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Near East/North Africa Report

(FOUO 4/82)



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INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

BROAD RANGE OF TUNISIA, KUWAIT COOPERATION NOTED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1884, 18 Dec 81 pp 3357-3358

[Text] Improved exploitation of phosphates is one of the areas in which Tunisia and Kuwait cooperate most closely, and as we have mentioned, their cooperation extends into a broad range of areas (note in particular MTM of 6 March 1981, p 608; 3 April 1981, p 935; 7 August 1981, p 2043; and 6 November 1981, p 2812).

Early last month, the president and general manager of the Kuwaiti Petrochemical Industries Company, Mr Abdelbaki Ennouri, came to Tunisia accompanied by a delegation to look at possibilities for cooperating in industrial investments. During his audience 4 November with President Bourguiba--also attended by Mr Abdelaziz Lasram, the Tunisian minister of national economic affairs, and Mr Mondher Ben Abdallah, the president and general manager of the Gafsa Phosphates Company--the most important project discussed concerned mining the phosphate deposit at Sra Ouertane, located some 20 kilometers from the town of Kef.

The first phase of the project--the economic studies which have reached an advanced stage--will consist of the establishment of a production unit that can handle 700,000 tons per year and the installation of a washing plant to process all the production, and the phosphate will be exported via the port of Goulette. At that stage, the number of new jobs created will be 6,000.

The second phase will raise production up to around 2 million tons. By the year 2000, claims Tunis Afrique Presse, a government agency, there will be a production capacity of 10 million marketable tons, with the creation of a new deep-water port at Cap-Negro, in the northwest, and the installation of a rail link. To grasp the importance of these figures, the press agency says, it is enough to know that the Gafsa Phosphates Company's total current production is scarcely more than 6.4 million tons.

Known reserves at the Sra Ouertane deposit are estimated at some 2 billion tons, more than half of which can be mined in surface pits. While the ore does not have a high percentage of phosphate, what is obtained can be enriched by a Tunisian "flotation" technique (processing in the washing plant) to yield a good quality product (65 to 70 percent).

Geological surveys and enrichment research are important programs. Over the next 5 years, an estimated 3 million dinars (in constant 1980 currency) will

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be spent on them. These activities will be carried out by the Gafsa Phosphates Company, by subcontracting for the geological research and increasing the capabilities of the research center.

Let us also point out that the reopening of the Sra Ouertane mine had been announced by Mr Mohamed Mzali during his visit to Kef in February. Already, a joint Tunisian-Kuwaiti company has been established, with 4 million dinars in capital assets, to carry out the operations. The Official Gazette of 6 November published a statutory order authorizing the Tunisian Government to subscribe for 1 million dinars of the capital of the Tunisian-Kuwaiti Company To Research the Sra Ouertane Project.

Importance of Arab Investments

Also, in a meeting which took place on 5 November between the Kuwaiti delegation and Mr Abdelaziz Lasram, various proposals for Tunisian-Kuwaiti cooperation in the chemical fertilizer industries sector. The establishment of a company to produce fertilizer composed partly of phosphoric acid produced in Tunisia and ammonia produced in Kuwait was also examined. The Tunisian minister for national economic affairs discussed with the Kuwaiti delegation the possibility of expanding the activities of the Gabes fertilizer company. Kuwait also agreed to subscribe to an increase in that company's capital.

In an interview given to the Tunisian daily L'ACTION last October, Mr Ali Boukhris, president and general manager of the Tunisian-Kuwaiti Development Bank (BTKD) noted the importance the contribution made by the bank, only a few months after its establishment, to the realization of new economic projects. After noting that the board of directors of BTKD, which is capitalized at 100 million dinars, first met in January 1981 and gave its approval for the financing of 12 projects, requiring an investment on the order of 23 million dinars, Mr Boukhris said: "At the present time, six industrial projects financed by BTKD are under way. Among these, in the first instance, is Gafsa Chemical Industries (ICG), costing 55 million dinars. ICG will use phosphates to produce 400,000 tons of fertilizers destined for export. BTKD contributed 10 million dinars, or 20 percent of the total cost of the investment, toward the creation of these industries, which will start producing in 1984."

