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21 August 1979

Near East/North Africa Report

(FOUO 32/79)



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NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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IRAN

IRAN SEEN ON VERGE OF COLLAPSE

Paris PARIS-MATCH in French 27 Jul 79 pp 36-44

[Article by novelist and reporter Jean Larteguy]

[Text] A well-known novelist as well as a great journalist, Jean Larteguy has been shuttling back and forth across the Middle East. His wanderings have taken him from Cairo to Tehran, via martyred Lebanon and a Syria racked by an Islamic crisis. Never has this volatile region looked so much like a cauldron simmering with the demons of war. It is here that the fate of oil-dependent Europe is being decided. It is along these borders that the two superpowers have traced blurred frontiers which the other must not cross. This week we publish the first in-depth report from Jean Larteguy on the shakiest of the region's nations, Iran, which obviously cannot long survive the ruinous follies of Imam Khomeyni, who rules there, answerable only to God.

Six months have passed since the Pahlavi dynasty was overthrown by Iman Khomeyni's Islamic revolution.

This half-year has brought defeat for the shah, who strove to go too far too quickly. It looks very much like defeat for Khomeyni and his mullahs, as well. You cannot change the temperament of a people in 20 years, any more than you can transport them back a century in the space of a few months. Khomeyni and his supporters managed to topple a frightened monarch unsure of himself, but they have shown themselves to be incapable of governing. There you have the roots of the tragedy Iran is going through today, and which may well mean its final end. Wherever I went I found disenchantment, and fear of what the future may bring. Not much is left of the heady exaltation of those days in January. Everywhere I found confusion and disarray. Nobody knows who is in charge, or who is to obey.

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Tehran was always an ugly city, a soulless place, but I had not expected to find it so gloomy, with its frozen cranes poised over buildings that will never be finished, with excavations that will never be filled in, its theaters charred by arson, its shops gutted because they belonged to Jews who sold alcohol or gaudy trinkets. The hotels are deserted: They serve nothing but Coca-Cola and wretched food, and even so people speak in undertones, as if the Shah's secret police, the SAVAK, were still lurking there to listen.

I took a taxi up the Avenue Shah Reza, now known as the Avenue Mosaddeq, the equivalent of our Champs Elysees. It was 1030 of a Friday evening--rather like a Sunday evening in Paris. On either side of the street, troops of the Guardians of the Revolution were sniping at each other with pistols and submachineguns. Other groups could be seen higher up, in combat fatigues, ready to take a hand in the fighting. Automobiles, to escape stray bullets, were driving full speed ahead and crashing into one another. The air was filled with hooting horns and the sound of crumpling fenders. Every night one can watch shootouts between rival gangs encroaching on somebody else's turf; every night, houses are searched for enemies of the revolution, for SAVAK agents, or for weapons, and when none of these are found, they carry off the carpets or the furniture as consolation prizes. From mysterious cars, equally mysterious commandos use militia barricades for target practice.

They have shot three prostitutes on charges of operating a callgirl system for foreigners. Poor girls! I wonder where in the world they could have found any customers! A man who imported pornographic books and films was executed along with them. He had an Armenian name, Begherian, and they took that as a pretext to call him a Zionist agent, although the charges against him were of the flimsiest.

One need only take an evening stroll through the southern quarter to stumble upon the latter-day equivalent of the Cour des Miracles: Sodom and Gomorrha; the hardest drugs openly on sale: Heroin and cocaine, not to mention opium. Reportedly, there are two million drug addicts in the Province of Tehran alone. The Koran, however, proscribes only alcohol. Nobody believes in the Islamic revolution any more. You see fewer and fewer chadors. If you make a little fuss, they will serve you vodka in certain restaurants. The Guardians of the Revolution offer you cases of whiskey at prices that are still prohibitive, which proves conclusively that not all the bottles were broken.

"If Khomeyni and his ayatollahs remain in power just one more year, Iran would cease to exist. Delivered over to anarchy, with no army, no police, no central government, it would swiftly lose its outlying provinces: Azerbaijan and Kurdistan to the north, Guilan and the Turkoman steppes on the Caspian, Khuzestan and its oil to the south, along with Belukestan, sole access to the sea for a Sovietized Afghanistan. No matter what the religious zealots may think, they can't do what they did in Cambodia, and

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pack the city-dwellers out into the country to go back to a subsistence economy when we don't even have enough to feed ourselves any more. Much less do so after the people have tasted, even in its delirium, a consumer society which was not altogether repugnant to everybody, particularly to the workers who profited by it." The man who spoke to me in such a voice of disillusionment has been one of Mosaddeq's closest associates, a leader of the National Front. He had experienced prison and exile. He was a practicing Muslim, but he felt that religion, while at times it might inspire policy, certainly ought not to make it.

An engineer who was my guide in Khuzestan had much the same sort of thing to say: "If Khomeyni and Semollah hang onto power for just a few months, wasting their time applying the law of the Koran to a people that has, after all, emerged from the Middle Ages, we shall slide into catastrophe. It will be like 1942, when we watched Iran carved into two spheres of influence: The north going to the Russians with its natural gas fields, and the south to the Americans with its oilfields, with puppet governments as their paid agents. Iran had been reunified by Shah Reza Khan, father of the present shah, around his person and his army. His son, after some hesitation, followed in his footsteps. The shah is gone; the army no longer exists, and Iran is back to its ancient tribal and ethnic quarrels. It is going to explode, and its explosion will incite such covetousness around it that a third world war may well break out."

I heard much the same thing from leaders of Arab or Kurdish minorities: "If Khomeyni does not understand our legitimate aspirations to autonomy, we shall seize our independence by force. If he remains obstinate, he will lose Iran, and we shall lose everything."

The rial, Iran's currency, is sinking on every market. It has lost half its value. Workers and government officials are still being paid for doing nothing, and even given raises. The merchants in the bazaars know that this joke cannot last long, and that it may well be they who are stuck with the bill. And yet they were the stoutest supporters of the "revolution." The middle class is scared, the technocrats are weeping over the good old days, and labor is restive. Nobody even knows who holds power. Officially, it is the Bazargan government, now sitting in Tehran. But that government is purely a pro forma outfit. Bazargan, an honest and learned man, represents nothing but himself and a political class with no grass roots. He exists only because the old man in Qom tolerates him. He goes along with Khomeyni's every whim. He resigns every morning, and withdraws his resignation every evening.

It is the Imam Khomeyni who, in the shadows of the holy mosque at Qom, makes all the decisions, who rules on everything, advised by a secret committee consisting of a majority of ayatollahs and doctors of the law whose average age is around 75, all of them extremists living in another era. The imam gets bogged down in niggling detail, like deciding what sort of clothing women must wear when they go swimming in the Caspian Sea, but pays no attention to the one essential: A country that is falling to pieces in his bony fingers.

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Leaderless Army

Of all the ayatollahs he was the least open-minded, the least educated. He was far behind men like Talegani, Milani, or Shar'iatmadari except for the size of his following.

He learned nothing, came to understand nothing, in the years of his exile. All he wanted was to get even with the Iranian monarchy, which he called a usurpation that had lasted 2,500 years. He was, though, the most stubborn, the most determined, the most intractable of them all, and he was the one people followed. The third government is in the streets, and obeys neither Bazargan nor Khomeyni. Most of it is Islamic, but there are parts of it that are Marxist fiefs. Marxist, be it noted, is a term that includes both the old-line Tudeh communist, who are discreet, and the leftists, who are by no means so. They would like to go even deeper into ferment and settling grudges, really to make this revolution that has thus far only been roughly sketched out.

Conditions were ripe for a successful military coup that would restore order to this rabble and keep the leftists and the Islamists from coming to blows. There was no longer any real shooting war and, even while there was one, in the distant provinces, it had lost its leaders. Even so, I searched, and I found nothing but stores of abandoned weapons and material.

