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Near East/North Africa Report

(FOUO 9/82)

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ALGERIA

PRIVATE SECTOR'S STATUS EXAMINED

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French No 257, 18-31 Jan 82 pp 25-26

Article by correspondent Kamel Djaider: "The Distinction"; passages quoted also printed in italics/

Text The FLN Central Committee devoted its sixth meeting essentially to debate on the place and role of the private sector in the Algerian national economy. The aim was to determine as exactly as possible the field of action of that sector so that it shall contribute effectively to the process of economic and social development, without giving it the power to question fundamental decisions anew.

There is reason to recall here that the Algerian private sector, which accounts for more than a third of national production--of which two thirds is in agricultural and one third in non-agricultural employment--does not have access to the strategic domains (hydrocarbons, mines, transportation by air, sea, or rail, or telecommunications).

Before its submission to the country's highest political body, the question of the private sector had already been debated at the base, within FLN structures. It emerged from this debate that in the mind of the Algerian citizen the problem is to lay down the framework--if not the limits--within which that sector should develop so as not to risk turning into "a springboard for the seizure of power." The dominant concern was to localize the economic fields in which its action could complement the activity of state enterprises without risk of market control, worker exploitation, or unjust cornering of wealth.

Decisive Planning

On the eve of the initial working session, it appeared quite evident that the direction being taken was toward implementation of a policy in which planning would intervene decisively. "It is inconsistent to be told that this debate could turn or deviate towards a discussion of choice," wrote the Algerian Press Service as that working session opened. "It is illusory to wish to change the course of history," it added, and considered it op-

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portune to recall that "recent experiments elsewhere, notably in Saudi Arabia, have shown how dangerous it was, as much from the standpoint of economics as in terms of political and social consequences, to wish to strengthen a private sector..."

Still, the general orientation was all mapped out, since it is understood in Algeria that private sector activities "must be situated and limited in such a way that they cannot acquire economic power or influence the centers of state decisions" (National Charter). The real task, then, for the 200 central committee members, was to "distinguish between that private sector which plays a useful role in the country's economy, and that parasitic or middleman private sector which endangers not only socialism but all independent economic development" (National Charter).

It is pointed out in Algiers, moreover, that if this private sector must be so situated as to complement the state sector, that is to be done also to reduce recourse to foreign production, and primarily to that of multinationals, which "remain the foremost enemy of all countries on the road to independent development." From that standpoint firm emphasis was placed, in the grassroots debates, on the risks entailed by maintaining any relations between the private sector and foreign capitalist circles, and the need was reaffirmed for the state to continue in control of the economic levers directly linked to foreign countries.

It is publicly admitted today that the Algerian private sector, which has grown considerably in recent years, "has developed in an anarchic and wild manner, both geographically and in the branches of its production."

There are actually two types of private sector. One, powerful and profitable, has spread into the most varied fields of construction and industrial processing, thanks to the immense possibilities of public markets, to the inexperience of taxation and pricing administrations, to the protective wall sheltering the domestic market from competition by imported products, and finally to the exceptional boom in consumption. The other, that of agriculture, traditional building, fisheries, handicrafts, services, retail trade, and transportation, after experiencing relative prosperity in the shadow of colonization, has seen its capacities under-utilized, at times frozen, or simply destroyed. At the periphery of the state economic apparatus set up in the decade of the 70's, there arose in a very empirical way a private "market place" which fed almost exclusively on the products of the imbalances in the emerging modern national economy, such as shortages, weaknesses of monopolies, and frailty of the first marketing institutions.

In that spreading jungle of middlemen--businessmen, wholesalers, proxies and connivers "speculative economic operations" range from the small cigarette retailer to the "nabobs" "representing" foreign firms, for whom the most effective working method remains the practice of corruption applied to certain officials of the public sector.

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To Strengthen the Public Sector

After completing an extremely thorough task of information and investigation, carried out in depth and in close liaison with economic operators in the state sector, the FLN Economic and Social Commission drew up a number of documents which place private activity in its macro-economic context and formulate the essential questions concerning organization of that sector. It is this Economic and Social Commission report which the members of the central committee studied during the two working days.

Starting with a global approach which considers that "the whole economy functions as a unit," this sixth session examined the question from the angle of the pressing need to strengthen the state sector.

Considering that the country's private sector developed "with the help of a very rapid growth of investment impelled by the state since independence," Algerian leaders considered that it is "the good or bad management of this aggregate of material and human resources (of the state) which in large measure determines the good or bad functioning of enterprises, whatever their status (socialist or private)."

In that spirit they consider that in the future it will be the role of the state to "make the rules of the game" by integrating private sector development with national planning.

To that end, it is proposed to set up legal machinery, with financial and commercial instruments intended to organize and control that sector so as truly to embody it in the general movement of the country's economy, and cause it to play, under proper conditions, the role assigned to it by the constitution and National Charter.

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EGYPT

RISE AND FALL OF JIHAN AL-SADAT

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 252, 11-17 Dec 81 pp 44-46

[Article: "The Sorrows of a Woman Who Was Egypt's First Lady: the Rise and Fall of Jihan al-Sadat"]

[Text] Her last request was to be appointed ambassador to the United Nations.

Egyptian television declines to designate a weekly program during which she would discuss the glorious deeds of the late president.

Is Jihan al-Sadat making preparations for leaving Egypt? The news is provocative, but what is even more provocative is the life of this woman who in recent years attained a [measure of] personal glory which vanished in [a few] tumultuous, dramatic moments.

She was the first and foremost lady in al-Sadat's Egypt. How did she rise, and how did she fall? How did she take part in government as the second unproclaimed president? How did she disappear from the limelight, which left her a woman veiled in black and facing one of two choices: travel to the United States or to West Germany?

Between the [presidential] palace and [the contemplation of] exile the story is a long one. This dispatch which AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI received from Cairo is a collection of stories about Egypt's talented and ambitious Eva Peron. For many this has been a closely guarded secret. These stories come under the short title of "A Woman's Sorrows."

Because of their amazing nature, discussions about Jihan al-Sadat have overshadowed any other discussions here [in Cairo]. They have even overshadowed discussions about the life of Anwar al-Sadat himself. In most private gatherings the sorrows of the lady in this particular period of time have captured a large part of the interests of various circles.

The sorrows of al-Sadat's widow, who was Egypt's first lady are sorrows of a very special kind. They are sorrows for a personal glory that has irrevocably vanished; they are sorrows for personal ambition that has

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melted into thin air. Everyone knows that Mrs Jihan's ambitions did not stop with her desire for wealth and for taking part in economic projects. Everyone knows that her ambitions went beyond that and that she also entertained political ambitions and a serious desire to "take part in governing Egypt" beside her husband, the late president. She even entertained ambitions of governing Egypt by herself when necessary after his departure. She would thus become another Eva Peron. She herself expressed that desire to participate in the reins of power as her late husband's successor when commenting on her husband's assassination in a conversation she had with Mr Mansur Hasan, former minister of state for presidential affairs and former minister of information and culture. Mr Mansur Hasan was removed from these positions by al-Sadat in a cabinet shuffle in which he was the only target. This was only one week before al-Sadat's death. In that conversation Mrs Jihan said, "If al-Sadat's killers had succeeded in assassinating all the political leaders on the reviewing stand for the military parade, I would have gone myself to the Broadcast Building and made a statement to the people or announced Bulletin No 1."

It may be that Jihan al-Sadat's unruly desire to take part in the government of Egypt as her husband's successor was the only reason that led her to appear the way she did at her husband's funeral. Her appearance was the subject of various comments in every Egyptian household. Her appearance was that of a strong woman who was in control and who was not shaken by what had happened. She also took pains to appear, as she usually does, elegant and beautiful. She refused to cover her head with the black veil of mourning, and everyone who saw her on the television screen noticed that she was arranging her hair with her hand while her husband's body was being laid to rest. Her fingernails were also covered with white nail polish, and this [too] was the subject of numerous comments here. It was also the subject of a comparison between al-Sadat's widow and the widow of the former Shah, the Shahbanu, who appeared beside her fully dressed in black.

Jihan al-Sadat, Umm Kulthum and the Wives of Others

Ever since the earliest days of al-Sadat's managing the government of Egypt, Jihan al-Sadat has been working at maintaining for herself a position of pre-eminence among the women of Egypt: Egypt's first and foremost lady. Toward that end she set out first on the scene of social activity to prepare herself for her entry into the field of political activity. Because the road to [her objective] had to go first through charitable societies and societies for social activities, that was a reason for her early clash with many of Egypt's women who were prominent then in that field. Umm Kulthum was one of those women. At that time Umm Kulthum had adopted a charitable or a social project through a society she had established for that purpose. She had begun gathering donations and contributions to that society. But Mrs Jihan soon took over that project under the pretext of developing it. She removed Umm Kulthum, and she even kept her away from it after she contrived a misunderstanding with her and claimed that she refused to have Umm Kulthum address the president by his name of

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Anwar or by his nickname of Abu al-Anawir. [She claimed] she told Umm Kulthum in one of their meetings, "He is the president. You must address him as any other citizen addresses him. You must address him as Mr President."

Umm Kulthum was extremely intelligent. She understood this message, and she gave up her role as "prima donna" after a new one came along and wanted to be everything by herself. Ever since then, Umm Kulthum retired from the social activity she had initiated. She also retired from singing so that the first lady and the new star can control the al-Wafa' wa al-Amal project by herself with the assistance of Mr 'Uthman Ahmad 'Uthman who had begun to worm his way into the ruler's household, trying to enter it from every door, even from that of the first lady.

What happened with Umm Kulthum happened with every other lady who was trying to find for herself a place on the scene of social activity. Jihan al-Sadat considered that personal competition and a challenge to her position at the top.

That was also the reason for the fall out she had with the wife of Husayn al-Shafi'i, who was vice president at the time. Mrs al-Shafi'i had also begun to be active in social work through the Baladi [My Country] Society. She had established that society and defined its goals: to carry out operations to clean up Cairo.

The first lady overshadowed all ladies, and her society, al-Wafa' wa al-Amal overshadowed all societies. Mrs Husayn al-Shafi'i disappeared from the scene just as Umm Kulthum did; her charitable society failed; and her husband, Husayn al-Shafi'i, was removed from his position for reasons he himself does not know to this day.

Many women were removed in this manner and for any reason no matter how trivial. What mattered was that Egypt's first lady remain the center of attention, remain in the limelight, remain in the center of activity and remain the subject of people's conversation. It was important that she remain the first in everything, even in beauty and elegance. It was for this last reason alone that Dr 'A'ishah Ratib, the minister of social affairs in Egypt, was removed. Later, she was removed even further when she was appointed ambassador in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and did not go back to her former position as professor at the university. Dr 'A'ishah Ratib's crime was that people in Egypt had begun comparing her with Jihan al-Sadat. People were saying that Dr 'A'ishah was more knowledgeable. She paid the price of all this by being removed from her position, and she became an example for other women who would try to compete with The Lady in any one of these areas. Therefore, it was enough for a beautiful woman to appear on television, and people would say that Jihan would get rid of her!