The problem of financing Tunisian projects by foreign capital was once again discussed in the house of deputies, in its meeting of 27 November. The members of parliament were considering a statutory order ratifying the convention providing for the Kuwaiti Petrochemical Company to own shares in the Gafsa Chemical Industries Company. One deputy asked why the Tunisian Government would allow a foreign partner to own more of a joint venture than the Tunisian side.

In response, Mr Abdelaziz Lasram said that the important thing in ventures of this kind was to be able to pursue the national effort in the field of heavy industry. Foreign financing, he added, does not constitute a threat, especially in cases like ICM of Gafsa, where Tunisians have full control of the technical and commercial side of the enterprise. The minister of national economic affairs also touched on the positive developments in Tunisian-Kuwaiti cooperation in the field of fertilizers, saying among other things that the two sides have agreed to a joint venture in Turkey and to establish a phosphoric acid plant in Kuwait.

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Mr Mansour Moalla, the minister of planning and finance, also took the floor to respond to the deputy's remarks. Moalla said that the favorable terms some Arab investors received on various ventures were designed ultimately to encourage them to finance projects in Tunisia. The minister then explained the importance that Arab-backed investments will have in the financing of the 6th Development Plan covering 1982-86, saying that the latter called for some 5 billion dinars in foreign participation, half of which should come from the Arab world. "Cooperation with our Arab brothers goes beyond the scope of the 6th plan and is, in fact, an integral part of Arab economic interdependence," Mr Moalla added, noting that Tunisia, in that regard, had already begun to establish joint ventures in the fields of industry, banking, service and agriculture. The statutory order was finally adopted by unanimous vote.

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ALGERIA

MARA OUTLINES DROUGHT EMERGENCY PLAN

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1884, 18 Dec 81 pp 3356-3357

[Text] In view of the gravity of the prolonged drought which has been ravaging Algeria, particularly in the western region and on the high plateaus, the Council of Ministers in a meeting 12 December with President Chadli Bendjedid decreed a set of measures in the form of a complete plan for action to feed, water and protect the health of the livestock, as well as safeguard agricultural production.

The emergency plan, about which we said a few words last week (MTM of 11 December, p 3295) and which was prepared by the appropriate agencies within MARA (Ministry of Agricultura and Agrarian Revolution) and local organs, is designed to respond rapidly to the disturbing situation, which is being most keenly felt in the sheep-raising sector, as close to 7 million head of breedable sheep are presently undernourished.

The emergency plan, according to Algerie Presse Service, calls for the amassing and distributing of large quantities of barley, straw, bran and feed, so as to cover the essential needs of the livestock through the summer of 1982. It also calls for a program of vaccination and veterinary care for the livestock.

The Algerian Government, to carry out this operation to save the livestock, has decided to import (through MARA) 52,000 tons of barley each month up to 31 May 1982.

If importation itself is not a particular problem, the situation is quite different with respect to transporting and distributing the quantities of barley required to meet the emergency needs, particularly in the governorates where the condition of the livestock is critical. To that end, MARA, in association with several subordinate bodies and entities outside the agricultural sector, has taken steps to organize the unloading of the imported goods at the eight principal ports of the country as well as further shipment by truck and in some cases rail of these cereals to the livestock raising regions.

The undernourished livestock need some 2,000 tons of grain per day, which will require daily deliveries to be made by a fleet of 400 trucks adapted for grain transport, for a period of 5 months starting in January.

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All the necessary steps have been taken, according to MARA for the livestock producers to get provisioned through CAPS (Service Cooperatives), the exclusive agent of OAIC (Interoccupational Algerian Grains Office), working with local authorities in such a way as to accurately assess the needs of each producer.