Lined up close to the azure domes of Esfahan, in carefully serried ranks, each one pinned onto its pad like monstrous bugs in an entomology collection, dead as if they had been pickled in formaldehyde, doomed never again to take to the air, I found hundreds of the most modern helicopters in the world, truly fabulous machines. They were the shah's pride and joy, and he had paid billions of dollars for them. There is no other unit in the world to be compared with this one, except the U.S. 1st Cavalry Division, which Congress found too expensive. The shah, though, thought that nothing was too good for his "Sky Cavalry Brigade." All sizes of aircraft, from the shark-sleek Cobras with their rapid-fire guns to those fighting machines known as AHIGs, with their remote-controlled missiles, which cost so much that the shah had to pay the U.S. designers out of his own pocket. Huge, fat-bellied carriers, to transport 155-mm howitzers, heavy tanks, and an intervention section of 30 men with weapons and equipment several hundred kilometers from their bases.

This helicopter brigade was not merely a toy for its master to play with: It was the tool of his policy of grandeur, the supreme weapon of the guardian of the gulf and all its wealth. The copter-borne commandos of the brigade controlled the straits of Hormuz and its conveyor-belt for supertankers on the tiny island of Abu Mussa. They had intervened victoriously against the communist rebels in the Dhofar. Iraq, with its broad, open plains, dared not risk its obsolete tanks against such monsters. The Iraqi bowed, and the shah had helped them to put down the very Kurdish rebellion he had himself fomented. Kuwait, the Emirates, and even Saudi Arabia had to put up with the moods and ambitions of the man who claimed to be the heir of

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Cyrus and Darius, the king of kings, whose sword rusts now in the sands of Esfahan.

For the past 6 months, ever since the U.S. technicians who used to maintain them left Iran, not one helicopter has taken to the air, not one blade has turned. The pitiless winds, the sand, and the scorching sun have eaten away at these magnificent machines. There are now merely empty carcasses, just capable of creaking along in the last parade of a phantom army.

No More Fuel, No More Radar

Some 30 U.S. experts reportedly came secretly back to Esfahan, and found nothing to report but disaster. No more than 2 percent of the equipment was worth salvaging.

I asked around:

"Where are the pilots? The mechanics? There used to be thousands of them, competent men, trained at great expense in the United States, and well paid?"

People shrugged:

"Rats!" They're gone. Some of them went home, others got into trouble and are in prison. Still others were kicked out of the army. The mechanics have found jobs that let them hide in the garages. The soldiers' and non-coms' committees can't get such machines as these to operate without their officers. Some of them tried, and they fell flat on their faces. No more spare parts, no more fuel, the radar systems and the control towers don't work any more. Since the shah left, nobody has touched a thing. There was no sabotage, no destruction: Everybody simply walked off and left. You can see how neat everything is, but it's not good for anything but scrap.

When it came to the outskirts of Mahabad, capital of Iranian Kurdistan, there was a kind of market set up at the foot of a hill. Since a lot of gunfire seemed to come from there, I thought there was a fight going on, and I went closer to see. All they were doing was selling weapons. Every would-be purchaser, before making his choice, would try a weapon by shooting at a row of tin cans that had been set up as targets against the nearby cliff. There were Kurds in huge, baggy breeches with festoons of cartridge belts over their shoulders, fierce moustaches, and silk scarves wound round their heads, sitting on packing cases and offering fellow-Kurds their choice of complete assortments of weapons and ammunition. There were pistols, rifles, and automatic rifles, mainly U.S.-made and acquired from the shah's army. And there were some brand-new Kalashnikovs just out of their cases, still thick with grease, that had arrived that very day. And the prices would stop any competition cold in its tracks: For a few thousand rial, a few hundred francs, you could turn yourself into a walking arsenal, with revolvers, assault rifles with five clips, and your choice of grenades.

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"If you're shopping, we've got assault tanks, too," offered Ghassen Lou, the leader of the Kurdish Democratic Movement, in impeccable French. Sentenced to death by the shah, he managed to get away, and surfaced later as a professor at Vincennes University.

"Genuine Chieftains, we have," he went on. "Excellent British-made stuff. We also have a few cannon, some heavy mortars, some machineguns and tons of ammunition. You can find anything in the camp on the other side of Mahabad, where there used to be an armored brigade. The officers left first, then the troops, and they left us all this stuff. We know what to do with it."

Kurdistan is, for all practical purposes, independent. People drink wine here. Nowhere will you see a picture of Khomeyni, and the only bearded ayatollah I saw, taped to a shop-window, was Karl Marx.

Kurdestan and a few other outlying provinces, taking advantage of the power vacuum, are demanding autonomy, urging that Iran be made a federal republic.

"We Kurds," Qasemlu went on to explain, "have an unfortunate habit of asking for too much and getting nothing. This time, we are determined to be reasonable, and ask only a little bit so as to get a whole lot," bursting into laughter as he concluded. "We are demanding autonomy, whereas we are already independent."

There is nothing left of the Iranian army except for a few units strung out in Reza'iyeh, Piranshahr and Shapur, along the Turko-Iranian border. It still has some tanks that can move and some helicopters flying. But the officers, suspected of having served the shah and still being secretly loyal to him, are no longer obeyed by the troops, who have formed committees. Some leaders still manage to maintain a semblance of authority. They owe what success they have only to their personal prestige, or to having given themselves over totally to the demagoguery in style at the moment.

There are some units still capable of mounting active intervention for maybe 24 hours. Against guerrilla fighters as well trained and well armed as the Kurds are today, and as the Khuzestani Arabs will be tomorrow, if the war were to last any longer than that, they would simply melt away.

The army is paying for the shah's military policy. Fearful of military coups, he chose military leaders who were mere courtiers, and have suddenly disappeared from the scene.

Amateurs Slaughtering Each Other

There are two picturesque characters involved in this, more gang leaders than generals, not at all above dealing with their troops as if they were mercenaries: In the south, there is Vice Admiral Madani, who believes he can count on the Gulf Fleet and the Navy commandos---between 5,000 and 6,000 men.

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In Tehran there is General Rahimi, who heads the military police and commands 6,000 to 7,000 men, many of them veterans of shock-troop units. Because he had clashed with the soldiers' committees, he was recalled by Prime Minister Bazargan, who quickly perceived him as a potential rival. However, Iman Khomeyni restored him to his command on learning of the matter and beginning to discover the importance of having an army that obeys its leaders. Neither Madani nor Rahimi, though, with the couple of handfuls of men who will follow them, and over-dependent on the mullahs, can hope to seize power, although there are those who say both of them are thinking about it.

The same applies to the gendarmes (national constabulary) as to the army: They are nowhere to be seen. Acting in their place are committees which, according to the region in which they operate, are made up of Muslims, leftists, or autonomists. The gendarmerie's mission was to put down separatist movements and keep the tribes in hand. It is quite incapable of performing that mission and is trying, by letting people forget about it, to wangle a pardon for having too zealously and brutally performed the tasks assigned it.

The police! The way to spot a policeman is to watch him run away when an accident occurs. Iran, in this month of July, is a ship adrift. At the helm is a stubborn old man, squinting at the Koran to find his course, ignoring such inventions of the devil as maps, charts, or compasses. His crew: Army, police, gendarmerie, civil servants, have vanished, their places taken by amateurs from the militia, by committees who do whatever they feel like doing, and who sometimes kill one another over sordid personal interests. The terrified passengers huddle in their cabins, as the contrary winds drive the ship onto the reefs. The scavenging wreckers have lit great bonfires on the beach, waiting for the ship to break apart so that they can divide up the plunder.

Only a miracle can save her. Only a competent, able man, a man untainted with the stink of oil like the shah, who is not God's fool like Iman Khomeyni, could take the helm, get the crew back to duty stations, and pack the militia and the committees down into the hold. But where is this man to be found? Where will he come from? Shahpur Bakhtiar could have done it. But, because he underestimated Islam and because he tried to apply the laws of the constitution, because he was too Western, he was sent back to his tribe. Shall we see him again, riding at the head of a troop of Bakhtiar horsemen? Reza Khan managed to take over Iran with one brigade of Cossacks. Those days, though, are gone forever.