The Story of Mrs Himmat Mustafa

There is another story that is not less curious or amazing than the preceding stories. It is the story of Mrs Himmat Mustafa, the former television

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announcer, and the present director of Egyptian television. This "lady" has an instinctive talent for finding her way to reach rulers. During the age of 'Abd-al-Nasir she was more of a Nasirist than 'Abd-al-Nasir himself. People remember how she appeared on Egyptian television on the day 'Abd-al-Nasir announced that he was stepping down, that famous 9th day in June. [People saw] Himmat Mustafa weeping on the television screen, and she was asking people to reject the decision and to insist on the president's leadership and on continuing the march.

'Abd-al-Nasir died, and the lady who was a Nasirist changed her colors and became a follower of al-Sadat. She would shed profuse tears before every interview she had with the new leader. She was the only one who interviewed the president in the annual television interview al-Sadat made on his birthday. She would always cry at the beginning of every interview. She would cry with emotion, considering that "she was in the presence of an inspiring, capable and talented leader who saved Egypt from perdition." She also used her tears to pave the way for her visit to Jerusalem. When preparations were begun to make up the media delegation that would accompany al-Sadat to Jerusalem, Mrs Himmat went to meet the president. She went in his presence and pleaded with him about how much she wanted to "experience" this unprecedented political and historic event. The president complied with her wishes and her tears, and Himmat Mustafa was the only Egyptian woman in the official delegation that visited Jerusalem with al-Sadat. This was before a decree was issued appointing her presidential adviser for press relations along with Sa'd Zaghlul Nassar who was then President al-Sadat's press secretary.

She thus became the first Egyptian woman to hold a position in al-Sadat's private secretariat. For her, getting close to the president was the beginning of the end. This is because the first lady did not allow anyone that much ambition, that much advancement and that much success in overcoming obstacles. Only 9 months after she was appointed to that position, the lady announcer was removed from that position in an appropriate manner and appointed director of television broadcasting. This is despite the fact that there were candidates for that position who were more experienced and more efficient than she is and who also had seniority. But Himmat Mustafa, nevertheless, continued to be loyal to the first lady, appreciating the fact that the first lady did not remove her altogether but prepared for her a position suitable to the loyalty she had demonstrated to the president and to his policy.

The Limousine [Service] Project

Since Mrs Jihan al-Sadat has been interested throughout the past years in "ensuring" her economic future as a precaution against any unforeseen situation whatsoever, she has therefore set up numerous economic projects and entered into partnerships with major investors and capitalists in other projects. The most important of these projects to which she was related were those of al-Wafa' wa al-Amal Society and the limousine [service] project.

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As far as the first project is concerned, despite the fact that it is a social project, its budget was not subject to any kind of supervision by the state. Project books and contributions made to the society in Egypt and from abroad, which Mrs Jihan worked diligently to obtain, remained a closely guarded secret not known to anyone except those who are in charge of the project who are her close aides.

But what is known to everyone is that in the name of this project Mrs Jihan received large sums of money. Specifically, she received contributions from international and especially American agencies and organizations. She also received contributions from important Arab personalities before the political boycott of Egypt. The project was also used as a cover to bring into the country devices and equipment that were not scrutinized by customs. Consequently, no one knew what was in those huge containers that came from abroad and were addressed to al-Wafa' wa al-Amal Society. No one also knows how much money was offered to that society or in what account these funds were deposited. However, the answer to this baffling matter soon came in news that the well-known 1,000 hectare California ranch had been purchased in the name of the first lady. This is the farm where the late president's son, Mr Jamal al-Sadat, was staying for a few days of rest and relaxation when his father was assassinated.

The other project is that of the Limousine Automobile Company. This is Mrs Jihan's project; it is hers alone. She has monopolized the operation of a fleet of Mercedes automobiles that are run by radio in various parts of Egypt. It is estimated that the capital of this company is 100 million Egyptian pounds.

If making such economic preparations was a kind of precaution against the surprises [future] days may bring, and based on the principle that politics is a dangerous game in the Third World and that [it is a game] whose future is unknown, the first lady's [preoccupation with these preparations] did not mean that she ignored her political ambitions and her desire to take part in government. Therefore, she began preparing herself politically, academically and socially for this mission.

Academically, she found an opportunity to become Dr Jihan al-Sadat. As long as she was in government, education would serve government. She was able--and no one believes this--to start on the road with the secondary school certificate and to go to the university. Then she obtained a master's degree, and she is preparing for a doctorate.

The "Unknown" Talent

The Egyptian university suddenly discovered that Mrs Jihan was an unusual talent and a closeted genius. She used to pass every year with excellent marks, revealing a genius that exceeded that of the professors themselves. Naturally, there were scandals everywhere, and people talked in whispers about professors who sold their consciences for a position granted to them by the first lady. Dr Rashad Rushdi was one of those who "taught" the lady.

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The reward he received for his loyalty was a presidential appointment as adviser for artistic and musical affairs. Mrs Jihan conferred positions on most of the members of Rushdi's family. She even appointed his nephew, journalist Ahmad Bahjat editor-in-chief and president of the board of directors of one of Egypt's weeklies. She also prevented his trial in the sectarian sedition incidents. His articles in AL-AHRAM were a clear invitation [to sedition], inciting Muslims one time and Copts the other time.

Just as Rashad Rushdi was rewarded, various professors who offered their academic services to Mrs Jihan were rewarded. Dr Mustafa Abu Talib, who was director of the university when the lady [was a student at the university] became speaker of the People's Assembly. Dr Subhi 'Abd-al-Hakim who was dean of the College of Arts where she graduated and where she was later appointed, became president of the Advisory Council and so on.

On the political level Mrs Jihan al-Sadat tried to maintain for herself a prominent position on the domestic scene and on the foreign scene as well. In addition to chairing the local council (the political council) of the governorate of al-Minufiyah, she used to attend various political events inside and outside Egypt. When she visited the United States "alone" last February, she did not hesitate to make numerous political statements just as though she were responsible for making that policy. This provoked the opposition in Egypt and prompted Dr Hilmi Murad to write and ask what right did "the president's wife" have to make political statements. That mere question was enough to arouse the president's anger against Hilmi Murad who was later disciplined when he was arrested along with those who were charged with inciting sectarian sedition in Egypt.

Mrs Jihan used to affirm to everyone that she was a lady qualified for government. She used to "negotiate;" to meet with delegations; to meet with stars; to give press interviews; to dance with heads of state and to show the West an image of a woman who was extremely modern and enlightened. Besides, she was a daily item on television news in one form or another, and [she appeared] in various publications.

Actual Participation in Government

Naturally, Mrs Jihan al-Sadat was not satisfied with the fact that the years she would spend by her late husband's side would merely be years in which she would prepare herself for government. Instead, she thought she should spend these years participating in government as well. Hence, her presence influenced the decision making process. There were numerous ministers who were personally loyal to her. In fact, she was capable of issuing her instructions to all ministers if there was a need to do so. There were journalists whose survival depended on her. Aminah al-Sa'id was her personal friend and adviser, and so was Muhammad 'Abd-al-Jawwad, president of a news agency, and Safwat al-Sharif, president of radio and television broadcasting. In addition, the speaker of the People's Assembly and the president of the Advisory Council depended on her as well. For a period of time 'Uthman Ahmad 'Uthman represented the strong arm she extended into the

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management of government. But then there was a disagreement between them because of family problems. She replaced him by Sayyid Mar'i who was a close political adviser and a relative.

The Shock and the Collapse of Ambition

The lady's ambition continued even after al-Sadat's assassination. In the first hours that followed the assassination of her husband, some of her proteges told her that the People's Assembly would nominate her vice president. This was something she urgently desired and was striving for. But she was later surprised, after the presidential referendum and the selection of President Mubarak president, to see all her hopes begin to collapse. President Mubarak turned out to be completely different from what she expected or thought he would be. The man dealt with himself firmly, thinking he should set an example for everybody. He issued instructions to the agencies of the media asking them not to publish any news about his family or his private life. They were not to publish anything about his wife or his family under any circumstances whatsoever. He issued instructions to the ministers asking them to stay away from the limelight and to refrain from making promises they cannot keep and statements they cannot carry out.

Mrs Jihan was by necessity out of the limelight, but she could not tolerate that. She wanted to test the situation herself so as to determine what the coming days would be like for her. She began making numerous requests. She asked that television cameras record her private meeting with one of the delegations that came to visit her from the United States. Safwat al-Sharif, director of Radio and Television [Broadcasting Agency] declined. He told her he was at her service and that he would actually like to do that. But he said he could not do what she asked because his instructions would not allow him to. He affirmed his loyalty to her, and he was moved to tears during his conversation [with her], so she comforted him.

Then she asked that a statement be broadcast to the people to commemorate the 40th day of her late husband's death. That request was denied with intense regrets. Her response was to publish a statement in the newspapers stating that "Women would not be receiving mourners coming to offer condolences."

She asked that an hour on television be designated every week for a discussion of the late president's glorious deeds and accomplishments. The reply [she was given] was, "We will think about it, God willing."

She asked that a number of rest houses which had been designated for the late president be designated for her and the family just as the mansion in al-Jizah and Alexandria were. But she was told that that would not be possible also. At the same time President Mubarak asked that a large number of these rest houses be disposed of and turned over to the agencies with which they were originally affiliated, such as the rest house at Ismailia which is owned by the Suez Canal [Authority].

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Ambassador. . . Or?

Jihan thus realized that her ambitions for government, for stardom, for the world of limelights had begun to collapse altogether. So her last request was to be appointed ambassador of Egypt at the United Nations.

And here numerous questions are being raised in Egypt.

Would this be the beginning of a permanent immigration? Has the lady who used to be the first lady decided to immigrate to her ranch in California?

Or is this a political ambition that cannot easily be forgotten? Will the lady actually travel and begin her voluntary exile? Or will future days open the books on the last 10 years: the books on politics, on the economy, on the university, on al-Wafa' wa al-Amal, on the Limousine Automobile Company and on whatever [else] has been hidden?

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EGYPT

LUTFI AL-KHULI COMMENTS ON GROUPING PARTY PROGRAM

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 252, 11-17 Dec 81 pp 42-43

[Article: "An Open Letter about the Grouping Party's Position on Current Egyptian Conditions; Lutfi al-Khuli Says, 'Our Strategic Choices Are Firm and Binding, and Our Tactics Do not Include Trickery and Submission' "]

[Text] The document published by AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in its recent issue, which included the full text of the political report issued by the National Progressive Unionist Grouping Party, the opposition party in Egypt, raised broad political reactions in the Arab homeland and in some European circles.

We received scores of telephone calls and a large number of letters early in the week, especially from Egyptians. These calls and letters commented on the report and also on the position of the Grouping Party after the departure of al-Sadat. The Grouping party is the party that endured the most in the campaign of arrests which was launched by the former president of Egypt against different factions who opposed his policy.

