

APPROVED FOR RELEASE: 2007/02/09: CIA-RDP82-00850R000100040046-6

20

1

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

JPRS L/8410

20 April 1979

TRANSLATIONS ON NEAR EAST AND NORTH AFRICA  
(FOUO 16/79)



NEAR  
EAST



NORTH  
AFRICA

U. S. JOINT PUBLICATIONS RESEARCH SERVICE



FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

NOTE

JPRS publications contain information primarily from foreign newspapers, periodicals and books, but also from news agency transmissions and broadcasts. Materials from foreign-language sources are translated; those from English-language sources are transcribed or reprinted, with the original phrasing and other characteristics retained.

Headlines, editorial reports, and material enclosed in brackets [ ] are supplied by JPRS. Processing indicators such as [Text] or [Excerpt] in the first line of each item, or following the last line of a brief, indicate how the original information was processed. Where no processing indicator is given, the information was summarized or extracted.

Unfamiliar names rendered phonetically or transliterated are enclosed in parentheses. Words or names preceded by a question mark and enclosed in parentheses were not clear in the original but have been supplied as appropriate in context. Other unattributed parenthetical notes within the body of an item originate with the source. Times within items are as given by source.

The contents of this publication in no way represent the policies, views or attitudes of the U.S. Government.

COPYRIGHT LAWS AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING OWNERSHIP OF MATERIALS REPRODUCED HEREIN REQUIRE THAT DISSEMINATION OF THIS PUBLICATION BE RESTRICTED FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

JPRS L/8410

20 April 1979

TRANSLATIONS ON NEAR EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

(FOUO 16/79)

CONTENTS

PAGE

INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

PFLP Leader Calls for Progressive Alliance To Oppose Autonomy Project (George Habash Interview; AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI, 2-8 Mar 79) .....	1
'Arafat Expounds Fatah Political Positions (Yasir 'Arafat Interview; AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI, 23 Feb-1 Mar 79) .....	6
PNC Fail To Heal Rift in Palestinian Leadership (AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI, 2-8 Feb 79) .....	16

IRAQ

Reporter Investigates Iraqi Positions on Arab Issued (Wa'il Rajab; AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI, 23 Feb-1 Mar 79).	22
---	----

MOROCCO

Journal Carries Interview With Hassan Aide on Sahara Problem (Ahmed Reda Guedira Interview; JEUNE AFRIQUE, 4 Apr 79) .....	28
---	----

- a -

[III - NE & A - 121 FOUO]

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

PFLP LEADER CALLS FOR PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCE TO OPPOSE AUTONOMY PROJECT

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 2-8 Mar 79 pp 16-17

/Text/ Interview with Dr George Habash about Palestinian unity, situation in Lebanon and events in Iran: "I Am Calling for Progressive Alliance To Confront Hostile Plans and Foil Autonomy Project; Popular Front Stands in One Trench With All Factions of Resistance in Spite of Differences"; time and place not given

/Text/ In the course of investigating the positions of the factions of the Palestinian resistance at this turning point in time which is characterized by changes in Iran whose final impact has not yet been felt, AL-WATAN AL-ARABI conducted this interview with Dr George Habash, the secretary general of the PFLP.

The interview consisted of a review of recent developments. Dr Habash began the interview by presenting his evaluation of the preliminary results of the Iranian revolution and its effects on the Palestinian question and the Arab region.

He said, "The revolution has brought about the crushing defeat of a reactionary regime that was endorsed by international imperialism as an agent for its business and an executive agent for its plans not only in Iran, but also in the entire Gulf area. The collapse of the regime and its institutions constitutes the collapse of an important executive tool whose use imperialism has had for a long time. It was able through this regime to plunder the resources of the Iranian people and to use the Iranian Army against liberation movements. Imperialism has lost one of its significant geographic, economic, political and military strategic spots.

"The victory of the uprising dealt a mortal blow to local monopolies that were under the control of the Zionist movement which is allied with international capitalist monopolies. The Zionist movement thus lost an important position which it had used for a long time to plunder the funds of the Iranian masses and to serve the Zionist entity in occupied Palestine."

Elaborating upon what has already been said, Dr George Habash thought that as a result of the Iranian uprising the reactionary imperialist Zionist alliance did lose a crucial link in its series of links, and that this has led to an upset in the other links.

1

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Although the government of the shah represented a natural enemy, threatening even conservative regimes through its ambitions in the Gulf, Dr George Habash thinks that the collapse of the shah's government has made the conservative regimes lose an allied military and an economic base, and that this is making them sense impending danger.

The Loss for Israel

With regard to how this is affecting Israel, Dr George Habash said, "The Zionist entity, which for years gone by had considered the Shah's regime and institutions to be centralized points for striking at the progressive forces and regimes in the Arab area, trembled at the victory which removed these centers. The Zionist entity lost a basic source of oil, and it also lost a fundamental base that it had used for a long time to train its military cadres. It lost an important intelligence center.

The fact is that in spite of their strategic importance, the source of Zionist alarm is not confined to these aspects; it rather transcends them to the other political and moral aspects which are represented in the major thrust towards the Palestinian revolution and the question of Palestine. The reins of this trust were loosened by the victory of the Iranian people.

Dr George Habash analyzed the directions of the immediate steps that were taken by the United States to deal with this. This was done by means of air force reviews and the expeditious dispatch of weapons to some regimes that were in league with the United States. He expressed his opinion that these measures will not be the only alternatives, and that other alternatives will be proposed. These will focus on the means of restoring the bases and the allied entities that have been torn down. These alternatives will have a basic position at Camp David between the representatives of the United States, of the Egyptian regime and of the Zionist entity.

Dr Habash deduces from this that signing the separate peace between al-Sadat's regime and the Zionist entity has become one of imperialism's urgent demands.

He went on to say:

"This will have a major impact on the area. It will quickly place historical responsibilities before the Arab progressive forces to confront the alliance that is being railroaded in spite of the Arab masses.

It is thus that the historical responsibility which is being borne by the Arab progressive forces compels them to gather the new factors of this momentum and use them advantageously to develop their own alliance to confront these plans."

Results of National Council Meeting

[Question] You came out of the 14th session of the National Council without electing a new executive committee. What has the course of Palestinian national unity achieved?

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Answer The National Palestinian Council came out of its 14th session with some positive results. It approved a political program that was agreed upon by all the factions. It also approved an organizational program that determined the organizational principles and bases for front action within the liberation organization.

But the council failed to elect a new executive committee, and this made our Palestinian and Arab masses look with anxiety at the contradiction between the positive results that were previously mentioned and this negative result. Hence, the council's failure to elect a new executive committee was a clear indication of what we have always said about the need to continue the struggle to solve the problems that pertain to the establishment of a national unity on sound bases.

Building Palestinian national unity cannot be carried out unless two basic factors are closely connected.

The first factor consists of an accurate, theoretical view of the bases and principles of the unity of the national and progressive forces during the stage of national liberation.

The second factor consists of establishing and applying scientific standards that must be used to estimate the balances of power and their proportionality among the factions of the Palestinian revolution.

With regard to the first factor there are bases and principles recorded in the council's programs and resolutions which we consider sound and scientific. But these bases and principles become mere ink on paper (as happened in the 14th session) in the absence of the second factor.

