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Extending the emergency law is a sign that the government will further undermine freedoms. This will obstruct the legitimate channels before political action. This will make citizens feel more frustration and isolation from public action. It will also open the door to sedition, sectarianism, extremism, and the spread of violence and counterviolence. Undoubtedly, all of this will weaken the Egyptian people's ability to confront outside challenges and dangers posed to our country and the Arab world in these crucial, historic moments.

The opposition party leaders assert that the imposition of the emergency law during this time has turned this law which, naturally, is an extraordinary law, from an exception to a rule. This constitutes a flagrant violation of the Constitution and law, and also casts doubt on the government's legitimacy. The opposition party leaders hold President Muhammad Husni Mubarak responsible for the grave consequences resulting from the continued imposition of martial law.

According to the Constitution, the president is responsible for emphasizing the people's sovereignty and respect for the law and the Constitution. In addition, according to the Constitution, the president assumes the executive authority and draws the state's general policy with the participation of the Council of Ministers.

Out of a realization of their responsibility before the people, the opposition party leaders declare their resistance, through all legitimate ways, to the continuation of martial law. Out of their feeling of the need for positive action, the opposition party leaders held a series of meetings last week to define measures to expose the government's behavior before the people. In this regard, a decision was made to suspend publication of the opposition newspapers, a day for each newspaper in turn. The papers abided by this decision.

A decision was also made that the opposition representatives would withdraw from the People's Assembly and the Consultative Council during some sessions. This decision was implemented during the Consultative Council's meeting last Saturday.

To reveal all facts to the people, the opposition party leaders decided to hold a popular conference to declare the demands and the integrated steps that will increase action against the continuation of the state of emergency. Similar conferences will be held in all governorates, and will be attended by the parties and some political and popular leaders.

Out of their confidence in the masses' awareness and out of their feeling of the popular rejection of the state of emergency, the opposition parties declare their determination to continue mobilizing public opinion until the people's struggle is crowned by cancelling the state of emergency and the extraordinary conditions, and also by conducting constitutional reforms so that a normal life will return to the country.

Violence Continues in Asyut; 60 Arrested

*JN041135 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic
1 Apr 88 p 1*

[By Fikriyah Ahmad]

[Text] Asyut—Acts of violence continued in Asyut yesterday for the 3d consecutive day. The security forces held the families of the extremist groups in Dayrut and Sallam as hostages. The State Security Intelligence also arrested 60 students and conducted large-scale search campaigns of houses to apprehend the leaders of the extremist groups. The Central Security Forces also imposed a military siege with cars around Dayrut and nearby villages and prevented the citizens from going to work.

The family of Muhammad Qutub 'Abd al-Majid, a student killed by the security forces, attempted to disinter his body in order to hold another funeral for him after they had buried him on their own and the security forces had prevented the people from participating in his funeral. Stringent security measures were imposed on Dayrut.

The health of 'Ali 'Abd al-Rahim 'Ali, a student who sustained serious chest wounds during Tuesday's bloody incidents between the security forces on the one hand, and the extremist groups and Dayrut people on the other, has deteriorated. He has not yet left the resuscitation room at Asyut's public hospital.

In a statement released the day before yesterday, Dr Ahmad 'Abduh, leader of the religious group in Asyut, warned of the seriousness of provocations against the Islamic trend in Egypt. He held the Interior Ministry responsible for the escalation of bloody incidents and stressed that they will lead to more tension.

The situation exacerbated when the security forces used tear gas and opened fire on the religious groups and on Dayrut people who staged a peaceful march to condemn the security organs' encroachments and violation of Islamic law.

Libya

Al-Qadhafi Speech to Joint Commission

*LD051013 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic
2042 GMT 4 Apr 88*

[Speech by Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi at the 4 April session of the joint higher Libyan-Tunisian commission in Tripoli—recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, we would like warmly to welcome our brothers from sisterly Tunisia. We are proud and happy about their presence here with us and the honor they do us by visiting their second country. This is the third meeting of the joint higher commission which encompasses the Council of Ministers of Tunisia

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and the General People's Committee [GPC] of Libya. This unionist activity began in 1983. It was delayed somewhat; now it is being resumed anew in the era of the new Tunisia and the era of 7 November.

