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JPRS L/8949

26 February 1980

# Near East/North Africa Report

(FOUO 7/80)



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NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

FRENCH SIGN OIL CONTRACT WITH GULF STATES

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 21-27 Dec 79 p 47

[Article by oil affairs editor: "Oil Contract Between France and Kuwait To Be Followed by Another Contract with UAE"]

[Text] Despite the secrecy that has surrounded the results of Kuwaiti Oil Minister 'Ali al-Khalifa al-Sabah's visit to the French capital on his way to the OPEC ministers meeting in Caracas, Venezuela on 17 December, it can be confirmed that the main purpose of the visit was to complete the initial discussions on the signing of a bilateral oil supply agreement between the French and Kuwaiti governments. The agreement, which would be patterned after a similar agreement concluded between France and Saudi Arabia, would be for a period of from 3 to 5 years.

France reportedly wants to obtain stable oil supplies from Kuwait averaging 100,000 barrels a day (or 12.5 million tons a year) based on the proposed contract. This would enable France to fill any gap resulting from an interruption of Iranian oil supplies, if the need should arise.

France is also awaiting the visit of Mr Mani' al-'Utayba (after the conclusion of the Caracas conference) in order to negotiate the signing of a contract to guarantee France 50,000 to 60,000 barrels of oil a day from the UAE. This is part of the French move to insure an element of stability in oil supplies, based on its strong relations of friendship with the Arab oil states.

Another matter discussed in the Kuwaiti oil minister's negotiations with French Minister of Industry Andre Giraud, who is in charge of oil affairs, and French Foreign Minister Jean Francois-Poncet, was President Giscard d'Estaing's plan to convene a conference for a dialog between Western Europe and the Gulf oil states. This conference had failed to convene before the end of this year, because of disagreement over agenda items.

France proposes that the dialog be confined to the issue of cooperation on oil-related matters, while the Arab states feel that the agenda should include matters of technical, economic, political and military cooperation.

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It has been learned that the Kuwaiti oil minister has placed new stress on the Arab viewpoint in his Paris discussions.

In any case, the conference for the proposed dialog will be one of the main issues to be discussed by President Giscard d'Estaing during his tour of the Gulf states at the beginning of the coming year, and by Prime Minister Raymond Barre during his forthcoming visit to Saudi Arabia. The latter visit was supposed to have taken place before the end of this month, but it has apparently been postponed for a while.

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INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

BRIEFS

ARAB DEMAND FOR MIRAGE AIRCRAFT--French sources indicate that the deal to supply Iraq with 24 Mirage F-1 aircraft is an implementation of an agreement concluded in July. The agreement provides supplying Iraq with 36 Mirage F-1 interceptor fighter aircraft. The same sources say that Iraq is interested in obtaining aircraft of the Mirage 2000 type currently under development. Kuwait, Libya, Morocco and Jordan have all contracted to purchase a number of Mirage F-1 aircraft. Qatar has contracted to buy 6 jet trainer aircraft of the al-Farhab [translation unknown] type. Morocco previously purchased 24 planes of this type. Jordan has reportedly contracted to purchase 36 Mirage aircraft. [Text] [Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 28 Dec 79 - 3 Jan 80 p 17] 8591

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ISLAMIC AFFAIRS

ISLAM IN MAGHREB COUNTRIES DISCUSSED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 4 Jan 80 pp 5-6

[Article: "The Rise of Islam in the Maghreb"]

[Text] In North Africa it has long been possible to observe attempts at fundamental Islamic indoctrination, conducted or inspired by the Muslim Brothers of Egypt. This dissemination of radical and intransigent Muslim thinking, moreover, has been conducted carefully in order not to upset Maghreb minds too severely; because of Western influences they more or less lean toward a certain liberalism.

In particular, for the benefit of the Maghreb people, emphasis has put on the spiritual and cultural elements; but the possibility of direct action, so considerably developed in the Egyptian Association, was scarcely mentioned. The violences perpetrated by that organization's "secret branch," such as the attempt to assassinate Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir in 1954, in fact aroused instinctive and sincere disapproval in the Maghreb. On the other hand, the Association of Muslim Brothers of Egypt, which became clandestine, was able to exert considerable influence, especially on intellectual youth, by circulating little works of theologic vulgarization, in Arabic or French, using in particular the famous Koran Commentary of Sayyid Qutb, who was "martyred" by the Nasserian repression.

The "Free Maghreb" and Fundamentalist Islamic Thought

Shortly after independence, conditions are unequally favorable in the three Maghreb states for the development of these fundamentalist seeds.

Tunisia finds itself initially under the influence of the reformist initiatives of President Habib Bourguiba, who modernizes the personal regulations by reinterpreting Islamic sources and then devotes himself to renewing the concept of the ritual fast day and introduces planned birth in principle and in fact. But soon President Bourguiba, discovering with anxiety the symptoms of a certain familial and social disequilibrium, restores the teaching of the Muslim ethic and sees to it that Islam remains a solid and definite base for the nation.

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In Morocco the no less remarkable (though very different) personality of Allal and Passi associates a prudently updated concept of Islam with a trilogy of monarchic loyalism, patriotism and progress. There is a certain distrust of the Eastern interpretations of Islam; but a debate between evolutionists and traditionalists feeds upon local sources. During recent years appeals to national sentiment and action on the Sahara question are helping to turn the university young people away from fundamentalist temptations that were becoming fairly powerful.

As for Algeria, it is approaching the problem head-on by clearly referring Islam and, the National Charter says, to a revolutionary Islam that has been substituted for a reformism that was not very effective. The affirmation of this dynamic of Islam, combined with the cultural effort to Arabize, leaves only a narrow platform for the fundamentalist demands; they were prematurely demonstrated with the "Investors" movement, but the few disturbances that occurred were quickly put down.

Few Fundamentalist Demonstrations Currently in Algeria and Morocco

At the present time, although a certain agitation prevails in the high schools and universities of Algeria, aroused both by the material difficulties that are trying the students and by the delicate Arabization problem, the strikers of the University say they have nothing to do with Islamic fundamentalism, and state that they are doing nothing but asking that the principles laid down by the FLN and approved by the Algerian people be applied.

The fundamentalist groups, therefore, would only invest discreetly, even clandestinely. Along the same line, it should be pointed out, however, that there is a familial and social conservatism that remains powerful and in particular holds back the adoption of a new personal regulations code, which is thought to be too progressive. There is also no doubt that the same conservative circles that are blocking familial evolution and feminine emancipation would militate for fundamentalism if the opportunity and the potential presented themselves. But it is unlikely that the authorities would go along with it.

In Morocco the problem cannot be posed in clear terms at present; religious sentiment corroborates the dynastic and national need to justify the war in the Sahara; today the potential fundamentalist impulses cannot fail to be channeled in the same direction.

The Development of Islamic Thought in Tunisia

So it is in Tunisia, and paradoxically because of the tranquillity that prevails in the country and the absence of large problems dominating current events, that the fundamentalist trends may be more clearly perceived.

The Destourian Socialist Party (PSD), moreover, has chosen to deal with these problems openly; it believes it is better to conceal nothing, and it is justifiedly confident that in this case public opinion everywhere is on its side.

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But the noise it is helping to make over this question might well give the fundamentalist groups and activities in Tunisia an effect out of proportion to their present real importance, if not to the importance they expect to assume over the more or less long term.

The zealots of the fundamentalist movement justify it in Tunisia, because they consider the excesses committed by the progressive socialist regime installed in the 1960s by Ahmed ben Salah to be insupportable. However, they intend to dissociate themselves just as much from the present government, which condemns the collectivist experiment no less, and which is building an entirely different socio-economic system, known as the "golden mean," based on capitalistic methods of development and distribution formulas with socialistic tendencies.

But the government of Hedi Nour and the PSD in its entirety are denounced as "lacking soul," moral vigor, inner conviction in the face of the present world crisis, which tomorrow may impose difficult tasks and heavy sacrifices. So it is necessary, according to the zealots, to fall back on the Muslim faith, which offers both the indispensable moral and doctrinal framework and the simple and sure rules that are necessary to build and manage a society.

This way of presenting things contravenes neither law nor public order; the idea may even be supported that it is moving in the direction of that rebirth of the moral ethic that the president has tried to arouse.