According to MARA's estimates, the existing capabilities of the ministerial department make it impossible to provide a ration of more than 250 grams per head per day. "This ration," we were told, "is intended above all to assure the survival of the livestock and safeguard the breeding stock which is a capital asset worth an estimated 700 billion centimes, until conditions are more favorable. This action will only involve a supplemental expenditure of 26 billion centimes for imports."

The move is of added importance because it protects the incomes of some 150,000 livestock breeders; thus more than a million people earn their living solely from sheep production.

A similar effort is to be carried out with regard to cattle and horses, and this will require supplying breeders with 2 kilograms of provender for each head of cattle and each young animal (cow and horse). Consequently, the volume of provender to be transported to the regions concerned is equivalent to 350,000 hundredweight, which also implies the mobilization of additional transport means.

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EGYPT

DEFECTS OF REGIME'S ECONOMIC, SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS REVIEWED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 247, 6-12 Nov 81 pp 74, 75

[Article by Amir Iskandar: "Words from the Far Shore"]

[Text] No intellectual law has ever been as true, especially in Egypt, as the law which states that nowadays everything is interconnected and interacts in influence and effects with everything else!

This is because if any serious discussion of what has gone on and is now going on in Egypt tries to rise above the platform of a police report, which is ultimately personal, or the platform of one-sided persons' interpretations, which are simplistic for the most part, it will mentally address itself to an extremely complex, interconnected picture of events, incidents, tendencies, currents, reasons, motives, causes and goals of a special and general coloring -- domestic and foreign, Egypt and Arab, local and international. It is as if what is happening and has happened in Egypt is similar to the acquired and inherited, fixed and variable processes that go on in a single cell of a living body and are ultimately a diminutive picture of what goes on in the context of the entire human body.

Let us take one aspect of the picture, the intellectual or ideological one. What are the basic features of this aspect? What are its main currents? What are the true balance of forces in it and the interrelationship of forces that are supported by their reservoir of capital within the changing Egyptian social structure? What are the probabilities for the future? What are the factors that have an effect in making these probabilities the likely ones and in defining the picture of this future?

One can say that the main currents that have influenced Egyptian intellectual and ideological life since the beginning of its modern history are three in number: the liberal current, the religious current and the nationalist current. The marxist current was added to them shortly after World War I. These four currents have dominated and still dominate the Egyptian mind, under various political, social and cultural titles and designations, with forces of varying volume and influence according to changing historical circumstances.

This is not a new picture, in any case, to people who follow the course of Egyptian thinking in particular and perhaps Arab thinking in general. Therefore, the important question now is not whether or not the picture exists but what its real worth is, that is, one's actual ability at this instant to form the picture of

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intellectual life and to influence political developments now and in the foreseeable future.

Perhaps it is not greatly offensive to reality to say that among these four the liberal current is the weakest and the least influential from the broad social standpoint, if we take it in its traditional historic meaning, that is, its more genuine meaning regardless of the foreign economic and political manifestations that have risen to the surface of Egyptian society in the context of al-Sadat's regime. Why? Because the liberal current is in the final analysis the ideological form through which capitalism expresses its interests and through which it engages in its struggles against the other classes and groups in society, in order to take political power and dominate economic, social and cultural decisions within that society.

Some writers and analysts consider that the al-Sadat stage, with the breakup of the "Nasirist" economic structure it has witnessed, known as liberalization, and the return of the system of party pluralism against which Nasirism directed severe legal blows, has been a revival of liberalism. The fact is that the economic forces that dominated the al-Sadat stage and still dominate it have no relation to the true essence of capitalism, that is, to the productive essence. Perhaps to the contrary, they have made a great contribution to directing painful blows at what in the prevailing literature is called domestic capitalism or the domestic bourgeoisie, whose place has been taken by "comprador" groups that engage in usurping great wealth through activities of brokerage, speculation and the local representation of foreign monopolies and multinational corporations. Among the economic projects the stage of "liberalization" has witnessed, we can hardly come upon any real productive ones. The overwhelming majority of them are service projects -- inflationary consumer projects which do not help the accumulation of domestic capital but have perhaps in essence been antagonistic to it. Such a socioeconomic situation does not represent a proper environment for the emergence and growth of real liberalism, although it does have the power to present some of its fraudulent aspects. Nothing offers better proof of this than the system of repressive laws which al-Sadat issued and through which he controlled the spirits of the citizens and kept stock of all their actions in a manner that is almost unknown except in fascist countries.