Question How are the members of the National Council selected?

Answer The Palestinian National Council is the highest legislative authority in the liberation organization, and this makes the selection of its members a sensitive and an important process. But we do not yet know of the existence of standards to select or elect its members, and this makes the application of sound organizational bases a difficult if not an impossible operation.

We Are in One Trench

Question How is work carried out in the institutions and departments of the organization?

Answer There are no standards for front-line action within these departments and institutions, and this makes building national unity in the revolution's infrastructures a difficult, in fact, an almost impossible case. Therefore, we believe that establishing and applying sound scientific standards to evaluate the balances of power on the Palestinian scene and relying on sound organizational principles will put the process of building national unity on the right track.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

The fact that there are three Palestinian organizations outside the framework of the executive committee and the fact that most of the organizations remain outside the organization's departments and institutions cannot possibly be an indication of a sound direction for building national unity.

We will continue to fight on the popular and on the political level to correct the picture and to bring about progress in building national unity. But I would like to indicate clearly that the popular front stands in one trench with all the factions of the revolution to confront the conspiracies of the imperialist, Zionist and reactionary enemies regardless of the differences between us about the organizational question.

The Autonomy Conspiracy

Question The autonomy project on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is a conspiracy whose purpose is to strike at the Palestinian Revolution and liquidate the question of Palestine. What do you think are the means of fighting this project?

Answer The autonomy project is in fact the most dangerous episode of the direct conspiracy against the question of Palestine at this stage. The project is tied, on the one hand, to the Camp David agreement, and, on the other hand, the leaders of the Zionist entity regard it as "their project" for solving the question of Palestine.

We cannot talk about fighting this project in isolation from the general and comprehensive confrontation of the reactionary, Zionist, imperialist plots in the area. In spite of the project's specificity and the necessity to have a special plan to confront it, it is tied to imperialism's more comprehensive plan. Therefore, the resistance's own program must necessarily be tied to the comprehensive confrontation program.

The general outlines of the confrontation program lie in the programs of the Arab and Palestinian progressive and national forces which opposed the Camp David agreement: the program of the Steadfastness and Confrontation Front; the Syrian-Iraqi Covenant; and the political program that was recently approved by the Palestinian National Council. But the special confrontation will undoubtedly require detailed programs to ensure that our masses inside the occupied land, and basically on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, will remain steadfast.

By steadfast, we do not mean political steadfastness only. We do mean material steadfastness which requires dealing with the livelihood problems of our masses inside the country; dealing with their economic, agricultural and industrial problems; and dealing with their educational problems, etc. We, therefore, think that the liberation organization is being called upon to draw up a detailed program to solve these problems and to adopt the budgets that are necessary for them. The budgets that were approved by the Baghdad Summit Conference in this regard will help solve these problems and guarantee their requirements.



FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

After ensuring the material basis for steadfastness inside the occupied land, it is our opinion that the organizations of the revolution are to unify their popular and political efforts and to embark upon a series of escalating struggles to foil the project politically. The organizations are also to unify efforts to prevent any cooperation with the advocates of the conspiratorial project.

This, of course, is in addition to the necessity of continuing to escalate military action against the Zionist entity. We would thus guarantee the failure of the project.

The Plan Continuing in Lebanon

Question How are matters going in Lebanon?

Answer In Lebanon the separatist Zionist alliance continues to implement the plan that was drawn up by the Zionist enemy. In South Lebanon the Zionist enemy is establishing his occupation as time goes by and is entrenching his positions under the auspices of the agent Sa'd Haddad.

In the areas that are controlled by the separatists, preparations are continuing to force the imperialist Zionist project on all of Lebanon over the long range.

In this period in particular U. S. imperialism is holding on to the Lebanese card as a means of exerting pressure on the Syrian regime, on the Palestinian resistance, on the Lebanese National Movement and on all the forces that are opposed to Camp David in an attempt to exhaust them.

We think that confronting the separatist Zionist plot is the function of the Lebanese masses in their battle. As far as the south is concerned, it is the duty of Arab progressive forces to take a responsible position in view of the establishment of the Zionist occupation of this part of our Arab homeland. It is in this context that the Palestinian revolution can play its historical role.

COPYRIGHT: 1971 AL-WATAN AL-ARABI

8592  
CSO: 4802

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

'ARAFAT EXPOUNDS FATAH POLITICAL POSITIONS

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 23 Feb-1 Mar 79 pp 16-18

Interview with Yasir 'Arafat by Shafiq al-Hut: "'Arafat Defines Position of Palestinian Resistance on Khomeyni's Revolution, Dialogue With Jordan, Camp David, the United States and France; Our Relationship With Revolutionaries of Iran Goes Back Many Years; U.S. Intelligence Conspired To Kill Abu Hasan; the Fact That Iraq Joined Confrontation States Compensates Arabs for Egypt's Temporary Departure; France Retreated From De Gaulle's Palestinian Position Under U.S. Pressure"'

Text This is the second time for AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI to initiate a dialogue with Mr Yasir 'Arafat. Without defining his official capacity it may be very difficult to distinguish between Mr Yasir 'Arafat the chairman of the PLO and Mr Yasir 'Arafat the leader of Fatah. This is because the dividing line between the responsibilities of the two commands disappears and vanishes in many vital occasions in view of the influence exercised by Fatah in guiding the PLO and in view of the logic of things, which does not accept duality on the revolutionary scene.

Major and significant events have taken place, and very significant developments have occurred since the interview which AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI conducted 8 months ago with Abu 'Ammar.

During this period al-Sadat signed the Camp David accords alone, challenging 30 years of strategic Arab solidarity around the question of Palestine.

During this period the Pan-Arab Front for Steadfastness and Confrontation was formed; the historic agreement between Syria and Iraq took place; and the National Action Covenant was issued by them to achieve unity. These months also witnessed the Baghdad Arab Summit meeting and its success in spite of the fact that bets were made about the impossibility of convening it. Bets were then made while it was in session that it would fail.

During this period a prominent Arab leader who was one of the biggest allies of the Palestinian revolution departed from the Arab homeland. This Arab leader is/ President Houari Boumediene. During this period the people's revolution in Iran led by Ayatollah Khomeyni was victorious. It thrust

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

onto the scene in the Middle East variables that were turning Iran into a reinforcement factor for the Palestinian revolution. Consequently, it encouraged the confrontation camp against the capitulatory programs.

In view of these variables from which the Palestinian revolution was not divorced--in fact it may have inherently assumed the opinions of Abu 'Ammar either as chairman of the PLO or as leader of Fatah--the revolution acquired special significance in a period characterized by a review of considerations by all the parties.

The text of the interview that was carried out with Mr Yasir 'Arafat follows.

Those who know Abu 'Ammar closely, and especially those who live with him day and night, are saying that he has not yet recovered from the wound he received when Abu Hasan was killed. Abu Hasan was like a son to him; indeed, he was "his dearest son" as Abu 'Ammar says whenever someone mentions Abu Hasan in his presence. It is known that Abu Hasan was the only one of his colleagues who called Abu 'Ammar, Father.