Still the illustrating of such an Islamic rebirth must not include topical commentaries likely to arouse popular passions. It is here that a danger appears, increasingly precise as dramatic events are being produced in the East, of which Islam appears to be the driving force. Not only do the religious newspapers, such as AL-MUJTAMAI ("The Society"), overflow onto political terrain with a eulogy of the Iran revolution and blame for the attitude of the United States, but preachers attached to the popular mosques, like the one at Sidi Mahrez in the Tunis medina, are commenting every Friday, in a happily dramatic tone, on the evolution in the Near East. All of these positions, which are aimed at bringing the institutions closer to those of the Islamic state and loosening the bonds linking Tunisia with the Western countries, seem more and more ill-timed to the authorities.

#### The Parade of the Tunisian Government and the Destour

Beginning in December, the Tunisian is suspending AL-MUJTAMAI, which had added to the eulogy of the Iranian Islamic revolution and condemnation of the attitude of the United States, a reprimand for the Arab states for not having received the Ayatollah Khomeyni's emissaries at the Tunis Summit.

Moreover, positive measures are taken immediately. An orientation campaign is launched by the PSD, according to directives given orally on 1 December by President Bourguiba to the director of the party, Mohamed Sayah. "Reason," he says, "must prevail in all circumstances," and the nation must be "protected from destructive currents and hegemonic trends that hide behind slogans as mistaken as they are fallacious."

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The PSD press reports that it is necessary "to protect Islam from its detractors...and from fanaticism" (L'ACTION, 4 December); even while rebuking "foreigners who caricature Islam," it advises "blocking the tendency of Muslims to withdraw into themselves..." calling it "ill-considered reactions." Returning to the subject by saying, "Islam, vigilance is imperative!", the editorial-writer of the same newspaper (6 December) recommends "barring the way to sorcerers' apprentices and demystifying the supporters of obscurantism, who...under the white veil of Islam are concealing black plans for subversion." Against "the Islam alibi," therefore (11 December) it advises stopping "those who ride spiritual values, the better to satisfy political ambitions...Not content to tarnish Islam's image with repeated falsifications of the holy texts, deliberate false interpretations and imprecations against all of man's triumphs in the fields of scientific progress, social welfare and cultural blossoming, they seek to destroy the party, the regime and all the achievements so laboriously accumulated by the nation in a half century."

Tunisian diplomacy gets in closer contact with the Eastern Arab leaders who were the crucible of the extremists of Islam; Mohamed Fitouri, Foreign Affairs minister, on 2 December takes to King Khalid of Saudi Arabia a message from President Bourguiba thanking him for his "firm position" on the occasion of the events in Mecca. On 7 December he leaves Tunis again, carrying a personal message from President Bourguiba, this time for Damas.

The ministers, members of the PSD Politburo, are busy informing and orienting the various classes of the population. Messrs Slaheddine Baly (Justice) and Mohamed Mzali (Education) do this with the young students of the Bab al Khadra high school and Sadiki College; Mzali, denouncing demagogic overstatements, describes "the real strength of the faith...it is not to withdraw into itself, but to shine forth, adapting the principles to the pragmatic virtues of action" (6 December). Mohamed Sayah speaks to the officers of the Tunis PSD and the general secretaries of the coordination committees (6 and 10 December); he denounces anarchists and obscurantists and emphasizes that to strengthen Islam's position it is necessary to acquire technologies and exact sciences.

The ambassadors from the Tunisian Republic abroad participate actively in this same action; dedicating on 9 December the premises of the Tunisian Workers' Association in Toulon, Hedi Mabrouk warns against the opposing excesses of the lovers of the past and the dehumanized modernists.

## Toward Perfecting Muslim Training in Tunisia

The 1,300th anniversary of the great "Olivier Mosque", which claims to be the world's earliest university, on 14 December, according to the Tunis ZEITOUNA, gives Hedi Nouira the occasion for evoking the methods that will enable everyone to be offered "a transcendent image of the highest virtues of Islam" and "the accusation of fanaticism, deep-rooted immobility and xenophobia" to be avoided.

Hedi Nouira evokes Islam as "a religion that allies faith with action and, at the same time as it exalts worship, exalts the practice of good and the understanding of the laws of the universe and life, with the help of God-given

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intellectual faculties." He recalls the bond between the faith and the Savior, illustrated by the dual function of the small shrines and mosques which have also always been used for teaching; he emphasizes the many appeals to reason and reflection contained in the Koran; he quotes the passage from the book indicating that God made Muslims "a golden mean community," and this recall is especially striking when one remembers that Mr Nouira, in the economic and human area, intends to establish in Tunisia "a median society."

The head of government mentions, in order to rebuke them energetically, "movements or groups that claim the right of protectorship over religion and refuse, in speaking to their century, to adopt the language appropriate to it; thus claiming to constrict the Muslims into rigid molds, they are opposed to progress and the opening of minds, make light of the feelings of Muslims and do not hesitate to resort to violent and provocative behavior." On the contrary, he announces, "Islam is correct balance in conduct, elevation in deeds, reconciliation between mind and matter, finally incessant intellectual effort to accede to the truth, which is found to be midway between two extremes, blind fanaticism and total indifference."

Finally, Mr Nouira concludes by recommending that the "immense resources" of Islam be exploited, and "its great capacity for going forward toward progress and the advancement of man." An appeal all the more significant in that it is uttered at the cradle of this Islamic university, which has now been revitalized within the framework of the University of Tunis, and thus is called upon to perfect the modern Muslim training of Tunisian citizens.

Shortly after 15 December the budgetary debates in the National Assembly show that the Tunisian people's representatives are seriously concerned about these training problems.

Ferid Dhaou, discussing the prime minister's budget, on which the management of worship depends, asks various questions: what are graduates of the theology school, the heir to the ZEITOUNA, worth? Are they equal to their responsibilities? Is the office of "mufti" (Islamic jurist) of the republic effective? Bechir Laribi suggests that the management of worship be strengthened. On the same subject, Ammar ben Aouicha and Belhassen Cherif request that the preachers and agents of worship be better recruited, better trained and better paid; the second of these two members of Parliament, Mr Cherif, suggests that orientation conferences be organized to inform them, and hopes that measures will be taken to prevent the mosques from "being used for goals other than those for which they were built."

Finally, Mohamed Jemal recommends revising the sermon programs, and effective support for the preachers, to adapt well to the spirit of the times and adequate possibilities for growth.

Hedi Nouira, closing the budgetary debate, makes an attention-getting speech in which he recalls that Islam--a religion of moderation and tolerance that bans any restraint--is the country's official religion and is the principal source of inspiration in drawing up the laws. He emphasizes the state's efforts to reinforce religious and moral education, and forcefully denounces the

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danger of the fundamentalist trends that "are in danger of degenerating sooner or later into a kind of civil war.

"It is our duty," Mr Nouira continues, "as sincere Muslims, to sound the alarm. We are saying that the situation is grave. Its gravity does not lie solely in the crusading spirit that continues to motivate some nostalgic people in the West, but also in that irresponsible behavior and those extremist movements that wish to provoke discord, compromise security and make use of religion for ends that are often foreign to it."

Before attacking more directly certain opponents, who make us of "a mixture of ideas and equivocation" in an opportunistic collusion with a claimed religious fundamentalism, the prime minister reaffirms that "in its capacity as manager of Islam as stipulated in the constitution, the state assumes the responsibility for protecting Islam and its institutions in Tunisia and protecting the generations against subversive and extremist trends." And moreover, "One has to see that the conceived, programmed policy that this regime has had the responsibility for implementing for nearly half a century is the object of a consensus that is as good as a rule of life."

This parliamentary debate confirms how deeply the Muslim institutions are "involved in the century," and may aid in a better understanding of why any Islamic movement, even though it be merely intellectual, is an "affair of state." It also illustrates the opening up of the Tunisian nation, which, unlike too many Muslim countries, allows ample public debates on such subjects, and allows foreign public opinion to be well informed.

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AFGHANISTAN

MOSCOW INCORPORATES AFGHANISTAN UNDER BREZHNEV DOCTRINE

Madrid CAMBIO 16 in Spanish 27 Jan 80 pp 38-44

[Article by CAMBIO 16 special correspondent Juan Carlos Alganaraz]

[Text] The "Brezhnev Doctrine" concerning the limited sovereignty of socialist states is being applied in Asia for the first time. Amid the mounting wave of international criticism, Soviet troops that were "invited to invade" assure Moscow control of a new satellite country.