After long hesitation, the Russians have at last decided to intervene, playing both sides very cleverly against each other, the separatist movements they encourage and arm, using various intermediaries such as the Palestinians in the South; and the army, which they are helping to fall apart through the soldiers' and non-coms' committees. And all the while they reassure the officers, praising their nationalist sentiments, their love of order and discipline. Khomeyni has finally extended amnesty to all who served the shah.

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The Tudeh communists, merely a conveyor-belt from the Kremlin, offer infinitely more to that army: Rehabilitation, a chance to take over the government, to settle their grudges against the priests and the leftists, on condition, of course--the Russians will see to that--that they faithfully play Moscow's game. Just like Afghanistan, the Americans think. This time, though, the Americans have made up their minds not to let the Russians have it all their own way, and, if the army slips away from them, they will concentrate full pressure on the priests, and never mind how many sins the mullahs have charged them with. Events will force them to join as allies. The Americans are coming back on little cat feet; they are being discreet; they will swallow any insults, but then, what would one not do for a few million barrels of oil?

The mosques have been transformed into weapons depots by the Islamic militia. Communists and leftists have turned the universities into bristling arsenals. In Tehran alone, 300,000 guns of all calibers are lying there, waiting to be used.

All is in readiness for civil war.

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LIBYA

LABOR MIGRATION SUSTAINS DUALISTIC DEVELOPMENT

London THE MAGHREB REVIEW in English May-Jun 79 pp 95-102

[Article by J.S. Birks and C. A. Sinclair]

[Text]

Introduction

The popular tendency to regard the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya as unique is not justified; examination of the Libyan economy shows it to be similar to the other Arab capital rich oil exporting states, and as having experienced an almost identical pattern of development to that of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In common with other major oil exporters, Libya has been through a transformation of economy and society (First, 1974). The pace of change can be illustrated by the increase in estimated *per capita* income. In the early 1950s, when Libya was judged by the World Bank to be one of the poorest nations in the world, *per capita* income was estimated at \$40. A significant contribution was made at that time to Libya's foreign exchange earnings by exports of esparto grass and exports of scrap metal — collected World War II wrecks — so low were other foreign exchange earning capacities. By 1977 *per capita* income had exceeded \$6,000, placing Libya as fourth wealthiest of the Arab oil exporters in *per capita* terms (World Bank, 1978).

This profound change in Libya's circumstances has posed for Libyan planners almost identical problems to those faced in other oil exporting states of the Arab world (Mallakh, 1979). Of especial importance is the resolving of tensions within society, and contradictory aims in social and economic policy.

The transformed economy

Oil was first shipped from Libya in 1961. By 1968, Libyan exports of oil had risen to 7 per cent of the World's total, a level of production which it had taken Iran 40 years to reach.

Throughout the 1960s, Libya benefited from the geographical proximity to Europe and the high quality

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of her oil. Although sales of this oil were not, in many respects, on good terms for the Libyans, production increased rapidly; between 1963 and 1968, *per capita* gross domestic product rose from \$543 to \$2,057, an average annual increase of over 55 per cent (UNIDO, 1976). Following the coup of September, 1969, and the establishment of the Revolutionary Command Council (now replaced by the 'General People's Congress') under Mu'ammarr Gadafi, Libya featured as leader of the Arab oil producers in discussions over the price of oil. The success of these negotiations is well known. Despite occasional cash flow problems causing slight trimmings in the sale price of Libyan oil to increase sales, the post-1970 policy of reducing oil liftings and exports contemporaneously with negotiating an increased take per barrel has been a marked success overall. It became less effective only in 1976 and 1977 with the world 'oil glut', and increased competition from the North Sea sources.

Today, Libya is well placed to negotiate further price increases, despite the competitive market in which her grade of oil sells. The Government's income, with but small declines, has been able to finance domestic growth on as a rapid and sustained a scale as the country could reasonably have maintained. Indeed, output of oil, according to the Secretariat for Oil (Libyan National Oil Co., 1978) 'will remain below 3.5 million barrels per day for conservation reasons'. This is important to Libya, with relatively modest reserves, estimated at some 20 years or so at current rates of extraction.

The transformation of the economy is well demonstrated by Table 1, which shows the accelerating growth of the 1970s. In the Three Year Development Plan, which ended in 1975, several optimistic growth targets

TABLE 1

INDUSTRIAL ORIGIN OF GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT AT CURRENT FACTOR COST (000 L.D.) 1964, 1973 and 1974

Sector	1964 ¹	%	1973	%	1974	%	% Change 1973-1974
Agriculture	16	14.0	60.0	2.7	64.7	1.6	7.8
Mining and Quarrying	196	54.0	1,136.8	52.1	2,894.4	61.2	111.1
Manufacturing	11	3.0	50.8	2.3	74.5	1.9	46.7
Construction	22	6.0	261.2	12.0	401.6	10.3	53.8
Electricity, Gas and Water	1	—	10.8	0.5	12.4	0.3	14.8
Transport, Storage and Communications	15	4.0	129.3	5.9	192.9	4.9	49.2
Wholesale and Retail Trade	20	6.0	124.8	5.7	184.2	4.7	47.6
Public Administration and Other Government Services	26	7.0	345.8	15.9	494.7	12.7	43.1
Services	56	16.0	62.8	2.9	93.9	2.4	49.5
	363	100.0	2,182.2	100.0	3,908.3	100.0	79.1

¹ Figures rounded in original source.

SOURCE: Ministry of Planning and Scientific Research.

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were exceeded, and 19.5 per cent growth in non-oil production was achieved. (Ministry of Social and Economic Planning, nd.; Sultan, 1977). Only in agriculture did expenditure and achievement fall below target figures. Libya is now embarked upon an even more optimistic development plan (1976-1980), which envisages an annual increase in gross national product of 10 per cent in real terms. To this end, development expenditure accounted through the plan for 1977 alone amounts to over \$5,000 million.

In general terms, the current plan aims to diversify the economy further, but in particular to establish heavy industry and to achieve self-sufficiency in food production. These aims are to generate an income independent of oil in the near future, and also a base for a future economy following the depletion of Libya's relatively modest reserves. A decline in agriculture in two or three decades time, when the population will have increased and the foreign exchange earning capacity of Libyan oil has fallen, would be much more critical than the present day malaise in the sector. Today, domestic production accounts for only some 14 per cent of Libya's total needs. In the late 1960s, agricultural output expanded at less than the rate of population growth and throughout the 1970s, apart from some modern agricultural projects, the decline of the sector has continued. Import dependence on most agricultural products has risen commensurately.

The previous plan (1972-1975) was successful in

the iron and steel complex at Misurata (at a cost of over \$1,000 million), the new chemical complex at Tobruk and an aluminium plant. This type of development is accompanied by increased infrastructure provision. The present Libyan plan represents an ambitious blueprint for development, even by the exotic standards of the Arab capital rich states.

The expanding labour market

The transformed economy has, of course, brought about rapid evolution of the labour market. In 1964 there were some 97,000 economically active; by 1969 this had almost doubled to 182,000; in 1974, the increase was still more remarkable, the total employed having risen to 540,000. In 1975 the total workforce is estimated to have been 677,000. The projected figure for 1980 is 930,000.

Table 2 shows the recent and planned evolution of the workforce by sector of employment. In 1973, before the recent rapid spurt of growth, the numbers of workers in agriculture amounted to almost one quarter of the total. (In 1964, employment in agriculture had amounted to 40 per cent of the total). Between 1973 and 1976 numbers in agriculture fell to less than one fifth of the total employment. During this period the sector displayed much evidence of decline, and seems likely to decay further.