Nevertheless, when I met him to record this interview, which was, as usual, completed in interrupted stages, his face was radiant; his eyes were shining; and his face was smiling. That was on the evening of 10 February. He had just finished a telephone conversation with the headquarters of Ayatollah Khomeyni in Tehran, and he appeared to be confident that the revolution there would be victorious in spite of the danger of these hours which preceded the settlement of the battle on the morning of the following day.

I did not want to spoil his joy, but I was not able to hide my concern and my apprehension about the gloomy acts of fate that lay hidden beyond these hours. I found myself, in spite of myself, saying:

Khomeyni Will Win

Question Some are blaming Fatah and are blaming you in particular for rushing into a public declaration of your position on the Iranian revolution. If Khomeyni fails, this could bring about negative reactions that would have designs on the Palestinian revolution.

He replied immediately and confidently.

Answer Don't worry. Khomeyni will win. They have informed me that they were turning everything in the streets of Tehran into barricades and that the people have taken up arms.

I thought he would not say any more in response to my question, but after finishing a number of telephone calls that lasted over an hour, he came back and he said:

Answer Those who accuse Fatah of revolutionary ventures do not understand Fatah and do not understand the revolution. They think that we discovered

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

the Iranian revolution the day they heard about it in the newspapers some months ago, because they do not know how deep and how old is our relationship with this revolution. Some of them did not understand the secret behind my participation 2 years ago in eulogizing one of the men of this revolution. He was 'Ali Shari'ati in the al-'Amiliyah School in Beirut. Some of them attacked me under the slogan of secularism. But Fatah, which came into being against the Zionist conquest to liberate our people and our homeland, will remain loyal to all those in the world who have been vanquished. They can be of any religion or of any color as long as they are fighting for their freedom and their dignity against subjugation.

Therefore, our relationship with the Iranian revolution and its men goes back many years. We used to offer its young men, its leaders and its advocates everything we could. We were on their side because this is how we understand revolutionary solidarity. It is a question of principle before being one of profit and loss. At the same time they were with us in the trenches of the battle and the holy war; they fought with us and they died with us. They were with us in Europe in their legions; everywhere they were found, they suffered with us.

Abu 'Ammar stopped talking for a while, and then he resumed his conversation:

Fighting against Zionism and colonialism is not a mere matter of words to be spoken or slogans to be painted on walls. Fighting Zionism and colonialism is a matter of action and movement. One who knows the conditions of the deposed Shah's Iran realizes what kind of stronghold of colonialism has collapsed.

The conversation was interrupted for a moment when Abu Jihad entered the room and Abu 'Ammar added with a chuckle:

Here is our brother Abu Jihad who would rush to the South Pole to help and to offer whatever assistance he can if he hears about a revolution there. This is just; it is right; and it is our duty. We have found and we are still finding those who help us and support our revolution.

Question Although the revolution's position on the Camp David accords and your statements and struggles against these two agreements are clear, we would like to have your appraisal of what the course of this capitulatory settlement has achieved.

Answer At the beginning we must affirm the principle behind our position as a revolution and as a people: we are rejecting this course completely in form and in substance. When we announced our position the parties of Camp David thought they might be able to find substitutes for us. But then they were confronted with the firm nationalistic position in the areas that were occupied in 1948. Prodded by their Palestinian nationalism they took part in rejecting any agreement or solution that did not guarantee our national rights and was not agreed upon with the PLO in its capacity as

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

the sole legitimate representative of the people of Palestine. The Americans, Israel and al-Sadat were not able to make a single Palestinian citizen budge from the position that was declared by the PLO. Furthermore, our masses escalated their struggles on all levels and by different means, until there was no longer any room [for them] in the enemy's jails. All the methods of subjugation, terror and torture--and all this was attested to by Miss Johnson, the former consular chargé d'affaires at the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem--did not dissuade a single fighter from his nationalist position.

Our time bomb which blew up in the faces of the Camp David trio is made up of our great people in the occupied land. This was the first blow that was dealt to the parties of Camp David on the Palestinian scene. Then the blows that were dealt to them on the Arab scene succeeded each other. These began with the creation of the Arab Front for Steadfastness and Confrontation; then came the Syrian-Iraqi agreement, the Joint National Communiqué and recently, not finally, the Baghdad Arab Summit.

[Question] What was the most recent blow?

He replied with a smile that covered his face:

[Answer] Even though.... The revolution in Iran.

[Question] Would you tell us some details about the Arab blows?

[Answer] We will return to this in a while, but let me now discuss the blows that fell on the Camp David accords on the international scene. First, in spite of tremendous American pressure there was no enthusiasm for these two agreements at the United Nations because there is a unanimity there that overlooking the question of Palestine and not establishing a solution to it will not bring peace to the area. The European Common Market bloc, which is allied to the United States, had the same reaction. Afterwards we find that the bloc of non-aligned countries, the Islamic bloc and the African group were clearer in their position: they saw no alternative to the need to guarantee Palestinians their national rights as a basic condition for any political solution that ensures the safety of the area and the survival of this peace. The positions of the Soviet Union and of the socialist countries are known and so are the UN resolutions. Today the Americans are working on two conflicting courses: the first calls for expedition in signing the Egyptian-Israeli pact and the other calls for waiting, because a treaty that is not worth the ink and the paper it is written on would be of no use.

[Question] Let us now return to the political talk on the Arab scene.

[Answer] You know and everyone knows that ever since it came into being Fatah has used one criterion for its relationship with others: it is their position on the Palestinian question, the Palestinian revolution and the organization that represents the Palestinian people. Support for Palestine

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

is no longer merely a theoretical position, especially when we talk about brothers. The support that is expected from every Arab country differs in quality and in quantity from the support that is expected from any African or European nation, because the pan-Arab nature of the question and our common Arab destiny requires the magnitude and the kind of support to us to be commensurate with our national faith and the relationship of destiny that holds us together.

This is a matter of principle. We had to refer to it so that we would not lose ourselves in details, in passing events or in the negative atmosphere that may sometimes come over the Arab scene. Therefore, after al-Sadat dissented from the pan-Arab course, and after his serious renunciation of the pan-Arab question, it was natural for the Arab psyche to be shaken and for the Arab countries--at least some of them--to begin confronting the new situation that disturbed the balance of power.

It is self-evident that we were among the first to undertake this course. The immediate reaction was the pan-Arab gathering that convened in Tripoli, in Algiers and then in Damascus. It later became known as the National Front for Steadfastness and Confrontation. In the course of the conversation here I would like to mention with all loyalty and gratitude the role of the late President, our brother Houari Boumediene. People near and far know how close he was to our revolution. He had a basic role in the context of the front, and his ideas and opinions were extremely important and strategically far-sighted. Of course, we mentioned Boumediene in particular because he is now in the arms of God and we owe it to him to remember him and also to remember the role of the other brothers who are leaders of the countries that participated in establishing this front. We are hoping to stimulate the role of the front after our brothers in Algiers settle their affairs.

