatch of Jam Sadiq's Adviser, Mr. Irfanullah Marwat, on a long holiday, as a preliminary to his withdrawal from the scene.

Sindhi Leader Wants Independent Sindh

Autonomy Requested

91AS1391A Karachi AMN in Urdu 28 Jul 91 pp 1, 6

[News Report: "Autonomy or Permission To Form Confederation With India for Sindh Requested"]

[Text] New Delhi, 27 July (AMN News)—Mr. G. M. Syed, founder and president of the Jiye Sindh Movement, said that Sindh should either be given independence or the permission to form a confederation with India. He said in an interview that the Sindhis were treated in their own state like the Red Indians. He said that the only solution to Sindh's problems was secession, because the Punjabis did not want the Sindhis to live in freedom. The state government did not do much for the welfare of the state. Commenting on the lawlessness in Sindh, G.M. Syed said that there was a similar situation in Punjab and other regions. However, Punjabi officials were trying to give the impression that only Sindh had this problem. He further said there was a conspiracy to obliterate all Sindhis. He said he supported Jam-i Sadiq's government, and accused his former disciples of a conspiracy to remove Jam-i Sadiq's government and pave the way for another martial law government.

Freedom From Military Rule

91AS1391B Karachi AMN in Urdu 27 Jul 91 pp 1, 6

[News Report: "Pakistan's Break Up and Sindh's Autonomy Can Result in Peace—G.M. Syed"]

[Text] Karachi, 26 July (Report by Ahmed Sayyed Salim)—Mr. G.M. Syed, veteran Sindhi political leader, said here today that the only solution to all the problems in Sindh and the only way to establish peace there was to break up Pakistan and to free Sindh. He said that the only alternative to Jam-i Sadiq was military or PPP [Pakistan People's Party] rule. "We will help neither the military nor the PPP. We will just support Jam-i Sadiq, because both the military and the PPP want us to stay in Pakistan, and we are against it." Mr G.M. Syed talked to the AMN correspondent last evening at Hyder Manzil. He said that the establishment of Pakistan was a big mistake, and that he did not want to commit another sin by making Pakistan strong. "Sindh is passing through the worst period in its history, and the only way to improve

the situation in Sindh is to break up Pakistan and establish Sindh Desh. I will use all my energy to attain this goal." He said that if Jam-i Sadiq is removed from Sindh's chief ministership, then either the armed forces or the PPP would take control there. He said he would help neither, because both supported Pakistan, while he wished to break it up. "That is why I am forced to support Jam-i Sadiq, even though Jam-i Sadiq himself is helpless, because all government affairs are being run by the military." He said that journalists have been asking him repeatedly about the twelfth amendment to the Constitution. "However, I just do not recognize Pakistan's Constitution. How could I comment on the twelfth amendment? I have no interest in Pakistan, because Pakistan is responsible for all the ills and problems here. The sooner it breaks up, the faster the problems will disappear. We cannot cooperate with any power that wants to strengthen Pakistan. The PPP is such an organization. It is very upset, because it has been dismissed from the government. I do not believe in the politics of coalitions to get into power. The kind of activities in which some Sindhi politicians are involved in order to make the government happy and to receive military help are all detrimental to Sindh. These politicians are not interested in Sindh's progress, welfare, and independence. All of them are thieves and dacoits." In answer to a question, he said that he did not help Jam-i Sadiq come to power, and that Jam-i Sadiq became chief minister with the help of the army. He further said that he was neither friend nor enemy of Nawaz Sharif, because he was also helpless under the government's rule by the military.

Sindhi newspapers—He further said that Sindh's government has promised him that it would free about 250 of his disciples by 1 August. He was waiting to see if this promise would be kept. In answer to another question, he criticized Sindhi newspapers and said that all Sindhi newspapers were against him. He said that these newspapers published color photographs of political actors and put his photograph on the other side in order to ridicule him.

Editorial Views Official's Role in Heroin Trade

91AS1393A Peshawar MASHRIQ in Urdu 26 Jul 91 p 4

[Editorial: "Another Heroin Trade Scandal"]

[Text] We have written repeatedly in these columns how the production of heroin, its sale within the country, and its export are very well-organized and protected. Worrisome news items related to this blight have also been published in the newspapers. A major scandal has been exposed recently, which shows us how many mysterious and invisible hands are involved in this worrisome business. The details of this scandal go like this. In October 1990, huge quantities of chemicals used in preparing heroin arrived at Karachi port in a foreign vessel. These chemicals were stored in a locked container. It was confiscated after a search and was moved to a very secure place in the port where it was guarded around the clock. On 12 May of this year, it was discovered that the locks of this container were broken and five tons of chemicals out of the total of 19 tons were missing. The International Narcotics Board also sent a team of its senior officials to investigate this worrisome incident, which indicates how closely the whole world views such incidents in Pakistan. This is extremely disturbing news that a huge quantity of chemicals was stolen from a secure place in a famous port like Karachi, especially when it was under guard 24 hours a day. It is clear that this is not the work of minor employees in the port; the hands of some important people are involved. A joint team of personnel from the International Narcotics Board and FIA [Federal Investigation Agency] has been established to investigate this mysterious break in. Interpol [International Criminal Police Organization] and the International Narcotics Board has extended additional help. High-ranking port and customs officials have already investigated this incident. It appears to be a fact that a gang of heroin smugglers, active both in Pakistan's tribal areas and abroad, is involved in this mysterious and well-organized theft. According to one report, the FIA has arrested three employees of Karachi port. These three have admitted to the involvement of 10 additional employees. Custom officials responsible for direct security of these chemicals are also being questioned. This theft would not have been possible without their cooperation and involvement.

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