Although experiencing a considerable increase over the past decade, employment in manufacturing remains

TABLE 2
LABOUR FORCE BY SECTOR OF EMPLOYMENT, NUMBER IN THOUSANDS, AND PERCENTAGES (1973-1980)

Sector	1973		1975		1980	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Agriculture	129.0	24.0	133.1	19.6	157.8	17.0
Oil and Gas	10.2	1.9	10.7	1.6	12.5	1.3
Mining	5.1	0.9	6.9	1.0	10.0	1.1
Other Manufacturing	25.9	4.8	32.9	4.9	55.9	6.0
Electricity, Gas and Water	10.2	1.9	13.0	1.9	18.0	1.9
Construction	90.4	16.8	152.6	22.5	225.6	24.3
Trade, Hotels	39.3	7.3	48.5	7.2	60.0	6.5
Transport, Storage & Communications	45.0	8.4	53.4	7.9	74.8	8.1
Banking and Insurance	6.5	1.2	7.7	1.1	10.4	1.1
Public Administration and Defence	63.6	11.8	71.1	10.5	82.8	8.9
Education	45.8	8.5	58.0	8.6	91.0	9.8
Health	23.5	4.4	30.5	4.5	43.6	4.7
Other Services	43.6	8.1	58.7	8.7	86.4	9.3
Total	538.1	100.0	677.1	100.0	928.8	100.0

SOURCES: *Population Census, 1973*, Tripoli, 1975, *Economic and Social Transformation Plan (1976-1980)*, Secretariat of Planning; MIED, 8.8.1977, *Libya*, p. 7.

establishing small scale import substitution industries. Since then, growth in manufacturing has continued. Industrial production in 1977 totalled \$245 million, which represented an increase of 34 per cent over 1976 (Centre for Statistics, Ministry of Planning, 1978). It remains to be seen, however, whether this rate of growth will be continued when the change of emphasis towards heavy industry has become significant. Examples of the new industrial policy's ventures include

a small proportion of the total (about 10 per cent). This, nevertheless, represents a considerable success in moves towards diversification of the economy. Despite the rapid overall increase in the size of the labour market, the proportion of employment in construction has increased, and it is envisaged that it will continue to do so. The construction boom is continuing. The relatively small amount of employment in the service sector compared to other Arab oil exporters (for

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example, Kuwait) is notable. It is not clear whether this is a result of the all encompassing planning that has been a feature of Libyan development in the 1970s, or because of the relative immaturity of Libya's economy. Even so, there has been considerable growth in tertiary sector employment; in 1975 services accounted for half the economically active population, compared to 39 per cent of the smaller workforce in 1964. There are signs that the proportion of the workforce employed in the service sector is about to rise rapidly.

The composition of the labour force, nationals and non-nationals

The Libyan population, of some 2.2 million in 1975, could not, of course, provide all the manpower needed for such rapid economic growth. Indeed, the expansion of numbers of Libyans entering the labour force has been slower than the overall rate of population growth (1.7 per annum compared with 3.6 per cent per annum respectively); the crude activity rate of the Libyan national population fell from almost 25 per cent in 1964 to less than 21 per cent in 1973. This was because of the increased proportion of the population aged less than 15 years, and the fact that Libyan youths who would have entered the labour force in their teens are being held within higher education. Thus, despite rapid population growth, the expansion of the Libyan national labour force has been relatively modest. Certainly, in terms of the modern industrial state that planners are attempting to create in Libya, the indigenous population is too small to provide either an adequate workforce, or even a substantial domestic market for manufacturing products.

Moreover, the level of educational attainment of the Libyan population is low. Libya experienced the replacement of her traditional Koranic system of education by a colonial style of schooling under the Italians. Yet enrolment even at primary level remained low: in 1952 a UNESCO mission found that over 90 per

cent of the Libyan population was illiterate (UNESCO, 1952). The illiteracy rate of 61 per cent in 1973 therefore represents a considerable improvement (Ministry of Education, 1976).

As important as the overall educational level of the population is the orientation of the education system. It is biased strongly towards general education, and away from technical and scientific subjects. Although efforts, facilitated by oil revenues, are being made to alter this orientation of the education system, the lack of technically and scientifically qualified Libyans will be a major problem for years to come. Investment in education — although considerable — is absorbed in large part by the expansion in the numbers of those of school age because of rapid population increase. Therefore, the \$12 million spent on education in 1978, for example, does not help change the emphasis of the system to the extent that might at first be envisaged.

The small absolute number of indigenous population, with limited educational qualifications in terms of modern sector development, has meant that with increasing economic growth, Libya's reliance upon imported labour has grown markedly (Table 3). Expatriates in the labour force increased almost three-fold between 1972 and 1975. In 1964 there were a mere 17,300 non-nationals in the country. Since 1975, the numbers have increased further; by 1976 the number of Non-Libyan Arabs alone had increased to 229,000. By 1977 there were over 400,000 expatriates employed in Libya.

TABLE 3

**THE GROWTH OF NON-LIBYAN EMPLOYMENT
1972-1975**

Year	1972	1973	1974	1975
Number of Non-Libyans	81,000	118,345	169,765	223,000

SOURCE: Ministry of Planning and Scientific Research, Unpublished Data.

TABLE 4

DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL AND NON-LIBYAN EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR, 1975

Economic Activity	Total Employment		Non-Libyan		Non-Libyan Employment (All Employment)
	000's	%	000's	%	
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	133.1	19.7	17.6	7.9	13.2
Petroleum and Gas	10.7	1.6	2.7	1.2	25.2
Mining and Quarrying	6.9	1.0	2.8	1.3	40.6
Manufacturing	32.9	4.9	13.8	6.2	41.9
Electricity, Gas and Water	13.0	1.9	3.6	1.6	27.7
Construction	152.6	22.5	118.0	53.0	77.5
Trade, Restaurants and Hotels	48.5	7.2	7.7	3.5	15.9
Transport, Storage and Communications	53.4	7.9	6.2	2.8	11.6
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	7.7	1.1	1.6	0.7	20.8
Public Administration	71.1	10.5	5.2	2.3	7.3
Educational Services	58.0	8.6	14.1	6.3	24.3
Health Services	30.5	4.5	9.8	4.7	32.1
Other	58.7	8.6	19.6	8.8	33.4
Total	677.1	100.0	222.7	100.0	32.9

SOURCE: Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Planning and Scientific Research, Demography and Manpower Section, Mimeographed Report in Arabic, n.d.

TABLE 5
EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATIONAL STATUS, LIBYANS AND NON-LIBYANS, 1975

	Libyans and Non-Libyans		Non-Libyans Only		Non-Libyan Employment as a percentage of the total
	Total Employment 000's	%	Non-Libyan	%	
Professional and Managerial	24.7	4.1	16.1	7.2	58.1
Technicians and Supervisors	58.1	8.6	20.4	9.1	35.1
Clerical Workers	37.5	5.5	6.2	2.7	16.5
Skilled and Semi-Skilled Workers	346.6	51.2	95.2	42.7	27.5
Unskilled Workers	207.2	30.6	85.1	38.3	41.1
	677.1	100.0	223.0	100.0	32.9

SOURCE: Ministry of Planning and Scientific Research.

In 1973, the overall share of the workforce comprised by the 118,000 expatriates was 28 per cent. By 1975, this proportion had increased to 33 per cent. Aspects of the qualitative dependence upon non-national labour of the Libyan economy are shown for 1975 in Table 4.

The highest share of the labour market absorbed by expatriates is in construction, where over three workers out of four were non-national in 1975. The labour in the manufacturing sector, so significant to Libya's future planning, was almost one half expatriate in 1975. Public administration — in which posts are specifically reserved for Libyan nationals — has the lowest dependence upon expatriates.

Important to this analysis are the numbers in agriculture. Only 13 per cent of workers in agriculture are non-national. However, it is these workers who represent most of the labour in modern sector agricultural production. The 133,000 Libyans in agriculture are largely in traditional sector farming, with low levels of production, low cash return, low levels of investment and few signs of modernisation. If these traditional sector workers are excluded, then Libya's reliance upon migrant workers appears greater: 38 per cent of the modern sector labour force was non-national in 1975.