Readers who communicated with us were asking if the Grouping party had changed its policy after President Husni Mubarak took over the responsibility [of the presidency], especially with regard to the Camp David accords and the Egyptian-Israeli treaty. They were asking if the Grouping party had changed its policy after the new Egyptian president released some of its leaders, who were among the 31 persons released from custody, even though others are still being held pending trial by the State Supreme Security Court.

In an attempt to answer these questions AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI contacted Mr Lutfi al-Khuli in his capacity as one of the leaders of the Grouping party. His name is still included in the detention and trial decree. At the present time he is in Paris where he is undergoing treatment. He preferred answering our questions in writing. The full text of his reply follows.

1. I thank you and I also thank [our] brothers who wrote the letters for the interest you show in Egypt's causes and in the struggle of its people. I also thank you for your conscientious effort to inform your readers about the positions and policies of our party which has been and still is a new

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experience in political organization and thought in the context of the experiences of the Arab homeland in this field. The Grouping party is an attempt to set up a public, legal party that would serve as the political home [so to speak] for all leftist factions with their various ideological premises. These would come together in Egypt's [current] circumstances, around strategic political, economic and social choices and form one political force with unified action.

2. The strategic choices for our party are still firm and binding. Only the party's General National Congress can change these choices, and the National Congress has not been convened, nor has it considered any proposed changes to these strategic choices until this writing. Accordingly, it is not true and it is basically irrelevant to say that changes have been made recently in these choices or that the party's program, which includes these choices, has been amended after the death of President al-Sadat and after President Husni Mubarak became president.

Chief among these choices are that Egypt is an indivisible part of the Arab homeland; that the Palestinian question is the central question of the Arab Liberation Movement; that the Liberation Organization is the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people; that there is to be no reconciliation with the Zionist enemy; and that the Arab-Israeli dispute is a national, not a regional dispute. This struggle is a distinct part of the struggle of the Arab Liberation Movement against all old and new forms of imperialism and colonialism.

Hence the position of our party has been and still is to condemn the Camp David policy; to reject the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty and the normalization of relations with Israel; [to reject] Egypt's isolation from its Arab nation; [to reject] the military facilities granted to the United States; and [to reject] Egypt's departure from the policy of non-alignment.

Possibilities for Change

3. Our party, like any other party in every society, has strategies and tactics to serve these strategies. If a strategy is firm, tactics have to be flexible so as to deal effectively with the variables and given factors of [all] situations.

Naturally, President al-Sadat's departure in the bloody, tragic manner in which that incident took place and under the circumstances in which it occurred [would seem to suggest change]. [When] President Husni Mubarak took office, some of the slogans he proclaimed were a continuation of President al-Sadat's policy, especially with regard to the Camp David policy and peaceful relations with Israel. In other slogans some differences with President al-Sadat's policy were noted, especially with regard to relative freedom for the opposition to express itself and changing the method of implementing the open-door policy, by putting more emphasis on production rather than on consumption. He also stopped hostile campaigns in the press against Arabs.

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Furthermore, President Mubarak invited our party along with other parties to engage in a dialogue with him.

In view of these "new conditions" there are all kinds of possibilities for change, and these exist side by side with specific policies that the regime will continue to pursue.

Hence, I am quite certain that our party has not changed its strategic choices; nor has it changed its positions on the Camp David policy, on the treaty and on the normalization of relations with the Israeli enemy. At the same time our party, which is a political force and not a political club, has not hesitated in its pursuit of tactics to deal with the possibilities and given data of the new conditions and with President Mubarak's invitation to engage in a dialogue. Tactful dealings do not mean that our party is engaged in trickery or is submitting blindly to new conditions. Tactful dealings rather mean getting to the bottom of these conditions, examining their depth and their orientation and participating with all the other national forces to steer these new conditions toward a proper patriotic, national democracy.

Leadership in the Field

4. It is self-evident that the determination of the party's policy in dealing with the premises and possibilities of the new conditions is first and foremost the responsibility of the party's leaders who are out in the field. Those are [the people] who have the opportunity to find out the nature and the dimensions of circumstances; they have their hands on the pulse of the nation, and they know the opinions of the infrastructure of parties. They are not the ones who were thrown in prisons or who were forced to stay abroad, regardless of their status in the leadership [hierarchy]. When I say the leaders of our party who are in the field I mean the members of the Central Committee and the General Secretariat who were not arrested and who stayed out of prison and the secretary general of the party, Mr Khalid Muhi al-Din. The actions they take adhere to the party's program and the party's strategic choices and [demonstrate] an appreciation of their responsibilities to all the levels of the party's leadership until that time when the party recovers from the blows that befell it.

5. What was published in your magazine is actually the complete text of "The Proposed Political Report." This proposed report is prepared, according to the traditions of our party, by a committee whose members are selected from the members of the General Secretariat. The proposed report was prepared in the light of discussions about current conditions within the secretariat.

6. According to the rules and traditions of the party, after the proposal is prepared, it is presented to party organizations in the governorates for discussion. What comes out of these discussions, along with observations and critical remarks, is compiled and the general secretariat ultimately

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presents the proposed report, to which a collection of observations and critical remarks are attached, to the Central Committee. Both documents are discussed in the Central Committee, and suggestions for deletions, additions or amendments are offered by the colleagues who are members of the Central Committee. There is a special committee within the Central Committee which writes the final text of the party's political report in light of the principal lines [about which an agreement] is reached during the open, democratic discussion.

I can affirm that not a single report that was presented by the general secretariat to the Central Committee throughout the life of our party has not been enriched by discussion. There was not a single report whose final form was not slightly or greatly different from the proposed report that had been presented. We consider this phenomenon in our party healthy and an indication of its vitality.

Eight Observations

7. According to reliable information I received the proposed political report that was presented by the general secretariat went through all these stages. It was discussed, and the discussion produced a set of observations and critical remarks made by a number of colleagues. These were included in a party document that was presented to the Central Committee along with the proposed report.

Of these observations and critical remarks we mention eight points only to provide an example.

First, the proposed report based its analysis on two anomalous incidents, notwithstanding their extreme significance. These are: (1) the phenomenon of terrorism that has surfaced recently; and (2) the sudden and violent departure of President al-Sadat. The fact that these two incidents were considered the center of the report and not its introduction upset the basic organization of the report, turning it into a document that was closer to a political statement than a political report submitted to the party's Central Committee.

This resulted in the absence of an integrated analysis of material facts on the Egyptian scene from various points of view. There is no analysis of the relationship between material facts in Egypt and those on the Arab and international scenes; nor is there an analysis based on the party's principles and political positions, as defined during the course of the party, of the mutual effects between those material facts in Egypt and those on the Arab and international scene at this stage. This absence of an integrated analysis has resulted, in turn, in the fact that proposed party functions were to a large degree general [in character] and did not express the specific aspects of those material facts.

Second, despite the fact that we appreciate the gravity of the terrorist incidents--incidents which we condemn--that have recently surfaced in political life and despite our appreciation of the importance of the change in

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the presidency, with President Husni Mubarak assuming the office of president after the assassination of former president, Muhammad Anwar al-Sadat, we do not see in all of this anything that would make us conclude that we are facing a new political stage, as the proposed report states on the basis of these two incidents.

It is our opinion that the term, "new stage," in this regard means primarily a set of coordinated, basic policies whose sum total constitutes the public policy of a regime at a certain stage of its development. Unless we are facing this change in secondary policies or in executive programs that would put basic policies into practice, [what we have] constitutes no more than a new management of the same public policy that is adopted by the regime.

We may in fact be on the verge of a new stage, but what was presented by the report does not constitute the components of such a stage. The report lacks an adequate, integrated, coherent analysis of effective forces on the local scene and of international variables to prove that we are on the verge of a new stage, especially since the proposed report affirms that the change that came about with the departure of President Anwar al-Sadat did not alter the basic nature of the existing regime even though it is possible that that may lead to the replacement of a few courses of action and methods of execution.

Third, the proposed report begins by saying that it is the masses and nations that make history. Then the report states with regret that the masses in Egypt, in this historical period, are not capable of shaping their lives to serve their own interests. [In Egypt] the present and the future of the masses is determined by the role played by one individual whom fate places at the top of government. That is why there were fundamental differences, which were referred to in the report, between 'Abd-al-Nasir's and al-Sadat's period. Thus, [the report states that] we believe that it is the masses who shape the future, but that they are not capable of doing so [in Egypt] where history is forged by the individual who heads the government. All these absolute contradictory statements lead to confusion and raise questions.

What is the use of our work if the masses are impotent? Is not this an excuse for being passive and apathetic? If an individual's role is that absolute, is not this an ideological justification for advocates of political assassination who think that assassinating a president will lead to a change in our destiny?

Fourth, the proposed report openly agrees with the emergency measures that are being adopted by the government. Is this the position of a party, scores of whose leaders and members were arrested? [Is this the position of a party] whose publications were confiscated?

The report speaks about the September measures that led to the detention of 1,536 citizens and the transfer of more than 100 university professors and journalists from their positions to others that have nothing to do

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with their areas of specialization. The report speaks about these measures as "protective measures" taken after matters got worse. Does the party really consider these measures a preventive strike even though that strike came late?

Fifth, the formulation of the report is controlled by the agencies of the media whose current jargon it uses. Because terms such as security, safety, tranquillity, peace, violence, terror, liberalization of production, etc. are used often, they have assumed the form of slogans without a clear definition of the party's understanding of any of them.

The report was also full of judgments or absolute and premature condemnations such as those that are current in the agencies of the media at the present time. For example, the report states that President al-Sadat was assassinated by the "bullets of fanatic terrorists." How did we come up with such a judgment when the investigation is still being conducted in total secrecy, when the trial has not yet begun and the courts have not yet issued their verdict? Such condemnations and descriptions are among those that are being used by agencies of the media at the present time. The fact is that the line quoted by media agencies has changed more than once in this regard since President al-Sadat was assassinated. It was said that the assassination was the result of the individual motives of a group [of people] outside the army. It was said that the assassination was related to the tragic events of Asyut. It was said that those who carried out the assassination were 12 men from the armed forces after [it was reported that] they were 4 or 5 outside the armed forces. The whole truth is still unknown. Nevertheless, we set ourselves up in judgment, and we issue verdicts! The proposed report also openly accuses Islamic groups of working for others abroad and of receiving finances from abroad. This is what has been repeated by the agencies of the media; but the truth [of these allegations] has not been established, and no reliable verdict from the courts has been issued. This is the same charge that is often repeated with regard to factions of the opposition. And once again we issue a condemnation. It was not that long ago that the Grouping party was accused in the events of 18 and 19 January 1977 by the former president, and the campaign that was launched by media agencies in that regard has not been that long ago. But the courts did speak and vindicate all the members of our party.

Sixth, the proposed report mentions that we are not opposed to finding ways out of the pitfalls of the Camp David accords. In our opinion this wording is unfortunate. It is the position of the party to reject Camp David and, accordingly, to take action in an effort to avoid its consequences. As far as looking for ways to get the Camp David process out of its pitfalls is concerned, that is the function of those who made the accords and those who support them.