If we appreciate the political value of this activity we will no doubt work to safeguard it. This is because it leads to unity in a very normal and calm manner. Those who do not appreciate the value of this activity are mistaken because the nation in fact is compelled to unify its ranks and capabilities, not for sentimental reasons—I mean that Arab unity is not a mere sentimental action but a necessity, particularly during this era. Hence, any means to bring about Arab unity—and we would prefer this to be in a calm and peaceful manner—should not be compromised. This is because any attempt to bar the way of unity will lead to violent reaction.

For this reason the reactionary and regionalistic regimes in the Arab homeland, just as in other nations that have struggled for their unity, are being subjected to violent upheavals because their regionalism bars the way to Arab unity. It is short-sightedness to view Arab unity as the current regimes in some Arab countries do. Arab unity is the future. Nobody has the right to veto the future of the generations of the Arab nation.

At this stage the masses have become aware and they refuse to allow themselves to be transformed into a herd on a farm with boundaries and shepherds. Those who want to immortalize themselves and remain rulers for life, crowned or uncrowned as well as sultans, are the ones who are trying to transform the people of the Arab nations into herds of sheep on farms which they own to the extent that they leave these farms to their sons generation after generation. The Arab masses have now become aware and refuse to be flocks of sheep on farms privately owned by rulers, kings, or sultans. Those who desired this have been swept away by the current. They are now in museums and the garbage cans of history.

But we should not be too meticulous with regard to unionist action or confine it to tight corners and say that this particular format is the only one that will lead to unity. There are many paths to unity. I believe that we have embarked on the easiest one of them all—with this calm, peaceful, and fraternal meeting. Let us try this path. But at the same time we must realize that we are not the only people who decide the fate of Arab unity. If we fail there are others who do not want to fail. If we bar the way of unionist action, there are people who will storm the blocked path by every means available. We exercise our pan-Arab and national duties only as long as we are in these positions and use them as soldiers fighting for this nation's unity and for gathering together its capabilities and dispersed people.

It is wrong to imagine otherwise—it is wrong to think we will decide the fate of the Libyan and Tunisian people as well as Arab people everywhere. It is wrong to imagine that if we say no, unity will not be achieved. No; we may

say no, but unity will be achieved through the work of others. The sincere person among us is the person who uses the responsible position he now occupies to bring closer the day of Arab unity. He should realize that he is only participating in this as a soldier and that he does not hold in his hands the final word and judgment on the fate of unity. Since the first day of the Al-Fatih revolution we have been making sincere efforts to bring nearer the day or Arab unity. Serious attempts have been made; we have tried all means. It may be said that unity has failed. But I believe that these experiments have taught us useful lessons and brought nearer the day of Arab unity. These experiments have become a legacy for the unionist struggle which cannot be taken lightly.

One of the means of achieving unity that the experiments have shown is the one we have in our hands—that is to say, executive establishments in the Arab countries, such as we now have between Tunisia and Libya, can begin by holding joint meetings. When they meet they set up a joint higher commission which looks into the affairs of both countries as if the two were one country. This is the executive. Therefore it is possible for us gradually to unify everything between the two Arab countries. After that we find that unity has been achieved in the form of the executive and in a practical, peaceful, and gradual manner.

Naturally this does not preclude other steps to achieve unity. [words indistinct] which we are not aware of, but we have before us some work whose political value should be appreciated and respected. It is a civilizing activity. It proves the ability of the Arabs, that they can advance toward unity in a peaceful and practical manner.

The Arabs have only one way of achieving unity and agreeing among themselves, and that is to reject violent action, noisy action, disarray, the closing of borders, and so on. I believe that the means we have in our hands now deserves respect, and it will gain the respect of others because it proves that we can achieve unity in a reasonable and peaceful manner.