Afghanistan has ceased to exist as an independent nation. This is testimony, not a political conclusion. With astounding rapidity and inexorable precision, in 3 weeks the Soviet troops have conquered the cities, control the few main roads and are now hastening to besiege the pockets of resistance that have fallen back into the most inaccessible mountain areas.

It is a true spectacle to watch the Soviet war machine on the march around Kabul, along the roads and crossing the most strategic mountain passes. CAMBIO 16 special correspondent Juan Carlos Alganaraz reports from Kabul.

Although the Soviet military presence is now discreet in Kabul, the routes into the interior immediately put one in contact with the forces of the USSR. Russian soldiers dig trenches and foxholes all along the roads, especially at high elevations, where it is bitingly cold, with snow everywhere. In addition to checkpoints, you can see successive troop barracks protected by light armored vehicles, tanks and artillery.

The Soviets smile courteously at the timid greetings of newsmen, but any attempt to leave the road inevitably brings a harsh gesture, the cry of "halt," a furious glance and an accusing index finger at cameras and a categorical "nyet."

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Red-Tinted Kabul

The spectacle is the same on any of the main roads. The helicopters and small observation aircraft make incessant overflights at low altitudes. From time to time the deep-blue sky is streaked by the parallel stars of two Migs on patrol. The airlift of some 40 flights a day is less intense now at the airport but continues uninterrupted.

The trucks, the enormous tank transports, the artillery and the armored vehicles also move incessantly along the roads.

Russian Trenches

Kabul Airport is a frenzy of red flags and stars. Enormous posters cover the front of the main building, proclaiming in the national language, in English and in Russian: "Proletarians of the world, unite" and "Long live proletarian international solidarity."

From the air you can see that the Soviets have carried out the two exhortations at all costs. Giant mountain chains dominate the landscape. The low, sprawling city of Kabul rises and falls amid some 10 hills, with its confused physiognomy that combines the motley neighborhoods of old, mud structures and the few low, rectangular modern buildings that line the avenues.

On the surrounding hills the Soviets are working full speed to build an iron ring to defend the city. You can see trenches, army tents, artillery, some armored vehicles and, on the main elevations, enormous trucks with radar and communications screens. Next to the airport you can make out an enormous, perfectly squared-off barracks, with its rows of tents and smoking field kitchens. The entire perimeter of the camp is guarded by armored vehicles and a number of gigantic T-72 tanks.

As the plane descends, one sees that both sides of the runway are lined with combat and transport helicopters, more armored vehicles and a large group of Aeroflot (the Soviet airline) planes. We pass by an Aeroflot plane that is surrounded by ambulances and Soviet medical personnel.

Once in the streets, the only patrols that cross our path are Afghan soldiers. "During the first few days," an Afghan told us, "the Soviets were constantly patrolling the streets with soldiers and small armored vehicles. At night they fired shots into the air to keep everyone at home."



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A British newsman who arrived and was expelled 2 days later explained to me that Kabul Airport looked like an immense arsenal with an enormous concentration of air materiel and armored vehicles. Although the Soviets also utilized the Bagame and Shendan bases north and west of the capital, Kabul Airport was the main scene of the invasion. After the initial confused reports, local diplomatic circles indicated that in reality it was on the night of 26 December that the Soviets began the operation by occupying the three airports with troops from the aforementioned bases.

There were not very many troops but enough to provide defense and receive the first planes bringing specialized personnel to organize the movement of aircraft.

#### Soviet Anthill

Beginning on 27 December, the Soviets flew 350 flights in 48 hours to install their bridgehead: the "blue berets" of Air Transport Division 105, an elite unit of 6,000 men specially trained as assault troops. The division has light tanks, a few T-62's, artillery and a group of helicopters.

In the penthouse of the Intercontinental Hotel, which is located on a hill that dominates the city, a terrified group of foreign businessmen were singular witnesses to the military avalanche. "We couldn't believe it," relates an Indian executive who works for a local German firm. "There was a tremendous noise of airplanes and a ring of lights in the sky descending like a serpent." One landing every 3 minutes in a difficult, mountain-girt airport.

The following night, other lights attracted the attention of the small group of witnesses on the upper floors of the hotel. These were the first endless military convoys that were arriving from the Russian border and beginning to surround the city.

Afterwards, toward evening the row of transports continued southward in the direction of Khalalabad, while other groups headed along other roads to various points in the interior.

#### Amin's Executioners

A hotel employee was helping a Soviet driver who had smashed an Afghan bus. They were able to communicate in Farsi (Persian). "He told me," the employee explained to CAMBIO 16, "that he was exhausted because they had been on the march for 7 days and were practically unable to sleep." By the end of the year the Soviet maneuver had clearly been accomplished. Directed from the Soviet border city of Termez, the Soviet general headquarters for the

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operation, the "blue berets" liquidated the resistance in Kabul, whose only major pockets were at the local radio station (dangerously close to the U.S. Embassy), the Interior Ministry, the House of the People and, in particular, the Palace of Darulaman, where President Amin had taken refuge with his bodyguards and several tanks.

#### A Coup with Music

A strange episode, which reveals how "voluntary" the local government's request for Soviet military aid was, took place on 27 December. Radio Kabul was broadcasting music all day when suddenly it seemed to be airing a message from Barbak Karmal, the new prime minister installed by the Russians, announcing Amin's fall. All testimony indicates that Karmal did not show up in Kabul until 2 days later, when control of the city was already assured, and that the message was broadcast from the USSR.

By the beginning of this month the 306th Division of Soviet Motorized Infantry was in charge of defending Kabul, replacing the "blue berets," who in turn headed for Badakshan, where the resistance or the guerrilla fighting is the heaviest. The 12,000-man division controls an immense zone centered in the capital.

Two more divisions, the 16th Motorized Infantry Division and an armored division, set out from Termez, via Kabul, towards the area of Khalalabad and Patkia, near the Pakistani border. The vise was complete when two additional divisions, the 357th and the 36th, crossed the Soviet border, descended on Herat and then headed for Kandahar. These shock troops were followed by a stream of support troops. Depending on the source, the Soviet troops total between 60,000 and 80,000 men.

#### The Siege of Kandahar

The battle of Kabul was over in a matter of hours. According to testimony and accounts, which are often contradictory, the Soviets encountered the toughest pockets of resistance around Herat and then on the outskirts of Kandahar. This city was under siege for several days and eventually suffered a serious supplies problem. It was impossible for newsmen to reach the area after 10 January. The province of Bamian, a rebel stronghold east of Kabul, was also the scene of fighting but is now under firm Soviet control. There were similar developments in the regions near Khalalabad and Gardez, by the Pakistani border.

The only road open to newsmen was towards Khalalabad, a city strategically located next to the Khyber Pass, the historic gateway to Pakistan and India. The Soviets are solidly in control

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of the route, and the military apparatus is gigantic when you get to Gorge, a narrow ravine from whose elevations any military force could pulverize the route. The slopes and main elevations are covered with army tents, artillery and armored vehicles. Controls are tight, but people are allowed to pass.

"Careful, Don't Let Them Mistake You for a Soviet!"

If there is calm, though not tranquility, in Kabul, Khalalabad is a city on edge. The Soviet presence here is overwhelming, and there are increasing accounts of fierce fighting on the outskirts during the initial days of the invasion. The guerrillas apparently blew up several bridges, but the Soviet military engineers spanned the gaps in a few hours.

"Careful, don't let them mistake you for a Soviet." This warning, which was repeated over and over again in Kabul, becomes a tragic memory here. In March 1979 the rebels controlled the city for a few hours and killed several Soviets. But the worst incident took place in Herat, where 60 Soviet military personnel and a number of their relatives were tortured and mutilated.

The only authorized direction is towards the border. The Soviets have no problems in this area. But attempts to head elsewhere meet time and again with the checkpoints. This shows that the Pakistani border region, many of whose posts were abandoned by the army, is still a combat zone. On Saturday the 12th persistent news reached Kabul about Soviet bombers on the outskirts of Birbok and Khust.

The Indomitable Afghans

Back in Kabul, you can stop to observe some of the mountain hamlets. All of the houses look like fortresses: outer walls, a single window and, inside, a life that has not changed for centuries. Tied to age-old, immutable cultures, the inhabitants are famous for their indomitable fighting spirit and their passion for independence. In reality, they would struggle against any authority other than their tribe and have their own moral and legal codes, which are at odds with the government's regardless of its orientation.

But if there is anything that unifies the population, it is the Muslim religion, which holds definitive sway in every aspect of life. This is the wall against which the British were dashed in three wars.