Seventh, as our party affirms its conviction that the question of Palestine--the homeland and the people--is the center of the struggle in the area, it is aware of its role in making the joint Arab struggle in support of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, a struggle that can settle this

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question, not only in the interests of the Palestinian people and their legitimate rights, but also for establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the entire area. This is the proper road to the restoration of stable Egyptian-Arab relations.

Eighth, an exchange of opinion about current problems with the broadest political and social forces in Egypt is essential to preclude the growth of the violence and terrorism phenomenon. This is based on an awareness of the danger of this destructive phenomenon, not only to any democratic action, but also with regard to the question of progress in Egypt in general.

8. These are some of the observations and critical remarks that were dealt with publicly during the Central Committee's open debate and in party documents. I have no doubt that all of this has enriched the proposed political report and that that has accordingly been reflected on its final version which was approved and issued by the Central Committee. Unfortunately, I have not yet received the final report that is binding on the party. I will send you a copy as soon as I receive it, and I ask that you print it.

9. I [respectfully] decline to answer your question about my personal position on the proposed report as a member of the party's General Secretariat. This is because my obligations to the party do not give me the right, regardless of my position in the party, to discuss the party's documents in newspapers. Such discussions take place freely within the organizational channels of the party. This is what I actually did when I sent my observations and my critical remarks to the General Secretariat in Cairo. The General Secretariat alone has the right to announce them and circulate them in accordance with the bylaws of the party.

10. Finally, I hope that my letter to you will have helped as much as possible in answering your questions and the questions your readers have regarding the positions of our party, the methods and means by which the party makes decisions and the climate under which those decisions are made or the political report is issued. Once again I thank you for your interest.

With sincere appreciation and regard,

Lutfi al-Khuli

AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI: It is known that Mr Lutfi al-Khuli is a member of the General Secretariat of the Grouping party and that he is the party's secretary for Arab affairs. His name was on the list of detainees whose arrest was ordered by al-Sadat last September. But he escaped prison because he has been abroad since last August, recovering from a heart attack.

Last November President Husni Mubarak issued a decree turning Mr al-Khuli and 21 of his colleagues who are under arrest to the Supreme State Security

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Court. They are being charged with trying to form a national coalition to overthrow al-Sadat's regime in cooperation with the Soviet Union and Islamic groups.

In statements made to international news agencies Lutfi al-Khuli had asked President Husni Mubarak to try from his new position to create a healthy climate in Egypt that would close the tragic chapter which ended the life of President al-Sadat. He asked him to do so by releasing immediately and without exception all those who were arrested in September; by restoring all university professors, journalists and writers who had been removed from their positions to their positions; by repealing all the laws that restrict freedom, chief among which is the Law of Shame; and by reinstating the legal board [of directors] of the bar association. That board had been removed from office arbitrarily in violation of the constitution. Mr al-Khuli asked President Mubarak to open the door to a real dialogue about fundamental political choices, chief among which is the Camp David policy. Such a dialogue was violently repressed and aborted by the legislative and security agencies during the administration of President al-Sadat.

Mr al-Khuli also asked President Mubarak to convene an Arab summit conference and to present to it the Camp David policies he had inherited. He asked that all Arab officials be placed squarely in front of their responsibilities regarding this matter so that a unified Arab position can be achieved and Egypt, through that position, can be restored to its leadership role in the Arab homeland and in the Arab Liberation Movement.

Mr al-Khuli affirmed that all this required the formation of a national coalition government in which all national forces and parties would participate. Such a government would have credibility and effectiveness with both the Egyptian and the Arab masses.

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IRAN

PROMISES, RESULTS, METHODS OF KHOMEYNI REVOLUTION COMPARED

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[Article by Ulrich Encke of the Bavarian Radio, Munich, who was radio correspondent of the Working Group of the FRG Broadcasting Institutes in Tehran in 1979-1980 and has been traveling correspondent for Iran since: "Between Revolution and Tyranny--Three Years of Mullah Rule in Iran"]

[Text] Independence, freedom and social justice--to reach those three aims, Ayatollah Khomeyni had said in his exile in Paris, would be the main task of the Islamic Republic. They are still being repeatedly talked about in Iran, but their propagandist nature has meanwhile become apparent to all. The historic opportunity of a new political beginning following the revolution has been missed. Reviewing the situation not quite 3 years after the revolution, one realizes that Iran has not even approached those three great aims. Though under different ideological auspices, the same problems still determine everyday politics, and the same unsuitable attempts at solving the problems are being made. Even the internal organizational structures of the ruling fundamentalist Islamic camp and of the opposition ominously recall the past.

Economic Dependence on Foreign Countries

The dependence of the Islamic Republic of Iran on foreign countries today is every bit as great as it was under the shah and can only increase in the future. The Islamic fraternal war with Iraq, which professes to be secular, has made postrevolutionary Iran dependent on arms supplies from abroad. If the deliveries of kerosene from the Soviet Union for the Iranian Air Force were to stop or if the deliveries of munitions, missiles and grenades from the Western countries--particularly the United States, Great Britain and the German Federal Republic--were to cease, the ayatollahs would have to hoist white flags on their southern and western fronts.

The war itself was started by Iraq--no doubt about that--but it was a war which was definitely welcome to those in power in Tehran, who needed a new domestic political lightning rod after the end of the embassy siege in Tehran. In addition the war provided an opportunity for tying down at the front an army which was suspected of being politically unreliable. These considerations are still valid today, more than a year after the war began. It is therefore not only Baghdad but also Tehran that bears responsibility for the war. Dependence on foreign arms was wittingly taken into the bargain in order to cover up insoluble domestic political problems.

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Some initial parallels become apparent here. At the same time the dependence is now becoming noticeable, for, unlike their Iraqi adversary, the Iranians have only managed to remedy the shortcomings in the supply of spare parts and ammunition caused by the war, while having been denied access to new and more effective weapons systems. They will not lose the war on that account, but they will not win it on that account either. There are primarily two reasons which have led to this stalemate. For one thing, the unpredictability of Tehran's policies have been standing in the way of any military partnership with countries in the East or West. For another thing, there are economic difficulties because Iran's ability to pay is being placed in doubt.

The collapse of Iranian economic activity abroad caused by the revolution and the utter lack of concepts of law and order on the basis of Islamic values have driven the country into an economic and financial crisis from which it certainly cannot escape on its own. Already some few crisis symptoms are making it clear that the Islamic appeals for moderation, such as are now the order of the day, cannot help the country along.

Iranian foreign currency reserves have dropped to about 2 billion U.S. dollars, forcing the government to make drastic restrictions of imports, which had again begun to rise slightly last year.¹ The preferential treatment of food imports to insure basic needs occurred at the expense of imports of raw materials and semi-finished goods. This in turn could not help but have repercussions in the sector of the finishing industry. Thus in late fall 1981 the utilization of industrial capacities--down to 40 percent as it was--was reduced by another 15 percent. With an inflation rate which is 25 percent according to official data but actually is as high as 50 percent in certain sectors,² and an unemployment rate of an estimated 5 million, this could be coped with only if, as in former times, funds could be provided for the individual and society as a whole with the aid of foreign currency obtained from oil exports. Current oil production does not make this possible, however.

If Iran adheres to its current production quota of 800,000 barrels a day,³ foreign currency reserves will be all used up in about 3 months. According to--albeit unofficial--computations by the ministry concerned, Iran would have to produce at least 2.5 million barrels a day to keep its economy going more or less. Considering the current problems, such a figure would represent a utopian target.

Unsuccessful Social Revolution

So here too postrevolutionary politics have led to increased economic dependence on foreign countries rather than to the hoped for emancipation. This is but one side of the medal, however. In addition to the country's economic freedom, the utopias of economic improvement and social justice entertained by both the middle class and the lower class and above all by the lumpen proletariat settled around Tehran went for naught. The middle class had speculated that after elimination of the upper class it would form the new elite in the country and thus be able to play a leading sociopolitical role, but its largely opportunistically motivated contribution to the revolution was not acknowledged.

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Following the predictable breakup of the antishah opposition movement, the post-revolutionary power struggles assumed the nature of a class struggle. The masses of the lower strata and of the subproletariat under the leadership of the fundamentalist portion of the clerics rebelled against the middle class and its intellectual representatives. A campaign against the "Westernized intellectuals" justified by cultural independence, restrictive measures against bourgeois, leftist and also Islamic Opposition groups, as well as the banning of any kind of non-Islamic ideas, pushed all forces not belonging to the fundamentalist camp first into a hopeless minority position and then underground.

This political plan might have worked if the economic and social needs of the "barefoot" had been satisfied at the same time, but in light of the enormous economic difficulties that was and still is impossible. For almost 2 years this had no political consequences. Despite no change in the catastrophic economic situation of the individual, the mass identified with the revolution and its fundamentalist propagandists. The feeling for the first time in one's life to be able to develop an identity of one's own, and thus a sense of one's own importance, weighed more heavily than any everyday economic difficulties. "The emphasis on being prepared to suffer and on a sense of importance on the part of the members of the lower class in this ideology apparently can cover up time and again the discrepancy between the expectations aroused by the revolution and the miserable actual conditions."⁴

Today this does not seem to work any longer, however. At least the fundamentalist camp apparently does not believe any longer that it can. In the meantime, it so happens, there has occurred, not the hoped for more equitable distribution of social prosperity, but a redistribution of poverty, with the criteria of distribution deriving not from overriding postulates of justice but from the power interests of the fundamentalist clerics.

The political program now in force can be reduced to a simple common denominator: development of the country has been abandoned at the expense of development in the capital, Tehran. In the final analysis, in a country whose area is bigger than the European Community, it is the masses in the capital that decide who is in power in Iran.

The land reform, which previously had foundered on ideological Islamic debates about the question of ownership, has now had to be abandoned for the time being for economic reasons. This also means that nothing has become of the plan--actually not very realistic anyway--to lead the lumpen proletariat composed of persons having fled the rural areas and now residing in the south of the capital back to agriculture, and thus to a way of life with which it was familiar at one time. Apart from isolated idealistic overtures, it has also been necessary to stop the holy war for reconstruction. The center no longer distributes funds to supporters of the fundamentalist camp who only a year ago still got whatever they needed while working almost all over the country, in small groups, primarily on projects of electrification and irrigation and building schools, hospitals and other social institutions. This has not only led to the suspension of innumerable small development projects but also has destroyed the fruits of the labor of trust connected with them. Other cost-effective reform programs--for instance, in the cultural and educational sector--were also suspended.

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To the extent that the remaining funds are not used for the subsidy of food serving everyone's purpose, they are now being channeled to the south of Tehran--in other words, to where the residuum of the Islamic revolution is located, the Muslims whom Khomeyni affectionately calls "the barefoot." Without these the mullahs and ayatollahs could not stay in power today, any more than the shah could have been overthrown without them. They have not been turned into "oil rentiers"--though at an extremely modest level--in order to insure the necessary mass base for exercising power.