It is said that Europe, with its basic differences and its various nationalities, languages, and nations—nations that fought each other for scores of years—in spite of all this, established the EEC, which will be turned into a politically unified Europe. This action is described as a civilizing action because these nations are civilized. I see the Arab nation is not lacking anything. It can do even better than this.

If Europe with all its resources—each state has an income greater than the entire Arab nation—has been compelled to establish economic and political unity, the Arabs have all the more reason to work night and day to establish unity. In our eyes, unity is not an emotional action or a slogan. Unity is a necessity for the gathering of economic resources in this day and age. Economic

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resources need protection, and protection leads to military unity. If someone creates economic unity and protects it with military unity it takes political action, and this leads to political unity.

This is the essence of unity. Naturally, the regionalists, the reactionaries and those who want to control one of the groups of Arab people as a herd of sheep, and have their children inherit their rule after them, are the ones who are putting a broomstick in the wheels. It is they who cast doubt on Arab unity not because Arab unity is open to doubt but, for reasons of family, individual, or self-interest, they feel Arab unity must not come about. Consequently every regionalist and isolationist ruler continually spreads doubts about establishing Arab unity.

We do not expect him to be an optimist in this respect; because it is not in the interest of his family, or against him personally. The one who is optimistic about the future of the Arab nation and who affirms that its unity is possible, and that it will emerge, is the Arab citizen who knows that this is possible and necessary.

Thus when he hear the voice of the masses anywhere we should realize that this is the correct thing—the correct thing is what the masses say; they are the ones who are entitled to the future and who have the right. When the flock rebels there will no longer be a ruler or a shepherd. There is nobody who is supposed to own a flock without actually having a flock; a shepherd of what? If the flock rebels then that is it, there will be no shepherd. The final word will always be that of the ordinary citizen. In actual fact the governments and the official organs which belong to these governments are the ones which establish the border posts, the borders, the passports.

As for the citizen, he is always rebelling against that. We call him an infiltrator or someone who has fled and we arrest him. This is proof that citizens do not recognize borders and that it is in his own interest to have Arab unity, and that he is motivated to move freely inside the one Arab homeland, but the rulers themselves are in a struggle against this citizen, the citizen is rebelling against borders; he does not recognize them.

Evidence of this can be found in the fact that this infiltration phenomenon, or what is called infiltration from one country to another, is in actual fact an expression of these ideas. [Al-Qadhdhafi turns to some of the delegates who wish to smoke]: Anybody who wishes to smoke can do so; there is no objection; smoking is not prohibited; it is allowed. At the first and second meetings between the Tunisian Council of Ministers and the GPC in Libya I told them, as I remembered some things from history, that some time ago delegations from Barqah and Tripoli used to sit down together. When each delegation spoke, they referred to Barqah as sister Barqah and to sister Tripoli. Then the independence of Barqah was declared.

When independence was declared, they said: God willing, sister Tripoli will join us too. That was a joke in Libya; we laughed at it then, and we laugh at it today. This has become a myth. When you tell it to the Libyans today, they do not believe that at one time there was a delegation who used to say sister Tripoli or sister Barqah. Libyans may be astonished to hear it and they do not believe it. They say: Could there be such a thing? Now that has become a joke for us. I told them that in time people would laugh at the fact that we used to meet, one representing Tunisia and one representing Libya, and we would both say sister Tunisia and sister Libya; I mean it is possible that a future generation living on this united land may laugh at this which will become a myth.

I mean, how were we brothers? We are one people. In actual fact, what is a laughing matter today was a myth even when it happened. I mean it was not permissible for Libya to have been what it was—divided; with calling Barqah as a sister and Tripoli as a sister. When Idris al-Sanussi said that in Banghazi—when he declared the independence of Barqah and said that, God willing, sister Tripoli will join us too—the people, who were applauding him threw their shoes and footwear at him; they hit him with their shoes. He fled the celebrations and entered the building which used to belong to the British authorities—the building where he stood outside and made that speech—the premises of the Chamber of Deputies in Banghazi. The people hit him with their shoes. They asked: What is meant by sister Tripoli? He as a ruler said sister Tripoli. Those who made this sister and that sister and this country and that state or that kingdom were the rulers themselves. But the people wish to hit with their shoes those who give such names—like they did with Idris al-Sanussi. They actually hit him.