Can political liberalism be established without economic liberalism? In other words, can a free political platform find its justification and the ability to continue without the presence of a free capitalist economic platform? The answer to this question is clear: that is that true political liberalism and true economic liberalism, that is, productive liberalism, are two sides of the same structure and the existence of one is a necessary condition for the existence of the other.

The most important question now is: is it in fact possible, in the current circumstances of the world, to establish a true productive capitalism, in the context of a free platform -- in Egypt at least if not in other Arab countries, and indeed, more than that, in most of the backward or developing countries of the third world?

Egypt was one of the first countries in the Arab nation, and perhaps one of the first countries in what was later called the third world, in which capitalism dominated at an early stage of its history. What however was the nature of this capitalism?

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countries in what was later called the third world, in which capitalism dominated at an early stage of its history. What however was the nature of this capitalism?

Regardless of the nature of the production which prevailed in the Egyptian social structure, and the Arab structure in general, before the start of colonialist infiltration, and regardless of whether it was feudalistic production or belonged to a specific type of Asiatic production (which is a problem that has been and still is the cause of severe disputes among economic thinkers and historians of that period), the important thing is to determine a fact which had great significance following the process of colonialist infiltration into our social structures, that is that this infiltration itself is what engendered distinctive new production relations in the Egyptian social structure and the Arab social structures, according to the transformation in the process of their historic evolution, and made them subject in this process to the logic of colonial subordination.

This fact entails two dimensions; the first is that there is a qualitative difference by which the bourgeoisie in Arab countries is distinguished from the European bourgeoisie, and that is a difference which lies in the nature of its historical formation and the nature of productive relations connected to its social dominance. The second is that since this Arab bourgeoisie arose through the influence and in the context of colonialist infiltration, and in a relationship of subordination and subjugation to it, there is another qualitative difference between it and the European bourgeoisie in the context of its ideological tendencies and practices, and its ideological content itself.

The French bourgeoisie, for example, could, by virtue of the fact that it was a dominant revolutionary class, launch a historic revolution which eliminated the feudal production relationships that stood as a barrier to its development and pushed the French social structure forcefully along the road of capitalist development, that is, development in a context of capitalist production relations that had been born within feudalism itself. The notions of the French revolution became crystallized and the concepts of bourgeois ideology and its instruments of dominance became embodied in this radical historic process of antagonism to the feudal system, so that, through those, it acquired its revolutionary liberationist nature at that time. Meanwhile we find that the Arab bourgeois classes, including the Egyptian one, which arose during and thanks to the colonialist infiltration, were in their domestic development subjected to the inevitable context of subservience from the beginning of that development. Thus this bourgeois class or classes were not genuine revolutionary ones, that is, able to continue the struggle on behalf of their logical goals of development, and it was not in their power to produce a revolutionary ideology either.

This bourgeoisie which was engendered by colonialist infiltration thus did not carry out a real bourgeois revolution, as was the case with respect to the European bourgeois classes, because the colonialist infiltration had begun, while they were still in their cradle and subsequently took form and proceeded with their specific limited growth in the structural context that had been created by this colonialist infiltration itself in its various forms, by linking local agricultural production to the European capital market, with the influential effects that had in the formation and development of private ownership on the land, in the establishment of mortgage banks, credit and so forth, in generous loans to the colonized country (whose aim was to push that country into inevitable bankruptcy, as happened in Egypt

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in the era of Isma'il, so that Egypt would fall easily under comprehensive colonialist dominance), or in other forms besides these.