Thus Iranian politics, however, are lapsing into the old mistakes which doomed the shah's regime--gross neglect of rural development at the expense of the Tehran hydrocephalus so vital for power; a privileged position not of a social class but, in terms of the entire country, of a small group of chosen people; forgoing of reform programs and thus of a national perspective (which really was a quite important aim of the revolution) and squander of the natural oil wealth to procure funds for small groups with the sole purpose of promoting the rulers' power interests.

The Machinery of the New Repression

Political, economic and social injustices are the inevitable result, and this in turn leads to discontent and attitudes against the mullah regime. Politically speaking, the fundamentalists appear to be unable to resolve this conflict of objectives between the struggle for a power base at the center and the need for a balanced development of the whole country. They therefore react the same way as others have done before them in Iran--with repression and, in part, brutal oppression. The instruments they use for this are those organizations which were created originally for securing the revolution. They are the revolutionary courts which were formed because of a justified distrust of the judiciary built up by the shah and which are now under the complete control of the Islamic clerics. They are the revolutionary committees whose task it was at one time to smash the local shah organizations and to perform in the villages and the urban districts of the major centers a labor of trust for the revolution closely affiliated with the citizenry. Finally, they are the "guardians of the revolution"--the revolutionary guards who at one time were built up as a politically reliable force vis-a-vis the old army. One cannot tell as yet to what extent today's SAVAM, the organization which succeeded the infamous SAVAK intelligence service, is employed in this, but one thing is sure: some political opponents have already been "treated" at the new Tehran intelligence service headquarters.

In the first months after the revolution, when they almost exclusively confronted representatives of the old system, these revolutionary organizations still enjoyed the confidence of the population as a whole, their actions being considered severe, but just from a revolutionary point of view. Moreover the people believed the assurances of the religious leadership and, above all, the repeated assurances of Ayatollah Khomeyni, that all these organizations would be dissolved again once the judiciary had caught up with the past. It did not happen that way. The revolutionary committees, the revolutionary courts and the revolutionary guards have been anchored in law, and provisional revolutionary tools became institutionalized instruments of oppression of a ruling minority. It is the work of these feared and hated organizations that causes a feeling among average Iranians that the third great revolutionary aim--more internal freedom--has not been attained either, and probably cannot be attained any longer under the present conditions.

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Though the ideological auspices are different, one cannot overlook the parallel to the time of the shah here either. The more the desire to stay in power becomes a political aim in itself, the more the internal contradictions become evident. The more articulate the opposition caused by this becomes, the more brutal are the blows from above.

This became apparent for the first time when the Iranian media were made to toe the fundamentalist line and freedom of the press was virtually eliminated. It became noticeable again when political developments at the universities were not taken in hand the way the fundamentalist liked, and the universities were forcibly closed. They have remained closed to this day, with about 600,000 young people being robbed of their academic prospects. The whole thing was declared to be a counterrevolution. The same process could be observed at elementary and secondary schools; what had started as an "Islamic purge" of the teaching staff and curriculums ended up as a political forcing into line and control of the schools which had nothing to do with any educational reform. The same has happened in the plants, where the strike councils so vital to the revolution have been dissolved and replaced by loyal plant committees.

Breakup and Weakening of the Opposition

This seizure of power by the--at the time still solid--fundamentalist camp, penetrating all social spheres, resulted in a polarization which also forced the opposition to regroup. There too, there were parallels to the expiring times of the shah that could not be overlooked. Representatives of opposition groupings were either driven underground or went into exile of their own volition. The first to be affected were the leading men of the National and the National Democratic Front, representing the bourgeois and left-liberal camp. Then came the turn of the Islamic social revolutionary mujahedeen and the Marxist-Leninist Fedayeen-e Khalq. Finally, the last prominent victim was Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr, considered to be part of the leftist Islamic camp. He was removed from the office of president and after several weeks underground remerged in Paris, from where, imitating his erstwhile idol Khomeyni, he intends to organize a counterrevolution.

Bani-Sadr's removal and flight put an end to the camouflage of the differences in the Islamic Republic, with the internal opposing positions becoming clearly apparent. The upholders of armed resistance are the social-revolutionary mujahedeen, who are presumably responsible for the numerous terrorist attacks of the past few months. But just as the most varied ideological and religious groupings united at the end of the shah's rule in a kind of front of rejection of the ruling house, so today too the mujahedeen are merely the label of a checkered opposition movement. Just as then, so again today bourgeois and left-liberals, enlightened and leftist Muslims, Marxist and grand bourgeois have agreed to the lowest common denominator--to rejecting the present rule in Iran. This means that this opposition movement too already contains the seed of its breakup, with new political conflicts programmed.

This is one of the reasons why the opposition as yet has not taken a consistent stand as an overall social counterforce. Another reason is the active terrorism developed by individual groupings of the movement, which is also a subject of controversy within the opposition. The radical ideological claim of the mujahedeen acting as the spearhead and the ruthless way in which they proceed have so far prevented the politically unorganized masses from making common cause with the

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opposition movement. As a result two groupings--meanwhile largely isolated as far as society as a whole is concerned--are fighting each other with terrorist actions, while the frightened population is observing events from a safe distance.

The brutality with which the execution machinery was started has been as repulsive as the ruthlessness with which the opposition placed its bombs. At the moment the deadly merry-go-round, constantly started again by mass execution, ensuing bombings and more mass executions, appears to have come to a comparative halt. There are several reasons for that. Even though the muhajedeen who provide the active fighters from their underground organization stress their unbroken fighting strength almost daily, they have been hit seriously by the execution of 2,000 of their members. While there are no exact data about the strength of their organization, they probably have had at most 5,000 fighters and another some 30,000 supporters. All their boasting notwithstanding, the fact that their leader, Massoum Rajawi, had to go into exile in Paris, indicates that their organization is not all that strong.

Making a virtue of necessity, the opposition has declared its now noticeable reserve to be its new strategy, with the justification that there no longer exists an unequivocal confrontation but that there is a split right through the ruling fundamentalist camp itself which the opposition must take advantage of. Any violent action against the religious camp, they say, would only lead to solidarity within that camp--a solidarity which otherwise was in doubt.

Permanent Power Struggle

The political differences within the religious camp are in fact apparent. For one thing, there are differences of opinion concerning the handling of the opposition, with some demanding ruthless severity and others considering a policy of reform to be a more effective way of proceeding against the opposition than executions. For another thing, there are fundamentally different orientations. The group around President Hojjat ol-eslam Ali Khamenei aims at testing a model after the pattern of Libya or Syria, leaning on but not submitting to the Soviet Union in the process. The politicians around Speaker Hojjat ol-eslam Hashemi Rafsanjani want to build up an independent but rather Western oriented Islamic society. These differing concepts become apparent in all questions of detail--from the question of ownership to cultural revolutionary overtures to evaluation of the clerics' political leadership role in government.

As in all the other questions, Ayatollah Khomeyni, as the leader of the revolution who continues to stand above all else, avoids any kind of clear stand. In accordance with the principle of "divide and rule," he tries to maintain a balance between the two competing groupings as far as political power is concerned. That is becoming daily more difficult, however. After the devastating bombings to which the few genuine political leaders of the religious camp fell victim, Khomeyni finds himself increasingly constrained to intervene in everyday politics--in other words, to deal with questions of detail and then also make decisions.

Despite the internal split in the fundamentalist camp and despite the decreasing political charisma of the leader of the revolution, the calculations of the opposition cannot be expected to be realized in the near future. From a security point of view, the Tehran regime appears to be able to at least curb the opposition

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activities as long as the opposition movement does not become a mass movement, and for the reasons given above there are at present no indications that this will happen. Should the muhajedeen prevail, it would be reasonable to expect an attempt to follow the Algerian pattern. It is more likely, though, that its opposition will fail. A breakup of the entire opposition movement and the buildup of innumerable new opposition groups underground would then be the result. A breakup, however, amounts to the collapse of one's own strength.

Unless there is foreign intervention (and at present there are no signs of that), the current fundamentalist regime therefore, despite international isolation and despite domestic political and economic political failure, will continue to be able to make do. The only force capable of organizing a large-scale counterblow, the army, is tied up with the war with Iraq until further notice. Moreover, particularly after the flight of Bani-Sadr, there have been personnel purges within the army which, while not bringing the forces into the fundamentalist line, broke their political back--if indeed such ever existed.

The Iranian opposition active abroad, whether it is part of the monarchist camp or part of the leftist Islamic forces around Bani-Sadr, lacks any support in the country itself. Its activities, eagerly noted by the public in the west and east, play no part in the domestic Iranian confrontations and occupy no place in the consciousness of the average Iranian. Unless there is an intervention by a foreign power which could bring the opposition forces back to Iran, a solution of the Iranian crisis is possible only from within; not only the people in Tehran but those in the rural areas are convinced of that.

One can therefore not expect a consolidation of the situation in one direction or another in the foreseeable future. Moreover, the real difficulties would only begin after a clarification as to who holds the power in Tehran, because the power struggle described above is limited almost exclusively to the capital proper. The ethnic minorities living in the provinces surrounding the capital, under the lee of the disturbances following the revolution at the center, have been able to realize their long-cherished dream of large-scale autonomy. In Kurdistan this virtually led to civil war, while in the other provinces it was tactly put up with owing to the weakness of the central power. Regardless of who will win the power struggle in the end, there is no doubt but that any new regime is found to follow one tradition of the time of the shah--a centralized government apparatus and a centralized-government claim to power, implemented by force if need be. In light of what is already happening in this country, this is a gloomy prospect.

FOOTNOTES

1. There are no reliable statistical data in Iran. Published figures therefore are subject to considerable fluctuations. The following data, based on internal calculations of individual specialists in the ministries, can therefore also be only approximate.
2. The total number of employed is about 12 million.
3. After the victory of the revolution, 4 million barrels a day were mentioned as a politically desirable production quota. The exchange value corresponded to the actual need for foreign currency by Iran for the country's reconstruction

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according to knowledge available at the time. For comparison, daily production during the last months of the time of the shah was 6 million barrels.

4. Kurt Greussing, "Neue Politik, alter Despotismus. Perspektiven der islamischen Revolution." [New Politics, Old Despotism. Prospects of the Islamic Revolution.] In "Religion und Politik in Iran" [Religion and Politics in Iran], Frankfurt/Main 1981, p 25.

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IRAN

ONGOING ANTI-BAHAI TERRORISM REVIEWED

Brussels POURQUOI PAS? in French 21 Jan 82 pp 38-40

[Article: "The Massacre of the Innocents"]

[Text] The execution squads, the gallows are not idle in Iran. In spite of the Iranian-Iraqi war which is continuing and intensifying on the Western border, the republic of the ayatollahs hunts down its opponents, the "hypocrites" as they are called by the authorities in Tehran, without respite.

The Islamic revolution is wading in blood. The blood of terrorism and of repression.