Now it is the Soviets' turn. Has the Kremlin met its Vietnam? The comparison is exaggerated because the differences between the two

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conflicts are enormous. The Soviets are fighting in a neighboring country with troops that in many cases belong to the same ethnic groups as those that populate Afghanistan.

All of the indications are that so far the rebel resistance has been crushed by the Soviet military drive. The guerrillas have been confined to the most inaccessible regions of the mountains. Most of their weapons are extremely old, with an extraordinarily wide variety of models, and the modern arms that they do have are insufficient to cope with the might of their adversary. The fact is, this medieval, sheepherding people has to confront tanks, helicopters and airplanes with rifles.

#### A Bleak Future

The Soviets are now engaged in sealing off the borders to prevent supplies from entering, rather than in liquidating pockets of resistance in the mountains. No serious obstacle to their operations has yet appeared. The USSR will clearly try in every way to convince Pakistan to stop supporting the guerrillas. In any case, it is a concrete threat to Pakistan that the Russians might cross a difficult to define border to pursue the rebels.

The future of the rebellion now hinges on the guerrillas' ability to get supplies from abroad. Another prominent point, which further highlights the differences with Vietnam, is the division of the rebel groups either on political grounds (Muslims, ultra-orthodox sects, followers of Khomeyni, loyalists of the former king, pro-Westerners) or because cultural tradition intertwines their loyalties basically with the family, the tribe and the ethnic group.

"We now have a common enemy, and that will put an end to our rivalries," reiterate the rebel leaders at their headquarters in Peshawar (Pakistan). But until that time comes, the guerrilla war against the Soviets does not have a unified leadership. This is a fundamental shortcoming because the Muslim rebels are now facing an enemy vastly superior to the various governments of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), which staged the pro-communist coup of April 1978.

Soviet military domination of Afghanistan is topped off by its political domination. There is not a single major institution (the ministries, the post office, telephones, radio and television) that does not have its "Soviet advisers," who, without much secrecy, are the ones who give the final orders.

#### "Advisers" Everywhere

The Armed Forces and the police are not only under the direct command of the Soviets; they also have their "advisers" in each unit. This

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correspondent even came across a Soviet officer in the foreign exchange office, which is located in the General Police Command, a barracks bristling with Soviet troops. The incident is significant because there was no way to communicate with the local police until the Soviet officer, in shaky but understandable French, resolved the problem with impeccable courtesy.

The incident is also significant because it shows to what extent the Soviets cannot conceal that they are the masters of the situation. The successive PDP governments plunged the country into disintegration. First, the Khalq (people) faction, led by Taraki and Amin, liquidated the "Parcham" (flag) group, headed by Barbak Karmal. Then last September, Amin got rid of Taraki but was ultimately toppled and executed by Karmal, whom the Soviet invasion installed in Kabul.

#### Being Without Wood Is Like Being Without Oil

All of the speculations about the Soviet action become clearer when you see the realities of Afghanistan, a poverty-stricken nation with a per capita income of \$120 and a life expectancy of less than 40 years. Ninety percent of the population live in little villages and hamlets and are ravaged by all kinds of diseases. In reality, all figures are estimates because a census has never been conducted. The clash between the PDP reformist programs and traditional society triggered a rebellion that by the time the Soviets arrived controlled more than half the country and was not too far from Kabul.

A high-level German executive remarked to CAMBIO 16: "In recent weeks supplies have not been coming in from the most remote areas. For example, there was no wood, an essential fuel for the most deprived inhabitants in this atrocious cold. I was unable to communicate by land with my branches in the various cities. So we had to rent a light plane. The countryside and the roads, especially in Novhe, are in the hands of the guerrillas. In the midst of this catastrophe, the successive purges in the PDP tore the party and the government apart. This turmoil hit the Armed Forces hard. Arrests, changes of command and, finally, mass desertions had brought the army to the brink of paralysis."

The Soviets had reached the conclusion that the extremely tough line against the rebels had no future. Not only did Amin weaken the party by liquidating Karmal and Taraki, but he also launched an offensive against the rebels, which resulted in hundreds of casualties last October and turned out to be a military setback for the government.

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All sorts of geopolitical and historical speculations are possible to explain why the Soviets launched the invasion, but the most realistic explanation is that if they had not taken direct control of the country, they would have been faced with the defeat of a "people's democracy" and the prospect of an ultra-conservative Muslim government nestled alongside their Muslim republics (50 million Soviet citizens).

The "Brezhnev Doctrine" in Effect

Afghanistan was already a satellite when the Soviet invasion took place. All of the outward symbols (the national flag had been replaced by the red flag) and institutions of the country were similar to those of a people's democracy. The Soviet invasion has confirmed that the "Brezhnev Doctrine" regarding the limited sovereignty of socialist states, which the Soviet leader proclaimed after the invasion of Czechoslovakia, also applies to Asia.

As far as the Soviets are concerned, it is now a question of reorganizing the entire state machinery and the economy, in addition to consolidating their military position. Karmal insists on respect for religion and private property. Radio Kabul now broadcasts readings of the Koran, and official communiques begin with the ritual formula of "In the name of merciful and compassionate God." In other words, the drastic program of reforms will be softened to the utmost.

Now, however, comes the worst phase of the war for the Soviets: they have to crush the rebels in the mountain strongholds. When the snows melt, Soviet helicopters, airplanes and mountain forces will begin an offensive that could result in a slaughter if they encounter stiff resistance. As in all guerrilla wars, the backing of local residents is essential to the Muslim rebels, and here the Soviets will have to learn from the lessons of Vietnam. To begin with, they are making lavish use of MI-24 helicopters, similar to the American Cobras, which are as lethal now in the Sahara in hands of the king of Morocco as they were in Vietnam.

By spring the Soviets have to set up a new Afghan Army that will enable them to rely on a seriously structured local force. If they do not come up with a political solution and if the orthodox Muslim resisters receive enough foreign support, the battle of Afghanistan, a country in which by tradition no prisoners of war are taken, will be long and exhausting.

This prospect is on the minds of the soldiers in the occupation force. The following anecdote has become famous these days. A German television correspondent met a Soviet officer in the post office who spoke to him in perfect German.

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The officer was descended from the group of Germans that Catherine the Great brought to Russia. They had a friendly talk that ended when the newsman asked the officer whether he was planning to leave soon. With a melancholy gesture, the Soviet replied: "No, we have enough for a long stay."

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IRAN

ANTI-AMERICAN SHOW GOES ON AMID POLITICAL CHAOS

Madrid CAMBIO 16 in Spanish 6 Jan 80 pp 42-44

[Article by special correspondent Ricardo Herren]

[Text] Any pretext will do to renew the populist, xenophobic carnival against the Americans. The clamoring, however, conceals a situation of total political, social and economic chaos, with its backdrop of 700,000 men under arms who could turn Iran into another Lebanon.

Shouting into a microphone, a mullah led the crowd in its rallying cries while brandishing a revolver to mark the rhythm. "Death to Carter!" "Death to the Americans!" The same old threats have been repeated throughout Tehran for the last 50 days, but especially along Thalegani Avenue, the location of the American Embassy, occupied by the revolutionary students and the 50 hostages that they are holding prisoner. CAMBIO 16 special correspondent Ricardo Herren reports from Tehran.

But now the hatred of the thousands of demonstrators was stained with the blood of the Ayatollah Mofattah, a top-level leader of the Shiite sect with close ties to Khomeyni who was assassinated last Wednesday by two gunmen apparently belonging to an ultraright-wing sect. Neither timid nor lazy, the Ayatollah immediately saddled the Americans and the Zionists with the crime.

Mofattah's assassination under very mysterious circumstances was just what was needed to give new life to the drooping populist carnival outside the American Embassy. After days of incessant agitation, the crowd became less dense, the traffic flowed normally, and there were increasingly fewer hawkers of cooked beet snacks and dried fruit. "Death to Carter; get your hard-boiled eggs," one of the merchants shouted.

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#### Threat of Naval Blockade

Now the crowds are coming back, especially after it was learned that the United States is threatening a naval blockade of Iran if the 50 hostages are brought to trial. With 21 warships and two aircraft carriers in the area, Carter could attempt a blockade with the backing of a UN resolution, which seems unlikely because of the more than probable Soviet veto. In any case, however, the tension is tremendous, because the radio and television are announcing the start of a battle near the Hormuz Strait, the key to the Persian Gulf, where the Iranian Navy would do battle with the Americans to maintain access to its ports.