After that, in view of the universality of the imperialist-Zionist-al-Sadat attack, we had to make more effort to gather and to stabilize the Arab ranks. The Syrian-Iraqi agreement fulfilled a hope that many faithful people have been striving for for a long time. Our confidence in the ability of our nation increased when the two fraternal countries took their step toward unity in the Joint National Covenant. There is no doubt that the fact that fraternal Iraq did join the confrontation countries gave us a significant strategic depth and compensated us to a large degree for the departure of Egypt from the scene of struggle--a departure we hope will be temporary.

But the surprise that astonished Washington in particular was the fact that the Arab Summit Conference had convened in Baghdad. Washington did not believe that the summit would take place without al-Sadat's regime. When the conference did convene, Washington thought that the summit would explode from the inside and that the Arab countries would not agree on a minimum program to confront Camp David. But what did happen and did surprise Washington was the fact that the conference was not only convened but that it adopted important resolutions. On the Palestinian question Arabs cannot be classified into moderates and extremists. Within certain limits all Arabs cannot but agree.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

U. S. policy is so stupid when it imagines that there is one Arab official who would, for example, accept Jerusalem's threat. I am saying, for example, and the fact is the the Camp David accords--in fact, everything in the Camp David accords--cannot be accepted by any honest Arab. These two agreements deprive Egypt even of its independence. We must bear in mind that with these two agreements the United States went beyond the limit even with its Arab allies. Today, the talks are faltering over the priority of Egyptian commitment and whether this priority belongs to Egypt's commitments to agreements it made with the Arabs or to its agreement with the Zionist enemy. The only thing that the Camp David parties offered to the people of Palestine was a new slavery which they are being asked to legitimize and to accept.

I will say one more time that U.S. policy is so stupid! It considered Ian Smith's black majority project in Rhodesia unacceptable and at the same time it was offering the people in Palestine what is less than Bantustan. I would like to say here that the Baghdad Summit was a painful blow to the capitulatory settlement project. Its resolutions curbed, even to some extent, this declining course in the policy of the Egyptian regime. But this does not mean that we are satisfied with this limit of joint political action. We all know the capabilities and the resources of our nation; these have not yet been used. Our nation has the weapon of oil, and it has petroleum funds; it has numerous people; it has a strategic location; it has other natural resources; and it has everything so as to impose its will in peace and in war.

Our Relations With Baghdad Are Improving

Question Prior to the summit conference in Baghdad, relations between some Palestinian organizations and some Arab capitals were overcast. What effect did the summit conferences have on these relationships?

Answer The fact is that before the Baghdad Summit all Arab relations were overcast and tense. But the conference dispelled many of these clouds and relaxed many of these tensions. The atmosphere today is not like it used to be; it is becoming clearer and better. Take for example the change that has come over relations between Syria and Iraq--what they were and what they've become and the effect of this change on national action. Likewise, the relations of our brothers in democratic Yemen with numerous Arab countries have also improved and continue to improve.

As far as our relations in Fatah with the brothers in Iraq are concerned, the Baghdad Summit was a suitable occasion to turn over the page that was not in the interests of all of us and to turn instead to a new page of mutual cooperation and agreement. Today we are continuing our contacts with our brothers in Baghdad in order to further and to strengthen this cooperation and this agreement. We would mention that Brother Abu al-Lutf, the foreign affairs official in the liberation organization, had visited Baghdad almost 2 months ago and that his visit was fruitful and beneficial.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

The Importance of Dialogue With Jordan

[Question] What about Palestinian-Jordanian relations? Much has been said about this subject, especially at the last National Council. Have you reached [an agreement] on a united position with all the brothers?

[Answer] Political struggle must not be held back by emotion no matter how severe the wounds and how painful the memories. In the course of our struggle to foil the American-Israeli-al-Sadat settlement we have to sort out and to define Arab positions. Then we have to strengthen those positions that oppose this settlement, and we have to work to change those positions that support it. This was the starting point in the subject of resuming the dialogue with Jordan. It is known that the Jordanian scene constitutes a vital, an important and a basic geopolitical and demographic reality for the struggle of our people. In spite of the negative factors and even the contradictions that may come over our relations with Jordan, we must always remember this geopolitical and demographic reality. In addition to the fact that a large percentage of our people live in Jordan, Amman is our gateway to the West Bank, to the Gaza Strip and to our occupied homeland. Therefore, we differed with some of our brothers who were opposed to "the principle of talking with Jordan." We also differed in opinion about what may be called a framework for this dialogue.

I do not want to promote myself over others, just as I refuse to let others promote themselves over me. We have already taken a number of positions and we have set up several agreements. Some of our brothers had reservations about these positions and these agreements. In fact, some of them opposed these positions and these agreements and accused us of extravagances when we undertook them. Then the days went by, and the positions changed and what was rejected became acceptable. This is what happened when we signed the Cairo Agreement with Lebanon and when we decided to go to the United Nations. There are other examples. Brother Abu al-Lutf will soon visit Amman to make preparations for a visit I intend to make afterwards.

America and the Palestinian Question

[Question] There is another subject which provoked long and heated discussion during the last National Assembly; it pertained to communications with the United States. What is your position on that subject?

[Answer] This is an old and a new question. I remember that you asked me the same question during our last interview 7 or 8 months ago. Do you remember my reply to it? Because my reply is still the same.

We began searching among the papers that were in our hands for the former answer, but Abu 'Ammar did not give us time to find the papers, and he said:

[Answer] That's all right. I remember my answer. The gist of it was that the U. S. administration still forbids its employees from making any formal



FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

contact with the PLO. I remember I said that although we are aware of the U.S. position, which is extremely biased towards Israel, and although we are aware of the United States' imperialist policy, we do recognize at the same time the importance this country has in international politics. Anyone who does not recognize this or who minimizes the importance of this role is making a big mistake. Therefore, we think that, first, we must--in fact, it is our duty--inform the American people about the realities of the struggle in the area and clarify to them the political and the national goals to achieve which we bore arms.

In this context I kept the door open for every U. S. official who wanted to inquire and tried to understand. It was never a secret that I have received numerous senators, representatives and other U.S. figures. To do justice to the truth let me mention that some of them were touched and were responsive. They returned to the United States with points of view that were radically different from those which they had previously held.

As far as official communications are concerned, none of which has taken place so far, we have announced repeatedly that we will always be willing to make such contact provided that there be no pre-conditions and that this contact be made publicly in front of the whole world. I think that the time has come for some of our brothers who have reservations about such political activity to realize that dialogue does not necessarily mean accepting the point of view of the party with whom we are having the dialogue. Let us keep in mind how many years the secret and the public dialogue went on between the Vietnamese rebels and the Americans. As far as dialogue with the United States is concerned, there is no doubt that if it were to take place the task will be thorny and difficult. But it is our duty to explain our question ourselves to the whole world and to try to achieve the recognition of all the countries of the world and especially the major countries.

The Process of Role Distribution

Question By the way, would you comment on the statements that were made by U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Andrew Young about the necessity of talking to the Palestinians? Some observers considered his statements to be dalliance with the liberation organization.