The 1st of September could have been influenced by that incident—I mean at the end he was hit. This action was a cultural action and should be a political legacy to the respected and honored. This makes us confident that this nation is one and that this people is one. There is no parallel in the world to what is taking place; a whole state government going to another state in order to meet within a joint commission. When the GPC in Libya go to Tunisia and meet with the Council of Ministers, and today the Tunisian Council of Ministers have come to Tripoli—I mean there is a spirit behind all this which makes it acceptable.

The GPC in Libya is not permitted to go to France and meet. Equally, the Tunisian Council of Ministers is not permitted to go to Italy or France to hold meetings, to carry out joint action. This is not permitted. Psychologically it is not acceptable. You will reject it even if politicians say that you should go; you will reject that. Why? It is because we are Arabs; one people, one homeland. We meet here. Why? Because we see nothing odd in that we are one people from one homeland. In fact we see this as a necessity. I want to say in actual fact: In this hall the GPC of Libya met with the Algerian Council of Ministers and set up a joint commission. They also met in Algeria after that.

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The YAR Council of Ministers came here to this hall and met with the GPC and established a higher joint commission. The GPC will go to Sanaa at a specified date. We, in Tunisia and Libya, are holding the third meeting. My presence here today with you—I mean in actual fact that I have no political or administrative authority, but my presence is due to the fact that your action is a unionist, pan-Arab and revolutionary action—this action falls within the revolutionary tasks which concern me. Thus, I am attending this meeting and this opening because this is a unionist action.

What I would like to say is that when you meet, whether in Tunisia or Libya, we should forget that we come from Tunisia or from Libya; we are a unified higher commission which looks into the issues of the two countries. It is within the right of the Tunisian Council of Ministers to discuss and give the benefit of their advice on issues concerning the Libyan compatriot in any municipality in Libya. Likewise, the GPC in Libya can look into the affairs of our brothers in Tunisia in any province—Tunisia has a provincial administrative system—I mean to look into the affairs of compatriots in any province in Tunisia and in a joint manner. By this I mean that both of you look into what the Banghazi municipality needs and what the Kairouane municipality needs, for example. This is what we wish.

This is what we want. This is the philosophy and the spirit of this meeting. We do not like it to be two delegations, one representing the Tunisian side and the other the Libyan side. No, we want it to be in a joint form which does not say Tunisia and Libya. We should be together. We want to tackle things municipality by municipality, governorate by governorate. We should have confidence in ourselves and in our joint action and joint possibilities. It should be clear to you that this has been our intention since the outbreak of the revolution.

Consequently, all attempts to oppose and confuse our actions or to evade or annul them have failed. It is, however, the unionist action and unionist platform which has endured and has remained. It will triumph even after we have gone. This action will triumph. It is because this correct direction is the one that will triumph.

Do not attempt to run away from facts. Arab unity is a fact. Attempts will fail. They are futile attempts. The truth is Arab unity. Arab unity is a fact and it is a necessity. For example, that the two countries of Tunisia and Libya should pool their resources in the interests of the citizens is a fact and a necessity. To hamper or water it down or to run away from it is a conspiracy and, really, a futile action really. Its authors will fail.

Its authors have fallen, in actual fact. The regionalist course, the conspiratorial course, and the course of hypocrisy have all fallen. They will always fall and will fail. Only the sincere and united supporters, those who work for others and forget themselves, are the ones who

will triumph, not those who think about becoming a president or who think about becoming a king or sultan. They do not think about how to bring about unity, liberation, or dignity. They contradict one another.

