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# Near East/North Africa Report

(FOUO 8/82)



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## NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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PERSIAN GULF AFFAIRS

VARIOUS IRANIAN ACTS ON ARAB SIDE OF GULF DESCRIBED, CONDEMNED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 254, 25-31 Dec 81 p 35

/Article by Ahmad Hafiz: "The Dreams of Khomeyni's 'Empire': Tehran Exported Them, Dubai Discovered Them and Bahrain Squelched Them"/

/Text/ A plot has been exposed which is being directed against the Arab Gulf and has been aimed at the Gulf's stability for a substantial period of time. The plan that was thwarted in Bahrain a few hours before it was to be put into effect is a chapter in a long story, an episode of sabotage in an ongoing serial that is being prepared for the Gulf states through a theory which holds that an "Iranian security belt" should be established which will realize the dreams of the "Khomeynist empire." AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI has gathered the following information on the latest developments.

Gulf security sources are in agreement on one scenario, which claims that the rulers of Tehran, specifically Iranian intelligence, are financing the process of "brainwashing" a number of deranged young people in the Gulf because they have been won over by Khomeyni's "philosophy" that the Arab Gulf regimes should be changed and that a group of regimes should be established which are in harmony with the new Iranian regime! What has happened in Bahrain seems like a coup-oriented act, and it is not the first of its kind in the context of the Iranian plan, which in its turn is a rush to the front lines to protect the Iranian regime from collapse.

The "coup-oriented" Iranian theory emerged after the first theory had failed; that propounded "exporting the revolution" of Khomeyni's after this "revolution" had lost its first ardor and the brilliance of the first weeks of excitement--a brilliance that was connected not so much to the Ayatollah's "revolution" as to the result of the suffering that the fall of the Shah itself had caused.

Stagnant Merchandise

Therefore the "revolution" is merchandise that cannot be exported. From this point, Iranian media set forth in quest of another method for dealing with all the Gulf countries without exception, and that is the method of large and small explosions in the terrorist manner--the assassination of officials, the destruction of official and unofficial organizations, the terrorization of ordinary simple people and deprivation of their stability.

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Since Bahrain appears to be the first nut in the Gulf cluster, the closest to the Iranians' reach, it was the first target. Encouraging the rulers of Iran to commit aggression against Bahrain was the fact that the Gulf Cooperation Council was starting to grow as an effective organization and that the plot had to be carried out before the bonds of Gulf cooperation could be strengthened in a manner where it would subsequently be difficult to penetrate the Gulf security sphere. What was required first and last was for Iran to continue to be the "policeman," just as it was in the era of the former empire--the first and foremost policeman.

This is what the first investigations into the information revealed. The security agencies in the Gulf countries cooperated with Bahraini authorities in following up on all the threads connected to it. Benefit has been derived from information available up to this point on the details of the "first instalment," which showed that the nucleus of the "main conspiracy" which had the Gulf countries as a whole as its target was an organization called the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain," headquartered in Tehran. The people supervising this organization schemed against the heart of the existing regime in Bahrain on the date of its celebration of the national holiday, which fell on 15 December, and the declaration of the annexation of Bahrain to Iran. Execution of the scheme was to be carried out starting with the assassination of the emir of Bahrain, Shaykh 'Isa ibn Salman Al Khalifah, his prime minister, and a number of senior officials in it. Meanwhile an armed group was to set off a number of dynamite charges and throw bombs at some official installations and buildings, while another group would organize and lead demonstrations of a popular character in support of the new "Islamic revolutionary" regime, with posters calling for union with Iran! Radio Tehran would immediately broadcast a statement supporting the new regime in Bahrain and declaring that any aggression against Bahrain would be an aggression against Iran. According to the plan, the organization members present in other Arab Gulf countries would at the same time throw explosives in different areas in Gulf capitals, then would lead limited demonstrations in support of the new regime.

Thus, as the conspirators planned it, the area would be plunged into chaos and the Gulf Arabs would be indefinitely preoccupied with their security concerns.

#### Deliberation for the Moment

By the nature of the case, officials in Arab Gulf countries have not yet officially made any declarations about these dimensions of the plot. There people's opinions tend to favor the need for careful deliberation in discovering all the secret threads aimed at countries outside the area people prefer to wait until opportunities are appropriate before officially announcing the scheme in full. The Saudi minister of the interior, Prince Nayif ibn 'Abd-al-'Aziz, referred to that when he said, in exactly these words, "Saudi Arabia is one of the countries that were the targets" and "The security of Bahrain and the Gulf emirates is part of the security of Saudi Arabia." The Saudi minister of the interior asserted, "Among those arrested in Bahrain were 13 Saudis, and contacts are underway between the two countries in this regard." A few days after the declaration of these statements, Prince Nayif went to Bahrain to learn from close at hand of the investigations that the Bahrain authorities had conducted into the organization members who had been arrested; these were 60 in number and included persons holding Saudi, Kuwaiti and Omani passports.

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It is worth pointing out that the first news on the "terrorist organization" was distributed by the security agencies in Dubai, which arrested six persons after they had become suspicious of their Bahraini passports. In the investigations, they discovered that these were forged and handed the persons over to Bahrain, which detained them on a preventive investigation basis. However, it soon discovered that behind the six persons were 60 others from all the Arab Gulf countries who had come to Bahrain via Tehran to dye the pure blue waters of the Gulf a deep blood red, while other groups awaited them in the Gulf capitals to begin carrying out the plot of an adventure of which the least that can be said is that it was destructive.

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ALGERIA

POLITICAL SYSTEM, POLICIES DEFINED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1886, 1 Jan 82 p 9

[Article: "A Clear Definition of the Political System"]

[Text] Since he assumed his duties nearly 3 years ago, President Chadli Bendjedid has been very sparing with doctrinal political declarations. The line that he intended to follow has gradually been drawn, to be sure, both in the light of his decisions and through the activities taken on by the Central Committee of the FLN and by the National Popular Assembly. It thus emerged, for example, that contrary to the expectations of certain commentators, the new chief of state did not intend to restrict the party's role, and that quite to the contrary, he expected decisively important collaboration from its Central Committee. But it is only in his "speech to the nation" on 20 December 1981 that President Bendjedid has systematically described the political functioning of the Algerian state of today. This part of the presidential message merits particular attention.

The Guiding Role of the Party

After describing the most important activities carried out by the political leadership in the past year, especially as regards satisfaction of the citizen's needs, the president declared clearly: "Algeria is the country of the guiding party, not the country of the management party." The party, he explained, had increased activity in 1981, asserting its vanguard role in the conduct of the revolution, as well as in expression of the needs and the hopes of the people; the major qualities of the "guiding party" are "mutual confidence between it and the masses, its capacity to identify with the objectives of the nation and assimilate the nation's active forces."

Among the party's recent achievements, the president listed: the increased numbers of intellectuals and cadres joining, which has made it possible to improve the mix of the different categories of citizens within its cells; the installation, at the head of the Coordinating Council of each wilaya, of a mouhafadha secretary, chosen from among the members of the Central Committee--a measure that strengthens the party's guiding role on the spot and ensures a bond between the rank and file and the political leadership; and examination by the Central Committee of the problems of national interest, which are first debated at the rank-and-file level within the organic frameworks of the party and of the state.

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The Elected Assemblies and Democracy

The president, next addressing the members of the National Popular Assembly directly, first stressed that the National Assembly is the first one to be elected by the people in accordance with the provisions of the National Charter, and he expressed his appreciation of their "sincere efforts." To be sure, the chief of state was generally very sparing with resounding oratorical rhetoric; but nonetheless, the modest level of the praise bestowed was noted.

Furthermore, this measured praise came after a rather severe evaluation of the elected Assemblies of the wilayas and the communes, certain of which "have not always been up to the objectives of the revolution and the aspirations of the masses."

The Central Committee's Resolutions

A Central Committee decision--though an old one--was stressed: involves medical care without charge, which "shall forever remain an irreversible popular acquirement," with every effort made to improve the quality of preventive medicine and medical service.

The resolution on cultural policy was represented as further clarifying "all the notions about the fundamental components of the nation," and as an achievement of "responsible democracy: a nation with a centuries-old past, united by the language of the Koran, that has forged itself in the crucible of Arab-Islamic civilization, whose ranks have been solidly united in the course of the hard struggle for independence and social justice, cannot help but be faithful to his history...and to its principles."

The last session of the Central Committee--the sixth--studied the topic of the private sector. The president remarked, in this regard, that "the strategic sectors, which can influence political and economic decision-making," will remain in the public sector, ensuring "the collective ownership of the means of production." The "nonexploiting" private sector will have its place, aimed at "national development and satisfaction of the citizens' needs." It should be complementary to the public sector, "probably as a stimulant, and not as a substitute." It will be necessary to define its field of action, and to "protect it from itself, so that it will not veer toward the exploitation that our religion forbids, and not be a threat to the advance of our socialist society."

It will be noted that the Central Committee's membership no longer includes Messrs Bouteflika, Abdesselam and Ghozali, who were ministers under President Boumediene.

Production, Consumption and Morality

Speaking of the socioeconomic problems of production and consumption, President Bendjedid introduced into the examination of them, for the benefit of the Algerian people, a preponderant element of morality, and he gave some admonitions that were of unaccustomed severity. Everyone, he said, "should ask himself what he has given to his country, should question whether his output is in line with the pay and allowances he receives.... There is no longer any room among us for anyone who lives at the expense of society.... No excuses will be accepted any longer from people who regress in their work." The rate of production has increased in many cases; but, the president remarked, "it still has not reached the level that would merit praise and admiration."

African and Arab Affairs

The president pointed out that Algeria belongs both "to the Arab Maghreb and to the Saharan group of countries," and drew from this fact the conclusion that "political good-neighborliness" is necessitated: there is no ambiguity about the country's borders, and the completion of their demarcation is in progress. The president's extensive tour around Africa has made it possible, despite the diversity of the political systems, to strengthen friendship and cooperation.

While striving to maintain a "minimum of Arab solidarity," Algeria cannot accept that "national rights should be ceded to the despoiler"--this being a discreet and measured condemnation of the attitude of Egypt, which conflicts with the struggle of the Arab people in occupied land. The entire nation will have to take up the provocations suffered on the Golan Heights and in Jerusalem, and make "a new selection among friends, enemies and spectators."

On the other hand, "the unity of the Arab Maghreb constitutes a fundamental support in the confrontation with racism and Zionism.... Thus should peace be reestablished in this vital part of the Arab nation." Algeria is thus adhering to the solution adopted by the OAU for the Sahrawi problem; while confirming its friendship and consideration for its Moroccan brothers, it cannot ignore the struggle of a people demanding its natural right: it will respect any choice expressed by the people of the Western Sahara "in a free, general and global referendum, without any foreign pressure or interference." Thus the president confirms that Algeria's policy toward the Sahrawi problem has not changed. But he expressed this determination in very moderate terms and in as conciliatory a manner as possible, while avoiding giving the slightest pretext to Moroccan sensibilities.