He shook his head and replied:

Answer Brzezinski said, "Bye bye PLO!" The U.S. State Department ignored the most impudent political decision of this age. I am referring to the resolution of the Israeli Knesset which came before the attack on South Lebanon. The resolution called for the annihilation of the liberation organization and its military forces and the liquidation of its political leadership. Then Young said what he did say. This appears to be an agreed upon distribution of roles. The U.S. administration may have thought that timing such a statement with the session of our National Council would reduce the intensity of Palestinian wrath with its aggressive policy.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

The U.S. administration has lost its credibility. We all remember the series of irresolute acts by the United States which paved the way for al-Sadat's visit to Jerusalem and afterwards to the Camp David accords.

There was talk about "a homeland for the Palestinians" and about official recognition of the fact that "the liberation organization represents a basic part of the people of Palestine. This was a joint U. S.-Soviet communique which included for the first time U. S. recognition of the fact that the people of Palestine exist and that they have legitimate rights. The U.S. administration took all this back until it came to the "autonomy" joke.

After all this we no longer believe the statements that are made by Carter's administration. And here in this regard I must raise an important question about the role of the U. S. Central Intelligence Agency in the assassination of the brave Palestinian leader Abu Hasan Salamah by Israeli intelligence men or by men from Begin's special office. Is it possible that U.S. intelligence was not connected with this crime when we know about the strong relationship that exists between Mossad and Begin's office which has been set aside for U. S. intelligence? We are certain that Israeli intelligence, like all the intelligence agencies of the countries revolving in the orbit of the United States, receives its orders from U. S. intelligence just as it receives the capabilities for its support and survival.

France Retreated From Its Position

Question The last question I have is about the liberation organization's relations with the French Government in particular, whose guest recently was Moshe Dayan.

Answer I am very sorry about the fact that French policy is still fluctuating in its position and has not taken one step forward beyond the course that had been charted by the late great leader de Gaulle and by Pompidou after him. Furthermore, it hurts me to say that there has been some retreat with regard to the French position on the question of Palestine, on the Palestinian revolution and on the liberation organization. It has become clear to us more than any other time in the past that the French position on our people is very much affected by the American position, which is completely biased towards the Zionist enemy.

It is regrettable to see France retreating from its independent policy to return again to the American orbit. I am saying with all candor that if the official French position continues to be what it is, the Arab nation will be called upon by the Palestinian revolution to reevaluate its position and its considerations with the French Government. Arab-French friendship cannot continue to be one-sided, on the side of the Arabs.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

In this regard I would like to refer to a statement made by Moshe Dayan a few days ago. Dayan said that the government of France had talked with him about its position vis-a-vis a Palestinian entity and not a Palestinian state. So far the French have not denied this, and I cannot imagine that matters have reached the stage when Dayan becomes an official spokesman for the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

COPYRIGHT: 1979 AL-WATAN AL-ARABI

8592

GSO: 4802

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

PNC FAILS TO HEAL RIFT IN PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 2-8 Feb 79 pp 27-29

Article dispatched by AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI correspondent from Damascus:  
"When Winds of Political Troubles Blow and Branches in Forest Become  
Entangled; What Happened Behind Scenes of National Palestinian Council;  
Problem of Proportionate Representation Behind Postponement of Election of  
New Executive Committee"

Text At the bar of the Meridian Hotel which faces the building of the  
General Federation of Syrian Workers, where the Palestinian National Council  
PNC was meeting in its 14th session, I overheard one of the foreign  
correspondents saying to his colleague:

"One who tries to cover news of the Palestinians finds himself inadvertently  
covering news of all the Arab countries. The nature of the Palestinian  
question, the multiplicity of places where Palestinians reside and the  
multiplicity of political currents among them are making their congresses,  
in spite of their Palestinian identity, appear to be national congresses or  
congresses of the League of Arab Nations."

The fact is that the truth in this observation is not inconsiderable, and  
it applies even to the Fatah movement which was established in 1965. This  
is because the other different Palestinian factions and forces are no more  
than developed extensions of national and patriotic movements that go back  
for decades. Even Fatah itself is not free of figures who had been members  
of some of these forces, parties and movements before joining Fatah.

Although Palestinian political statements are generally united on the  
principles on which Palestinian politics is based, one detects more than  
one tone when one hears those statements. There is a nationalist tone, a  
Ba'athist tone, a leftist tone, an Islamic tone and a tone that may be  
called, especially after this council meeting in particular, a Fatah tone.

There is neither vilification nor praise in this observation. This is  
an objective fact that was prescribed by numerous factors: some of these  
are inherited, and some are acquired. This is not the place for providing  
details about these factors, but they do in fact exist. One who deals with  
the question of the Palestinian revolution must inevitably take these factors  
into consideration if he is striving for objectivity and reality.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

The National Council chose Damascus as the site of its 14th session. The Syrian capital thus became the first Arab capital to host the PNC since the PLO came into existence.

After the occupation of Jerusalem and Gaza it had become customary for the Palestinians to convene their congresses at Arab League headquarters in Cairo. They did not want to hurt people's feelings in the other Arab capitals, and they wanted to avoid arousing any sensitivities, which are numerous in our vast Arab homeland.

Damascus in particular was chosen after al-Sadat's Cairo dissented from Arab consensus. The choice was made after the pan-Arab agreement between Iraq and Syria. In spite of the great esteem which Palestinians have for Algeria and the great esteem which it holds for the Palestinians, Algeria was ruled out as a possible site because of the death of the late Houari Boumediene. This session of the PNC was named after him.

Thus there were clear and obvious shadows that loomed ahead for the council. Then President Hafiz al-Asad's statement confirmed the existence of these shadows. This either urged or inspired Mr Yasir 'Arafat to tell him, as he offered him the council's gift--a replica of the radiant rock--that the Palestinian revolution was affirming its pan-Arab character and that it was hoisting the flag of the Arab revolution and of Arab nationalism.

The Unity of the Resistance: an Important Indicator

The fact that President al-Asad included in his address at the opening session an indiscriminate request to Palestinian factions to support the Iraqi-Syrian agreement did attract attention.

President al-Asad said, "The Iraqi-Syrian agreement needs the efforts of all of you. It needs your protection and your increased support. The agreement is for all of you, for all of us and for the entire Arab nation. It is not for individuals, for leaders or for specific groups." He said, "Our brothers in Iraq and we view this matter from no other framework than this. Therefore, this is how you must look at it."

This advice from President al-Asad was considered tantamount to an acknowledgement of the importance of the Palestinian revolution and of the vitality of its role in the Arab area. It also indicated an interest in the unity of the revolution's factions and the need to have them settle their differences on the nature of the make-up of the organizations' executive committee.

But nobody expected this subject in particular to become critical; nobody expected the National Council to fail in reaching an agreement on electing a new executive committee because of a disagreement about quotas. This is because all the organizations had been working hard for many months and had formulated a national unity project in two parts: political and organizational.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Since agreement upon this project was completed prior to the agreement between Syria and Iraq, the council was careful to introduce the necessary amendments to it before endorsing it so that the project would include reference to the Joint National Covenant, an appraisal of it, and an expression of its importance as a national accomplishment and a bulwark for the Palestinian revolution.

The fact is that the Iraqi-Syrian Covenant had provided the suitable climate for ratification of the political and organizational program to which the factions of the resistance had agreed.

Disagreement About Proportionate Representation

There was disagreement, however, about proportionate representation. Relying on one of the organization's bylaws, the council was satisfied with an endorsement of the existing executive committee as the organization's legitimate commanding body until the council should convene again in an emergency or a regular session. This may take place in 3 months.