I consider 7 November to be a victory for the revolutionary course, the unionist course, the civilized course. It is a defeat for regionalism and for withdrawing to oneself, conspiring, subservience. In fact, 7 November was an inevitable result of the Arab unity crisis, the crisis of relations between the Arab people in Tunisia and the Arab people in Libya. It was inevitable; 7 November was the inevitable result, because falsification cannot remain law.

The natural truth is law. This is a lesson; 7 November gives a lesson to others. Falsification, no matter how long it lasts, will fail. It leaves nothing behind except disgrace and dishonor. Regionalism! What can it leave behind? What can falsification leave behind? Subservience! What can it leave behind? What can negligence leave behind and what would treason leave behind? They leave behind disgrace and dishonor, and their authors will end up in the garbage can of history. But civilizing action and unionist action, a struggle for higher ideals and for others will bear the fruits and prosperity.

I would like that this work should compensate for what has gone astray. The two sides should respect it; its continuation lies in its success. If it produces results for the citizens of the two countries and we feel that there is some benefit from it, then it should impose itself on us. We will not be late for the next appointments. This is what must be. The citizens of our two countries and the governments and institutions of our two countries should feel that this work is for their benefit. Consequently, it should not be late in forthcoming. The atmosphere calls for its continuation. We must gradually get rid of regionalism. We might sit together once, twice, or three times in a spirit of regionalism which is inherited, to some extent. But these sittings are training courses for unionist action. How can the Libyan be a Tunisian and Libyan at the same time, and how can the Tunisian be a Libyan and Tunisian. In the end, how can we be Arabs. It is because we must be Arabs first.

A day will come when the executive bodies will all meet together in Tunisia, Algeria, Sanaa, Syria, or Libya, and we will automatically find that we have been deceived by the borders. We were deceived by the superstitions which we have lived with: that we are a nation which cannot be easily united. The executive bodies would meet (?in the form) of a Council of Ministers comprising several Arab countries—in the long run, this is unity. That is when we plan together and implement together. Unity is not something which is difficult.

There is a move in the world today toward local rule. It is not necessary for Tunisia and Libya to have just one province, governorate, or municipality. On the contrary, all over the whole world now large units are divided into

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small ones within the federal framework. Each of the U.S. states is a state—with its own government, parliament, police, and institution. However, in the end there is a single political, economic, and defense structure of a U.S. state. We have to perceive unity in this way, especially because the Arab homeland is spread over a large area. I do not believe there could be a central unity or a unity that is integrated to the extent that is imagined. Not at all; it is assumed that there would be autonomy, provinces and municipalities, with a framework that will bring together economic resources and political activities to the benefit of this unity which, internally, would have multi-administration.

In this context, regarding the situation between Tunisia and Libya, I would like to say something else. This is the first meeting under the new Tunisian era, under the glorious 7 November. The credit goes to brother Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, the hero of 7 November, and his supporters such as brother Hedi Baccouche and other supporters who made 7 November, which removed a great obstruction to the path of unity, release, and liberty.

For our part, we have been considering borders as nonexistent; not only between Libya and Tunisia, but with all Arab countries. Any citizen, from any Arab country, can enter Libya directly, without permission. We have no right to object to an Arab citizen traveling in his Arab homeland. What used to be called infiltration has been abolished, and I explained to you a few moments ago that the phenomenon of infiltration is a reality that differs from this infamous term. Any citizen from Libya, Algeria, or Tunisia may enter from any point, and this undermines Tunisian measures inside. If the citizen wants to leave his country, we will accept him at any point; but if you do not want him to leave, that's your right. If you agree, it is alright by us for him to enter at Ra's Jadir, (Dhihibah), or any other place. We regard him as free to live anywhere, and we will ask him whether he has found work or not. We do not fear, because we do not differentiate between a Libyan and Tunisian.