This entire climate is essential to Khomeyni, who needs the constant rallying of the masses against the foreign enemy to cover up the catastrophic domestic political and military crisis. With 700,000 men under arms, if the unifying element of xenophobia ceases to exist, Iran could wind up like Lebanon. "If this campaign against the Americans were to end by trying or deporting the hostages, it would be a real disaster for the Islamic revolution. These kinds of incidents have to continue," Ebrahim Yazdi, Ayatollah Khomeyni's former foreign affairs minister and a current member of the revolution, explained to CAMBIO 16.

Yazdi supports the theory of the "ongoing revolution" as an indispensable element in making the people forget about the economic crisis, for example. This crisis becomes evident as soon as you enter the bazaar, the downtown area with the most chaotic traffic in the world, the thousands of stalls selling clothing, Islamic music cassettes (all other music is expressly prohibited by Khomeyni) and the entire array of Ayatollah speeches and somewhat fly-flecked food.

A good part of the three million persons who have lost their jobs since the beginning of the Islamic revolution have found work in this makeshift trade.

The jobless account for no less than one-third of the active Iranian population. The country has 35 million people; only one-fourth, some 9 million, are regarded as the active population.

Thus, the country depends on what less than 20 percent of its citizens now produce, and what they do produce is meager enough to loom (behind the shows that the regime stages day after day) as one of the most dangerous and threatening elements for the disjointed Islamic revolution.

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Little and Nothing

The country's industrial potential is in a state of semi-paralysis. Many factories have been occupied by the workers, who have expelled or detained their owners, the hated "tagutis" (literally, "devil" in Farsi, but which is used as a nickname for the wealthy). Shop committees have taken charge of management and production.

Other businessmen have fled the country. Bankruptcies and suspensions of payments number in the tens of thousands, but reliable statistics are lacking owing to the widespread chaos. Most foreign and Iranian technicians have left the country.

Hamid Nazati was the owner of a textile factory in the outskirts of Tehran. One day the workers committee demanded that he surrender the factory. When he resisted, he was given a thorough thrashing and thrown out of his company. "They told me never to return, unless I wanted them to report me to the Guardians of the Revolution. I'm leaving the country; I don't want to have anything to do with it. They'll remember me when they run out of raw materials or when the machinery breaks down on them," he told CAMBIO 16.

The revolutionary workers are probably already remembering their taguti.

The textile industry as a whole is producing about 40 percent of what it was a year ago. The automobile industry is doing even worse: 30 percent. The canning industry has been completely shut down, and the effects are beginning to be felt in stores, where most of the canned food shelves are empty. The building materials industry is also at a zero output level, but the effects are less visible. All of the major scheduled projects, such as a satellite city complex in Tehran budgeted at \$20 billion or the Erbatan urban developments next to the capital's airport (300,000 housing units) are frozen.

The iron and steel industry, which was nationalized along with petrochemicals, the banks and insurance companies, was scheduled to produce between 15 and 20 million tons of steel in 1980. Current production amounts to a half million tons.

The petrochemicals industry, which is highly dependent on U.S.-made industrial goods, has sharply cut its output owing to the absence of direct imports from the United States.

The Islamic revolutionary regime has been importing only emergency items in the area of foodstuffs and medicines, while halting the flow of other merchandise, in a country that depends heavily on its

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foreign trade. Japan has seen its exports to Iran drop 82 percent, and Spain, 75 percent. The country least affected has been the FRG, whose trade with Iran has fallen off 67 percent.

#### Just in Case the Flies

The upshot can already be seen in the streets. There are shortages of eggs, tires, detergents, construction materials and pharmaceuticals. There is also an active black market for these items, some of which sell for almost six times their normal price. As a result of this turmoil, the annual inflation rate is estimated at 50 percent, in spite of the inflows of petrodollars.

Most of the populace lives at subsistence levels, and that explains why inflation is not worse. The price of housing has been constantly on the decline. The price of household appliances has not risen because there is no demand; no one is buying consumer durables. A number of primary wants, such as clothing or bread, have not increased in price either, because of government intervention and because the least hard hit sector has been farming (it is producing only 20 percent less than last year). Oranges, however, are now a "luxury item," climbing from 120 to 280 rials a kilo.

#### In a Persian Market

Along the dark, narrow alleys of the Tehran bazaar, an enormous marketplace in the southern part of the city, pictures of the Ayatollah Khomeyni and black flags with Koranic sayings to commemorate the holy month of Muharram abound, as they do everywhere. "Don't get the idea that everybody here is a Khomeyni supporter," cautions a bazaar vendor with a waggish smile. "Many people have replaced the shah's picture with some ayatollah's."

Most people have more than enough personal reasons not to be too fond of the Islamic revolutionary regime. At the outset, the bazaar merchants enthusiastically supported the overthrow of the shah because he forced them into unfair competition with the big multinationals. In this war between "the neighborhood store and the supermarket," as a European diplomat described it, the bazaar people quickly took their place alongside the revolutionaries.

"But things have changed in the last few months," the bazaar merchant explained. "The lack of security, the fear of a future that no one can see clearly has caused a recession among us bazaar merchants, who account for 40 percent of the country's non-oil trade."

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The notion that they could be invaded by the Americans at any time is going through the heads of many merchants, who anxiously ask newsmen "when is the invasion going to happen."

One of the merchants commented in all seriousness that he was prepared to clear out all of his merchandise "because the Americans will be coming soon and they'll kill us all."

The Americans, of course, do not seem ready to kill any Iranians, with guns at least. In the short or medium term, however, they could force them to tighten their belts. "Sixty percent of Iran's overseas foreign exchange has been frozen; the domestic supply of rials is totally insufficient," explains economist Rokhsam Manucheri.

#### Fast for Islam

Iran depends heavily on imports, especially in basic sectors such as foodstuffs. At least 60 percent of the food that the 35 million Iranians consume comes from other countries, although some sources say that the dependency reaches 90 percent (as in almost everything, there are no official figures). The BBC has put the country's food imports at \$8 billion a year.

In the absence of sufficient financial assets, Iran is at a bottleneck, tied hand and foot in the bid to purchase all that it needs, pay off pending debts, get the country moving and shoulder the liability of a 30 percent jobless rate. "Iran depends on its oil revenues today to buy what it needs, and they are clearly insufficient," says Manucheri. Oil revenues this year will be around \$27 billion. The country's foreign debt, however, totals \$7 billion, weighing heavily, above all, on the helter-skelter attempt (no clear-cut program or visible planning) to transform the country's economy.

#### In Debt up to Its Ears

The credit terms of the past have vanished. "The Iranian economy was already in debt up to its ears before the Islamic revolution, with outlays that were much higher than revenue," says a European economist. "But there was confidence in the country's potential. That confidence has disappeared." Iran used to get credit with 12 percent security, but foreign banks now demand 100 percent. "In light of such demands, we can say that most loans are no longer available to Iran," the expert adds.

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The 50 Hostages

In the face of all this, "the only policy of the new managers of the Markazi Bank (the nationalized central bank) seems to be to shake their fists angrily at the U.S. banks that have frozen their reserves in Europe," economist Manucheri contends.

Placing the emphasis on political spectacle thus becomes an urgent need for the Islamic revolution, "not only to rally the masses," as Ebrahim Yazdi advocates, "but also to demagogically prevent the populace from realizing the nation's serious basic problems.

In addition, however, empresario Khomeyni's big shows keep the public's attention absorbed, which enables the government to not govern or to govern as little as possible.

Iran is, in fact, a country fragmented into countless political, religious, personal, tribal, regional and economic divisions and subdivisions. If the government took steps to organize the country, it would entail admitting that the period of utopia has ended and that it is now high time to return to reality. It would also mean curbing revolutionary excesses, placing every citizen in his spot and organizing the machinery of production and the other facets of national life.

To do this, the country would have to have a national program, which does not exist (or at least no one has disclosed it) and which cannot even be guessed at from what is happening. And even if such a program existed, taking action, governing in other words, would again bring out and heighten all of the latent strife among the Iranian masses. Several persons have already been executed by firing squads for "practicing sodomy."

For the time being, the shows are much more useful to the Ayatollah Khomeyni and enable him to shunt aside all of the nation's problems, even though the country is silently rotting away. Yazdi does not fool himself: "We have to come up with excuses, just as you newsmen invent sensationalist headlines to attract readers' attention. We have to create incidents to keep the masses mobilized."