This unexpected outcome, especially after the unanimous ratification of the political program, aroused the interests of numerous political agencies inside and outside the Palestinian scene. There is no doubt that the Arab citizen who is concerned about these organizational Palestinian affairs did read analyses, justifications and defenses that are not free from some bias against this or the other party.

The fact is that it is very difficult to evaluate the position of every organization and to make a judgment about it without risking being accused of siding with one party and not the other. There are such entanglements, cross-purposes, analogies and incompatibilities on the Palestinian political map that--as they say--a Moroccan astrologer would sometimes be needed to analyze its riddles and reveal its secrets. Not everything that is known is being said. Palestinians often disagree about what they don't say and not about what they do say.

Let us cite an example.

The subject of Palestinian relations with Jordan took more than three consecutive days of the council's time. More than 50 members and all the representatives of the organizations without exception had statements about the subject.

There would be no harm in citing another example to indicate how entangled the branches in the Palestinian forest are. This example is from the minor sphere of private relations between the factions.

An internal disagreement in one of the factions of the revolution, the General Command of the PFLP, took place between the previous and the current sessions of the National Council. As a result of this disagreement--which

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

no one was able to contain or transcend--a group seceded from the front, and its members announced they would set up a new organization called the Palestinian Liberation Front.

This organization asked the PNC to recognize it, and the council found itself in a dilemma because the old organization i.e., the PFLP was opposed to recognition for the Palestinian Liberation Front and threatened to withdraw from the PNC if the council accepted the new front in the PNC. The members of the new front were threatening that denying them recognition meant a denial of actual national unity. They said that they would not be responsible in the future for any actions they might undertake, because they were removed from the sphere of joint action. Try and solve this problem if you can!

An Example From the International Sphere

From this small sphere we cite an example from the international sphere. This is the third example of political torture on the Palestinian scene.

In the past during the days of Mao Zedong it was customary to mention the People's Republic of China in the course of greeting the friends of the revolution. But this time there were those who refused to greet China because China was opposing everything the Soviets had agreed to, and it was agreeing with everything the Soviets had opposed. China this time supported the Camp David accords, and no Palestinian can consider such a position to be that of a friend, considering the magnitude and the kind of friendship that existed between China and the Palestinian revolution.

What is to be done? And the discussion goes on: do we accept this or not? The conferees weigh acceptance against rejection, and they ultimately sort out the profits from the losses, and so on.

I cited these examples so I can return to the subject that has attracted everybody's attention: it is the failure to establish a new executive committee that would be on a par with the ambitious unifying political program in spite of the fact that there was agreement and consensus about this program.

We will be brief, and we will try to be as objective as possible.

Fatah is stating something to this effect: "Now that we have agreed on a single political program, proportionate representation in the executive committee must reflect the real proportions of the organization. It would not be permissible for Fatah to be just like the other organizations when all have acknowledged that it has been the backbone of the resistance and that it had borne 90 percent of the burdens of the war in South Lebanon against Israel."

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Fatah becomes even more candid and states, "There is not a national front in any revolution in the world that does not have a managing body. Fatah is the managing body of this revolution in the context of a group leadership where the minority is subject to the majority. This is stipulated in the organizational bill for national unity which has already been ratified."

On the basis of this statement Fatah was making proposals to every formula that was being proposed to form the executive committee to ensure that the aforementioned statement is realized.

Blows From Every Side

In accordance with that, most of the organizations are in agreement with the following statement:

"In spite of the prestige of Fatah, the situation requires the establishment of a strong command that includes all the forces and makes a new qualitative change in Palestinian action."

They add, "As long as we have agreed on one program, why is Fatah insisting on distinguishing itself even though nothing will actually be changed or altered by the presence of more than one of its representatives in the committee as long as he represents Fatah and its prestige?"

On this basis representatives of the other organizations insisted with various degrees of vehemence that it was necessary not to favor Fatah with more than one representative. This, of course, would be in addition to having Abu 'Ammar in his capacity as the leader of the revolution.

They did not agree. Their discussion lasted for a long time, and for a long time they were engaged in conversations that muddied the waters more than they cleared them.

Then they left the old arguments and they rushed back to South Lebanon, where sparks were warning against a new war. They went to the capital, Beirut, to bury a brave fighter whom the Zionists were able to snare after having pursued him for 6 years. He is the late 'Ali Hasan Salamah.

It is unfortunate that the Arab citizen, who is not familiar with the complexity of Palestinian action and does not care to become familiar with it because he is only concerned about the revolution as a whole, can do no more than express considerable grief when he sees that the brothers in the Palestinian command have not yet taken in the significance of these blows which they are receiving from every side.

The hope remains, however, that the brothers will return soon and they they will detach themselves from the atmospheres of emotionalism and rhetoric to reconsider all their positions so as to achieve the permanent Arab Palestinian dream of bringing about the substantive change in their relationships and in their struggles against the enemy that lies in wait for all of them.



FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

May they learn the lesson of truth from the outcome of the council's session, which they began with a salute to the late Houari Boumediene and concluded with a salute to the late Palestinian fighter 'Ali Hasan Salamah.

COPYRIGHT: 1979 AL-WATAN AL-ARABI

8592

CSO: 4802

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

IRAQ

REPORTER INVESTIGATES IRAQI POSITIONS ON ARAB ISSUES

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 23 Feb-1 Mar 79 p 30-31.

/Article by Wa'il Rajab: "To Those Who Are Betting on the Shi'ites of Iraq After the Events in Iran: There Are No Conflicts Between Religious Feelings and Feelings of Arab Nationalism; National Unity Is Strong and Establishment of Constitutional Organizations Will Make It Stronger; al-Ba'th Party Gave Iraq Stability That Helped It Perform Its Mission in Gulf and in Major Homeland"

/Text The alarm that was sounded by different sources in the media regarding the effects of Iranian developments and events on the Gulf area and regarding their negative and positive impact on the neighboring countries was one of the factors that motivated the Department of Investigations in AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI to send the colleague Wa'il Rajab to Iraq to conduct an objective, fact-finding investigation into Iraq's position vis-a-vis what the different media sources are describing as "the cauldron which is boiling over with possibilities."

I was not alone in my journey from Paris to Baghdad. I was accompanied from the very first moment and all during the 5 hours on board the Iraqi Airways airplane by numerous questions about the motive that several international media sources had in helping each other exaggerate the impact of Iranian events and in singling out Iraq as the location that would be in the spotlight. They did so in a manner which indicated the special attention Iran is getting from the countries of the area or from the international powers that have positions of influence in the area or the means to attempt to influence the course of events.

Why?

What are the strategic motives and considerations that lie behind this?

These were difficult questions that Iraqis, especially concerned officials and ordinary citizens, had to respond to. The proverb states, "The owner of the house knows best what is in it."

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

And thus the question that I raised here and there was this:

What are the factors that lie behind this foreign interest in Iraq? What are the motives behind giving expression to this interest, which emphasizes linking developments, possibilities, Iraq's vital strategic location, its military capabilities, its oil resources, its human capabilities and its role in shaping prevailing trends in the area?