It is true that the government of the mullahs is being attacked from all sides, that every day political or religious leaders are assassinated, that innocents perish in assassination attempts, that public buildings blow up or are taken by storm, that Pasdarans (the revolutionary guards) are attacked. This terrorism is echoed by the terror of the state. The repression is indiscriminately hitting the Mujaheddin Moslems, the Marxists of Peykar, the bazaar tradesmen, the monarchists, the Kurds and other ethnic minorities. Thousands of Iranians -- and not necessarily opponents -- have been jailed without charge and without sentence. Last year, 2000 "hypocrites" were officially executed. Henceforth, this slaughter has been broadened to include the Bahais -- the most important religious minority in Iran --, advocates of a-politicism and non-violence.

The example of Iran has shown how an enforced march toward modernization and the monopolizing of the riches by a minority can push the people toward those whose only privilege is the fact that they shared their suffering. The shock wave which came down from Qom has not finished troubling the Third World, explained a participant in the seminar, organized by the University of the United Nations, and devoted to "socio-cultural alternatives for development." The "third road," represented by the Iranian revolution, is not very tempting. What is happening in Iran is not a stopping of the train of progress, but a return to barbarism. Over there, it is impossible to mistake the revolution for a gala dinner.

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To be sure, the government of the mullahs is being attacked from all sides at once. By the Iraqi army as well as by the national oppositions or by the autonomist Kurds and Baluchis. To these attacks, these acts of terrorism, the government responds with repression. The revolutionary guards shoot or hang people after summary trials -- some last only a few minutes --, held behind closed doors and where the accused are not allowed to have the assistance of a lawyer.

"The Islamic revolution has no other option but violent and bloody purges," admitted Ayatollah Rafsanjani, the president of parliament.

But why does this regime with its back to the wall persecute the Bahais? Why has it undertaken to systematically eliminate the spiritual leaders of a non-violent community which does not allow itself any political activity? Why is it destroying their places of worship, their cemeteries? Why is it confiscating the property of the Bahais?

The Iranian leaders are complaining that they are being kept out of the concert among nations and are preparing to send "goodwill missions" throughout the world. You do not need to be a genius to predict that their emissaries will have great difficulty in getting people to recognize the merits of an Islamic revolution soiled by the massacre of the innocent Bahais.

It was on 23 December that eight Bahais, members of the National Spiritual Assembly (the community's highest body) were arrested while meeting at the home of a fellow Bahai in Tehran. Without notifying their families, without a trial even, the eight Bahai spiritual leaders were executed and buried in the "infidels' cemetery."

A month-and-a-half before, six Bahais, also members of the National Spiritual Assembly, had been arrested and shot. On 3 January, in the face of the emotion aroused in the West by these assassinations, the president of the Iranian Supreme Court, Ayatollah Ardebili, denied the execution of the Bahai officials and tried to make believe that they had been eliminated by opponents. However, on 6 January he rescinded his statements, and confirmed the death of the eight Bahais "executed for having spied for Israel and the United States."

People at the Belgian Bahai Center are indignant about these accusations formulated by Tehran:

"Who will believe that spies get together before passing information on to foreign powers? And if they were really spies, why then did the regime want to keep their arrest, their detention and, finally, their death, a secret? Why not have set up a trial, why a hasty burial without the knowledge of the families? The truth is that these crimes are a disgrace to Islamic justice. Henceforth, a secret organization with support within the Revolutionary Council will attend to the persecution of the Iranian Bahais."

The fate of the Bahais -- there are more than 300,000 of them in Iran -- has never been enviable. In December 1978 already, 60 houses belonging to Bahai faithful in Shiraz were looted, and 25 in Nayriz were burned down. In Savistan, followers of the Bab were taken to the mosque and forced to renounce their faith. In June 1979, all Bahai properties, including their places of worship and their cemeteries were

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confiscated. Their national center in Tehran was turned into an Islamic university. The commercial enterprise Shirkat, established by the Bahais 50 years ago and employing 15,000 Bahais, was seized by the new regime. In September 1979, the revolutionary guards attacked the House of the Bab in Shiraz, the Bahais' holiest shrine in Iran. In September 1980, seven Bahais from Yazid were executed, ostensibly for "spying for foreign powers and anti-Islamic activities."

New executions took place in November in Tabriz. In December, a Bahai couple living in Shiraz was awakened in the middle of the night, beaten, doused with gasoline and put to death by fire.

In January 1981, Dr Hakim, professor of anatomy at the University of Tehran, was shot down in his consulting room. The property of his wife -- of French nationality -- was confiscated. March 1981: new death sentences passed and executed in Shiraz.

The list of Bahais who have been arrested, brutalized, plundered, assassinated, is as long as a requiem. In the face of this attempt to eliminate Bahai believers, the 6,000 Spiritual Assemblies spread throughout the world have made known their anguish to Ayatollah Khomeini, to President Bani-Sadr, to the United Nations, to the European Parliament, to governments and to the human rights defense leagues:

- Except for the persecutions in the middle of the 19th century, which took the lives of 20,000 of the first believers, the current threat of total destruction of the Bahai community in Iran has never been so imminent or so real.

International indignation has forced the Iranian authorities to change their attitude, but not their policy. There are no longer any "official" trials or executions of Bahais. But a kind of death squad has undertaken to remove the disciples of the Bab and shoot them.

The Shiites, who are a minority within the Moslem world, have suffered from the predominance of the Sunnis. It is distressing to see former victims become the executioners of another religious minority, and the tolerance prescribed by the Koran goes unheeded.

The current Iranian regime has formulated various accusations with regard to the Bahais.

1) The Bahais collaborated with the Pahlavis.

"The assertion that the Bahais supported the former regime," explained a member of the Bahai Center in Belgium, "comes from the fact that the Bahais never denounced the Shah's regime, that they did not join political organizations opposed to the regime, and that some Bahais held important positions in the branches of that regime. According to the teachings of their faith, the Bahais owe loyalty and obedience to the government of the country in which they live, whatever its form or its policy. Hence, they never participate in subversive activities. Furthermore, the Bahais are not allowed to become politically involved or to hold a political function. These basic principles do not change with the governments."

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During the 58 years of the Pahlavi rule, the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais in Iran made repeated appeals to the Shah, to the ministers and to the Majlis (parliament) to convince them to grant equitable treatment to the Bahai community. But in vain. The authorities did not do anything to protect the lives and property of the Bahais, whose religion did not receive legal status. In 1975, the Bahais refused to become members of the Rastakhiz Party (single party introduced by Reza Pahlavi) and, more recently, they refused to vote in the national referendum for the establishment of an Islamic republic, which has earned them even more hostility.

2) The Bahais are enemies of Islam.

"The Bahai faith is usually considered an heretic sect of Islam, desiring to overthrow Islam in its current form. However, in spite of its roots, it is as different from Islam as Christianity is from Judaism," stated one Bahai. "Our faith teaches us that religious revelation is continuous and progressive, and that Baha'u'llah, our founder, is the most recent but not the last of the divine teachers sent to guide humanity. The Bahais believe in the essential unity of all major religions in the world, and honor their founders as divinely inspired prophets. A Bahai who would try to oppose Islam, to denigrate it or to destroy it -- that or any other religion -- would be in profound disagreement with the basic principles of the Bahai faith."

"According to our beliefs, all the major religions teach the same basic spiritual principles. They differ solely in their social teachings, which change in function of the needs of the era they were revealed in. For example, among the Bahais men and women have the same rights, privileges and responsibilities. Consequently, the women participate fully in all the spiritual and administrative affairs of the community. Because they are different from the social teachings of Islam, these practices only reinforce the accusations, directed against the Bahais, that they are hostile to Islam."

3) The Bahais are agents of Zionism.

Because the Bahai World Center is located in Israel, and because numerous Bahai pilgrims visit that country, the disciples of Baha'u'llah are suspected of having secret dealings with the Hebrew state.

As one Bahai explained: "The Bahai World Center was established in the last century -- long before the establishment of the state of Israel -- and it has absolutely nothing to do with Zionism. Baha'u'llah was exiled to the Holy Land on the order of two Islamic governments (Iran and Turkey). He remained there until his death in 1892. His tomb is located in Haifa and attracts Bahai believers."

It is an irony of fate, a mockery even, to see the Bahais of Iran persecuted, martyred and eliminated. Indeed, their founder, Baha'u'llah stated: "The light of men is justice, do not suffocate it with the adverse winds of oppression and of tyranny. The goal of justice is the appearance of unity among men."

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IRAN

REGIME REPRESSES 'HERETIC' BAHA'IS, 'AUTONOMIST' KURDS

Martyrs of God

Paris L'EXPRESS in French 22-28 Jan 82 pp 76,77

[Article by Jacques Buob]

[Text] There are over 300,000 of them in Iran. They constitute the principal religious minority in the country. And yet they do not exist. The constitution of the Islamic Republic protects Jews (about 50,000), Christians (200,000), and Zoroastrians (30,000). It does not protect the Baha'is.

And though they do not yet wear a yellow star, it is almost the same as if they did. "The holocaust has started," asserts a member of the community in France.

Since the start of the revolution, 97 Baha'is have been executed. About 40 more have disappeared, kidnaped, vanished. Heretics, spies in the pay of Zionism, collaborators of the former regime: anything is good enough to set off a Baha'i hunt. Why?

The history of this new faith begins on 22 May 1844, at Chiraz, in Persia. That day, a young man of 25, Mirza Ali Muhammad, announces the impending arrival of a messenger from God. He is named the "Bab," which means door. The one opening to knowledge. Soon, he says, the era of peace and justice promised by all the holy books will begin. For, in his opinion, religions have only one God. The Bab is the continuator of Abraham, Moses, Buddha, Krishna, Zoroaster, Jesus, and Mahomet.

First conversions. First martyrs: 20,000 dead, it is reported. The Bab is shot at Tabriz. His successor, Baha'u'llah, presents himself as the Messiah. He formulates the principles of the new faith. He launches an appeal to the princes to stop wars. He preaches the equality of men and women. He asserts that humankind may henceforth address God without an intermediary, and takes advantage of that to proscribe any form of clergy. There is nothing very Shi'ite in all that. And the mullahs, as one might guess, will never forgive

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this denial of their role and their privileges.

Abdul Baha, who succeeds Baha'u'llah, travels in Europe and America. Millions of people throughout the world become converts. With no problems. Except in Iran.

From the accession to power of Reza Khan, in 1921, persecutions are resumed. Purges in the administration. Obligatory declaration of one's religion to enter the civil service. Baha'i marriages declared illegal.

Mhammad Reza continues his father's policy, cleverly channels popular anger against the Bab's followers, whenever the social situation becomes too tense. In 1955, a fresh pogrom. A vast national campaign is launched over the radio, in the newspapers. Military and religious leaders take part in the destruction of the Baha'i center in Tehran.

During periods of moderation, the Baha'is, middle-class, often enlightened, people, again appear in the forefront of social life. Although their religion forbids them to engage in politics, some are found in the Shah's entourage, like his private physician, and others in the army. Later on, they will be criticized for this.