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ALGERIA

ADOPTION OF INFORMATION CODE NOTED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1887, 8 Jan 82 p 72

[Article: "Algeria: First Information Code"]

[Text] Algeria has provided itself with its first "Information Code," thus filling a juridical vacuum which has been noted since the independence of the country, both in terms of the regulation of journalism as well as in terms of information policy.

This "Information Code," approved on 28 December by the National Assembly, which amended some 60 of its articles and brought in new provisions to the government draft, states in particular that "the right to information is a fundamental right of all citizens" and that the state must assure the provision of "complete and objective information."

It also states that "information is an area where national sovereignty is exercised under the aegis and direction of the National Liberation Front [FLN]." The journalist is required to provide information "in the framework of the socialist choices defined in the National Charter," while expressing "the revolutionary will" under the direction of the FLN.

The official text, which has not yet been published, defines in Article 9 the conditions in which foreign institutions present in Algeria shall exercise their information activities. It sets out the provisions of the monopoly by national institutions in terms of information and regulates publicity-type information in the country.

The code also defines the rights and duties of the journalist, in particular freedom of access to sources of information, the legal protection of the profession and of the journalist, the exercise by citizens of their right of response in the media, the prohibition against publishers receiving funds from foreign organizations, etc.

Penal provisions and punishments are also provided for in the text of the code to prevent "abusive practices flowing from the privilege of writing and of providing information," the daily newspaper EL MOUDJAHID points out. The newspaper notes in this respect that even though the National Assembly has been at some pains to avoid making this law into a "Penal Code," it is nonetheless true that a "reading

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of the document as a whole nevertheless serves to bring out a wide predominance of penal provisions which could specifically block the possibility for the journalist to inform himself."

It is therefore appropriate to "balance the judgment on each occasion when it is a matter of discerning what was the good faith of the journalist and what were the intentions which could be attributed to him," EL MOUDJAHID adds. The newspaper considers that the "Information Code," "like every law, is valued by the quality of its application and the use which is made of it."

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ALGERIA

BRIEFS

ALGERIA-SOVIET COOPERATION--Some 100 projects are being carried out in Algeria with the aid of the Soviet Union, declared Semion Skatchkov, chief of the Soviet delegation, to the 12th meeting of the Soviet-Algerian Standing Committee for Cooperation. In an interview in the journal INDUSTRIE SOCIALISTE reported in an AFP dispatch from Moscow, Skachkov stated that economic and technical cooperation between the USSR and Algeria "is helping to solve the most important problems" of the development of the Algerian economy. Skachkov referred to the construction of a 630-MW thermal power plant at Jijel, a cement plant with annual output of 500,000 tons at Djelfa, a spare-parts shop in the metallurgical plant of El-Hadjar, as well as the enlargement of the drinking-glass factory built at Oran with Soviet assistance. He added that the Alrar/Hassi-R'Mel gas pipeline is "an important project" in Soviet-Algerian cooperation. "The contract for the equipping of a section of it has already been signed by the competent organizations of the USSR and Algeria," he indicated. In the agricultural sphere, Skachkov confirmed that Algeria and the USSR had decided on joint construction of four irrigation dams in the northern regions of Algeria. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1886, 1 Jan 82 p 18] 11267

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IRAQ

PRESIDENT DEMANDS MILITARY SACRIFICE OF PARTY MEMBERS

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI 'In Arabic No 256, 8-14 Jan 82 p 23

/Article: "Saddam Husayn: Self-Sacrifice in Combat Is the Prime Condition for Party Promotion"/

/Text/ The Iraqi People's Army's participation in the war is a phenomenon that acquires special importance in the context of combat participation and party commitment to combat. President Saddam Husayn visited a special People's Army training camp and spoke with the fighting men.

Every day the commanders of the People's Army say goodbye to a detachment headed for the battlefronts and receive groups coming in from the front that have performed their fighting role in combat.

Many are the groups of people who have participated more than three times in various sectors of the front, and many fighting men still are pouring forth, along with many other persons whose turn has not yet come.

The last 2 weeks, many comprehensive camp sessions were held involving a specific type of fighting man distinguished by special characteristics that have attained records which the Iraqi command has not announced.

These numerous large camps, which include tremendous groups of People's Army fighting men, are broken down among a number of Iraq's governorates. It is said that there are thousands of volunteers waiting for their turn to take regular training in similar camps. These are the type of fighting man to whom the special characteristics apply.

A few days ago the president of Iraq, Saddam Husayn, accompanied by Mr Taha Yasin Ramadan, commander general of the People's Army, Samir al-Shaykhli, commander of the People's Army for the Baghdad region, and a number of officials, visited these camps and was received with great enthusiasm.

The Iraqi president became directly acquainted with the conditions of the fighting men and witnessed a number of their training exercises. He entered into open discussions with them on training and proficiency in and the use of weapons. He also talked to them about the spirit of self-sacrifice and bravery by which the people's fighting men must be distinguished.

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In this regard, the Iraqi president asserted to the fighting men that bravery and self-sacrifice were the most prominent conditions for party promotion, and the other well known conditions came after them. He said, "The spirit of sacrifice will be a new criterion that will go into effect in the party apparatus, because the Ba'th means self-sacrifice; it means abnegation, bravery and initiative."

The Iraqi president greeted the fighting men of the People's Army with appreciation for their high morale and their enthusiastic rush to volunteer to sacrifice themselves for the country and the Arab nation. He stressed that this live presence of the People's Army fighting men was the link between the two al-Qadisiyahs, the first and the second, and stressed the people's inner strength and their vital perseverance throughout history.

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IRAQ

INFORMATION MINISTER CRITICIZES OPPONENTS, IMPERIALISTS

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 256, 8-14 Jan 82 pp 20-22

/Article by Kamal Hasan Bakhit: "Latif Nasif Jasim to AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI: The Syrian Regime Supports Cooperation Between Tel Aviv and Tehran"/

/Text/ When a whole people stand in the front-line trenches and the army realizes a miracle, the media cannot remain in a state of passive absorption; from absorption they move to the initiative, and from the initiative to profound interaction with the conscience of the army and the nation.

Latif Nasif Jasim, the Iraqi minister of culture and information, has realized this combative pioneering achievement in the fighting media since the war began, as he, in the uniform of the People's Army, has been in a state of permanent readiness and extraordinary alertness. He is very strong and works without commotion in innate solidarity with the struggle, keeping up with the unremitting daily acts of heroism in all sectors of the front, on the battle line as in daily life.

The Iraqi media today, with their agencies and organizations, are dynamic and do not rest, are vital and do not let up, and are a true embodiment of the will of a people who are fighting, building and singing, with blood and full vigor--building domestic and national dignity and interacting with the world with the feeling of people who are forging history.

AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI met with the Iraqi minister of information and culture, and this conversation took place on the media, the front, development, Golan, the conflict with Israel and the Arab media in the struggle of destiny.

I asked the minister, "What goals are expected of the festival of Saddam's Qadisiyah, which your ministry is organizing now? Has it achieved them?"

He replied, "The festival is a spontaneous tactical situation that all social classes and popular organizations in the country have pursued warmly to express the victories that have been realized in the period of war that has passed, especially in 1981, immortalizing the memory of the martyrs of the new Qadisiyah who gave without limit and whom the state of martyrdom has placed in a lofty, elevated status which President Saddam Husayn expressed when he said 'The martyrs are the noblest of us all,' being entitled to commemoration and glorification."



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He went on, "The central observance is the 61st anniversary of the birth of our giant army, which falls on 6 December. It is also an occasion for saluting this prominent event, this immortal day which took part in the immortal battles of 1948, 1967, and 1973, and, before those, in 1941, and the battle of al-Qadisiyah. These interconnected events have made people concerned with culture, arts, ideas and other means of innovation move spontaneously in festivals, celebrations and carnivals that sing of these glorious deeds and stress in a warm, vivid manner their essential solidarity with the heroic commander Saddam Husayn, from the far north of Iraq to the south, from east to west--children, old men, women, military men, civilians, students, peasants and workers, all at their places of work, expressing this condition, which we consider to be an unusual one, by mobilizing, fortifying and massing ranks. This interaction stresses that these great people possess unlimited powers of dynamism and vitality. The joy is a state that the people expressed in the first days of the war; we find ourselves in the 16th month of the war, and this dynamic state is increasing, becoming clear and deepening itself. The picture today is riper than before. The songs are deeper, more involved, more comprehensive. Such a state is rarely realized among any people."

He added, "Our people are fighting, singing and building a giant lofty edifice, which you will witness and sense in all development institutions and all the installations of life."

"Therefore the festival of Saddam's Qadisiyah is a festival of victory. It is a state of affirmation of the spirit of victory; it is a state of recalling the entire sequence of events in the past that have elapsed in 16 months of war and are still continuing. It comes as a culmination of the heroic struggles and giant victories that our heroic army realized in al-Khafajiyah and recently waged in West Kilan and Sumar, by which it turned the mountains and plains of Iran into graves where stubborn arrogant haughty heads have been buried. Things will remain like this until they acknowledge all our rights to land and water and accept nonintervention in our domestic affairs in accordance with recognized international criteria, rules and laws."

"I as an individual taking part in this festival feel unlimited happiness because every day I discover that there are unusual powers in these people, powers for poetry, powers for drawing and all other creative arts, powers that must be used and directed in the proper, full manner in the various areas of the media."

/Question/ What are the Iraqi media's most prominent approaches in the conflict?

/Answer/ The Iraqi media have not created a miracle. The miracle has been created by our heroic army, by our extraordinary commander Saddam Husayn, and by the loyal masses of our people. The media have been and remain a reflection of this state of affairs. They express this state, the state of victory, even if the expression has so far been incomplete. The heroic army that is encamped on a front 1,200 kilometers long and 50 to 80 kilometers deep in Iranian territory is a matter that was not easily realized. This state of mass upsurge is a state that is not often found in history.

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All that the media have presented is to express themselves truthfully and in solidarity and convey the facts to the masses of the people and the world at a high technical capability, through the living pictures of battle and by transporting journalists to the battlefield and facilitating their arrival at the front.

By this description, I do not want to be humble or to belittle the role of the media. The media are a basic central means for mobilizing, fortifying and rallying public opinion around any great goal. However, this time the battle has been greater than the volume of the media; no matter what mobilization and coverage we have achieved, the battle is a greater and more immense truth than what we imagine and what we have managed to convey.

/Question/ Nonetheless the media have managed to raise the morale of the fighting men on the fronts and increase the cohesion of the domestic front.

/Answer/ That is true. However, the morale of our people has always been high, and their adherence to their command has always been firm. Our people know everything about their usurped rights to land and water and they know that they are a people against whom aggression has been committed and that they are not the aggressors. It is the Iranians who started bombing and striking the towns of Mandali, Zarbalmiyah and Khaniqin and tried to blow up more than one place in Baghdad, commit aggression against women, old men, children and government officials, and form a secret party linked to them inside Iraq. Our people know and fully realize all these and other matters. They are a proud people who are not happy to have anyone interfere in their affairs, and they adhere to their rights in full. Therefore they have been totally fortified and mobilized, and the media have just been able to convey the facts to the masses.