This is a myth created by colonialism; it was fed by colonialism. It was cared for by the regionally orientated rulers who wanted to transform the homeland of this Arab people into flocks of sheep. They made us fear each other. They used to tell us that infiltration is dangerous and that danger comes from across the border. All this is in actual fact lies and myth, and I will prove that it is a myth. Tunisians or Algerians, or Arabs from anywhere, will enter Libya in the thousands and nothing harmful will take place. Fear of what may come from over the border will be removed. There is no border post between Libya and Sudan; Sudanese enter Libya in the thousands; they work here. Those who do not find employment may return to Sudan. I believe that there is no border post between Libya and Algeria—border post along the land border I mean. Between Tunisia and Libya there is a border post at Ra's Jadir. On our behalf

and on this occasion, we abolish this border post because it is not necessary. I mean its function is abolished. A Libyan citizen can leave via the Tunisian border post; the latter will receive him. If the authorities at the Tunisian border post allow him to enter Tunisia, then he will do so. If the authorities do not want him to enter Tunisia, then he will return to Libya. This is because the Libyan border post will not function at all. There will be no stamping of passports at the Libyan border post; the citizen will just pass through. The Libyan border post shall not prevent a Tunisian from entering Libya; it will not stamp his passport; equally it will turn him back. Anyone wishing to enter Libya may do so. This Libyan border post is abolished and we declare its abolishment on this occasion. This naturally will not affect the measures taken by the Tunisian authorities, which may prevent any Libyan from entering Tunisia—it does not matter whether or not a Libyan is denied entry. Those who are denied entry will return. If he is told: please go back, then he will return.

If there is a Tunisian who is told that he is not permitted to leave Tunisia because he is wanted for one thing or another, for example internal matters, then he will return to Tunisia. But if you allow him to leave, then the Libyan side will allow him to enter—this permission is granted in advance. At the same time, there was in actual fact a military division regrettably deployed along the Tunisian border. This was because we feared that Tunisian territories might be used against Libya. Now we have become sure that the United States made attempts to use Tunisian territories against Libyan territories; that means that our assessments were correct, our fears were true.

The heroes of 7 November were among those who prevented the United States from using Tunisian territories against Libya. Therefore, we now also declare the withdrawal of this entire division from the western border. We will save this military effort for another location. As long as there are Arab territories beyond our western border and these Arab territories will not be used against us, then this border is safeguarded. We place our forces in the areas which are not Arab territories and which the enemy can directly enter. If there is an Arab territory beyond our border and that Arab territory will not allow the use of foreign forces against you, then there is no reason for deploying the armed forces along Arab borders.

We consider Tunisia a defensive and secure area insofar as our western borders are concerned. The same applies to Algeria. Consequently, there is no need to place military forces along Arab borders as long as those borders are not used by foreign forces. As for the question of fear at the use of an Arab force against an Arab force, this is not actually feasible. We do not expect it at all, not in our time. In any other situation, we do not expect brothers to fight one another, a Tunisian fighting a Libyan, or a Libyan fighting a Tunisian. This is a possibility not only now, but also in the foreseeable

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future. (?Why should they). It is illogical that such a thing should happen between Algeria, Sudan, and Egypt. The fear was of foreign forces using Arab territory against Libya.

You know that the Egyptians officially said that the United States has asked them several times in previous years—at the time of Al-Sadat and at the time of those who came after him—that the United States asked Egypt to carry out a military action from Egyptian territory against Libyan territory. They said: We rejected this. After 7 November we learned that the same request, the same attempt, was made with regard to Tunisia. For this reason, there were Libyan military forces and military areas along the Egyptian borders and along the border with Tunisia. We announced their withdrawal from Egypt, and now we announce their withdrawal from Tunisia. It is a secret that is being revealed for the first time. Its revelation is proof that our hearts have become clear, that today we are not like we were yesterday, and that we have become brothers in order to strengthen confidence, brotherhood, security, and tranquility between us and along our borders.

The truth is that there was a military formation called the Badr Formation. Its task was to operate inside Tunisian territory if the United States used Tunisia against Libya. Today we declare the dissolution of the Badr Formation, and present its weapons as a gift to the Tunisian Army and Tunisian police. [applause]

As for Egypt, we would like to inform the brothers present, and particularly the brothers in Tunisia, that we have announced the same measures. We regret very much that they have been met with rejection, contrary to what the Arabs were expecting. Also the efforts made by the brother Arabs in Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan have failed. They all made efforts with regard to withdrawing the military forces by the two sides from the borders.