"They Are Pernicious"

With the coming of the revolution, they believe they will cease to be outcasts. Wild dream: they constitute a political group. "They are pernicious," Imam Khomeini asserts to a Kuwaiti journalist in 1979.

At the Iranian embassy in Paris, a diplomat, Hossein Mashayekhi, asserts that the Baha'is are agents of Israel.

It is easy to accuse them of Zionism, since their holy place, where the Bab lies buried, happens to be in Haifa, once Turkish, but now -- alas for them! -- Israeli.

More pogroms in January 1979. Property confiscated, men dragged off to the mosque to be converted by force. Kidnapings, murders. Cemeteries desecrated, razed by bulldozers. Trials, executions, disappearances.

Since 21 August 1980, date of their arrest, there has been no news of the eight members of the National Spiritual Assembly, the highest Baha'i authority. Their successors, intercepted on 13 December 1981 by an "unidentified armed gang," are discovered by chance buried in the capital's cemetery for unbelievers. On 1 January, the leaders of the Tehran community are executed.

The plan for extermination of the Baha'is has begun. Where will it end?

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Winter of Massacre in Kurdistan

Paris L'EXPRESS in French 22-28 Jan 82 p 77

[Article by Christian Hoche]

[Text] It is snowing in Mahabad, the capital of Iranian Kurdistan. A severe winter has settled in over the valleys and the mountain foot-hills of the rebellious province. In spite of the cold and the deprivation, several thousand Peshmergas (Kurdish resistance fighters) are still defying the Tehran government....

"Democracy for Iran, autonomy for Kurdistan," an entire people in rebellion has been crying out for years. In vain! "The Iran-Iraq conflict has totally eclipsed the frightful repression prevailing today in our province. Every day people are dying amid general indifference, murdered at the dictates of the mullahs," we are told by Mohsen Salehi, special envoy of the Kurdish religious leader, Sheik Ezzedine Hosseini.

Because they demand the right to be different, the Peshmergas, who overshadow a territory of 100,000 square kilometers, are engaged in a merciless fight. Two Iranian army infantry divisions --the 128th, quartered in Sanandaj, and the 64th, based in Ouroumiah -- supported by regiments of Pasdarans (Guardians of the Revolution), air force detachments, and reinforcements from the Tabriz and Ghazvin divisions, are pitilessly mopping up the Kurdish area. Heavy artillery bombardments, poundings from helicopters, harvests burned, villages "cleaned up"; since March 1980, nearly 10,000 persons, civilians and combatants, have thus been killed in the name of "lenient and merciful Islam."

In the village of Inderghash, near Mahabad, which served as a withdrawal base for the Peshmergas, the Guardians of the Revolution proceeded to a mass murder. "On 4 November 1980," Mohsen Salehi recounts, "the Pasdarans surrounded the little hamlet of 500 homes. They cold-bloodedly massacred 40 peasants, including women, children, and old men. On 22 November 1981, they attacked it again with mortars and 155-millimeter cannon. Outcome: 8 dead, 20 seriously wounded, and 100 homes destroyed."

A large-scale battle is now being waged along the Baneh-Sardasht road, which is 60 kilometers long. All the villages along this frontier road are said to have been systematically shelled. The Iranian army's objectives are to finish cutting off the northwest frontier, mop up pockets of resistance, and, above all, prepare for a huge offensive against the Iraqi forces, which are withdrawn to the west of Baneh.

Having already been subjected for 2 years to a suffocating economic blockade, Kurdistan "is dying in silence," in the words of Ahderramane Ghassenlou, leader of the Iranian Kurdish Democratic Party (PKDI). Worse: some tribes in Iranian Kurdistan -- such as the Barzani -- have allied themselves with the

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Iranian army to fight against their blood-brothers. In July 1981, indeed, the tomb of the prestigious Iraqi Kurdish chief, Mustafa Barzani, was desecrated in Oshnaviyeh. Provocation? Probably. Immediately, Barzani's sons, Idriss and Massoud, accused the PDKI of iconoclasm, and attacked, with their 1,500 combatants, supported by the Guardians of the Revolution, the Peshmergas' positions in the North of Kurdistan. "A dagger in the back," Mohsen Salehi acknowledges.

Politically divided, the Kurdish people are in agreement about one thing: the armed struggle to "drive away the new tyrant in Tehran." In a message that reached France during the last few days, Sheik Ezzedine Hosseini stresses that "the Iranian masses have as their only solution the overthrow of the regime to establish a democratic republic."

But cut off from the world by a military cordon, with no outside aid available to them, deprived of medication, of milk, can the Kurdish people hold out much longer?

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SYRIA

PRO-IRAQI MAGAZINE COMMENTS ON HAMAH INCIDENTS

JN211658 Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 19 Feb 82 pp 18-22

[Excerpt] The Syrian city of Hamah has for 2 weeks been isolated from the rest of Syria. The ugliest massacre ever perpetrated in an Arab city in contemporary Arab history is now taking place in Hamah. The number of victims, according to reports by arrivals and diplomatic sources, has thus far amounted to 3,000. The casualties may be more than that because the information leaked is still little. Secret reports from Beirut say that the number of victims is not less than 6,000.

The blood tax being paid by Hamah is not the first of its kind and the massacre being perpetrated by the special forces and the defense squads, which are reserve forces basically formed to act as a tool to protect the ruling family in Syria against its political opponents, is also not the first of its kind. Most of the Syrian cities, particularly Aleppo and Hamah, have previously witnessed popular uprisings which were strongly resisted by the authorities. However, these uprisings always ended up in armed confrontation between the repressive military tool and the inhabitants. There came a time when this tool began to turn against its owners. In the March 1980 uprising, which lasted 20 days, for example, intensive units of defense squads and the 5th army division, supported by the 47th brigade, combed the city of Hamah for 1 month from 7 April to 7 May 1980. These forces tortured the people and cut off water and electricity throughout the combing operation. Two years after this campaign, the 47th brigade sided with the people in fighting against the regime until the end.

In an attempt to retaliate for the abortive March campaign in Hamah, which robbed the authorities of much of their esteem, the special forces took revenge by confronting a group of worshippers on 'Id al-Fitr, killing 83 of them near one of the Aleppo mosques. There also came the Tudmur massacre in the same year, in which 746 political prisoners, most of them Syrian intellectuals, were killed. This was followed by the Hamah massacre on 24 April 1981, in which 124 were killed after confronting the regime's forces in the following three Syrian villages: Salhab, 'Ayn al-Kurum and Wadi al-'Uyun. On that day the special forces and the defense squads besieged Hamah and prevented its people from entering it. A battle took place and 300 were killed, as reported by unofficial sources. These forces also shelled the city mosques, including the 'Umar ibn al-Khattah, al-Afandi, al-Dallul and al-Ahdab mosques.

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The recent battles in Hamah actually happened as a result of a popular decision for general confrontation. The decision was adopted by the field command of the fighting vanguard in the city on 19 January 1982. The confrontation was scheduled to begin on 25 January, but was postponed until 2 February when the fighting vanguard groups moved and attacked the Syrian forces stationed in the city as a precautionary measure. Hundreds died in the first attack and the first day ended with massive losses among the Syrian military.

Before reinforcements reached Hamah, the people joined the ranks of the attacking vanguard, occupied public buildings, ruling party centers, police stations and military airport and gained full control of them in something like an armed popular revolution. The surprise was that the 47th armored brigade, which was in charge of quelling the uprising and which arrived in Hamah from the township of al-Qutayfah, had divided loyalties and soon afterward joined the people. A battle between the 47th brigade, supported by the city inhabitants, and the defense squads, the special forces and parts of the 21st brigade took place. The fighters blew up the al-Rastan bridge so that no additional reinforcements would reach the city.

In order to face this critical situation, the authorities resorted to the use of the air force. At first they used helicopters in a landing operation which failed after two had been downed. Fighter planes were then used; the first attempt failed when the planes flew over the town and pilots failed to drop the bombs. The second attempt was carried out under the supervision of the Syrian president's brother, Rif'at al-Asad, and Defense Minister Gen Mustafa Talas who were directing the operations 10 km away.

As fighting intensified inside the isolated city, the regime's forces set up barricades on the Aleppo-Hamah highway. Hamah was also besieged from the direction of Homs. A number of military communiques were issued by the various factions of the Islamic revolution on other clashes in Aleppo, Latakia, Dar'a and Damascus and the state of tension in other Syrian towns. The communiques point out that 3,700 officers and men joined the people of Hamah complete with their missile units and three tank battalions. Twenty planes were ordered to bomb the town but they remained neutral. The authorities' siege of the town extended to over 50 km away and the people of Hamah scored many direct hits. [Sentence as published]

In another communique, fierce clashes were reported to have taken place in Aleppo on 10 February and the firing was heard all over the city. A group of fighters controlled a relay station which transmitted these communiques on 1000 khz declaring the possible liberation of the city. Clashes also took place in Latakia among the people themselves and between them and the army. Travelers to Turkey through Aleppo said that they heard intermittent shooting over their heads. Other sporadic clashes seemed to have occurred in Dar'a and Damascus when the Hamah clashes were continuing. These clashes came 1 week after the attempted coup which was planned but had no chance of success. The coup attempt was planned by 200 army officers from the various army corps and proved that the opposition to the Syrian regime is not confined to a few indignant army officers or to the Muslim Brothers Organization but is an opposition which runs the

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length and depth of Syria. The opposition permeates the armed forces and civilians and includes entire cities. This made the Western press consider these events the first real threat to the Syrian regime in 11 years.

The bloodbath which began on Tuesday, 2 February, has not ended despite tons of artillery shells and missiles which destroyed hundreds of houses in Hamah alone. Entering and leaving the city was impossible for Syrian citizens and Arab and foreign reporters even 2 weeks after the outbreak of fighting. However, travelers spoke about ambulances actively transferring military casualties from Hamah to Homs and burned army vehicles and tanks seen by first aid men themselves. An extremely tense situation is reported among army ranks, and the naval forces are indignant. A large number of troops from the defense squads were deployed around the capital to defend it within security measures to protect the Republican Palace and government buildings.

It is naturally impossible to estimate the final casualty figures. The various communiques of the Muslim brothers reported 2,000 killed and 3,000 wounded among the military forces. A communique said that units from the 5th brigade and 9th division comprising 3,500-4,000 soldiers have joined the people. The communique added that these units are armed with a fully equipped missile battery, two artillery battalions and one tank battalion. Long-range artillery in the town of Masyaf, near Hamah, shelled the rebel artillery and the Hamah artillery replied, silencing the Masyaf artillery.

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SYRIA

SYRIAN MEDIATION ROLE IN IRAN-IRAQ WAR QUESTIONED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 256, 8-14 Jan 82 pp 18-19

[Editorial: "The 'Schemer' of Damascus and the 'Mullah' of Tehran: Hafiz al-Asad's 'Initiative'...Its Mysteries and Reasons"]

[Text] Why do you think that Hafiz al-Asad is playing--or pretending to play--a part in stopping the Iraq-Iran war, after it has lasted more than 16 months?