It can easily be said, as some interpretations that have been propounded do, that the big agricultural landowners in Egypt, for example, represented a class of feudalists directly linked to colonialism, and that because of this position they were in a hostile contradiction with the "national bourgeoisies" represented by the middle classes that aspired to take power and that consequently were in contradiction with imperialism and colonialism. Indeed many interpretations or analyses of ideological trends occurred under the guidance of that thinking. It was said that obsolete and conservative tendencies were the tendencies of "the feudalists" and that the tendencies of the middle classes, to the contrary, were liberal and liberationist and derived their roots from French revolutionary thought.

We must be aware of the difference between what is called a growing middle class in the framework of a subordinate bourgeoisie and an emerging middle class in the context of capitalist relationships, as was the case in Europe. The difference is great and qualitative at the same time. It lies in the difference of origins, and the difference in the position within the process of development itself. The European middle class is the one that emerged between the noblemen and the peasants, that is, it itself is the rising bourgeois class that brought the system of capitalist production along with itself and its revolutionary ideology when it emerged and seized power from the class of feudal noblemen. This is not the case with our bourgeoisies, which emerged as subordinate classes that went through their growth condemned by the framework of their structural relations of subordination to the colonialist bourgeoisies and not through their hostile contradictions with feudal classes that did not exist.

Nonetheless, the middle class that is born in the womb of subordinate Arab bourgeois structures and finds the road blocked toward natural development -- blocked by virtue of subordination to the very colonialist and imperialist bourgeoisies themselves -- refuses to give in to this historic fact, that is, the impossibility of such capitalist development in accordance with its classical notions that such a development is possible, that the obstacle that stands in its way lies not in structural subordination to imperialism but in the class that dominates the local social structure at a stage of its development, that is, the class of large agricultural landowners. Therefore, this middle class appears to resemble a revolutionary "bourgeoisie" fighting against "feudalism" and "the aristocracy," and the false analogy between these Arab middle classes and the capitalist middle class in the West spreads, in spite of the radical difference in origins, growth, course and the law of movement between the two. This middle class which struggles for power with the old class adopts the ideas of the European middle class in its initial formation within the womb of European feudalism, and here it forcefully reiterates traditional liberal ideas in all their tendencies and forms, the zeal to imitate its Western models increases, and indeed "the West" becomes, to some groups in it, if not most of them, the model which must be emulated in order to seize power.

Regardless of the illusions or hopes, the West, as "an optimum model," cannot be reproduced, because the West itself no longer is as it was during its capitalist development during capitalism's first stages. The West has become monopolistic and itself no longer allows the emergence of regimes which resemble or seek to resemble it, except in the context of their structural subordination to it and within the

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limits of the international division of labor which it determines and whose course it dominates, in the context of the international capitalist system by the nature of the case.

Can the free Arab economic platform find scope for progress and a future in this current international context? The answer is yes, but within the limits international imperialism sets out for it in the form of a course, growth and ceiling that it cannot transcend, and, more important than that, within the limits of its structural subordination to this imperialism. In this context it will never be more than a distorted picture of a fraudulent bourgeoisie governed by fate by its unbreakable subordination to the world imperialist bourgeoisie. So is it possible to say that there is a future for political liberalism? The answer is yes but within the same limits as those drawn up for the free economic platform itself, and, beyond that, within the limits permitted by the social struggle in poor developing societies. These are limits which al-Sadat's experiment has proved to be much narrower than they were in the early part of this century. The most likely possibility is that they will become narrower and narrower the closer we get to the end of this century!

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IRAQ

RECENT RAIDS ON IRANIAN OIL CENTERS DISCUSSED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 246, 30 Oct-5 Nov 81 p 70

[Article: "Recent Iraqi Raids Prevent Iran From Exporting Oil"]

[Text] Recent Iraqi raids on Iranian ports in the Arab Gulf have led to the destruction of Iran's ability to export oil for a period of time ranging from several months to a year. They have also definitely put most of the industrial projects in Iran out of commission.