When we announced the withdrawal of military forces the Egyptian president regrettably (?seems to) reject this and said that there are no military forces. Yet the whole world knows that all the Egyptian Army is deployed along the Libyan borders, and this because they have no other borders. I mean, is it deployed along Sinai? What is the job of the Egyptian Army today? They have have no border except the Libyan border.

We have withdrawn our forces, and the Egyptian president appears to be in a quandary. What will the Egyptian Army do now that the Libyan Army has withdrawn from the borders? What will the Egyptian forces do in the western desert? Actually, he is personally removing the Egyptian Army and he does not know where to put it. He previously had justification. Libya announced that it would not fight Egypt, that it will not go to war with Egypt, and that it will withdraw its military forces and abolish the eastern military area.

Yesterday the Sudanese president's relative [reference to Mubarak] was talking to me, and he said to me: We want to withdraw military forces from the two countries, from the Egyptian-Libyan border, and the brothers in Egypt would welcome this and agree to it. After we agreed, he said that this is World War I talk, and that there were no Libyan or Egyptian forces on the border. This is incomprehensible, because he was talking to the Sudanese president every day telling him: Please let us withdraw forces. Unless, perhaps the meeting between Al-Mirghani, head of the Sudanese state, and Husni Mubarak had taken place during World War I—perhaps. I do not know. How did this mess occur?

I also proposed another plan which is remote from all current problems—the linking of the Nile Valley to the great man-made river. Regrettably, he refused. He refused with complete irresponsibility. Although proceeding from the Great Man-Made River idea...[Al-Qadhdhafi pauses] this idea inspired Turkey—I believe that you may have heard of the Turkish project—to build a man-made river passing through Syria and Palestine, and then to the Negev or Sinai desert, and another branch passing through Iraq to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates. Of course, this project will take 30 years according to preliminary studies. And this great river will cost billions. However, serious work is now being put into studies and tenders. It is, of course, hindered due to the existence of an occupied Palestine and it may create an artery to feed the Zionist entity on Palestinian land—if the river reaches it. Otherwise, the Turkish project would be a great feat, because there is an abundance of water in Turkey and it needs to move the water elsewhere.

This will also benefit Turkey; it will bring returns for Turkey and the returns will continue. Turkey is contemplating this work to bring water to the Arabian Peninsula; while our plan to link Lake Nasir with Kufrah, and Nubariyah with Tobruk was rejected by Mubarak. He says no. This is unreasonable. Arabs as a whole and at all levels were saddened by this. They were saddened by this Egyptian position of rejection; no, no, no. I wish no would be extended to the Israelis—no to the Israelis; no to the United States; no to U.S. maneuvers; no to recognizing the enemy. Then we will accept no to the Great Man-Made River; no to the withdrawal of forces; no to the opening of borders; no to meeting with the Israelis; no to meeting with the United States.

We accept these noes if Egyptian logic adopts all these no's with regard to all these issues. But Egypt said yes with regard to the normalization of relations with Israel; yes to the staging of U.S. military exercises; yes to the U.S. occupation; yes to submission; but no to Arab unity; no to the opening of Arab borders.

Alright, we say that we have opened the border—an Egyptian can freely enter Libya and a Libyan should freely go to Egypt. He said: No. I did this in actual fact according to repeated and urgent requests from the

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Egyptian people, the Egyptian opposition, and Egyptian parties. I will send official messages to the Egyptian parties which request this from me—and to all the Egyptian circles which requested this from me—and say: You have insistently asked me to declare the opening of the border. Alright, I have abolished the border. The Egyptian Government has said no. The Egyptian parties which used to insist on this should confront the Egyptian Government.