#### The Dangers of Khomeynism

/Question/ In the light of the new facts the war has brought forth in its 16th month, how do you view the features of the coming stage politically and militarily on the regional level?

/Answer/ We had hoped that no one would commit aggression against us or interfere in our affairs, but the war occurred, and we achieved brilliant victories in it. Since 28 September 1981, President Saddam Husayn has unilaterally suspended the war in the hopes that the Persians would revert to their senses and their right minds, but, in spite of all the appeals, all the stands and all the assertions of peace, the Iranians' stubbornness has increased and they imagine that that is weakness on Iraq's part. However, the appeals to suspend the war on Iraq's part have begun to assume great scope within Iran itself and many bodies have begun to ask Khomeyni's clique "Why do you insist on continuing the war at a time when Iraq is declaring its readiness to stop it, in triumph, while it is strong and able to continue?"

These appeals have therefore added a new problem to the series of the Khomeyni's regime's problems, and the proof is the proliferation of statements that tell the people not to listen to these appeals and other statements made by the Iranian media.

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Our position on the state of war is not a tactical one, it is one of principle, and it is one of principle on the state of peace as well. It is a state we are living through with a live conscience whose basis is our rights in full to land, water, sovereignty, noninterference in our affairs, an absence of aggression against us and the refusal to seek further rights by force.

■ However, Khomeyni the senile swindler, who has lost all the properties of civilized man, does not understand this thinking. He is not just with his people, so how can he be just with other peoples? Khomeyni has turned Iran into a slaughterhouse and a great bloodbath. They boast that they have tens of thousands of prisoners, and that they have executed 90 percent of the opposition, and we know that the current Iranian opposition is what launched the revolution, while Khomeyni was living in a suburb of Paris.

When the ruler's position on his people takes this form, it is natural that he will be more harsh and tyrannical with other peoples.

#### Exposed Cards

/Question/ Do you believe that indoctrination and preparation have been made available for the rest of the masses in the various Arab countries?

/Answer/ We are carrying out indoctrination through an unusual media and cultural effort. In the first place we are concerned with our own people because we are waging the war in proxy for the whole Arab people and are striving to indoctrinate this nation about the dangers looming over us.

The recent events that have occurred in Bahrain constitute serious additional proof that the Iranian regime does not want to stay within its borders. Its aspirations extend to all Arab territory, and what they are saying about "exporting the Islamic revolution" and other claims a Persian Oman, a Persian Iraq, and a Persian Aden-- this all shows a deep-rooted resentment and backward mentality that is known for its hostility to the Arab nation.

/Question/ What role is requested if the Arab media is to break the noose of the blackout on the level of the authorities and crystallize the popular Arab position and move it forward?

/Answer/ Brother, we absolutely do not have any doubts on whether there are any sincere Arabs opposed to this war of ours, because we have faced an attack, and this attack is threatening the independence of our country and threatening the independence of the Arab nation.

Our faith is firm that no sincere noble Arab can stand against us in this struggle. But for the cards to be shuffled, and for Islam to be mixed up with Arabhood, Arabhood with Islam, and Islam with nationalism, then with the participation of the Persians in the liberation of Palestine, and other appeals, these are all camouflages whose real nature time will lay bare.

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The greatest proof that the cards have begun to be exposed is the armaments cooperation between Iran and the Zionist entity. This is material proof, Rafsanjani has admitted it, and the former president, Abol Hasan Bani-Sadr, has confirmed it in his capacity as the former commander general of the Iranian armed forces. In addition there are the documents which Mas'ud Rajavi, the leader of the opposition Mojahedin-e Khalq organization, has highlighted and published, and the crash of the Argentinian airplane. All this proof has categorically confirmed that the Iranian regime is collaborating with the Zionist enemy in a secret manner to destroy the Arab nation.

Nonetheless, in spite of the confirmation of the relationship, Hafiz al-Asad is still offering the Iranian regime tanks, artillery, missiles and military advice to help it keep on with the war and kill Iraqi soldiers who hastened to save Damascus from falling in 1973.

There has been a change in the Arab media, and it is certainly an excellent transformation. On the point that some Arab leaders are adopting a negative position, I can say that there will be an accounting for everything.

/Question/ What news is there on the killing of Iraqi prisoners and the blowing up of the Iraqi embassy in Beirut, with the cooperation of Syrian intelligence? Was the intention in blowing up the embassy to cover up the annexation of Golan?

/Answer/ First, regarding the prisoners, this is a vile, immoral thing. History will remember it for hundreds of generations, because prisoners have religious rights and legal rights. The Persians' venturing to kill prisoners is expressive of a state of terrible degeneration. It is a process which has removed the veil they hide behind, which is Islam.

We are not surprised that the Iranian regime has perpetrated such a vile crime, because it slaughters children and women, even pregnant women. Isn't that in its own right a vile crime? We expect them to do more if they can; it is normal for them to slaughter captured Iraqi soldiers who are fighting for the independence of their nation and their usurped rights.

Second, regarding the blowing up of the embassy, the people who confessed to the abominable crime are the ones who set it off, and we have enough evidence for that. The people who committed that crime are accomplices of the Persian regime and the Syrian regime's intelligence.

Third, we do not believe that the embassy operation was intended to secure the annexation of Golan. For 14 years Golan has been under Israeli control--do you believe that a Syrian decree will bring back territory the enemy annexed 14 years ago? Will it regain it by its own decree? We believe, indeed have faith, that land that has been taken by force can be reclaimed only by force, whether or not the Zionist entity acknowledges that it has annexed it. The territory will be reclaimed by force--true Arab force.

We stand severely against this tyrannical Zionist decision and condemn it with all our power, because the territory of the Golan is the equivalent of any plot of

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land in Palestine or Iraq; it is Arab land and does not belong to Hafiz al-Asad or anyone else.

The Opposition and the War

/Question/ Would an Iranian regime headed by Abol Hasan bani-Sadr, Mas'ud Rajavi, Shapur Bakhtiar or the Iranian army be able to take a decision to end the war and respond to Iraq's legitimate demands?

/Answer/ We, as President Saddam Husayn said, are prepared to cooperate with any party in the opposition in order to rid Iran of Khomeyni's clique.

We will welcome any party that comes and is prepared to stop the war and negotiate on the basis of Iraq's legitimate rights.

/Question/ Have any Iranian opposition parties responded to President Saddam Husayn's appeal?

/Answer/ I have no knowledge of that and I do not follow that subject.

/Question/ Are there any new Arab or international efforts to resolve the conflict between Iraq and the Iranian regime? Specifically, has Algeria declared its readiness to make such efforts?

/Answer/ I have not heard about that.

/Question/ In the international and Arab media, there are two attitudes: one stems from hostility toward Iraq, its experiment and its leaders, and the other from the ally or friend's concern for Iraq, its experiment and its leadership. However, people are united in wondering about the extent of Iraq's losses and military and economic exhaustion through the war. How do you cope with these wonderings, especially as regards the issue of economic development?

/Answer/ We say that many people are pained by the victory and are pained by the process of development and the continuous nature of this process, as well as the excellent international position Iraq enjoys as a result of numerous factors, principal among them the ability and genius of President Saddam Husayn, as a great, magnificent figure in the nonaligned movement. All these factors intermingle and constitute a collection of grievances, a state that in some aspects resembles jealousy. However, we are concerned about our people, who are zealous over their experiment and are sacrificing themselves on its behalf. Day after day they increase in pride and respect for themselves, their glories, their history and their leaders. Day after day they see the land of Iraq continuously changing, the faces of the Iraqis changing, and even the skies of Iraq changing, for the better and for the preferable. This is the true situation we are going through.

We also want Iraq's brothers to be informed of this situation, to see it, and to experience it, because it is basically their experiment, because it is the state that we would like to become widespread, not in the form of a horizontal extension but in the form of rays with a psychological, economic and social effect.

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The efforts of 2 million Arab brothers in our country and in our midst is a state of affairs which we consider healthy and a mutual contact of principles. This has all been created through a new experiment, the experiment of construction and the experiment of development.

As to whether anyone wants to say that Iraq has lost much or little, I say that everything is of little importance in the face of independence, the preservation of dignity and the preservation of the soil. Development is of no benefit, billions of dinars accumulated are of no benefit, a strong army is of no benefit, if the independence of the country is lacking and if the country is not beloved and is not noble. What is the benefit of tremendous development if sovereignty is lacking? What is the benefit of plans, principles and books if foreigners are trampling our land underfoot, or a portion of it, as is now happening in Golan, Palestine and elsewhere? Why this blood, this effort and this suffering? It is for the sake of independence and sovereignty.

What is the difference between Gaza and Sayf Sa'd, between Jaffa and the Shatt al-'Arab, between Zayn al-Qaws and Golan? That is all the Arab territory which we want to be sovereign, and we are saddened when any square inch of it is foreign. We thank the people who grieve over our losses but we know full well what we want, and that is enough.

/Question/ How do you evaluate the Arab and international Media?

/Answer/ The Arab media in general, except in rare instances, are responding to us to the utmost in the war. The media of Kuwait, the media of the Gulf, the Lebanese media, the press abroad except for two publications in Lebanon that represent two political regimes, and some Lebanese papers that do not write because they face deterrent pressure from the Syrian regime--however, we know that everyone's intentions are on our side and their hearts are with us.

The media that are intensely hostile to us are primarily the Zionist media and the American imperialist media. The international media which are not suspect are taking a fair position and on some occasions are neutral.

The Nonaligned Summit

Concerning the nonaligned summit, the Iraqi minister of information and culture said, "Preparations are reaching an end in the form of halls, villas, buildings, staffs responsible for administration and translation, secretaries and companions. Everything that is needed is fully ready. The conference will meet at its scheduled time, with God's permission."

Finally, I asked, "How do you interpret the broad mass rallying, the great love that the Iraqi people feel for President Saddam Husayn, although the war is entering its 16th month, and the fact that the domestic front is still strong and growing in strength with every day?"

He replied, "I wrote an article about that once in which I said that he is a state, a symbol, a leader, a brother, a comrade and a friend."

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"Every Iraqi feels that Saddam Husayn is in his mind and in his conscience, because he is close to him; every male and female Iraqi is waiting for Saddam Husayn to visit him and take breakfast, lunch or dinner with him, or drink tea with him.

"This state which has been created is an unusual one. Every day Saddam Husayn receives thousands of telephone calls from citizens and answers them calmly and patiently. He receives the hundreds of thousands of letters the citizens send him, and also answers them calmly. Saddam Husayn is in the village, the town, the plains, the mountain, the factory, the field, the school, the university, and in every installation in life.

"This state must be matched by a state of love, embracing and unlimited support expressed by the Iraqis in numerous forms and various ways.

"This should also be matched by the fact that Saddam Husayn is the son of the Tigris and Euphrates, the son of Barada, the son of the Nile, the son of our land and sky. That is the state that was created in the stage when we were in the greatest need of a knight and brave commander to lead this nation from victory to victory, from triumph to triumph, from glory to glory.