Other facets of Libya's dependence upon expatriate workers are demonstrated in Table 5. Over 58 per cent of professional and managerial manpower is non-national, as are over one third of technicians and supervisors. Only in the case of clerical workers does the expatriate element fall below one quarter. Dependence upon non-national labour increased in all occupational categories between 1973 and 1975. Since 1975, this trend has continued yet more steeply.

Table 6 shows predicted shortfalls in labour, of various skill levels, which are expected to accrue by 1980. These shortages are wide-ranging and substantial; only by importing extra labour can Libya's development plans be met. It is expected that by 1980, non-national will be contributing some 41.3 per cent of total employment. The scale of imports can be illustrated by the need for some 4,130 teachers, together with 800 medical doctors.

Imports of labour on this scale and of this qualification represent a major call on the suppliers of labour

from which Libya draws her expatriates. The analysis now turns to the pattern of nationalities that are represented in Libya's expatriate community.

The origins of expatriate labour in Libya

Table 7 shows that over one half (almost 57 per cent) of non-Libyan workers derived from Egypt in 1975. Less than one quarter derived from Tunisia, the next most important exporter of labour to Libya (Findlay, 1978). Of the remaining labour suppliers only Syria supplied more than 10,000 (sending 4.8 per cent of the total expatriate labour force). Together, the Arab world, according to these figures, accounts for 85.5 per cent labour imported by Libya. Pakistan supplies over 4,500 workers, and Yugoslavia over 7,500.

TABLE 6
EXPECTED SHORTFALLS IN LABOUR SUPPLIES AT
VARIOUS SKILL LEVELS 1976-1980

Occupational Group	Demand	Supply	Shortfall
Professional and Managerial			
Personnel	18,170	9,360	8,910
Technicians	40,690	29,900	10,790
Clerical Workers	15,880	15,090	790
Skilled and Semi-Skilled			
Workers	157,145	84,350	72,795
Unskilled Workers	71,615	4,300	67,315
Total	303,600	143,000	160,600

SOURCE: Economic and Social Transformation Plan.

Examination of the origins of Arab workers by nationality makes changing patterns apparent. Table 8 shows the changing contribution of various Arab states to the Libyan labour force for the period 1972-1976. The number of Egyptian workers has been rising proportionally, as well as in absolute terms, increasing from less than 50 per cent in 1972 to over two thirds of the total number of Arab expatriate workers in Libya in 1976. As a result of this increased Egyptian share, most other Arab nations have contributed a progressively declining proportion. The exceptions to this appear to be the Sudanese, who only started arriving in significant numbers in 1976, and the Moroccans, who

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TABLE 7
NUMBERS OF EXPATRIATE WORKERS IN LIBYA BY
NATIONALITY IN DECEMBER 1975

Nationality	Number	Per cent
Egypt	148,070	56.7
Tunisia	37,674	14.4
Syria	12,608	4.8
Jordan	6,899	2.6
Palestine	6,570	2.5
Lebanon	5,363	2.1
Sudan	4,250	1.6
Morocco	1,950	.8
	(223,584)	(85.5)
Pakistan	4,541	1.7
Yugoslavia	7,641	2.9
U.K.	5,633	1.4
Rumania	2,214	
U.S.A.	2,173	
Italy	2,087	
Bulgaria	2,073	
Turkey	1,923	
France	1,884	
Germany	1,376	
Greece	1,085	
	(254,214)	
Other	7,054	
Total	261,268	100.0

SOURCE: Ministry of Labour; Immigration Department, Secretariat of the Interior.

were also not present in large enough numbers prior to 1976 to feature in the Table. Between 1972 and 1976, the number of Tunisians working in Libya almost doubled. Whilst partly a reflection simply of employment demand in Libya, the return of Tunisian workers from Europe, where the demand for expatriate labour in France is falling, is also significant in raising this number (Findlay, 1978).

number of Lebanese fell by almost 50 per cent between 1972 and 1976, presumably because of the return of many Lebanese to their home country following the easing of conditions there.

Clandestine labour migration to Libya

Illegal migration does not affect numbers of all nationalities and skill levels who migrate into Libya for employment, but it swells the numbers of unskilled in the country beyond the dimensions suggested by the official figures quoted here. In particular, the clandestine movements of Tunisian, Egyptian and Sudanese labourers is significant.

In the case of Tunisians, for example, statistics suggest that numbers entering Libya doubled each year between 1970 and 1973, when 11,519 migrants emigrated under contract (Findlay, 1978). O.C.D.E. statistics suggest a total of 45,000 Tunisians in Libya by 1973, a very different figure from 34,000 in 1976, shown in Table 8. George estimated 80,000 Tunisians in Libya by the end of 1974 (Findlay, 1978; George, 1976).

With estimates as varied as these, it is difficult to assess the level of illegal migration. However, in 1971, for 2,984 Tunisian migrants who entered Libya legally, some 40,665 were prevented from crossing the border because they had no authorisation. That numbers living illegally in Libya are high is beyond dispute (Findlay, 1978). In 1976 Libya expelled 13,700 Tunisians who were clandestine migrants. There are probably about 40,000 to 45,000 Tunisians in Libya. Almost all of these are workers. Very few are women and dependents.

Estimates of the numbers of Egyptians working in Libya are as hard to assess and make. There are more than the 153,000 economically active officially recorded (Table 8). The present authors estimate that, at the

TABLE 8
NUMBERS OF NON-LIBYAN ARABS IN THE WORKFORCE, 1972-1976

Nationality	1972		1976		Decrease or Increase of Each Nationality	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Egyptians	44,764	49.3	153,284	66.8	+108,520	242.4
Tunisians	17,252	19.0	34,650	15.1	+ 17,398	100.1
Syrians	4,812	5.3	13,029	5.7	+ 8,217	170.8
Jordanians	4,358	4.8	7,253	3.2	+ 2,895	66.4
Palestinians	5,266	5.8	6,913	3.0	+ 1,647	31.3
Lebanese	11,441	12.6	5,771	2.5	- 5,670	- 49.6
Sudanese	n.a.	n.a.	5,004	2.2	5,004	
Moroccan	n.a.	n.a.	2,466	1.1	2,466	
Others	2,906	3.2	1,015	0.4	- 1,891	
Totals	90,799	100.0	229,385	100.0	+138,586	+152.6

SOURCE: Ministry of Labour information.

The number of Syrians working in Libya nearly tripled; yet numbers of Syrian expatriate workers elsewhere have not risen so rapidly — this reflects a special relationship building up between Syria and Libya, the latter becoming a major donor of aid and military equipment to the Syrian Arab Republic. The

end of 1975, there were almost 230,000 economically active Egyptians living in Libya (Birks and Sinclair, 1979). Numbers of Sudanese in Libya have been fluxing rapidly. Today, there are over 8,000 economically active Sudanese in Libya, and in 1975 there were more than the 5,000 recorded officially.

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Table 9 shows the corrected totals of economically active Arab expatriates in Libya. It makes the non-national contribution to the workforce look rather greater than the Libyan figures acknowledge. Table 9 also shows the overall sizes of the non-Libyan communities which are living in Libya, calculated by applying crude participation rates found in expatriate communities elsewhere, where documentation is superior. This is not, however, a straightforward process; crude participation rates of expatriate communities change over time, and vary widely. In Libya, political constraints and the pattern of economic development suggest that relatively few dependents accompany the economically active expatriates. A crude participation rate of 70 per cent has therefore been used to compute the total populations of the various Arab communities in Table 9.

The number of some 310,000 non-national Arabs working in Libya comprises part of an immigrant Arab community of up to 480,000 persons in 1975. This is a much larger non-national Arab community than official figures acknowledge. Moreover, since that time, both

TABLE 9
ARAB EXPATRIATES IN LIBYA BY ECONOMIC STATUS
AND NATIONALITY, 1975/76*

Nationality	Number of Economically Active	Total Number of Expatriates
Egyptians	229,500 ¹	275,000-380,000 ¹
Tunisians	38,500 ²	40,000- 45,000 ²
Syrians	13,000 ³	16,900 ³
Jordanians	7,250 ⁴	9,425 ⁴
Sudanese	7,000 ⁴	9,100 ⁴
Palestinians	6,900 ⁵	8,970 ⁵
Lebanese	5,700 ⁵	7,410 ⁵
Moroccan	2,500 ⁵	3,250 ⁵
Other Arabs	2,000 ⁵	2,600 ⁵
Totals	312,350	372,655-482,655

* Figures date from the year end of 1975.