The objective and comprehensive reply to this question may lie in what an informed source stated; he turned the spotlight on the aspects of the subject when he said:

"There are several and numerous factors that lie behind the interest in Iraq. Two vital and important matters are among them.

"The first is that the regime in Iraq does not consider its geographic location to be the legally determined land that is defined by well-known international borders. The regime in Iraq was created by the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party. The missions of the Iraqi revolution transcend the national boundaries and include the entire pan-Arab scene. Iraqis affirm that this understanding of their revolution does not mean that they are "surrogate revolutionaries" for the Arab people in their different countries, nor does it mean overlooking taking advantage of the Arab status quo without hampering the factors of its development.

"This was actually what they affirmed at the summit conference. This policy is a fact that is not unknown to anyone because it is the essential nature of the candid national ideology of the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party.

"The second vital and important matter is that the strong, settled nature of Iraq since the outbreak of the revolution on 17 July 1968 affirms that the masses' ties with their revolution and their confidence in this revolution, which was led by the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party, are deep and are characterized by a very effective inviolability. Thus, the stability of conditions in Iraq along with the growth in the strength of these conditions in a manner that is consistent with the advance of the revolution's course focus the spotlights on two considerations that explain and justify the interest in Iraq.

"The first one of these considerations is that no bets are being made on strengthening relations with Iraq, and no precautions are being taken in anticipation of dreaded surprise.

The second consideration is that the stability of a strong, national regime, which is independent of international tendencies, does not appeal to these tendencies which try in various ways to control the area; to have a certain amount of influence to affect its directions; and to modify its courses to make them consistent with their own ideological or political objectives. Consequently, the stability of this national regime is of interest to these

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

tendencies in a negative, contradictory sense, that is, in the sense of restricting opportunities or blocking some of them from being used by the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party, which is leading the state and society in Iraq.

"It is thus that the ideological and political course of this regime constitutes a nuisance to these tendencies. In addition, there is another reason which increases other people's displeasure with them: this course has a superior ability to deal with and to control events. As a result every counter-reaction that goes in another direction turns the enemies' plans upside down and in one moment turns the success of adversaries into a catastrophe. Iraq's initiative, for example, to bring about a pan-Arab alignment in accordance with the resolutions of the Baghdad Summit Conference and to achieve Iraqi-Syrian unity illustrates the highest degree of competency in directing the practical courses of ideological politics in a manner that would deal crushing blows to the enemies of the nation and express the efficiency of the strategic mind in its devotion to the objectives and the aspirations of the Arab nation."

These analyses that were offered to me by an informed source lingered in my mind as I tried to determine the features of the action that Iraq wants and to compare them with the other possible trend of concerned countries in the Arab region or in the Middle East region.

Iraq has always remained in the midst of the region's events. This is a fact that indicates Iraq's destiny in the past, in the present, and in the future.

To diversify my sources in completing the picture of the situation in Iraq I asked my companion a question about what he thought Iraq's position might be in any policy that may be drawn up for the area. I posed the question as the car carried us through Baghdad's crowded streets and a cold breeze brushed against our faces.

As I said, the question was no more than another attempt to find the truth from more than one source and from different positions. After some deep thought my companion said, "I will give you a clear and a simple answer. The features of Iraq's position in any policy that is drawn up for the area were determined by our great companion Saddam Husayn in one of his talks when he said, 'No comprehensive policy will be drawn up for the Middle East unless Iraq is placed on the sand table military maneuver planning board, so that in one way or another it can be included in the considerations or in the treatment.'"

My mind continued to pursue this deep vision and to tie the movement of events in the area with Iraq's position. From this vision I formulated strong ideas about the kind of major hopes that Iraq is striving for, about the worries that others are having about its course, about the kind of worries Iraq may have and about the kinds of victories the achievements of which appears to be inevitable.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

The 10 days that I spent in Iraq were characterized by a series of radiant pictures about the continuous effort [to achieve] the goals of the nation; to reinforce the socialist structure; to establish democracy as a system of ideological values and a practical course; and to build socialism in all the areas as a central law to solve the problems of society.

During my visit to the most distinguished [town of] al-Najaf, the glimmer of the golden dome on top of the final resting place of al-Imam 'Ali ibn Abi Talib loomed in the distance between Karbala' and al-Najaf. It was like a lighthouse telling generations the story of the immortal heroes in the life of the nation. From afar the dome appeared to be a glowing flame and a glimmering light. I confess that the basis of my visit to the sacred shrines in Karbala' and al-Najaf was a desire to see the chaste burial grounds. This was combined with a secret that moved me as a journalist who tracks down and analyzes events. I wanted to know the truth about the anticipated events that the western media was picturing with regard to the impact the Iranian crisis will have on Iraq.

The western media are trying--and they are trying very hard--to picture the events that are happening on the Iranian scene as events that will have an impact on Iraq. They are trying to show that it would be easy for the Shi'ite Moslems of Iraq to be negatively affected by what is happening in Iran.

In the courtyard of the al-Haydari mosque where a group of men were getting ready to perform the noon prayer, I tried in an indirect way to pose some questions with which I intended to verify some matters. A dignified older man wearing a white turban and with a grey beard said, "What is happening in Iran is an internal event. It is a matter of interest to the citizens of Iran, and among them are the religious men. We hold the knowledge of Ayatollah Khomeyni in high esteem. He is free to adopt for Iran the course he finds suitable for it. This is an accepted fact. But if the countries that do not want Iraq and the Arab nation to achieve progress and unity are hoping that the Iranian crisis spurred by their attempts will have negative effects on the Shi'ites in Iraq, this would be a different thing.

"Our Arab character is just as sacred as our religion. The pride we have in our Arab character and in the course that our rulers are pursuing is fundamental."

In the light of what I heard I felt my face flush with embarrassment because I had embarked upon this line of questioning. But what else could be done when journalism is the profession of difficulties and of searching for the truth? Reluctantly I put the question to an official just as I had put it to many other people here and there and in al-Najaf.

The official replied, "When western media correspondents write much about Iraq's fears of the events in Iran and the fact that these events may generate problems with Iraq' and when they overexert themselves in writing about

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

the Shi'ites and the fact that they are subject to oppression, they do not do so without political considerations. It is our considered opinion that two factors clearly underlie this situation:

"First, there is an attempt to play on sectarian sensitivities to fight the revolution, but the fact is that this sectarian chord is torn and is incapable of producing the desired tune.

"Second, the trend to unite with Syria has turned the balance of power in the area and has created a dangerous strategic crack in hostile tendencies and considerations. If such a trend is dangerous, the most dangerous thing about it is its ideological basis and its solid doctrinal course. Enemies' attempts to portray the Iraqi-Syrian agreement as a fearful reaction to the events in Iran are attempts whose objective is to remove the agreement from its ideological and historical context and present it as a political agreement entered into in anticipation of emergencies and hypothetical events. This is one of the motives underlying the recent increase in commentaries about the impact of the Iranian crisis on the Shi'ites in Iraq.

"This tendency on the part of western media correspondents reveals the degree of triviality to which western media agencies has declined. This trend also reveals their intentions against Iraq and against Arab unity."