"Finally, let me thank you in person and thank the magazine AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI and our brother Walid Abu Zah. I am happy that he has lost more than 15 kilograms. This is further proof that AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI is always experiencing a state of vitality."

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MAURITANIA

LOANS FOR GORGOL NOIR PROJECT RATIFIED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1886, 1 Jan 82 p 22]

[Article: "Gorgol Noir: Ratification of Loan Agreements"]

[Text] On 29 April 1981, the Moroccan JOURNAL OFFICIEL published three ordinances of 23 April relative to the loan agreements and the tax regime for the Gorgol Noir project. The following agreements were ratified:

--the loan agreement and its appendixes signed in Nouakchott on 1 March 1981 by the representative of the Mauritanian government and the Saudi Development Fund relative to the financing of a part of the Gorgol Noir project and involving a loan of SRls 33.5 million;

--the loan agreement signed in Abu Dhabi on 6 November 1980 by the representative of the government of Mauritania and the Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development relative to the financing of a part of the Gorgol Noir project and involving a loan of 24 million dirhams from the United Arab Emirates;

--the credit agreement signed in Washington on 21 November 1980 by the Mauritanian government and the International Development Association relative to the financing of a part of the project and involving a loan of SDR [Special Drawing Rights] 11.4 million (\$15 million);

--the loan agreement signed in Jeddah on 15 November 1980 by the government of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and the Islamic Development Bank relative to the financing of a part of the Gorgol Noir project and involving a loan of 4.62 million Islamic dinars;

--the loan contract and its appendixes No 44 [as published] signed in Rome on 24 October 1980 between the Mauritanian government and the International Fund for Agricultural Development relative to the financing of a part of the project and involving a loan of SDR 7.6 million;

--the loan agreement signed in Tripoli on 6 October 1980 with the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya relative to the financing of a part of the Gorgol Noir project and involving a loan of \$10 million.

Finally, Ordinance No 81-088 of 23 April 1981 establishes the tax regime applicable to the Operation Gorgol Noir project. The companies to which contracts have been awarded and their Mauritanian and foreign subcontractors approved by the administration, responsible for carrying out the Operation Gorgol Noir project (F0umbleita dam, the canal, the Gorgol Noir rice-growing area, and the administration and production buildings), will enjoy, for the entire duration of the project, total ex-

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emption from the current-action tax and from all customs duties and taxes as well as from any levy having the character of an indirect tax on the materials, supplies, spare parts and tires necessary for carrying out the work. The materiel necessary for carrying out the work will be placed under the exceptional temporary admission regime for the entire duration of the work and the time needed for reexportation of it. The foreign experts working within the framework of the project will enjoy exceptional temporary admission of one personal vehicle per expert.

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ARTICLE EXAMINES SAHARAN WAR STATUS

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1887, 8 Jan 82 p 67

[Article: "Will the Saharan War Change in Character?"]

[Text] Morocco has decided to put an end to the "outpost battle": the effort was using up its troops. A regiment which had spent a long tour of duty in the isolated position of Guelta Zemmour seems to have become demoralized. On 13 October it was found no longer fit for combat. The army general staff in Rabat did not think it needed to immobilize a new unit in this unsatisfactory mission. In the course of November not only Guelta Zemmour, just barely reoccupied, but also Bir Enzaran, another fortified position situated in the middle of the desert east of Dakhla, which had just undergone two prolonged harrassing attacks by the forces of the POLISARIO Front, were evacuated.

This double disengagement was carried out under excellent conditions without hostile forces intervening to make it difficult. In fact the weakness of the POLISARIO Front is that it has no air force. Lacking such a force, it often does not have a rapid means for the collection of intelligence. In any event it did not learn of the withdrawal of the Moroccans until well after it was completed.

At Guelta Zemmour the defensive and logistical positions, already seriously damaged in the course of the November fighting, were totally destroyed. Bir Enzaran, whose defensive perimeter was much less extensive, on the other hand was abandoned almost intact, apparently with a certain amount of haste. However, the Sahraoui state that the well was poisoned.

In leaving these outposts situated in the depths of the desert the Moroccan forces have given up for the immediate future further raids in the eastern part of the former Spanish Sahara. However, such operations no doubt did not figure in their plans for the moment. In addition they are no longer in a favorable position for an eventual exercise of the "right of pursuit" into Mauritanian territory. But that is no longer a very current question. Following the Guelta Zemmour affair the Moroccan forces had thought they had detected Sahraoui concentrations at Bir Aydiyat, in Mauritanian territory, and the air force bombed them. However, it was soon established that the Sahraoui were located a few hundred meters away from that point, on the territory of the former Spanish Sahara, territory which they state they never left in the course of the movements and fighting around Guelta Zemmour.

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- On the other hand the Moroccan defensive deployment has not been really weakened  
- by these evacuations. It is not true, as has been written at times, that Guelta  
Zemmour "protected" Bou Craa and Bir Enzaran Dakhla. The light Sahraoui  
columns easily bypassed, at a good distance and most often without even being  
detected, these positions, which were in no sense "unavoidable routes of movement."

- In the event the Moroccan Government has simply given up a presence for prestige  
purposes. Its flag has ceased waving in the middle of the Sahraoui desert. Out-  
side the "useful triangle" of the phosphate mines of Bou Craa, the traditional  
capital of Smara, and the port of Laayoun, the Moroccan Government only covers  
the coastal enclaves of Boujdour, Dakhla, and Lagwira. However, it considers that  
this small change on the war map, although it serves enemy propaganda, provides  
the Moroccan general staff with the highly valued possibility of achieving a sav-  
ings in the use of its forces and the prospect of regrouping them.

- However, the Sahraoui, as might have been expected, see things from another point  
of view. According to statements made to EL MOUDJAHID (Algiers, 2 November) by  
Ibrahim Ghali, Sahraoui defense minister, it was not so much Guelta Zemmour which  
was the target in the middle of October but rather the Moroccan forces grouped  
near Smara and Bou Craa. He said, "We made them bring out forces camped within  
this 'useful triangle.' We forced them to regroup and we concentrated our fire-  
power on them. Our objective was to wipe out a regiment of 2,000 men, earmarked  
to come to the support of the units located outside the 'useful triangle.'"

Will Heavier Armament Increase the Scale of the Fighting?

The Sahraoui therefore pride themselves on having forced the Moroccans onto the  
defensive. However, according to the Moroccans, this kind of defensive deployment  
is a victorious one and no doubt only temporary. Since the completion last spring  
of "the defensive wall" the Moroccan forces have stated that their deployment  
has never been penetrated or even seriously attacked by POLISARIO elements. The  
latter, for their part, have reported many acts of harassment of the "wall," which  
no doubt have taken place at a good distance, and the shelling of places like Zag  
and Lemsseyed. However, it was alleged only once that they had made a breach for  
a period of time at a point in the Moroccan deployment. One of the last great  
undertakings which the POLISARIO Front claims, the taking of the post at Kheig  
Afteita, 50 km southeast of Assa, is located on Moroccan territory near the  
Algerian border, that is, in a region far from the center and not covered by the  
defense line.

To do more it would have been necessary for the POLISARIO Front to have heavy,  
very long-range weapons, capable of reaching not only the garrisons and strong  
points of the "wall," but the concentration points of the Moroccan reaction units.  
The Sahraoui are the first to admit that the best of their armament comes from  
materiel seized in combat from the Royal Armed Forces and even say that they did  
not have SAM-6 [Soviet-made, hand held surface to air missiles] missiles at  
Guelta Zemmour. Will they now ask the Libyans and Algerians to obtain Soviet arms  
for them corresponding to these long-range missions?

In any case the Moroccans have gone on ahead. Referring specifically to the use--  
although this is denied by the Sahraoui--of SAM-6 missiles at Guelta Zammour,

they are asking that the United States both speed up the shipment of arms and missiles already promised and the provision of further materiel. Concerning the equipment already promised, this involves above all 108 M-60 heavy tanks, radio and telecommunications equipment, and electronic equipment. Concerning the further materiel desired, no details have been provided as yet. In any case it can be assumed that this additional armament is not intended solely to strengthen a defensive posture which is already rather strong, but rather that it pertains to longer-term offensive plans.

In effect, given the present condition of the forces on both sides and the fortifications which have been completed, the Moroccan general staff considers that a Sahraoui offensive coming from the other side of the "wall" is practically impossible. Moroccan diplomacy, which is engaged discreetly but effectively in the normalization of relations with Algeria, seems to consider it unlikely that the Libyan commitment to the POLISARIO Front will be increased. Libya is involved in other tasks and is not very desirous of new complications at a time when Colonel Qadhafi is about to assume the presidency of the OAU [Organization of African Unity]. The defensive status quo assumed by Morocco could therefore go on for some time.

However, the provision of additional offensive equipment, and in particular heavy tanks and combat aircraft, would make it possible to move from this defensive stage to active operations. While neglecting the southern and central part of the former Spanish Sahara, the Moroccan Army could concentrate its efforts on the eastern part of the Seguiet al Hamra area, held for a long time by the POLISARIO Front and which constitutes, for the latter, "the liberated Sahara."

The Moroccan deployment, resting in the north on Djebel Ourskiz, to the west on the "wall" and on Smara and Bou Craa, squares off this Sahraoui quadrilateral area, whose other sides are made up by the frontiers with Algeria and Mauritania. Conditions are favorable to attack an enemy concentrated in a narrow space. Certain indications make it possible to think that the Moroccan general staff is studying this possibility. In this way a military solution would be prepared against the possibility, in no way unlikely, that a diplomatic solution would fail.

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PHOSPHATE INDUSTRY PRODUCTION, DEVELOPMENT REVIEWED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1882, 4 Dec 81 pp 3236-3237

[Text] Continuation of the Phosphate Plan

Included within the framework of the 1981-1985 five-year plan adopted by the Chamber of Deputies at the end of July is the continuation of the phosphate plan for the industrial sector, and especially the completion of Maroc Phosphore III and IV (MTM, 12 June 1981, p 1586); the plan anticipates an overall gross investment sum of around 111 billion dirhams (1 dirham = approximately Fr 1.05). France will contribute to the implementation and financing of this plan. The principle of French cooperation was confirmed in Rabat at the end of October at the meeting of the fourth session of the joint intergovernmental committee; following this meeting, Claude Cheysson, minister of external relations, indicated that an agreement was being prepared for a contribution of 13 to 14 billion, and he announced upcoming meetings between Mohamed Karim Lamrani, general manager of the OCP (Moroccan Phosphate Office), and the French minister of economy and finance, Jacques Delors (MTM, 6 November 1981, p 2813).

CEDES (Socio-Economic Research and Information Center), an agency of CGEM (Moroccan General Economic Federation), analyzing the OCP report for 1980, recently revealed the current data and outlook for the phosphate industry from the point of view of production and development. The importance of phosphates for Morocco was emphasized; Morocco is the world's leading exporter, and its estimated reserves of some 58 billion tons account for three quarters of worldwide reserves.