SOURCE: Birks, J. S., and Sinclair, C. A., *Contemporary International Labour Migration in the Arab Middle East*, Geneva, I.L.O., 1979, Table 10.

figures have increased markedly. In 1978 there are probably over 350,000 non-Libyan Arab workers in the country, many of whom are clandestine migrants.

Numbers of non-Arab expatriates in Libya do not involve the same proportion of illegal migrants, but are also increasingly rapidly. For example, Table 7 shows a population of 3,600 U.K. expatriates in Libya; by 1977 this had risen to over 5,000. In March 1978, the Koreans were negotiating contracts which involved the bringing in of almost 1,000 workers of that nationality. Numbers of Pakistanis and Turks have increased rapidly. Data on Pakistanis are rare, but it is likely that they now number over 7,000 (compared to less than 5,000 in 1975).

Libya has asked Turkey for 100,000 workers (Hakeri, 1977). At present some 10,000 Turks are believed to be working in Libya. Mohammed al Fatouri

has said 'Libya has vacancies for 250,000 foreign workers' and that Libya 'would like these filled by Turks' (Ministry of Planning, 1976). Eastern European labour is also featuring increasingly.

The implications of these imports of labour

There can be no doubt that the imports of labour have enhanced the indigenous labour force considerably in terms of both numbers and skills. This has facilitated a scale and pace of development which would otherwise have been quite impossible.

Against this must be set a series of indirect costs (Gupta, 1976). Of particular interest in the Libyan case is increased imports of consumer goods because of expatriates' purchase of goods to take home with them. This is particularly true of, for example, Sudanese, who find it very difficult to purchase consumer goods at home. Their purchases of luxury and consumer goods are bound to put extra pressure on the Libyan balance of payments, and drain the foreign currency reserves. Whilst Libya has managed to remain in surplus, these purchases of consumer goods are significant because they are being made when investment expenditure, upon which the present plan is based, is suffering marked inflationary pressures.

There is also the question of the political vulnerability of the groups who migrate internationally. Quite apart from the individual disruption of their personal lives as a result of what amount to refugee movements during enforced repatriation, there is also the question of the impact of the politically stimulated migrations upon production. The repatriations of some 14,000 Tunisians in 1972, and the return migrations of numbers of Egyptians following the Libyan/Egyptian war of July 1977, certainly had some impact upon the economy of Libya. This is, from the host country's point of view, one of the disadvantages of relying so heavily upon one nation (Egypt, and to a slightly lesser extent, Tunisia) as a source of labour.

It is largely because of this awareness that Libya has begun looking elsewhere -- for example to Turkey -- for an alternative labour supply. Apart from seeking labour in Turkey, Libya has also attempted to draw more labour from Eastern Europe, and in particular Yugoslavia. Manpower from these alternative sources has other advantages attached to it than a simple diversification of supply. Under the contracts by which Libya negotiates utilisation of Yugoslavian labour, the manpower comprises part of a wider package, under which Libya and Yugoslavia are building the Libyan aluminium smelter as a joint enterprise. Thus the supply of labour is part of a bilateral agreement dealing with exchange of financial capital, expertise, raw materials and machinery.

This process of formalising the supply of labour, and making manpower provision part of a large latch key contract, has been taken to new extremes by Korean and other Oriental companies, who since 1973, have made great inroads as contractors and suppliers of labour in the Arab world. In Libya, as in all the other

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capital rich states of the Arab world, the number of Oriental workers is increasing rapidly. These Oriental companies are working on major contracts which amount to enclave developments, isolated in labour market terms from the host country economy at large. Moreover, during the period for which they are resident in the capital rich state, the Oriental labour force on the development remains largely apart from the indigenous and immigrant Arab populations. Certainly they do not make substantial consumer purchases, and so do not put further pressure on the host country balance of payments. The isolation of the Oriental workers in the enclave development from the domestic labour market of the host country obviates the need to recruit labour locally, and so formalises labour supplies, cutting down opportunities for spontaneous migration for employment in the capital rich states.

On completion of the enclave contract, the Oriental labour forces depart for home, and do not daily seeking other employment, by which process Arab migrant workers effectively establish themselves permanently. Capital rich countries, including Libya, are increasingly trying to discourage the build up of permanent non-national communities. Apart from viewing them as a potential social problem, the economic costs of providing infrastructure and services for these immigrant communities are very high. In their complete departure from the host country on completion of their contract, and isolation from the indigenous populations, the Oriental contractors hold great attraction for the Libyans, quite apart from their competitive tenders.

It is with these advantages in mind that the Libyan planners are attempting to have more major contracts put out to tender to Oriental companies.

The Libyans see the utilisation of more bilateral agreements with non-Arab countries, and in particular the tendering of major projects to Asian companies, as offsetting many of the disadvantages associated with importing labour. However, the major deleterious impact of importing labour is less tangible. It concerns the stunting of the development and utilisation of Libya's indigenous human capital. This problem is especially acute in Libya because of the high levels of clandestine migration, mostly at low skill level, which make it impossible to control or monitor the labour market. Quite apart from the obvious and immediate disadvantages of having a substantial number of undocumented illegal immigrants in the country, and the social and possible disruption that this engenders, there are some important wider issues.

A direct result of the inability to control immigration into Libya is lack of control of the new influxes to the labour market. Consequently, it is thought increasingly likely that large numbers of immigrants are given opportunities in wage employment in preference to Libyans. This is because the clandestine immigrants are willing to work for lower rewards than Libyan nationals will accept, and which are, indeed, often less than the legal minimum. The problem is made acute by the fact

that the skill and educational levels of many of the Arab migrants — both clandestine and legal — are the same as those of the mass of the Libyan population; they are of low educational attainment, limited modern sector work experience, and tend to be semi- or unskilled.

Thus the large number of unskilled immigrants has displaced Libyans from many positions in the modern sector open to the unskilled and semi-skilled. Equally significantly, these large numbers of non-national migrants for employment have allowed Libyans to move out of those occupations in the modern sector which they consider under-remunerated and least desirable, without the Libyan economy having suffered significantly as a direct result. The problem is that these very positions from which Libyans are departing are the *only opportunities in the modern sector* open to many of the Libyan national population. Therefore, in shunning these undesirable jobs, *many Libyans are opting out of the modern sector.*

As they opt out of, or do not enter the modern sector, Libyans prejudice adversely their country's economic development. Libya suffers an inordinate reliance upon immigrant labour in occupations where she could be much more nearly self-sufficient than is presently the case. As time passes, certain modern sector occupations, considered by Libyans to be in any case undesirable, become associated increasingly with non-national labour, with the result that progressively fewer Libyans are prepared to work in them. It becomes, therefore, even more difficult to motivate Libyan nationals to work within these occupations for normal remuneration related to marginal product. Yet, as noted, because of the Libyans' low educational attainment, these are the very posts by which they should be gaining modern sector work experience.

In not entering the modern sector, Libyans do not engage in large numbers in modern productive agriculture. Numbers of Libyans remain in the traditional sector, living in rural areas and virtually completely cut off from modern sector development. They represent the traditional, 'rural sector of a dualistic pattern of development which is becoming increasingly acutely drawn in Libya. They produce only small amounts of cash crops on their farms, using the land for subsistence crops which require low labour inputs. As noted, the modern productive aspect of Libyan agriculture is small, employs a number of non-nationals, and only few Libyans (Lawless, 1976). The dual economy model is also sustained within agriculture, therefore.