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IRAN

TABRIZ DISPUTES RAGE AS IMAM VACATIONS

Paris L'EXPRESS in French 12 Jan 80 pp 73-74

[Article by Bernard Ullmann: "Iran: Falling Apart"]

[Text] Civil war is breaking out in Tabriz again... A pitched battle in a village on the gulf: 40 dead... But the Imam has decided to be tired from 12 to 27 January.

Khomeyni's periods of silence are as eloquent as his diatribes. He chose the right moment to go into retreat: Civil war erupted once more on Wednesday in Tabriz in flames, more violently than ever. Every day the peripheral provinces are becoming increasingly engulfed in an anarchy which suits many people in Washington, Moscow, Baghdad, and doubtless also very near where the Imam is, in the holy city of Qom. In short, it is in fact a struggle for power or for the succession.

The American hostages: A lot was said about them on Tuesday evening on French television, in "Screen Reports." In the face of the Soviet divisions in Kabul they no longer carry much weight in chancelleries or editorial offices. In Washington, following the tragicomedy of the unfortunate Kurt Waldheim's last ditch trip, people have stopped having any faith in a political or diplomatic solution. But their fate provides fuel for a campaign on a new theme, carefully orchestrated by the White House for once: The men who hold the American diplomats are not, if they ever were, "Islamic students." Now it is a question of professional terrorists, definitely Marxists, perhaps Palestinians, who are deliberately seeking to set minds afire in the hope of pushing the United States to military intervention. Jody Powell, the White House spokesman, himself asked the newsmen questioning him: "Who is Iran's leader today?" Which amounts to saying that for lack of authorized representatives, one day or other the United States will have to take unilateral action. The fact is that the formidable American "task force" which has been cruising south of the Gulf for a month and a half is again to be strengthened. Now, on those famous "warm seas" so many Soviets covet, it just so happens that Iran is contiguous to Pakistan.

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"A Final Ultimatum"

This week it was in Tabriz, only some 50 kilometers south of the Soviet Union, that the most spectacular confrontations took place. Not necessarily the bloodiest: At Bandar Lengeh, a small gulf port, some 40 deaths were reported, some 150 wounded. A real pitched battle for 2 days set Khomeiny supporters against local inhabitants, Sunni Arabs of the area, armed perhaps by Baghdad and officered by pro-Iraq Palestinians.

In Kurdistan where the Iraqis are also active, a forthcoming "final ultimatum," another one, was predicted following a deadly ambush which on Tuesday made it possible for autonomists to confiscate the weapons of 120 policemen who were perhaps not very combative. The previous day the governor general of the province, Hossein Shahvessi, himself resigned to rally to the insurgents, which says a great deal about the authority of the "central government."

In Azerbaijan, the stakes are infinitely higher for the future of the Iranian revolution. For despite their denials, it is in fact the two holy men of Qom, Khomeiny and Ayatollah Shariat Madari, who are fighting over which of the two is to be the supreme leader of the Shiites with exchanges of rifle fire by the "guardians of the revolution" and the native militants of the Moslem people's Republican Party.

Two years ago, long before Teheran, Tabriz was the scene of mass demonstrations against the shah which were violently suppressed. Today, Khomeiny is openly booed there. In accordance with a well-established tradition, the combatants are fighting over the radio-television building, not much of which can be left. After the proclaiming of martial law, there were at least some 10 dead, about 100 wounded--among them our colleague, French photographer Patrick Chauvel--several banks looted, cars set on fire. A scene that in Iran has been virtually "normal" for 2 years. But all that took place on a day sacred to the Shiites, Arabaine, which marks the anniversary of the 40th day following the death of the prophet Hussein.

At Qom itself the worst was expected. Since the scuffles of 4 January, Shariat Madari's partisans thought he was restricted to his residence and --who knows?--threatened with death. Clearly his appeals for calm, forced or sincere, hardly soothed tempers in his Azerbaijan fiefdom. The army, or what remained of it, had to multiply its barrages to prevent an armed raid from descending upon Qom. However, the only ones who showed up were ardent supporters of Khomeiny, parading by tens of thousands by the modest residence of the Imam who, seated on the terrace, greeted them by waving his hand. On their way they shouted "classic" slogans: "Long live Khomeiny! Death to Carter!" Whereas in Teheran it was under the green flag of Islam alone, without any portraits of Khomeiny, even without any hostile shouting against America, that hundreds of thousands of people marched.

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A strange atmosphere nevertheless for a "presidential campaign." For on 26 January (barring unforeseen events) the Iranians go to the polls without leaving their guns at home for all that. Khomeiny announced that he would not exercise the right conferred upon him by the constitution of accepting or rejecting candidacies in advance. He also forbade the mullahs who after his death must preserve the reality of power within a council of wise men, to stand for election. Which bars the way for Ayatollah Mohammed Behchti, secretary of the Council of the Revolution, who posed perhaps excessively as a possible successor.

There thus remain the two eternal rivals of the days of Neauphle-le-Chateau, Bani Sadr and Sadegh Ghotbzadeh. An admiral whose fleet since the revolution no longer leaves port and especially not to observe the movements of the American aircraft carriers, Ahmad Mahdani, they say, has the support of the "moderate" bourgeoisie and also perhaps that of Shariat Madari. And then an unknown has presented himself as a candidate: A certain Jallalehdin Farsi, author of an obscure work on the Islamic state who, it is said, apparently enjoys the favor of some members of the entourage of the Imam.

The latter, having decided that he would be tired from 12 to 27 January, will not have to intervene directly in those disputes among his underlings. On the Islamic Republic's sidelines (which moreover has never prevented him during previous retreats of the same sort from granting long interviews to those mass media that persistently denounce his lieutenants), he obviously remains the arbiter. But the rules of the game are no longer observed by anyone.

With its convulsions bringing back into question the country's very unity, its clan struggles, its hostages whom they continue to claim as a right to "try," unlike any other this revolution goes on in a strange isolation. As though the swarming of Soviet tanks were taking place in another universe and not in a neighboring country as ferociously Moslem as Iran. It is true that the Afghans who speak Farsi, but who are chiefly Sunni Moslems, have always been cordially despised by their big Iranian brothers and the victims of frequent "punitive raids."

So no one was surprised to see the Teheran police roughly expel young Afghans who for a few hours had occupied their country's embassy as a show of protest against Russian intervention.

The demonstrators who sought to attack the USSR embassy met no better fate. The guardians of the revolution fired into the air to disperse them, allowing them just enough time to burn ritually a Soviet flag and a few portraits of Lenin. Which enabled Ambassador Vladimir Vinogradov, in thanking the authorities for their swift intervention, to pronounce these memorable words without a laugh: "It would not have been appropriate to take us as hostages, us who are not armed."



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This shock diplomat was not just anybody. From the Kremlin's standpoint, the importance of the Teheran embassy is measured by the fact that the one now holding the position was previously assigned to Tokyo and to Cairo and went to Kabul at the end of December to endeavor unsuccessfully to bring Hafizullah Amin to reason before the "final solution."

Moscow's Gift

In the early stages of the revolution, Khomeiny did not treat Moscow with kid gloves any more than it did Washington. Today, the Iran that has been torn apart cannot offer itself the luxury of defying the two superpowers at one and the same time. And the Soviet Union is dangerously near by. It is true that right after the intervention there was a statement by the minister of foreign affairs deploring the "occupation of a neighboring country which has the effect of weakening our struggle against American imperialism and is considered a hostile action against the Iranian nation."

But Ghotbzadeh is now virtually certain that the USSR, which since the Afghan crisis no longer has any reason to treat Washington with kid gloves, will exercise its veto in the Security Council on any "strong arm" resolution. Such a gift certainly deserves some indulgence toward the powerful neighbor to the north. The Afghan warriors of the provinces bordering on Iran must therefore not expect any help from their Moslem "brothers" on the other side of the frontier unless the latter themselves become dissidents. Against Teheran.

At the beginning of this new year the situation seems more than ever at a dead end.

The hostages are certainly not going to see their families again in the near future. American military measures against Iran would doubtless cause Washington to lose the advantage of the reprobation aroused in the Moslem world by the Soviet seizure of Afghanistan.

And, lacking a UN vote, the economic sanctions envisaged by Carter, even supported by his Western partners as a whole, will have hardly any short-term impact. Given the general mess, who will notice them in Iran?