In the first place, the development of world phosphate production is examined here. The document brings to light the fact that as the OCP has tried to raise prices, this nevertheless has had the effect, on the one hand, of encouraging phosphate production in several countries through the opening of new mines in diverse areas (Brazil, People's Republic of China, Finland, and some Middle Eastern countries), and, on the other hand, of spurring the United States, Morocco's principal rival, to once again begin extracting its ores, in spite of their poor quality and of the fact that they formerly had not proven very profitable.

In this way, worldwide production, continuing its rising curve, increased by 7 million tons (or +5.6 percent) in 1980 to reach 135.86 million tons. The most important increases, outside of the United States, the Soviet Union, and China, were, as in the preceding year, those of Brazil, whose production reached 2.9 million tons (+72 percent), and of the Middle Eastern countries, especially Jordan (+50 percent).

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In like manner, total deliveries of phosphate increased by 4.9 percent. Last year's figure was 136.36 million tons, compared to 129.96 million tons in 1979. Deliveries slightly exceeded world production, to the benefit of the United States, which lowered its stocks by 2.3 million tons. Domestic deliveries by producer countries to their local industries increased by 9.9 percent to reach 84.08 million tons, or 61.7 percent of total deliveries, compared to 58.9 percent in 1979. This hurt exports, which meanwhile dropped from 53.45 million tons to 52.28 million tons; they had increased by 4.1 percent from 1978 to 1979.

However, if secondary products from phosphates are included, it can indeed be seen that, all together, world exports in 1980 represented the equivalent of 74.8 million tons of phosphate, compared to 73.2 million tons in 1979; secondary products accounted for 30 and 26.9 percent, respectively. Furthermore, projections have been made that phosphate and secondary product exports in 1985 will be around 95 million tons of ore, 38 percent of this in the form of phosphoric acid and fertilizer.

This development indicates a structural transformation which has characterized the world phosphate market since the beginning of the 1970's and which might particularly be explained by the following: the increase in the consumption of fertilizer and other secondary products in all producer countries; and the establishment, near the deposits, of a phosphoric acid and fertilizer industry basically oriented toward the exporting of these products.

Morocco, Tunisia, and Middle Eastern countries have already embarked upon this route. Senegal will soon follow suit. As for Morocco, the OCP, which accounts for 40 percent of the country's total exports and creates 7 to 8 percent of the GNP, wishes to further develop its industry. Its projects will focus, on the one hand, on strengthening its phosphate production potential, and, on the other hand, on developing an increasing share of on-site ore production. For this it will rely upon Morocco's assets, among them its high ore content and a geographical situation which gives it access to major markets under conditions that are more advantageous than those of most of its rivals.

Production...

Regarding production, the OCP's development projects anticipate a doubling of extraction capacity between now and 1986. These projects, region by region, are as follows:

Khouribga--The deposits developed in this region supplied 14.7 million tons, or 70.6 percent, of a total production of 20.8 million tons in 1980. Of this, 11.7 million tons came from surface mines and 3 million tons from underground mines.

The three plants involved in the expansion project are:

--The "Recette IV Surface Mine," scheduled to open during the second quarter of 1983 (projected capacity will go from 2.6 million tons in 1984 to 3.9 million tons in 1986).

--The "Meraa El Ahrech Couche II Sector," with a projected capacity of 3.5 million tons per year. Its production will go from 1.5 million tons in 1984 to 2.5 million tons in 1986.

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--The "Sud Recette X Surface Mine," which should produce 6 million tons per year. It is scheduled to begin operation in 1985 with an extraction of 2 million tons.

Youssoufia--The prime concern here is black phosphate, for which the project anticipates opening two units. This will bring production from 600,000 tons in 1981 to 4.5 million tons in 1986.

In 1980, Youssoufia was responsible for 26.4 percent of the OCP's total production, with 5.5 million tons; of this, 3.8 million tons were extracted underground and 1.7 million tons at the surface.

Sidi Hajjaj--The phosphate from this deposit will be intended for export after washing and drying at the Jorf Lasfar site. Extraction will take place at the surface and will involve 3 million tons in a primary phase beginning in 1984, the scheduled opening date.

Meskala--Exploitation of this important deposit will allow 10 million tons of phosphate to be produced in the final phase.

Development...

Regarding development, in addition to strengthening the phosphoric acid production capacity of the Safi complex, two complexes are scheduled to be built at Jorf Lasfar and Nador.

At Safi, the additional units involve "Maroc Phosphore I, Fourth Line," with an annual potential of 165,000 tons of P205, and "Moroc Phosphore II," designed to develop phosphate from Benguerir, with an annual capacity of 495,000 tons of P205. These will begin operation in the very near future. It bears mentioning that in 1980, the Safi complex achieved overall acid production of 573,811 tons of P205 from 2.3 million tons of phosphate.

At Jorf Lasfar there is the "Maroc Phosphore III-IV" group, intended for production of phosphoric acid and fertilizer. This includes eight production lines for acid, each with a capacity of 500 tons per day, one unit for 70-percent P205 superphosphoric acid, and one manufacturing unit for diammoniac fertilizer.

The Nador complex (Maroc-Phosphore Nord), scheduled to open in 1985, will have a capacity of 600,000 tons of P205 per year. This represents the development of 2.5 million tons of phosphate.

The operation of these diverse units will create some 7,500 new jobs. This will strengthen the current OCP work force, which is made up of 21,704 blue- and white-collar workers, 3,775 technicians, supervisors and administrative executives, and 489 engineers and associated workers, for a total of 25,968, of whom 79 percent work solely for the OCP.

Attempts at extraction of uranium and characterization of acids have also been undertaken in Morocco and abroad; one meeting concerning this has been held with major producers of uranium from phosphoric acid regarding the choice of a process and of the company that will be responsible for completion of the first industrial unit.

OCP development projects also include efforts in the areas of scientific and technical research, training, and the strengthening of activities of subsidiary companies.

In the training area, there are plans to open a supervisory school at Safi for the purpose of training team leaders for the chemical industry, a training center at Benguerir for vocational workers, and a training center at El Jadida for advanced technicians.

At the subsidiary level, it should be noted that Marphocean, which at present has available six phosphoric acid tankers and one gas tanker, for an annual transport capacity of 1 million tons of acid and 55,000 tons of gas, will soon be equipped with four new phosphoric acid tankers with a total capacity of 41,200 tons, and three bulk carriers of 37,000 tons each, loaded weight.

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LOAN GRANTED FOR BOU-GAFFER MINING DEVELOPMENT

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1886, 1 Jan 82 p 19

[Article: "Loan of DH 15 Million from the BNDE (National Economic Development Bank) to the BRPM (Mineral Prospecting and Investment Office) for Mining the Bou-Gaffer Deposit"]

[Text] Moussa Saadi, minister of energy and mining research, presided, in Rabat on 22 December, over the ceremony of the signing of an important loan agreement between the BNDE and the BRPM. This loan agreement, signed by Abdelkader Benslimane, general manager of the BNDE, and Mohamed Shahid, general manager of the BRPM, is intended for the financing of the project to work the mines of the Bou-Gaffer sector in Ouarzazate province.

In the speech he gave on this occasion, the minister stressed the importance of the project in question. The Bou-Gaffer deposits are a part of the deposits of precious metals, silver and gold, in addition to copper, whose exploitation has been included among the priorities of the 1981-1985 Five-Year Plan.

Through the intermediary of its subsidiary SODECAT (Anti-Atlas Copper Development Co), the BRPM has concentrated its action on the Bou-Gaffer district, which contains the principal deposits of auroargentiferous copper presently confirmed. The results of the exploration and studies programs have led to the decision to open four mining centers in 1982: Tiouit, Tizi Moudou, Akka N'Oulil and Asfalou.

The reserves already brought to light make it possible to set up mining units equipped with two operational installations: one of 200 tons per day at Tiouit, and the other of 100 tons per day at Asfalou.

At the outset, these centers will produce annually: 1,500 tons of 12-percent copper concentrate containing 185 kg of gold per ton [as published], 1,350 g of silver per ton; 1,100 tons of 30-percent copper concentrate containing 3,600 g of silver per ton. At current prices, this production represents a turnover on the order of DH 35 million.

The total investments will be on the order of DH 55 million. The BNDE will contribute to the financing of this investment with a medium-term credit of DH 15 million. Finally, the opening of these new mines will make it possible to create 200 jobs and will contribute to the development of a regions whose nonmining resources are very limited.

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ESSAOUIRA GAS DISCOVERY DOUBLES REGION'S PRODUCTION

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1886, 1 Jan 82 p 20]

[Article: "Discovery of Gas at Essaouira"]

[Text] A communique from the Ministry of Energy and Mining Research announced, on 22 December, that the ONAREP (National Office of Oil Exploration and Exploitation), which has undertaken exploration of the Essaouira basin within the framework of a loan granted to Morocco by the World Bank, has discovered a deposit in this basin.

This discovery is the first of its size discovered in Morocco, the communique added, specifying that an initial drilling at Meskala, 35 km southeast of Essaouira, to a depth of more than 3,374 m, gave a daily flow of 172,000 m<sup>3</sup> of gas and 81 m<sup>3</sup> of condensate.

A second well, being drilled 1.6 km north of the first one, has demonstrated the continuity of the deposit. Other drillings will be necessary in order to define the reserves better. In the specialist circles, it is stressed that it is still difficult, for the time being, to have an exact idea of the deposit's value.

Noting this discovery and commenting on it, the Moroccan daily L'OPINION stresses that it doubles the region's production, with the present well's production (172,000 m<sup>3</sup> of gas per day) added to the 112,000 m<sup>3</sup> per day already being extracted from the two wells of Jeer and Keshoula, which are also in the Essaouira sector.

The two deposits, L'OPINION further indicates, under the byline of Nadia Salah, are being exploited by the Moroccan Petroleum Company (SCP), and the production is transported by pipeline to the phosphate drying lines of the OCP [Moroccan Phosphates Office] at Youssoufia. The SCP signed an agreement with the BRPM in 1980 for systematic mining of the concessions belonging to the national company, and since then, the exploration activities in the sector have been multiplied by a factor of four, thanks to the World Bank financing.

The intensive prospecting has therefore borne its fruit, since the Essaouira region has just taken over the lead from the Gharb as regards gas production. The Gharb is presently producing 34.5 million m<sup>3</sup> per year from two principal deposits: Douar Jaber and Ksiri, mined in association with BRPM/APEX. In that region too, exploration work is in progress and drillings have been done at Ouled Merah and Ouled N'sa. The gas of the Gharb too is exclusively for industrial use, and the bulk of it is delivered to the Moroccan Cardboard and Paper Company of Kenitra.

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With the Essaouira discovery, total gas production rises from 75 million to 82 million m<sup>3</sup> per year. This production is still marginal, though, in relation to the country's energy needs, and it is reserved for industries such as phosphate-drying.