What kind of an Arab is the one who you ask to open the border and he says no? He is not the master of his own will, or he fears for the Israelis and the United States who are many in the streets of Egypt. But in return we are continuing; we are committed to the opening of the border with Egypt, to the withdrawal of armed forces, and to the proposal of linking the Nile Valley with the great man made river. If the present Egyptian rulers are incapable of realizing these things, then others will realize them. These ideas will triumph. Those who oppose these ideas will be placed into the garbage can of history and will fall; they will ultimately be hounded by curses, and not by glorifications. Glory and action will be for this cultural and historic proposal which changes the terrain of Arab land and Arab reality.

These are the projects—the regionally oriented and doubted policies—which are failing. Evidence of this lies in the fact that we are now in Tunisia in the era of 7 November and are once again brothers, meeting without any obstacles. At every meeting and with every passing day, another of the obstacles which used to exist falls—the forces which used to be deployed along the border with Tunisia used to disturb us; in actual fact it was, as far as we were concerned, a source of shame that our forces, the revolutionary forces, were deployed along an Arab border. But in actual fact that border was not Arab. We were afraid that the United States would enter across that border. Now we are confident that the United States will not enter across the Tunisian border, and therefore the Libyan Forces should be withdrawn from the border with Tunisia. The formation which was prepared to operate inside Tunisian territory no longer has a task now and is abolished.

I am in actual fact very grateful, not only from this position but also as a unionist Arab citizen. I am very grateful to see the brothers from Tunisia and Libya meeting on the premises housing the GPC and around the table used by the GPC. They now sit around the same table as the GPC for the two countries, or as a Council of Ministers for the two countries, as an executive authority for both countries.

Brothers, it is not in our interest at all to doubt each other or be stingy toward each other, because this will be of the utmost triviality. This is because one day there will be no differences between a Tunisian and a Libyan. Supposing that there is a case of fraud inside Libya—against a Libyan municipality. This would be an act of treachery, and would be illogical; it would be as if the act

had been committed against Tunisia. You should look at matters and bear in mind that there should be no differences between the two countries.

Will you please take back with you my greetings to my brother Zine El Abidine, hero of 7 November. We and his brothers here are awaiting his visit at any time to welcome him. We congratulate you on 7 November once again at this occasion which has brought you all together, led by your brother Hedi Baccouche, a hero of 7 November, who is a master, an intellectual, a politician, and a struggler. There is no need for us to explain to him the value of Arab unity and the bitterness of colonialism, regionalism, and struggle if the latter is waged independently against the forces of colonialism, and how different that can be when he receives assistance from his brother! He knows the tragedies of the presence of borders and the tragedies of colonialism.

As long as Hedi Baccouche is in charge of the executive authority in Tunisia as a prime minister, I can rest assured that there is a struggling and experienced man who knows the value of this struggle and the value of life. The other brothers—you too have had much experience; there are strugglers among you, too. The important thing is that you should be confident about your brothers in Libya. Their hearts are opened and their country is open.

At this stage, I would like to advise the GPC in Libya to do whatever is necessary in the interest of the new era in Tunisia and to overlook Libya's interests at the present time. Our interest now lies in the fact that the new era in Tunisia should become firm. This is the service that can be provided by us—to protect this new era. This is because if this era becomes firm, the common interests of the two countries will be realized. We do not want at this stage to say: What will Libya get? We should say: What does Tunisia want at this stage which will firm its new position and new regime, even at the expense of Libya? This is because the return is greater than the benefits which Libya may ask for at the present time. I wish you success. Peace be upon you. [applause]

Baccouche Speech at Commission Meeting
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[Speech by Tunisian Prime Minister Hedi Baccouche on 4 April in Tripoli at the opening session of the Libyan-Tunisian Joint Higher Commission meeting—recorded]

[Text] On behalf of all the Tunisian brothers present, we express our happiness at our presence in the Jamahiriyah, our country, with our brothers. We are in need of mixing with one another, to know one another, and to engage in dialogue with one another.

This is an excellent occasion on which we deliver to you personally, to all the brother officials, and all the brothers in Libya, the greetings, the appreciation, and the optimism of His Excellency President Zine El Abidine