Did Hafiz al-Asad forget all this time that Iraq forms a strategic depth for Syria and that its large, strong army is an indispensable force to confront the Zionist entity...to now start extricating the Iraqi army from its very long battle with Iran?

Did Hafiz al-Asad forget that the Iraqi army kept Damascus from falling in 1973, without which he would not be in power...or at least the capital of his regime would be a city other than Damascus, perhaps Aleppo...or Latakia?

Why did Hafiz al-Asad not discover this fact...and the fact that he is "defenseless" against Israel without Iraq since Egypt pulled out of the battle...until the official annexation of the Golan Heights, while he merely watched the occupation of the Golan for many years, occupying himself by plotting and scheming against Iraq and Lebanon?

The interesting thing is that he did not discover all these facts and stir his "nationalistic" conscience until his recent visit to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries.

These are questions, or mysteries, which political commentators are trying to answer and get to the bottom of.

No doubt the annexation of the Golan Heights is a great humiliation for Hafiz al-Asad. What will he do? Can the Syrian president satisfy his people with decisions on paper issued by the Arab League or the Security Council...how do the Syrian people view this regime's continued support for the Iranian regime in its war against Iraq, tying down the Iraqi army when Israel is annexing the Golan Heights and al-Asad is incapable of military confrontation? This is one of the mysteries...

Another mystery being discussed by Arab political circles is that the leaders of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf, although out of honor they are publicly courteous to Hafiz al-Asad, openly told him, "It is impossible to have true 'Arab solidarity' against Israel when you are supporting the Iranian regime against Iraq, and it is also impossible to organize an effective confrontation with Israel while Iraq is busy with the war with Iran."

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The most dangerous aspect of this for Hafiz al-Asad is what he has heard openly or indirectly to the effect that Israel's annexing the Golan while Iraq is preoccupied means that Syria cannot confront Israel militarily. This means that there is no need to increase financial support for Syria...what would this support go for?

If Saudi Arabia and the Gulf stop financing Syria, this would be the real predicament for Hafiz al-Asad's regime. Then how would he face his people on all his other predicaments [such as:]

1. Israel is occupying the Golan and there is no real way to confront this dangerous move.
2. Internal opposition intensifies daily...and the regime is foundering in the domestic slaughter.
3. The regime and its military are sinking in the Lebanese quagmire.
4. The economic problem is growing and cannot be solved without a continued flow of money from the oil countries.

These are the mysteries and reasons.

However, what is the mystery of this dramatic changeover by the Tehran regime from threatening to occupy Iraqi territory and overthrow the Bagdad regime to suddenly complying with Hafiz al-Asad's hypocrisy and making these flexible statements? A few days after Hafiz al-Asad returned from Kuwait, where he discussed the so-called Syrian-Kuwaiti initiative to stop the war, the Iranian Prime Minister flew to Damascus. Theran has welcomed the upcoming visit by Hafiz al-Asad to Iran, although al-Asad wanted to make the visit and requested it of the Iranian regime.

This visit was planned much earlier, and what made al-Asad delay it was not moral opposition to Iranian aggression against Iraq, but fear of the reaction of the Syrian Arab people. This latest visit is merely carrying out a visit not made earlier. Its purpose remains coordination between the Iranian and Syrian regimes to plot against Iraq and the Arab Gulf.

Moreover, officials in Tehran have started speaking a "diplomatic" language which none had spoken before. At the beginning, the Iranians fought Iraq under the military leadership of Bani-Sadr, who depended primarily on the military and on a great deal of political flexibility to decrease Iran's isolation. Bani-Sadr fought from September 1980 until June 1981, when he left the presidency...without any success in driving the Iraqi forces from Iranian territory. It became clear that his army could not withstand the Iraqi army.

After Bani-Sadr, the mullahs took over completely. When Bani-Sadr was in power, the mullahs said that he did not know how to fight the Iraqis...and if they were in control, they would know how to drive the Iraqis out of Iranian territory; however... how could they invade al-Basrah, al-'Umarah and even Baghdad to overthrow the regime!

After the mullahs got what they wanted, they tried their luck with the Iraqis. At first, the battle east of al-Karun excited them...despite their huge losses there, they applauded...and exchanged congratulations and renewed their hopes...they started

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giving Iranians hope of a day of victory: they did not realize one important fact, that the Iraqi leaders had already decided to withdraw from that area...they ignored this fact and imagined that the situation on that front had turned around, with the Iraqis retreating...and the Iranians advancing.

Then, in the battle of Basatin in December, the Iranians actually made progress; however...as the regime's leader Khameneh'i said, they liberated "250 square kilometers and a border village named Basatin from the 15,000 square kilometers occupied by the Iraqi army and important cities such as al-Muhamrah [Khorramshahr] and Qasre-Shirin"...the Theran regime tried to portray the result of this battle as a great victory, ignoring the magnitude of their losses--more than 6,000 dead and three times this number wounded, a great number of tanks and weapons destroyed, out of proportion to their "progress"--an insignificant progress as confirmed by Khameneh'i's speech.

In the shadow of this erroneous estimation, the mullahs decided to continue to take risks, thinking that attacking the Iraqi forces repeatedly would confuse them and lower their morale, turning the situation on the front to their advantage...therefore they forced what was left of their best units...especially the volunteers whom they spent months gathering...into a difficult battle in the area of Kilan and Sumar in the middle sector of the front. It was impossible for the Iraqis to withdraw from this area because it was not like east of al-Karun, which was far from the Iraqi border. The river forms an important barrier between the two armies, and this area directly overlooks the Iraqi border cities of Khanaqin, Mandali and Naft Khaneh, which were shelled by Iranian artillery on 14 September 1980, causing the outbreak of war between Iraq and Iran.

In the battle of Kilan and Sumar, the Iraqis decided to stand fast...they did not withdraw...and a very lengthy battle broke out which lasted about a week.

Because the Iranian's plans were based on risk-taking and on the psychological aspects as they saw them, their losses were enormous...while the Iraqi losses were slight because they were in a defensive position, had excellent weapons and their fortifications were strong. In this battle, the Iranians lost more than 11,000 combatants [killed] and three times this number wounded...the volunteer and [Revolutionary] Guard forces were almost wiped out. The mullahs considered these forces to be their primary weapon in their new method of confronting the Iraqis...and by this the mullahs lost their main weapon and their magic, as Bani-Sadr lost his magic months earlier.

On the other hand, these battles forced the Iraqis into a state of watchfulness and emergency preparedness. President Saddam Husayn and the party called for party members and the people to volunteer to provide new blood for the battle, and volunteers began to pour in. Many thousands of young men from all Iraqi governorates gathered in army camps to complete their military training, and new brigades of fighters began rushing out to the front, and while the mullah's magic was failing in Tehran, the Iraqi forces were renewed and vigorous.

This explains the change by the ruling mullahs in Tehran from their fiery statements a few weeks ago about entering Iraqi territory to suddenly welcoming the initiative of their friend Hafiz al-Asad. A friend in need is a friend indeed...Hafiz al-Asad, who was backing up the Iranian regime in a state of war now becomes the Khameneh'i regime's back-up to get out of the dilemma of war.

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If Hafiz al-Asad is in a very uncomfortable position because of the continuing Iraq-Iran war and his support for Iran in the shadow of these circumstances which we point out...he will not be able to risk the collapse of his allies in Tehran. Hafiz al-Asad is a "schemer" who knows what side his bread is buttered on...and when to act. He went to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf...heard what he heard...and decided on the method of the "schemer" to try to "rescue himself" and "rescue his friends" in Tehran and to appear to the people as if he is doing a "nationalistic service."

However, is Hafiz al-Asad actually trying to achieve peace, or maneuvering to win time for himself and his friends in Tehran?

There are grave doubts about this move; however, the most obvious truth is that time is no longer working for the "schemer" of Damascus or the "mullah" of Tehran.

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SUDAN

DEMONSTRATIONS SEEN AS HERALDING INEVITABLE REVOLT

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[Article by Abou Sameh: "Revolt"]

[Text]The events that have occurred in the Sudan the past few days express the continuous state of crisis afflicting General Numayri's regime. Despite the special laws enacted last July, fresh demonstrations by university and secondary school students occurred at the end of last December in protest against the dissolution of the Federation of University Students. State security forces had issued a warning to the students, who were assembled in their federation offices, declaring any meeting to be an "illegal act" viewed by the authorities as "a subversive action," or even a "plot remote-controlled by foreigners," seeking to incite the masses to rise against the authorities.

The students responded to this threat by occupying the university, from which they were evicted after a violent assault led by anti-riot squads. Several hundred were arrested, and went off to join the other 10,000 or so political prisoners.

The movement toward revolt was not entirely put down, since 10 days later, the protest movement broke out again. This time it was the secondary students in the capital, who starting on Sunday, 3 January, held a series of non-stop demonstrations, in which all the educational institutions took part, including the girls' secondary schools. As they marched on the Boulevard de la Republique, which leads to the presidential palace, college and male and female secondary school students, and even eight- and nine-year-old children shouted slogans questioning the economic recovery program published by the Sudanese head of state. The movement snowballed; next day college and secondary students in the larger cities took up the cry of those in Khartoum. The demonstrations quickly assumed the characteristics of a mass movement. Neither the police nor the armed forces' armored vehicles were able to stop the tide of popular discontent that swept, thereafter, over most regions of the Sudan. Thousands of voices, previously muzzled, censored, oppressed, challenged Numayri's team: "The cost of staple foods must return to normal!" This demand is a basic one, for it affects the living conditions of the great majority of Sudanese, crushed by the economic recovery program set up by Numayri. This

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program, imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), includes raising the prices of sugar (62 percent), tea (43 percent), and oil (85 percent). It was to avert any disagreement over this program that the authorities decreed the dissolution of the powerful Federation of Railroad Workers, then the closing of all educational institutions.

In so doing, the government was trying to avoid a confrontation that could well be fatal to it, especially since in the South autonomistic tendencies have been apparent for some time. Thus, in Juba, the capital of the South, an opposition party dubbed Council for the Autonomy of the South has just been formed. Its main objective is to mobilize the populace around the idea of self-determination of the southern population, which differs from that of the North through its Christian or animistic beliefs (the Sudanese of the North make up the Islamic majority). At the head of this separatist movement, which already includes hundreds of professionals and intellectuals, are 17 former ministers and 3 leftist political leaders. Thirty-one members of this new party have just been arrested and accused of being "remote-controlled" by ...Libya.

Caught between popular discontent, in the North, and the separatists, in the South, Numayri finds himself locked in; the economic measures required by the IMF in return for a loan of 220 million dollars for the current fiscal year induced him to devalue the price of basic raw materials.

To this is added one fundamental factor: the withdrawal of the state subsidy for these very same staples. Low purchasing power, combined with rising unemployment, the reduction by half of cotton output, the basis for exports (hence the prime source of foreign currencies), amount to symptoms of what Numayri's fate will be in the months ahead.

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