The official added, "We are confident that all our people have achieved a degree of ideological immunity which makes their national unity firm and unshakeable. If there are those in the west who are dreaming that events in Iran will have negative effects on our Shi'ite Arab citizens, we tell them dream on. They will soon find themselves in the midst of a terrifying nightmare." And here the official did not hide the fact that had the events of Iran taken place during any administration other than that of the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party, they would have had a negative impact. "This is due to the fact that these administrations which had a sectarian basis were not able to establish just laws for life. They were prisoners of their sectarian makeup."

Stability Is an Existing Fact

"Are you confident that stability in Iraq can only become firmly established?"

The official replied, "This is the truth. We do not make this statement perfunctorily; we rather make it as a result of the course of the revolution and of the horizons that it will achieve in the future. A country which fears the possibilities that may shake its stability cannot resolve to expand the democratic process for the masses."

"How is that?"

Without any prefatory remarks the official said, "Did you not hear Comrade Saddam Husayn in a speech he made to the workers refer to this major question, which is that the command has approved general elections for all the people

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

of Iraq so that the Central Council of the people's representatives, the parliament, may be created? It will be one of the constitutional representative institutions wherein the masses will participate in formulating resolutions and in building the state and society."

I tried to excuse myself, but I was stopped by the official's voice. He was saying, "This is not the only thing that the command intends to achieve. It has on its agenda a completed study about the democratic management of the state's institutions. This study will soon take the form of law. This means that the workers are to become extensively and collectively involved in a legal and in a revolutionary manner in the management of the state's agencies. This will be done according to special principles for practicing democracy in reporting, criticizing and supervising."

This development indicates quite eloquently that events in Iraq are proceeding on their course. It is responding to many questions in a practical way by providing centralized results instead of reactions. In this regard an observer finds a general sense of optimism in the fact that the trailblazing experiments which Iraq is experiencing will succeed and the major general national hopes that are hanging on the unity of Iraq and Syria will be achieved. Everyone one meets in Baghdad will assure one that this unity is undoubtedly coming. It is the hour of destiny, and unity with Syria was an still is the destiny of Iraq.

COPYRIGHT: 1979 AL-WATAN AL-ARABI

8592  
CSO: 4802

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

MOROCCO

JOURNAL CARRIES INTERVIEW WITH HASSAN AIDE ON SAHARA PROBLEM

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 4 Apr 79 pp 71-73 LD

[Interview with Moroccan King Hassan's adviser Ahmed Reda Guedira by Hamid Barrada "exclusive": "Morocco Will Give Priority to the Quest for a Negotiated Solution to the Problem of Sahara"--date and place not specified]

[Excerpt] JEUNE AFRIQUE: How would Morocco react to another attack by the Polisario Front similar to the attack against Tan-tan in February?

Ahmed Reda Guedira: Hitherto the Moroccan army was satisfied with insuring the citizens' security and defending localities under attack. Henceforth it will go further than that--it will pursue aggressors, trying to inflict on them the greatest possible losses but stopping short of fully exercising its right of pursuit [droit de suite]. This is one of the aspects of the policy stated in the royal message of 8 March.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Why has Morocco, which repeatedly and solemnly stated prior to 8 March its intention of fully exercising the right of pursuit, refrained from exercising it?

Ahmed Reda Guedira: Because we have deliberately limited our army's action.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: In that case, why did you mention the right of pursuit?

Ahmed Reda Guedira: In order to remind people of a naturally and legally acknowledged right possessed by any country whose territory is violated by aggressors based abroad. The exercise of this right depends on the political situation. Both the exigencies of defense and diplomatic requirements must be considered.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Will the National Security Council have any army officers as members?

Ahmed Reda Guedira: All council members will be representatives of "organized political movements." Members of the government and certain

28

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY



FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

representatives of the army will participate in the council's deliberations whenever their presence is deemed necessary.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Some people believe that the new Sahara policy amounts to offering the opposition a fools' bargain--war against Algeria in exchange of social peace....

Ahmed Reda Guedira: This is an erroneous interpretation since the message referred to Sahara and nothing else.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Nonetheless, it could be retorted that the new Sahara policy is not devoid of ulterior motives connected with social tensions.

Ahmed Reda Guedira: I can assure you that the King did not intend to make any deal with the opposition when he addressed his message to parliament. It is true, however, that a certain measure of social peace is necessary to enable Morocco fully to assume the responsibilities imposed on it by the situation prevailing in our Sahara.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: The King's recent visit to France, which seemed to presage a peaceful solution, was immediately followed by a hardening in Morocco's attitude. Should it be deduced from this that the visit proved to be of no avail after all?

Ahmed Reda Guedira: Let me repeat that the message constitutes a clarification rather than an indication of the adoption of a more hardline policy on our part and that in this context Morocco will continue to give priority to the quest for a negotiated solution. As for the King's visit to France, it has in no way proved unprofitable since it enabled the two heads of state to exchange views on a question which remains of fundamental importance to Morocco.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Did the two heads of state exchange viewpoints or did their viewpoints clash?

Ahmed Reda Guedira: Both.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Will not Franco-Moroccan relations suffer as a result of Rabat's new policy?

Ahmed Reda Guedira: Absolutely not. As far as I know, President Giscard d'Estaing has no specific or personal policy with respect to the Sahara problem. It seems to me that he is trying to help the parties concerned out of this deadlock and find a satisfactory solution.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Is he more likely to achieve this now (after 8 March) than he was in the past?

Ahmed Reda Guedira: Certainly. If he has not, it would not be our fault.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Mr Olivier Stirn, French secretary of state for foreign affairs, thought fit to state that a meeting between Hassan II and Chadli was "a possibility." It is believed in certain French diplomatic circles that it was merely a "slip of the tongue" or a "blunder" on his part. What exactly happened?

Ahmed Reda Guedira: It is not up to me to explain Mr Stirn's statements. However, I am able to state that what he said had no connection with the contents of the talks between President Giscard d'Estaing and King Hassan II.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: The King's recent statements on American television suggest that he has been unable to modify the U.S. attitude, especially toward the question of arms' supplies to Morocco....

Ahmed Reda Guedira: In 1960, Morocco and the United States concluded an arms agreement. The Americans have imposed on us a very strict interpretation of it which, in my view, is a consequence of misreading of the agreement, especially with reference to Sahara.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Is the United States prepared to let Morocco use arms it has supplied in former Spanish Sahara?

Ahmed Reda Guedira: We in fact use American arms to protect Sahara but quite often we have to explain the situation and discuss matters first.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Do you think that you will be able to modify the American attitude?

Ahmed Reda Guedira: We have conducted, and will continue to conduct, a large-scale explanatory campaign among American leaders. Despite the difficulties with which we have been faced, we have not lost hope that the United States will come to assess the situation more correctly and gain a better understanding of our policy.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Will the American attitude not lead to a rapprochement between Morocco and the Soviet Union?

Ahmed Reda Guedira: We have excellent relations with the Soviet Union and there is no reason why we should not ask it to supply us with arms.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Would it agree to supply arms to you?

Ahmed Rida Guedira: Certainly.

COPYRIGHT: Jeune Afrique GRUPJIA 1979

CSO: 4400

END