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TUNISIA

INTERVIEW WITH HABIB ACHOUR

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 252, 11-17 Dec 81 pp 40-41

[Interview with Habib Achour, president of the Tunisian General Federation of Labor [UGIT], in Tunis by correspondent Habib al-Salimi: "Pardoning Me Meant Acceptance of the Independence of the Federation"; date of interview not given]

[Text] Pardoning Habib Achour, 3 years after he was forbidden to take part in union activities following the incidents of January 1978, was a promising political decision. Another "political" decision was his election as President of the Tunisian General Federation of Labor [UGTT] after his release. AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI met with him in Tunis after his release and discussed political and union issues with him.

Our first question was about Habib Achour himself and his meeting with Habib Bourguiba after the former's release...Achour answered sincerely:

[Answer] My meeting with the president was not out of the ordinary. We shook hands and he started talking to me about my part in the struggle for independence and the sacrifices I made. As you know, our close friendship goes back to 1934. We fought and struggled for Tunisia's independence, and when the subject of lifting my house arrest came up which was the reason for our meeting, we got into a heated discussion. The pardon which I had been waiting for was to me the righting of a wrong, while to the president it was a humanitarian act.

As I said, the discussion was heated, and I would not accept less than the lifting of my house arrest and the independence of the Tunisian General Federation of Labor. I insisted upon this, and after a long discussion, we arrived at this solution. I was backed by certain union officials who were demanding, in accordance with the decisions of the Qafsah Emergency Conference, that I be released and allowed to return to union activities. For the second time, the Federation confirmed its independence from the government and that it will never give up this independence.

[Question] The members of the Tunisian General Federation of Labor did not impose the house arrest upon you, and you were singled out by high government officials, not by the Federation. Isn't this true?

[Answer] True. However, the authorities could have lifted the house arrest without granting me a pardon, and the pardon which the president announced lifts the restrictions on me and enables me to return to union activities under the law.

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[Question] Your pardon was a special legislative pardon. Would you consider it a step toward a general legislative pardon?

[Answer] My pardon concerns union officials primarily, and we got what we were demanding. However, we are still working toward a general legislative pardon at every opportunity, as you can see in numerous publications by the Federation.

[Question] You were elected president of the Tunisian General Federation of Labor, which is a new position. Would you explain to us the advantages of this position and how it differs from the position of secretary general, which you held before January 1978?

[Answer] We were thinking about creating this position in 1964, when Ahmad al-Talili headed the Federation. It is not a new idea; it has been around for a while, and now we have decided to go through with it. The presidency is not honorary, but is real, and I have considerable power. The president is the highest official of the Federation, and his responsibilities are the same as those of the secretary general under the old structure. The presidency is the foundation on which everything rests. I strongly refused the honorary presidency which was offered to me first, and which would have kept me from union activities. I would never accept such a suggestion because it would mean death for the union. The suggestion of an honorary presidency caused a very heated argument between President Bourguiba and me when he suggested it to me and other union leaders.

[Question] Then the position of secretary general becomes the number-two position?

[Answer] Of course. This was confirmed in the last National Council meeting. This is the system in most union organizations all over the world. In Germany, for example, there is a president and a secretary general, and the same is true in Sweden, England....

Qafsah Revisited

[Question] After being pardoned and resuming union activities, how do you evaluate the Qafsah Conference, which you were not allowed to attend by government authorities?

[Answer] When the National Union Committee was elected, disputes arose among union officials. Many did not want to serve on the Committee as they knew it, while I agreed from the beginning to serve because the Federation was weak at that time. I knew that we would be weakened by disagreements among us, so we said, "Let us serve on the Committee to increase our chances for success." However, when the unions reorganized, a legal violation occurred. Despite this, the free union officials, those who believe that the Federation cannot be a true Federation unless it is independent from political parties and the government, decided to serve on the Committee. They were followed by many other union officials, while a certain group insisted upon not serving.

Shortly before the Qafsah Emergency Conference, some of my union brothers and I submitted my candidacy, but the National Union Committee rejected my candidacy, and the party official told my brothers, "If you accept Achour's candidacy, you

declare war on the party and the government!" However, a good number of union officials thought that I had a right to be a candidate and stuck by my candidacy. Others were not dissuaded from participating in the Qafsah Conference by the rejection of my candidacy, not because they did not back me, but because they believed that union officials must participate in the conference and fight to have the exception lifted.

There were arguments and much discussion at the Conference, ending in the withdrawal of a large group of union leaders. Recommendations were made by the Conference which were positive on the whole, and union leaders started trying to carry them out...then there was a delay by the executive office because, at that time, they were still influenced by the party. The secretary general of the Tunisian General Federation of Labor, Taieb Baccouche, played a large part in fulfilling these recommendations through his numerous meetings and contacts with government officials.

At first, restrictions on me were eased, and I was permitted to go to my birthplace. The pardon came when the authorities contacted me to go to Tunis to meet with the president.

At the National Conference, all the union leaders were satisfied by this victory, which was not a victory for me, but the Federation's independence and freedom, which were asserted for the second time.

[Question] If you had been secretary general during the recent legislative elections, would you have agreed to join the ruling Destour Party in a united front to go into these elections?

[Answer] It is for me to answer this question, and of course I have my own opinion about this front and the recent legislative elections, but I do not want to divulge it. Participating in these elections with the ruling party was the decision of the Federation's executive office and management, and I cannot dispute that decision now. While I was in Qarqanah (Achour's birth place), a "delegation" contacted me and threatened that my provisional pardon would be revoked and I would be imprisoned again if I did not interfere and cause problems within the Federation management. Some of the union officials closest to me know my position on that participation well. Have they revealed this opinion? I do not know...and now that I am in my present situation and after the Federation's decision, I cannot criticize that participation. The Qafsah Conference decided that all parties would be equal before the Federation. We had decided in 1978, when I submitted my resignation from the ruling Destour Party, that we would not have political responsibilities, and we did not do so, not as some believed to fight the Destour Party, but to be independent from all parties and all political movements in the country. We do not favor one movement over another because of our deep concern for the Federation's freedom and independence. We want a strong, independent and neutral Federation.

An Independent Movement

[Question] You were jailed during Nour's government, released, then went back to union activities during Mzali's government. What is the difference between the two governments?

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[Answer] I am still a prisoner and cannot express my opinion on this. The only thing I have noticed is that unions are now working without interference from the police or the army.

[Question] Do you think that Mzali's government really intends to carry out the "democratic relaxation?"

[Answer] Union circles are serious about the application of these freedoms. In Nouira's time, when we decided to strike for even 1 day, 26 January for example, the police and the army tried to stop us. Today union officials strike 1 day or 3 days without this kind of "arrogance."

[Question] Do you think that your return to leadership of the Federation will stop the divisions which still exist in the ranks of union officials, and the Federation will regain its power?

[Answer] This has already started happening. I noticed in the last National Council a significant relaxation, the result of the lifting of the exemption and restrictions on me and the assertion of the Federation's independence. I have heard that union circles throughout the country are experiencing this relaxation.

[Question] There are those who say that reinstating you in the Federation was meant to move the conflict in the government into the Federation itself, especially at this time when the country is witnessing a wave of unrest.

[Answer] Is there someone who says this? I am surprised by that. I was not forced upon the Federation. I went back at the request of the old union hierarchy, which is still in place. Furthermore, in the National Council, all officials except one agreed that I should be president of the Federation. I did not enter the Federation to cause discord. I have been in the Federation for 30 years, and I have never been a cause of dispute. Each official must protect the unity of the Federation, without which he cannot be strong. What is being said is in my opinion nothing but rumors to which we have to become accustomed.

Associated Federations

[Question] The relationship between the Tunisian General Federation of Labor and the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions is still weak. What are the reasons for this in your opinion?

[Answer] Most of the Arab Federations are not independent from political parties, which is evident when these parties disagree. The Arab nation in most cases is divided into two factions...and when the Steadfastness and Resistance Front was formed, as a Federation we regretted this split because we have always defended Palestine as if we were on the firing line. When we joined CISL (the International Confederation of Free Labor Unions), no one was even saying the word "Palestine." The same thing was true in the International Office of Labor. After lengthy efforts--I was then a vice president of CISL--we managed to make it neutral in the Arab-Israeli conflict as a first step following a situation in which every member of this international organization supported Israel. The Arabs at that time were divided, which is what hurt us because it

was reflected in the unions, which consequently could not speak with one voice or adopt one position. When the Arabs agree to anything, we back and support it, and when they disagree we feel sorry. However, it does not keep us from defending Palestine.

The Tunisian General Federation of Labor attended a conference in Libya which caused a great deal of talk and excitement in Tunis...someone volunteered to tell the International [Confederation of Free Labor] Unions what happened, which cost us all our earlier efforts to make this international organization neutral in the Middle East conflict, and it began to back Israel. However, we did not give up, and I went to Brussels to convince the International [Confederation of Free Labor] Unions that there was no danger in the resolutions of the Libya Conference. Then we voted with them, and did not work against them...however, this vote caused us great problems.

[Question] Does your separation from the Destour Party shortly before the incidents of January 1978 mean that you do not believe in its principles and goals?

[Answer] I still view that party in which I struggled for 30 years as I viewed it when it started, when it faced French colonialism as the only party in the country and fought along with the General Federation of Labor to liberate Tunisia. I still adhere to its original, unchanged values, which guide my work. However, I do not approve the changed ideas of some of its leaders because I am not yet convinced of the worth of these ideas.

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TUNISIA

AFTERMATH OF ELECTIONS, NEW 5-YEAR PLAN EXAMINED

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French No 1095, 30 Dec 81 pp 59-61, 65

[Article by Francois Poli: "Tunisia '82: the Third Stage"]

[Text] "We have known socialism without democracy. Then liberalism without democracy. We want to live under socialism and democracy at the same time." There are many Tunisians who share this opinion. However, since the legislative elections of 1 November, which have left a real feeling of frustration, other and more immediate concerns--the high cost of living and unemployment--have again come to the surface. These are concerns to which the Sixth Plan will try to respond.

In the course of the electoral campaign before the last Tunisian legislative elections there was not a single political group which did not include in its program the struggle against rising prices and unemployment, the reduction of social and regional inequalities, and the problems affecting agriculture, industry, and tourism. The elections are over. Where are we now?

The time is past when the foreigner who arrived in Tunis for the first time had the feeling that he had gotten off in one of the least expensive cities in which to live in the world. At the Tunis central market, the barometer of daily life, a kilo of daurade [a variety of Mediterranean fish] on the average costs 3 Tunisian dinars (1 dinar = 500 CFA francs); a kilo of mutton costs 2,400 dinars; chicken costs 800 millimes a kilo; rice costs 300 millimes a kilo; semolina [course ground wheat, eaten with the North African dish cous-cous] costs 250 millimes a kilo; a liter of olive oil costs 570 millimes. Now the guaranteed minimum wage, which was increased following the installation of the Mzali government, is still only 60 dinars per month. A low-ranking employee only makes about 100 dinars per month. A teacher with 12 years' seniority has a base salary of only 130 dinars. That is to say that the large, pink shrimp, which is extremely fished for along the Tunisian coast and which is sold for more than 6 dinars a kilo, for Tunisians as a whole is an item which is beyond their reach.