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IRAN

BRIEFS

ATTEMPT TO KIDNAP PROMINENT ARMENIAN--Felix Aqayan who some revolutionaries tried to kidnap from his home in Paris is not only a personal friend of the shah but also the recognized head of the Armenian minority in Iran, which is Christian. This action is attributed to the plan being conducted by the Shi'ite Moslems against the other religious communities. [Text] [Paris VALEURS ACTUELLES in French 7 Jan 80 p 10 - WA]

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IRAQ

ATTEMPTS TO COUNTER ISRAELI MOVES IN AFRICA

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 28 Dec 79 - 3 Jan 80 p 26

[Article: "Baghdad Works Actively in Africa To Counter Israeli Penetration"]

[Text] The Iraqi-African meetings in Baghdad are proceeding with startling speed, causing some observers to ponder the implications of Iraq's sudden burst of diplomatic activity on African affairs in the light of the rapid results this activity has achieved.

President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, who came to Baghdad last week in response to a personal invitation from President Saddam Husayn, was the fourth African leader to visit Baghdad in less than 3 months.

The Iraqi move in Africa falls within the scope of what can be called an Iraqi strategic vision of strengthening the nonaligned African states, considering that they constitute a natural ally in the fight against colonialist influence. One of the main priorities in this fight is, of course, the erection of strong barriers against Israeli penetration into Africa.

This strategic vision, based on broadening cooperative relations between Iraq and the African states, revives a long-standing historical link. The voracious colonialist wave which dominated Africa for many centuries was able to weaken this link, but failed, in the final analysis, to drown it in the well of oblivion. Since colonialism is quickly disappearing from Africa, the independent African states are naturally searching for someone who understands their needs and sees the necessity of enriching their experience in building an independent existence, as well as someone who would respond sincerely to their need for assistance free from aims of domination and exploitation.

In any case, this development is a natural outgrowth of Iraq's increasingly important role within the nonaligned movement. The importance of this role was made clear during the Sixth Conference of Nonaligned Nations held in

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Havana last summer, when Iraq was unanimously chosen to be the host country for the seventh conference which will meet in 1982.

The Iraqi move was naturally aimed especially at the progressive African states. On a wide-ranging African tour, 'Izzat Ibrahim, a member of the RCC and official of the Economic Office, carried special messages and official invitations from President Saddam Husayn to the leaders of these states.

Observers point out that the doubling of capital appropriations for the Iraqi Fund for External Development has supported the Iraqi move in Africa, since the developing states of Africa are the nations which have benefited most from Iraqi aid.

Observers and diplomats were especially interested in President Nyerere's visit to Iraq in view of his steadily rising influence in Africa. The Tanzanian leader's influence has grown particularly since his forces cooperated with Ugandan opposition forces in sweeping away the regime of Idi Amin, thereby extending Tanzania's influence all the way to the headwaters of the Nile in Uganda.

The developing bond of cooperation between Iraq and Tanzania springs from bilateral economic cooperation agreements. This opens new horizons for joint action by the two countries to serve the interests of their peoples, and strengthen themselves in their fight against colonialism, Zionism and racism.

African leaders who visited Baghdad prior to Tanzanian President Nyerere included Samora Machel, president of the Republic of Mozambique; Didier Ratsiraka, head of government of the Republic of Madagascar; and Kenneth Kaunda, president of the Republic of Zambia. There is no doubt that the results produced by these visits will have a far-reaching effect on the future of Arab-African relations in general and the Arab-Zionist struggle in particular, enabling both sides to draw from unity under conditions of similarities of their struggle for independence and of their progressive revolutionary experience. This could be gleaned from the personality characteristics of those activists among the heads of the African states who have responded to the historical need for a link between their countries and Iraq.

Mozambique and the New Experiment

Mozambique's President Samora Machel was the last African leader to visit Iraq before the president of Tanzania. Machel's visit ended during the second week of December. The Mozambique president held extended discussions with President Saddam Husayn and high Iraqi officials culminating in the signing of three agreements for economic, commercial, and scientific and technical cooperation. The discussions also produced very much closer

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points of view with respect to both Arab and African issues. In addition, Michel 'Aflaq, the secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, met with the Mozambique president for the purpose of developing relations between the Ba'th Party and the FRELIMO [Mozambique Liberation Front] (formerly the Popular Liberation Forces) in order to achieve their common goals.

It should be pointed out that Mozambique is a newcomer to independence, having won its freedom only 5 years ago--on 25 June 1975, to be exact--after some 5 centuries of Portuguese colonial rule.

#### Madagascar and the Arab Struggle

Didier Ratsiraka, head of government of the Democratic Republic of Madagascar, visited Iraq from 28 November to 1 December. This visit also resulted in a strengthening of relations, in this case between the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and the party of the Malagasy National Front for the Defense of the Revolution. Another outcome of this visit was the signing of an agreement for economic, technical, scientific and commercial cooperation between the two countries. The Iraqi side expressed readiness of the Arab Fund for External Development to participate in development projects [of Madagascar].

In addition to near total conformity of the political views of the two sides on the various issues that were discussed, the Malagasy side welcomed the Iraqi decision to compensate the poor developing states, which now have direct oil contracts with Iraq, for any increases in the official prices of Iraqi oil from 1 June 1979 to the end of 1979. This will be accomplished by offering these states long-term interest-free loans, equal in amount to the oil price increases, in the hope of achieving a radical and just solution to this problem.

It is recalled that Madagascar became independent from France on 26 June 1960. Independence was proclaimed in (Muhamasina) Square in the center of the capital city of Antananarivo where the coronation of kings and queens had formerly taken place. The Malagasy people had remained subject to colonialism for about a century. Some 700,000 Malagasy people had died either at the hands of the occupation forces or due to starvation.

On 18 May 1972 former President Tsiranana called on General Ramanantsoa for help, and turned over all powers to him. This paved the way for the end of neocolonialism in the country at the hands of Didier Ratsiraka, who assumed the task of reconsideration of the French-Malagasy economic agreements. The last French forces left the country, and surrendered their naval and air bases, and the national government took over the NASA Air Station located 40 km from the city of Antananarivo.

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Ratsiraka also moved to sever the relations which former President Tsiranana had established with South Africa and Zionism.

On 30 December 1975, the people approved the military command's decision and Ratsiraka was elected president by a 94.66 percent majority.

Zambia and the Rhodesian Issue

Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda was the first African leader to visit Baghdad at the invitation of President Saddam Husayn. Like Mozambique, Zambia is in the front line of defense of the revolutionaries of Rhodesia. Some have termed Zambia "the Lebanon of East Central Africa," and in fact its situation resembles that of Lebanon to a considerable extent.

The 55-year-old Kaunda, who celebrated the 15th anniversary of his accession to power on 28 October, is one of the last 2 African giants who formed the vanguard of Africa's revolutionaries. The only other leader who shares this distinction is Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere, who was the last of the African visitors to Baghdad.

Kaunda's most serious difficulties lay in the fact that his land was regarded as open territory for the raids of the racist Rhodesian army. This was based on the army's pursuit of Rhodesian revolutionaries operating from Zambia, which welcomed the revolutionaries by virtue of common nationalist bonds.

It is perhaps paradoxical that in spite of Zambia's tense relations with Rhodesia's racist regime, which came to an end following the successful settlement with the African nationalist leaders last week, the economy of Zambia is dominated by relations with Rhodesia and South Africa, since 90 percent of its copper production passes through Rhodesia en route to the South African ports of Durban and Port Elizabeth. By this same route, Zambia imports thousands of tons of corn and chemical fertilizer from South Africa to meet the needs of agricultural production.

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IRAQ

'AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI' SPECULATES ON IRAQI FORM OF DEMOCRACY

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 14-20 Dec 79 pp 20-21

[Article: "Iraq: Open Popular Dialog on First Parliamentary Experiment in 20 Years"]

[Text] In Iraq these days, an open popular debate is underway on the draft laws for an Iraqi National Assembly and for a Legislative Assembly for the autonomous area. Based on this discussion, the two laws will be put into final form in preparation for the holding of the first elections in the country in over 20 years. But what is the significance of Iraq's new democratic experiment? What are its limits? What is its substance? How serious is it?

This report to AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI from Baghdad attempts to answer these questions.

The violent events in the Gulf area have almost completely overshadowed an important internal event in Iraq which will have far-reaching significance for political life in this Arab country.