The day to day income of these rural populations derives largely from non-wage sources, such as social security payments, and disbursements based on patronage. These are augmented by periodic or part-time spells of work in certain occupations within the modern sector. The rewards from this 'informal participation' in the modern sector are high — many nations' salaries containing an element of rent and therefore being artificially raised — and so serve to provide these rural based families with what they consider to be a satisfactory standard of living. This, importantly,

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includes a large amount of leisure.

Thus Libyan planners are placed in something of a dilemma over migration into Libya of large numbers for employment. Immigrant labour, particularly skilled and qualified labour of high educational attainment, is essential, despite the element of external dependence that this brings about, if economic development is to continue at all. If the rates of economic growth are to continue at anything approaching planned levels, then greatly increased amounts of imported labour of all skill levels are inevitable.

Yet the continued rapid pace of development will inevitably engender further clandestine migration across Libya's long open borders. This will serve to aggravate the isolation of many Libyans from their own modern sector development. The task of the development of Libya's indigenous human capital, with its low level of educational attainment and lack of modern sector work experience, is anyway one of immense difficulty. As many Libyans in rural areas become further alienated from the modern sector, and less inclined to work in it on a realistic basis, it will become increasingly difficult to break down the pattern of dualistic development. Yet only the end of the dual economy will enable the Libyan population to share fully in and facilitate further modern sector economic development.

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MAURITANIA

NATION STILL IN CONFUSION ONE YEAR AFTER OULD DADDAH'S FALL

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 18 Jul 79 pp 26, 27

[Article by Abdelaziz Dahmani: "Military Caught in a Trap"]

[Excerpt] On 10 July 1978 officers spreading out in all directions overthrew Mokhtar Ould Daddah. One year later chaos reigns.

It was only a year ago, but the 10 July 1978 seems a long way off from today because the country has been subjected to so much upheaval during the past 12 months. On that day, the Mokhtar Ould Daddah Regime fell, the victim of erosion of power, of the weight of war, of stifling of the economy, of delays in the receipt of the aid promised by friendly nations.

One year later, without war, the situation, while no more worrisome than then, is hardly more brilliant. Devoured by an appetite for foreign "vultures," torn apart in the interior by tribalist demons, the nation is on the brink of destruction. As a result, the popularity of Mokhtar Ould Daddah, stubborn, cloaked in his dignity and his silence, has again risen to its peak. Just as it did when independence was won, when the capital was created or MINFERMA [Iron-Mining Company of Mauritania] nationalized and as a result iron from Zouerate, one of the nation's chief sources of wealth, became his Achilles' heel. Yet Mokhtar Ould Daddah is today only a prisoner from afar, secretly brought back to the military fort of Oualata in the very heart of the desert. In a way, it is the revenge of political savvy over arms...

One year was enough to prove that there is no plethora of great statesmen and that sometimes the fate of a nation is linked to the vision of one of these when he is exceptionally well endowed with lucidity, quiet courage, simplicity and radiant good will. This is true to such an extent that we have been able to recognize in Mokhtar Ould Daddah's character traits those of an entire nation, appealing and respected as he was.

In such cases the exercise of power appears to be an easy matter. All one has to do is imitate the master. But, in the euphory of the coup, in the exultation over the seizure of power, they forget that on the morning of

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the 10 July 1978 there was not a single political prisoner to be found in Mauritania, despite 3 years of war. And that, at the end of 20 years in power, Mokhtar Ould Daddah was poor. This state of affairs is so rare nowadays that all his successors had to do was to entangle themselves in errors and contradictions in order for the former president to recover his popularity. In this country of moderation and discretion, some people made a saint of him, although during his presidency he was always opposed to any sort of personality cult.

For him, power meant his office without air conditioner, jaunts throughout the country, many trips abroad where he forced De Gaulle, Nasser and Mao to respect this nation and gained the respect of Hassan II and many others. He who, when he was on vacation, loved to get on a bus and lose himself in faceless crowds once refused to go to Moscow because Leonid Brezhnev had let it be known that he would not go to the airport to welcome him: "I do not bargain with my dignity," he replied. And in November 1975 when Boumedienne threatened him with reprisals if he continued to refuse to respect the agreements signed with Morocco, he came up with this superb rejoinder: "Mauritania is poor and weak. As for me, I have only my word of honor and I have already given it." Then came a time of war, the Polisario's attacks on Zouerate and the 10 July 1978 coup. After Colonel Ould Saleck's takeover and the military's subsequent attempt at collective government, Ould Saleck himself assumed "full power" in March 1979 prior to his being ousted in early April by Lt Col Ahmed Ould Bousseif's clique. This new strong man lasted only a few weeks before his accidental death in a plane crash off the coast of Dakar (27 May). Moustafa Ould Saleck attempted to regain power but the other officers forced him to resign. Since then, discreet Lt Col Mahmoud Ould Louly has occupied the presidency, assuming office shortly after Lt Col Khouna Ould Haidalla became prime minister. Haidalla is actually the new ruler, backed by new advisors and idea men.

Thus Mauritania has successively been influenced by different pro or con forces: Polisario, Moroccan, Algerian, Baathist, Libyan, Saudi, French, Senegalese, Malian, ... All of these have tried and are still trying to tear the country apart. Hence the disagreements and settling of accounts, the chaos and the doubt. Each of these has its own conception of "its" Mauritania in a confusion of the most contradictory of interests and an impressive waltz of ministries and policies.

These stops and starts are caused by the two different speeds at which the country is moving. On the one hand, it is moving too slowly in its efforts to find a solution to the Sahara problem, which is stagnating due to the effect of a twofold determination, that of Morocco, on the one hand, and of Algeria and the Polisario on the other. At the same time, Mauritania is anxious to escape from the "Saharan hornet's nest." The result: the initiatives and influence of the military are becoming more and more limited and discredited. Four of them have already followed Mokhtar Ould Daddah in office!

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In this chaotic situation, civilian administrators are the scapegoats. Several former Ould Daddah ministers have been asked to leave Nouakchott and return to their home towns. The movements of various former officials, businessmen and big traders, especially those who applauded the 10 July 1978 coup and led the procession to the president's residence, have been recently restricted and their passports confiscated. Then too there is the specter of tribal antagonisms (the tribes Ould Saleck and Bousseif, both natives of Kiffa, belong to are on the verge of confrontation), to say nothing of the disintegration of relations between Moors and Black Africans.

At the summit, they opt one day for applying more pressure and the next for massive appointments to leadership posts, thus with each switch plunging Mauritaniens a little more into the abyss of chaos. Current Prime Minister Khouna Ould Haidalla, a man to be trusted, honest and austere, one of the military's last trump cards, is with a great deal of good will making an effort to communicate his civic concern and profound patriotism to his fellow citizens. But we fear he does not have enough popular strength to successfully achieve such a revival.

Must this not involve national reconciliation? It is up to them to make a start by liberating Mokhtar Ould Daddah, who is still the nation's best conscience.

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MAURITANIA

NATION SAID TO BE SUBJECT TO ANY UPHEAVAL

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 25 Jun-8 Jul 79 pp 13-14

[Article by Said Ould Khelifa: "Blurs and Shadows"]

[Text] An official Mauritanian delegation visits Algeria at a moment when general popular discontent is being manifested.

Ould Daddah, Ould Saleck, Ould Bousseif, and again, Ould Saleck--and finally--but for how long--Ould Louli. Since last July it's been a regular parade of men heading up the Mauritanian executive.

The sandstorm is certainly much to be feared in this country maintained by floods of petrodollars, but the storm which smashed Minister Ould Bousseif's plane into a Senegalese sand dune has been a catastrophe with devastating effects. To be sure, a new chief surged from the shadows to recommence this game of hide and seek, but for all that the country does not seem to be approaching "an imminent resolution of the Saharan question."

Observers judge that the death of the "strong man" of the moment could precipitate a chain of events. For all that, for the time being they have only precipitated the departure of the "honorary president", Mustapha Ould Saleck who is readying himself, it is said, to visit a western capital (probably Bonn) for medical treatment.