Thus, people do not refrain from criticizing the government, even though it is not alone--or even principally--responsible for the high cost of living. The following is the view of a high official of the Ministry of National Economy, charged specifically with price control: "Those who criticize us systematically take the price of butter as an example, which has, in fact, gone up from 1 dinar to 1,700

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dinars a kilo between 1980 and 1981. However, they remark less often that the prices of oil, sugar, coffee, bread, cereals, pasta, semolina have not changed; that a can of sardines has only gone up 35 millimes in the course of the last 2 years; that a 300 millimes container of butane gas remains the same (despite the increase in the oil price); that a liter of fuel oil continues to cost 20 millimes; that a bottle of kitchen bleach [made with potassium chloride] continues to cost 8 millimes (while soda went up by 48 percent in 1980); and that a ride on the urban transportation system has gone up by only 10 percent. Too often they also forget that in the last 2 years the prices of many products have gone down: school supplies, textiles, transistors, TV sets...."

It is no doubt also true that in explaining the high cost of living the existence of innumerable speculators between the wholesale and retail business levels has not been taken sufficiently into account. For example, a retail merchant needs to obtain fruit. The price paid to the wholesaler ranges between two limits: a floor price for the lowest quality and a ceiling price for the "best choice." If he is dishonest, the retailer buys a small quantity at the ceiling price and the rest at the floor price, and manipulating the bill of sale he resells all of the fruit at the highest price.

More than 10,000 violations of this kind have been reported in the course of the past year. During this same period of time the authorities have ordered 300 business firms closed for periods of 3 to 6 months. Since April, 1981, the fight against speculation has been intensified, thanks in particular to small teams of two or three price controllers who, in addition to their salary, collect a premium proportionate to the number and size of the violations which they report. It seems that this is enough encouragement for the results to be substantial.

That is not all. Are the prices of industrial products manufactured in Tunisia always what they ought to be? To find out, the government undertook what are called here "fair price operations." Teams of three persons (an engineer, an economist, a lawyer) go through companies with a fine tooth comb to determine if the cost of manufacture of their products, their selling prices, their quality, and the ratio between quality and price are correct. Or if, on the contrary, something should be changed by better organization of the work, better defined schedules, or better supervised health conditions. Since May, 1981, about 60 Tunisian companies, manufacturing some 130 products in all, have been visited in this way.

Prices have gone down, but there have also been "upward readjustments," in the case of businessmen who had incorrectly established their prices. This shows well that the researchers are less preoccupied with doing police work than with helping the company and improving its functioning.

Suspected at first, these operations today are so well accepted that they are to be expanded and extended to wider sectors of the industrial activity of the country. Evidently, they do not resolve everything. However, they are a part of the struggle for the reduction of social inequalities and against too rapid enrichment of some, which have been criticized for years and which still take place, as evidenced by certain sumptuous residences which continue to be built in the residential areas of Tunis or in its northern suburbs, Carthage, La Marsa, or Gammarth. These are the property of speculators of all kinds, unscrupulous businessmen who have built enormous fortunes by exploiting the housing shortage or reselling cement on the black market.

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In the confines of his not always comfortable, two-room apartment on the Rue des Maltais or the Rue de Bab Suika, the very average Tunisian, who calls these nouveau rich "the Arabs of the BM" (a reference to a BMW automobile), generally knows how they live and entertain with champagne, smoked salmon, and foie gras from Fauchon's [expensive delicatessen in Paris] and even how they amuse themselves at night without making a spectacle of themselves in public places. The most stylish thing in this circle of people is to have one's own "night club" inside one's own home, with blinking lights, dance floor, and a professional model stereo set.

One of these "happy few," it is said, keeps in a stable behind his vacation home three cows and a complete, sophisticated system for cooling milk for the sole purpose of giving him his bowl of fresh milk on Sunday mornings. After, no doubt, a game of cards on Saturday night. Because they play a great deal, of course. Poker for the men, pinochle and rami [a kind of rummy] for the wives of these gentlemen.

And when the lady of the house marries off her daughter, you have to see it! To say that the money spent on this occasion would be enough to feed a residential section of Tunis for several days is hardly an exaggeration. Wedding gowns which cost 2,000 dinars and more are far from being the exception. Dressmakers who are capable of copying any of the great style houses of Europe, come to the house and are charged with making the gowns...and are paid in foreign exchange. The dinar is not for circulation outside the country, but for the nouveau rich of Tunis there are always arrangements with heaven. And well established ways of doing things. Those of the Tunisian emigrant workers, for example.

Courted by real collectors of foreign exchange, those who agree to play the game do not even have to go to the post office to send a money order to their family in Tunisia. The money is paid directly to the family, with a small bonus, by a correspondent of the collector, and the francs remain in France. This transaction, multiplied by the number of emigres contacted, will make it possible for the rich businessman from La Marsa to spend his winter vacation comfortably with his family in a chalet in Megeve of Courchevel [two winter resorts in France].

A resident of Tunis who tries to judge his country objectively told me: "For those people it's a question of where to find a way to impress those who are members of the same social class, with money they don't know what else to do with. But it is the evolution of events which leads to that. And all social classes have tended in parallel directions. Although for many Tunisians the first concern is still to eat properly, things on the whole have considerably changed.

"Everyone now wants his motor bicycle, his TV set, his car. Even the poorest no longer want to live in shanty towns [bidonvilles]. Moreover, most of the latter have disappeared. They have been replaced by small houses which a rather wide selection of loans at very reduced rates of interest makes it possible to buy in several years. We don't have high salaries, but often we have several persons working in the same family. They're able to pay the bills....

"About 5 years ago it was impossible to find locally made clothing of very good quality in Tunis. Now you find nearly everything. No doubt you can criticize the country for many things, but it works and doesn't get along so badly."

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You will hear these views often. I have not found a single Tunisian who did not admit that real progress had been made in all areas, before as well as after the advent of the Mzali government. They say this while still being aware that a great deal remains to be done at all levels of society.

The Fifth 5-Year Plan was completed in 1981. The Sixth Plan (1982-86) now begins. Redressing the balance of payments, that is, ending the importation of more than is exported, is not the only concern. There are two other priorities, which, moreover, are closely connected: the problem of jobs and the corrective action to be taken to correct the imbalance between the various regions of the country.

The number of jobs which need to be created each year in Tunisia is on the order of 65,000--or 325,000 over the next 5 years. That's a lot. About 49,000 jobs were created in 1981, or 10,000 more than in 1980, but this is not enough. How to make up the difference. As France is not taking in any more Tunisian workers, an effort is being made to find more and more job openings in the countries of the Persian Gulf.

Elsewhere, each time that a former emigre finally returns to his country, with a little money and an idea of a business to open--a "project," as they say here--the authorities try (and they will try more and more) to loan him, at a low rate of interest, as much money as possible to permit him to get started and to create jobs. The 1974 law on industrial investments provided for the grant of various advantages to business leaders to encourage them to decentralize, notably for the benefit of the poorest regions of the country.

The Sixth 5-Year Plan filled out the measures already undertaken, and the disadvantaged regions are better defined now. There are 120 "delegations" (subprefectures) in all of Tunisia. They have been divided into five groups, from the most prosperous to the poorest, in order to make it possible to divide the assistance to be given them, on the principle that it is necessary to give more to the poor than to the rich.

The same 1974 law only provided facilities to companies creating more than 10 jobs. Below that level, there were no facilities. Now it has been understood that there is a need to look into the small "projects" with more interest and to provide them with loans that are important to their proprietors. This is all the more the case since, with unemployment and the difficulty of finding a job, more and more Tunisians are trying to open their own business, and, in most cases, this is necessarily on a small scale. People are also aware of the fact that the young people who come onto the job market each year often have real qualifications.

Despite everything, the young have little experience, like all those beginning work, but they demand relatively high salaries, and they are not always easily satisfied with less. One of the ideas of those who developed the Sixth 5-Year Plan was to encourage business leaders to hire the maximum possible number of young workers as apprentices. The government will pay part of their salaries and for 3 years will partially exempt the company from paying the social security taxes which it would have to meet because of them.

The volume of investment provided for in the Sixth 5-Year Plan is in the order of 8 billion dinars (against 4.5 billion dinars in the Fifth 5-Year Plan). National savings, in the circumstances, should be able to finance 78 percent of the total, with the remaining 22 percent assumed by "external" financing. The purely Tunisian banks are not able to finance all these "projects." Therefore, various banks have

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been established, like the Tunisian-Kuwaiti Bank and the Tunisian-Saudi Bank. Other such banks will be established in the near future: a bank bringing together Tunisia, Qatar, and France; a Tunisian-Algerian bank; and a Tunisian-Abu Dhabi bank.

In accordance with the Sixth 5-Year Plan we should also note a series of basic reforms concerning the whole structure of the country: education, administration, tax system, distribution system. In the agricultural sphere particular importance has been attached to the development of animal husbandry and grain production. In the industrial sphere it is intended in particular to give a breathing spell to the textile industry and to develop the mechanical and electrical industries.

In the domain of tourism investments provided for will be more than twice what they were during the Fifth 5-Year Plan. It is planned to increase the capacity of many hotels, and throughout the country some 35,000 to 40,000 beds will be added, particularly in Tabarka and Raf Raf (near Bizerte). A Kuwaiti consortium has begun to invest in Tunisian tourism. Saudi Arabia is becoming more interested. This is understandable: in 1982, 2 million tourists landed on Tunisian soil.

The new factor in the years 1980-81 is the development of Algerian tourism. The 800,000 Algerians who visited Tunisia in 1981 did not just come to the country. They brought a considerable quantity of products which they could not, or only with difficulty, could find in their own country: particularly bedspreads, food, and cosmetics. As the second source of foreign exchange after petroleum, can tourism become the first source? Most Tunisian leaders seem to be convinced that it can. It appears that they will do everything possible to make this happen.

What do the Tunisians think? A few weeks after the legislative elections of 1 November which as we know left a feeling of frustration, they recall the promises made during the election campaign. Not all of the political promises have been kept. With a certain optimism Tunisians expect that the other promises will be kept and that the view recently expressed by a Tunisian minister will become a reality: "With Ben Salah we experienced socialism without democracy. With Nouria we had liberalism without democracy. We want to live under socialism and democracy at the same time."

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TUNISIA

ARTICLE REFLECTS ON SLOW DEMOCRATIZATION

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French No 1095, 30 Dec 81 pp 65, 67, 69

[Article by Habib Boulares: "On Homeopathic Democracy"]

[Text] When a system of government, based on the supremacy of a single party--de facto or de jure, what difference does it make!--goes through the constraints of a multiparty system, how far is it possible to go along the path of peaceful change in the exercise of power?

The answer given to this question by Tunisia--a developing African, Arab, and Muslim country--merits reflection. Since the proclamation of its independence on 20 March 1956, Tunisia has been governed by Bourguiba, to whom the Constitution of 1 June 1959 gave practically full powers within the framework of a republican presidential regime.