Had the political leadership not been serious about its promise to establish popular constitutional institutions, it would have used events abroad as an excuse to postpone or bury the matter. However, it is abiding by its promise that Iraq would have its elected representative assembly no later than the end of this year or the early part of next year.

In fact, the airing of the draft laws for an Iraqi National Assembly (Parliament) and a Legislative Assembly for the autonomous area, at this particular time when a storm is gathering over the Gulf, comes as confirmation of the importance attached by the Iraqi political leadership to the matter of establishing constitutional and popular institutions.

This determination to open a debate on this subject under the present circumstances is perhaps an indication of the stability and self-confidence

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of the Iraqi regime. It also suggests the regime's firm belief that however boisterous the popular debate on the draft laws may turn out, it will above all provide a healthy and timely demonstration of the strong day-to-day relationship of the regime with the citizens and the masses.

#### A Bitter Experience With Parliaments

Past Iraqi experience with representative assemblies, particularly during the royal era, was not successful. Rather, it gave rise to extreme bitterness, at times bordering on desperation and rebellion, among the people. The reasons are too involved to go into here. However, it will suffice to mention that British colonialist influence, political corruption, fruitless party infighting, and the lack of deep-rooted democratic traditions, all contributed to abort the evolution of a healthy democratic experience, even by the [modest] standards and concepts of that era.

More than 20 years have passed since the collapse of the last representative assembly. It is perhaps inappropriate to ask why there were no representative assemblies from 1958 to 1968, since the regimes in power during those years did not enjoy the stability needed to establish representative government.

#### Why Have There Been No Representative Assemblies Since 1968

It is appropriate, however to wonder why no representative assemblies were established from 1968 until the present time.

There is more than one answer to this important question. First, there was the bitterness still rankling in people's hearts over the failure of the conventional parliaments which existed before the 1958 revolution in doing their basic job, namely, giving expression to the will of the people.

Another reason was the preoccupation of the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party regime with the momentous issues which had always proved to be a stumbling block in the way of previous governments, and frequently led to their downfall. Thus, the regime fought to reclaim the country's national wealth (oil) from international monopolies. It also fought to end the rebellion which aimed at draining the resources of the country, as well as to resist [international] power blocs.

In the past, all these factors forestalled the formation of genuine representative assemblies. They also disrupted the very stability of Iraq, and prevented the establishment of a strong national government which was Arab in action, speech and vision.

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Accordingly, after the 1968 Revolutionary regime had taken care of these tasks and preoccupations, and had proven its stability, continuity and competence, it automatically turned its attention to incorporate the ideals of the revolution into law, and to establish its constitutional and popular institutions.

One might ask at this point; But wasn't the regime tardy in launching its democratic experiment? The answer is negative. The nature of the [1968] Revolutionary regime and the challenges it faced did not allow it to pursue a policy of "trial and error." Any serious mistake would have inflicted serious damage upon the regime, so that there was no room for repeated experimentation.

In other words, it was not possible to establish a representative institution on a haphazard or rash basis, because collapse or fragility of such an institution would have been damaging to a regime which came to power through the strength of its party organization, the sympathy of the masses, and the staunchness of its leaders.

Actually, it is only fair to point out that the issue which on many occasions preempted all of Saddam Husayn's time and energy was the issue of democracy. He was not satisfied with posing the matter to himself, his party, his associates and his aides. Rather, on many occasions he engaged in deep and lengthy discussions about it with guests and visitors, including senior officials, men of culture, intellectuals, administrators and statesmen.

#### The Democratic Experiment in Iraq

How can democracy be applied in a country like Iraq? What are the pre-conditions for it? What circumstances are favorable to it? What would guarantee its success? How will its institutions operate? What are the necessary political and personal qualifications of the members of these institutions? And, finally, what is the proper role of the ruling or leading party in this experiment? Or, put more exactly, what is the proper role of a popular party, like the Ba'th Party, which has come to power through its struggle, the strength of its organization, its sacrifices, and the affinity of its principles and its vision with those of the great majority of the people?

A seemingly endless stream of questions was posed by Saddam Husayn to himself and to others. He had a great variety of ideas and concepts, and so did the others. With time, these ideas and concepts crystallized and took their final form in the two texts which Saddam Husayn submitted to the people, after discussing them with his associates in the Revolution Command Council and the senior apparatus of the party leadership.

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Any ruler or young leader in the position of Saddam Husayn, whose long years of experience in government have not blotted out of his memory of his original party, popular and revolutionary experience, no doubt places his allegiance to the people and the masses ahead of allegiance to the government and the administration.

From this one can realize how serious the democratic experiment being undertaken by the revolution of Saddam Husayn really is. He earnestly wants to make it succeed, so that there can be a true democratic process which will satisfy himself as well as his people, his party, his small [Iraqi] homeland and his large [Arab] nation.

Those who know Saddam Husayn assert that he does not believe in half-solutions. In other words, he would never proclaim his democratic experiment, unless he is firmly determined to conduct a true democratic experience according to revolutionary standards of democracy.

A fundamental problem still remains. The political leadership's perception of the importance of democracy, and its dedication to making the democratic experiment genuine, significant and effective are not enough. For just as the political leadership had the duty to seek the road to democracy, individual citizens as well as the masses now bear a heavy responsibility [with regard to the democratic process].

Democracy does not consist of mere formats, constitutions and institutions. Rather, it involves practices, traditions, rituals and faith which gradually become rooted in the conscience, daily life and national outlook of the people.

Democracy is not an escape from rules, standards and values. Democracy is not absolute freedom, but rather responsible freedom. It is the ability to use freedom as a tool to serve the public interest and the national welfare, not to sow hatred, stir up emotions, and revive sedition and intrigue.

This is how democracy ought to be. The question is: How will the Iraqis practice it?

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IRAQ

EUROPE SEES NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRADE

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 21-27 Dec 79 p 48

[Article: "Ten Iraqi Projects Attract General European and Arab Attention"]

[Text] The attention of world economic circles is turning to Iraq, as the Iraqi projects scheduled for implementation as of the beginning of 1980 may provide the largest market for business opportunities in the Arab world.

The most important of the new 1980 projects, which are attracting the attention of European companies and organizations and Arab international contracting companies, are the following:

1. Projects to complete overland transportation systems. A supplementary appropriation of 153 million dinars has been allocated to these projects, in order to begin constructing and paving 758 kilometers of roads. Likewise, a supplementary appropriation of 77 million dinars has been allocated to drinking water systems.
2. Various production projects in al-Ta'mim (Kirkuk) Governorate valued at 80 million dinars. These include construction of a cement plant at a cost of 64 million dinars, a plant to produce plastic cables, and a high-voltage electricity generating station. They also include modernization of a gas liquefaction plant.
3. Projects in the education sector costing 33 million dinars. These include construction of a technical school of higher education in Kirkuk, an agricultural college, and 87 elementary and secondary schools in Kirkuk Governorate. They also include a complex for athletic events in Hawijah and six youth centers in Wasit.
4. The start of implementation of 124 projects in various governorates involving expansion and improvement of sewers and pumping of drinking water.

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5. Construction of a gas bottle filling plant in Hamam al-'Alil (Nineveh Governorate) with a capacity of 3,000 bottles per hour, construction of a similar plant in Hilla with a capacity of 2,000 bottles per hour, and expansion of the capacity of the gas liquefaction plant in Basrah from 560 to 1,000 bottles per hour.

6. Start of construction of the international airport in Basra at a cost of approximately \$40 million. Invitations to bid on the project are expected to get underway early in the new year, and contracts are expected to be awarded early in the spring.

7. Construction of a four-star hotel in Mosul, using prefabricated components.

8. Establishment of a tourist complex in Dukan--al-Salmaniyah (near the Iraqi-Iranian border).

9. Digging of the Tigris channel between Baghdad and Basra to regulate the flow of waters of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

10. Construction of a turnkey food plant to process potato by-products in Abu Gharib (east of Baghdad).

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SAUDI ARABIA

BRIEFS

DELIVERY OF WEAPONS PACKAGE--Measures have been taken to speed up delivery to Saudi Arabia of the naval weapons package that was agreed on with France. This package includes 18 vessels--both launches and missile boats of the "Cherbourg" class--and 12 attack helicopters. The responsible French authorities are working to complete a study on installation of an electronic belt along both the Saudi Red Sea and Persian Gulf coastlines to warn of movements at sea. [Text] [Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI 11-17 Jan 80 p 18]

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