A forced resignation or a voluntary departure? The question is valid, for it is difficult to imagine why his colleagues would have brought him to power in July 1978 if his health had been so poor. The epilepsy he is said to suffer from does not just appear from one day to another. Or is the ex-president of CRM [Military Revolutionary Council] a pawn in the hands of his peers, quick to sacrifice him in order to find a replacement Ould Bousseif?

The Cease-Fire?

In any case, this changing of executive leader, occurring in the midst of a period of conflict, cannot be interpreted as a "readjustment" as they would like to have us believe. Even less so inasmuch as the statements made by

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Ould Bousseif, especially in Paris, have not been followed by any noteworthy changes in the field. Worse, his speeches on POLISARIO and the Mauritanian population were completely different from previous statements.

While Ould Saleck was bound by his commitment to obtain the withdrawal of Moroccan troops from Mauritania, Ould Bousseif wanted to maintain the Moroccan contingent on national territory. Better, in Paris he asked that the French forces at the disposition of Nouakchott be increased.

The deceased prime minister seems, then, to have wanted to increase foreign military potential in Mauritania, probably to counter the renewal of Saharan raids which would automatically follow a hardening of the position of the masters of Mauritania.

However, irritation is beginning to rise in POLISARIO circles. And no one in Nouakchott today doesn't know that the unilateral cease-fire decreed by the Saharans a year ago is more precarious than ever.

The first to panic, were, to be sure, the sharks of Avenue Jamal ab-al-Nasir who made a heartfelt call for a definitive accord with Morocco. Rabat, moreover, is depending on this bourgeoisie, composed mainly of "easterners" (the Lebanese, for the most part).

On their side, Saudi Arabia and other gulf states are not insensitive to the assiduous court being paid them by alaouite leaders, attracted by the cash boxes of the emirs.

So more and more the royal cousins of the Orient and the West are exchanging visits. The Saudi's ended King Khaled's trip to Morocco with the delicate attention of financing construction of a swimming pool reserved for women exclusively--it should be remembered!

All this while there continues to be a desperate lack of water in Mauritania, but the bankers of the gulf are much less interested in this problem than in the management of Habous (department in charge of religious property, called "the dead hand.")

On the economic level, the alert has been by-passed. The "program of July 10" (published after the fall of Mokhtar Ould Daddah) was supposed to enable battle against corruption and bureaucracy and for economic recovery: it has been returned to the files. And the few measures, timid but salutary, taken during the course of last summer, were quickly abandoned.

Today we are returning to a revolting life style: government employee salaries not paid, vice on work sites, shortages of food, and corruption in the administration.

The Pessimism of the Progressists

Certain moderate elements speak of destabilization being orchestrated from outside. Citing the troubles produced following the suspicious emergence

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of the problem of the black population, they do not hesitate to blame Hassan II and some of his African allies. Has not the monarch recently declared that he cannot tolerate that Morocco be separated from black Africa!

The Mauritanian progressists are not hiding their pessimism in regard to the current status quo (neither war nor peace) which seems to suit perfectly the different masters who have succeeded each other, in less than a year, at the head of the country. The only hope of the militant Mauritanians is the resurgence of popular discontent and the support of progressist forces in Africa. In this respect, the position taken by Nigeria on Zimbabwe recently, as well as the changes occurring in Ghana, contribute to weaken the moderate regimes, especially those who have contributed to block the Saharan issue at the OAU level. Is the new team in Nouakchott aware of the stake of which Mauritania is the center today and which threatens even the existence of this fragile nation?

Currently, in any case, the country (totally delivered up to a military self-absorbed in camp quarrels) could be the scene of every possible upheaval.

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MAURITANIA

PREMIER ATTEMPTING TO RESOLVE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 6 Jul 79 p 1923

[Text] Reestablishing a reasonable relationship between production and consumption in Mauritania seems to be the major concern of Lt Col Mohamed Khouna Ould Haidalla, who last 31 May was named Mauritania's prime minister. So says AFP [French Press Agency], which recalls that the Mauritanian economy has suffered a series of calamities. In some regions the drought destroyed up to 70 percent of the livestock, making unexploitable the major part of the land cultivated "under rain." The peasants fled to the cities, where they have not been integrated because of the poor progress of the modern sector, and for that reason have continued to be the state's responsibility. In addition, contact in recent decades between the Mauritanian society and consumers' societies has created new lifestyles, bringing with them an increase in imports.

The most important foreign currency resource, iron, nationalized in 1974, was not able to be entirely beneficial to the development of the economy, chiefly because of the fluctuations in the market and the Shara war, which is expressed by the POLISARIO's attacks on the railroad and the mining city of Zouerate. Exploitation of copper, the price of which has fallen, has been halted for two years.

In recent years, in order to face a budgetary deficit of 20 to 30 percent, Mauritania, which contracted a foreign debt exceeding 30,000,000,000 ouguiya (1 ouguiya = 0.10 French francs), has not been supported, various Mauritanian economic circles believe, by a worthwhile investment strategy. Several projects, such as sugar (at Nouakchott) and oil (at Nouadhibou) refineries, have not succeeded in being profitable.

Until it can in the end develop natural resources like fishing or an agriculture less dependent on the vagaries of the weather, the new government has taken emergency measures: price control, credit control, currency control, rationalization of the state's management methods, stabilization of the administration and of finance. Commissions, charged with studying more profound measures which will affect all sectors of national life, should file their reports before 15 September.

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Will the new prime minister succeed where others before him have failed? the AFP wonders. His first acts seem to indicate that he has decided to set an example (especially by renouncing the privileges of his office), to proceed in stages, to say little and to try to follow up his actions.

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MAURITANIA

BRIEFS

CHINESE PHYSICIANS DEMAND SALARY INCREASE--The Chinese medical cooperants in Mauritania are asking the Mauritanian Health Ministry for an increase in their salary. Until now they have been receiving 3,000 ouguiya (300 French francs) per month. This is the equivalent of the salary of a Nouakchott construction worker. A servant boy employed by Europeans earns 5,000. The medical cooperants want to receive 15,000 ouguiya, which represents a little more than the wages of a village schoolteacher (11,000) and between one-eighth and one-tenth the salary of a French physician in the same locality. The Chinese teams are the only ones who agree to serve in the provinces far from the Mauritanian East, particularly in Kiffa, Aioun el Atrouss and Nema. [Text] [Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 1 Aug 79 p 29] 8946

COMMISSARIAT FOR FOOD AID ESTABLISHED--On 29 June the Council of Ministers of Mauritania created a Commissariat for Food Aid. The creation of a commissariat, under the direct authority of the prime minister, gives a legal framework to the emergency plan, to enable it to respond under the best conditions to the food needs of the populations. [Text] [MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 13 Jul 79 p 1977] 8946

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WESTERN SAHARA

BRIEFS

POLISARIO BREAKS TRUCE--The Tichla attack on 12 July by the POLISARIO Front ended in a "heavy toll" for the Mauritanian side, according to the Nouakchott government itself. In a press conference in Algiers on 14 July Bachir Mustapha Sayed, deputy general secretary of the POLISARIO, justified the resumption of hostilities by the fact that the Mauritanian Government had had one year to withdraw from the war, but were continuing to "shilly shally." He threatened Mauritania with "in-depth" military operations. In Nouakchott, the resumption of hostilities was to destroy the equilibrium between the forces in favor of maintaining the alliance with Morocco and those who declared themselves in favor of a unilateral withdrawal of Mauritanian troops in the Sahara. [Text] [Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 25 Jul 79 p 31] 8946

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YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC

BRIEFS

SAUDI DEVELOPMENT FUND--Saudi Development Fund representatives were due to meet with Yemeni officials during July to discuss further Saudi funding for infrastructural projects in Sanaa, Taiz and Hodaïda. Yemeni projects already receiving Saudi backing include road and airport construction, irrigation and water supply networks and erection of grain silos. This development assistance is in addition to Saudi budget support for North Yemen, which is to be continued through 1979 (to the tune of over \$100mn) for the third consecutive year. [Text] [London THE MIDDLE EAST in English Aug 79 p 88]

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