The man is a convinced autocrat, for whom the idea of a stable and strong state wins out over any other consideration of political circumstances. Now 79 years old, he has not changed. He still thinks that the multiparty system is dangerous in a country which he frankly admits is underdeveloped, above all when the country is sensitive to the influences of an Arab-Muslim world, where democracy in the Western fashion is far from being a part of the cultural heritage and where, at times in the name of Arabism and at times in the name of the Muslim Umma (community) the very notion of the state is placed in question.

His party, the PSD (Destourian Socialist Party), which has become the single party over the years, is not even a party. Rather, it is an organism charged with contact with the people, an apparatus serving to control the cities and the countryside instead of a reflective body capable of having any influence at all on the real choices made by the government.

It is undoubtedly a single party, but it has nothing in common with the idea one has a single party in the people's democracies, where the party governs the state. Here in Tunisia, it is only a wheel operating within the government, among so many others. It is also a party with several tendencies, where the members stay within it out of force of habit or fidelity to the nationalist past. They come into it out of the desire or need to play a role and leave it, at times, disappointed or eliminated by the course of events.

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Hence all of the ambiguity which the first steps toward a multiparty system involve. The PSD, despite its name, is not an ideological body but rather a grouping of bureaucrats, or men who belong to the party apparatus, of those who are nostalgic for the national liberation movement, of young people in search of an outlet for their desire for action, and of representatives of socio-professional organisms determined to maintain the connection between their specialized activity and the administration of the state. One might think that the PSD would cease to exist on the day when the umbilical cord connecting it to the state is broken. However, one could also transpose the question and say that, since the state is what it is, it is hard to see what place it could leave to other parties.

And at that point we must speak of constraints. The move toward a multiparty system is taking place under the pressure of an internal evolution within the country, and first of all because there has been created, in the course of the last 10 years, a real kind of multiparty system on the margin of the laws. Ideological groups--Islamic, Arabist, Marxist--have seen the light of day. Democratic, socialist, and trade union dissident movements have been developed. For some of them it is a matter of struggling for a different model of society. For the others it is a matter of rejecting despotism, even if it is "enlightened."

The bloody clash between the security forces--on 26 January 1978--and the workers, as well as the attack on the city of Gafsa--on 28 January 1980--by commando group of desperadoes who had come from Libya were spectacular and tragic revelations of the fragility of the "domestic front." The witnesses to the decay of the situation were not in short supply. During the 1970's a record number of political trials took place before special courts. It was necessary that blood be shed, on two occasions, to bring it out into the open--that is, the need to change the kind of government.

Before history it should still be recalled that President Bourguiba hesitated between two choices: to tighten the screws even further or to discharge some of the ballast. Those who believe in the unavoidable character of developments should reflect on this point of history. President Bourguiba could have chosen a "strong" solution. No doubt, after other somersaults, the will to liberty would have ended by winning out. But when? And at what price? With his temperament and at his age, he could have let things run on. He chose to throw some ballast overboard. There was constraint, and there was also a choice. By appointing Mohamed Mzali as prime minister he wanted to show this. Thus, a new political course began in April, 1981.

In any case, throwing ballast overboard means easing up on the brakes, not taking them off completely. Bourguiba intends to remain in control of the game. Pluralism? All right! But pluralism in expression first! Newspapers were permitted to appear. Five weeklies and a monthly publication now express opinions opposed to those of the government. A multiparty system? Yes, but in small doses.

The PCT (Tunisian Communist Party) has been reauthorized to function since July, 1981. The single party system is officially out. The others? They will be treated case by case. Islamic extremists were thrown into jail on the day when the Communists received the green light to begin open activity. As the social democrats are divided, they will be left, according to their various choices, to try their own luck.

The socialists of "popular unity" are also divided. Only one of the two tendencies will be encouraged. And, since it is necessary for divergent opinions to find their expression in the framework of governmental institutions, the government has been trying for months to establish a "National Front" made up of the PSD and the trade unions of the UGTT (Tunisian General Federation of Labor), whose leaders, released from prison at the beginning of the year, were the beneficiaries of a kind of amnesty to let them regain the controls of their central labor organization.

The message was clear to those who wanted to hear it. Bourguiba agrees to accept opposition within the very center of official organizations, on a single condition: mutual concessions. You accept me, I accept you! It will be said that that's not real democracy. However, has Bourguiba himself ever claimed that he was establishing a European style democracy?

From his point of view he has done the maximum. Authorizing the publication of newspapers that he did not want to hear spoken of; again legalizing the Communist Party; dismissing the men responsible for the 26 January 1978 affair; freeing imprisoned trade union members; letting them resume control of their central organization and meeting with them; allowing a free election campaign; "offering" television and radio time to declared opponents of the government. That's already a great deal.

In addition, will the entry of those opponents into parliament also be required? Are they going to require the recognition of parties in the name of universal suffrage? To these two questions the president's response is a categorical "no." Hence the ridiculous figures "recognized" by the socialists (in particular) following the early elections of 1 November 1981.

Why play this game, it is asked on all sides? Because there is no other way in the eyes of all those who have chosen the legal path for the transformation of the Tunisian political system. Bourguiba and the regime have not changed. The transformation can only be gradual. For those who want to measure it in terms of the ideal, it is insignificant. However, compared to the situation which prevailed 2 years ago, the change is profound and spectacular. The multiparty system today is a recognized fact. The next stage should make the two levels fit each other.

It is clear that the established system has adopted the rule of not sharing power and of not letting anything be forced on it. The opposition can demonstrate outside government offices and parliament, and it is the president who chooses the time to give it legal status.

In any case, this is a risky game, because it does not take into account the reactions of public opinion. Profoundly shocked by the results of the elections of 1 November, frustrated in its hopes because it believed in the normal operation of democracy, public opinion threatens to turn into revolt or disenchantment. The government is losing the confidence which it has been able to capitalize on for the past 2 years or so. And to get back on top of things it would be necessary to do much more today than what was demanded yesterday.

Few people seriously believed in the arith-etical possibility of an entry of the opposition into parliament. That is the reason for which many voters, already part of the system, gave their votes to opposition electoral lists on 1 November.



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An honest result of the elections would have satisfied the majority of Tunisians. Even better, the success of some opposition elements would have satisfied everyone, although it would not have made any change in the balance of forces.

Instead of that, the frustration is such today that the new government course seems to be threatened. It is threatened by social tensions which serve as compensation; threatened by the radicalization of opposition movements, the more moderate elements of which see the extremists mock their legalistic approach ("We told you that there was nothing to expect from this regime!"); threatened also by the cracks which are appearing in the governmental edifice, where agreement is far from complete on the way in which the opposition has been treated.

No doubt, in a Third World country slow evolution is as indispensable as democratization. The government cannot fail to loosen the vice of authoritarianism, under pain of seeing the country plunged into dangerous disturbances. It can be done, step by step, by stages. However, it is necessary to guard against provoking a backlash by treating the people with contempt. The reactions then would be impossible to foresee. The achievement, patiently added to and which is--once again--considerable, risks being rejected in an atmosphere of loss and confusion.

For Africa, for the Arab world, the Tunisian example is not transferable. In order for it to become so, it will be necessary to repair the harmful effects of the mistaken maneuver of the elections of 1 November 1981. By recognizing the opposition movements; by letting their representatives enter parliament in the first byelections which present themselves. Then one could talk of a Tunisian model for slow democratization. If the time is available.

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TUNISIA

AGREEMENT SIGNED TO CREATE FISHING COMPANY

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1887, 8 Jan 82 p 73

[Article: "Establishment of a Large Industrial Fishing Company"]

[Text] On 10 July 1981 an agreement was signed in Tunis for the study and establishment of an integrated fishing operation in Tunisia, by the Tunisian-Kuwaiti Development Bank (BTKD) and the French company CECOTRAT (Center for Cooperation in Transportation, Tourism, and Telecommunications). On 9 December an agreement was also signed in Tunis on the financing of the operation between the same partners and a Norwegian company for the construction of fishing boats, Rana Batfabrikk A/S.

This is a large operation for the development of deep sea fishing in Tunisia, which will be undertaken, since a new company, called the Industrial Fishing Company [SIP], will acquire a fleet of 16 trawlers 24 meters long and construct a processing factory including: an ice-producing unit, equipment for freezing, filleting of fish, canning, preservation, stocking, packing, etc.

The Industrial Fishing Company will also construct a ship repair yard for its own needs but which will also be available for the repair of trawlers operating along the Tunisian coast. The company's base of operations will reportedly be the port of Bizerte.

The overall investment will reportedly total Fr 230 million. CECOTRAT will provide the Industrial Fishing Company with all technical assistance needed up to the point of the sale of its products.

The agreement was signed by Ali Boukhris, president and general director of the Tunisian-Kuwaiti Development Bank (BTKD), and Tien Phuc, president and general director of CECOTRAT. The funds needed for the operation will be provided by CECOTRAT (33.4 percent) and the BTKD (30 percent). The latter will be the guarantor for syndicating the remaining 36.6 percent among Tunisian institutional or private partners. Further, the BTKD will guarantee Norwegian and Danish loans provided under the form of export credits, one for the construction of the trawlers in Norway and the other for the supply of the main engines by a Danish firm.

The feasibility of the integrated operation is based on fish catches in the order of 600 tons per year for each trawler. Two trawlers have already been ordered from the Norwegian shipbuilders, Rana Batfabrikk, and will be delivered as follows: the first trawler on 30 November 1982 and the second trawler on 30 April 1983.

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Established on 25 February 1981, as we reported at the time (MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS of 6 March 1981, p 608), the BTKD is a Tunisian company with a capital of 100 million Tunisian dinars, of which 50 percent was provided by Tunisia, 40 percent by Kuwait, and 10 percent by various Kuwaiti institutions. The president and general director is Ali Boukhris.

CECOTRAT, whose president and general director is Tien Phuc, is a consortium of French and foreign industrial, commercial, transportation, engineering, and financial enterprises. Its purpose is the construction of "turnkey" or "production in hand" projects, ranging from the search for financing up to technical assistance in management, if it is needed. We recall that CECOTRAT was the promoter, in particular, of Dakar Marine Company in Senegal.

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TUNISIA

BRIEFS

TUNISIA-KUWAIT COOPERATION--Tunisian-Kuwaiti cooperation, which is manifested in many projects (see in particular MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS of 6 March 1981, p 608; 3 April 1981, p 935; 7 August 1981, p 2043; 6 November 1981, p 2812; 18 December 1981, p 3357), has just been ratified in a way by the official visit to Tunisia made, from 21 to 24 December, on the invitation of Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali, by the crown prince and president of the Council of Ministers of Kuwait, Shikh Saad Al Abdallah Salem As-Sabah. In the course of his visit, the crown prince, accompanied by a sizable delegation, was received by President Bourguiba and visited several installations in the country. Apart from political questions, problems of the Arab world and international questions of common interest, the talks dealt with bilateral relations, with the two parties affirming their desire to strengthen their cooperation. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1886, 1 Jan 82 p 18] 11267

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