On 20 September, the Iraqis attacked the oil pumping station at al-Ghurah, which supplies the loading port on al-Kharj island, where the main oil exporting station is. The Iraqi air force also launched two raids in October on the port of Bandar Khomeyni.

These raids were in retaliation for Iranian raids which attempted to put the main electrical generating stations in Iraq out of operation. Informed Iraqi sources told AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI that the Iraqi raids, to a large extent, paralyzed the Khomeyni regime's ability to continue to finance its war against Iraq and to supply the causes for economic stability at home.

Before the war, Iran was exporting about 5 million barrels of oil a day. After the revolution, but before the recent raids, this amount had dropped to about 500,000 barrels a day, of which 60 percent was exported from the loading port on al-Kharj island.

The ground pumping station at al-Ghurah and ships that were being loaded with oil in the ports of al-Kharj and Bandar Khomeyni were hit in the recent Iraqi raids. The huge petrochemical complex in Bandar Khomeyni was also badly damaged.

Right after these raids, the Iranians asked their principal oil clients (India and countries of Eastern Europe) to switch to a secondary oil port in the southern Arabian Gulf. However, the loading capacity of these ports is extremely small and does not exceed 200,000 barrels a day.

Iran was selling its oil at \$37 a barrel, but the collapse of oil prices has forced it to sell oil for barter or at a lesser price. Before the recent Iraqi raids, Iran's income from oil was \$550 million per month. However, it will lose most of this amount now, while it is preparing for winter, and is in dire need of hard currency to import foodstuffs as well as fuel.

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Iraqi experts estimated Iran's reserves of hard currency, before the recent raids, at only \$3 billion, and this is subject to rapid reductions after oil exports were cut off. They do not think it unlikely that Iran will resort to selling her shares in foreign companies, such as the West German Krupp firm (\$6 billion), in order to prevent the collapse of the Iranian economy and to continue to finance the war against Iraq.

Iraqi's evidence for the success of their recent raids is the decisions of the Iranian Central Bank requiring restrictions on imports and limiting them to arms and very essential foodstuffs. The Iranians are trying to limit the amount of imports to only about \$900 million a month, of which \$300 million is to finance the Iranian war machine.

As for the two Iraqi raids on the Bandar Khomeyni petrochemical complex, any opportunity to reach an agreement in the long and difficult negotiations between the Iranians and the Japanese Mitsui Company, which built it, has been destroyed.

The Iraqis anticipated the completion of the complex to be imminent, as well as the repairs to the damages it suffered as a result of a previous raid last year. Therefore, they launched their new raids in October.

The Japanese had estimated the costs of the previous damages that the complex suffered last year alone at \$800 million. They are now demanding that the Iranians pay the installments that are due. Moreover, they have informed Teheran that they will not be able to continue the work in light of the recent raids.

The complex is considered to be the largest Iranian industrial project, and is also considered the largest industrial project carried out by Japan abroad. Its costs amounted to \$3.6 billion.

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IRAQ

'AL-THAWRAH' GENERAL MANAGER DISCUSSES PAPER'S PROGRESS

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 246, 30 Oct-5 Nov 81 p 87

[Interview with Mr Hani Wahib, director general of AL-THAWRAH, by Kamal Hasan Bukhayt: "Hani Wahib, On Culture and Writing as the Pulse of Life"]

[Text] The Iraqi newspaper AL-THAWRAH recently celebrated its 13th anniversary. Mr Hani Wahib, the director general and assistant editor of AL-THAWRAH, recounts the newspaper's progress and the role which it has and will play on the intellectual, enlightenment and news levels.

Hani Wahib said: "On this new anniversary, we celebrate the excellent accomplishments in the media field throughout last year, with respect to excellent issues of various types, embodied by the daily edition modified to serve our fateful battle with the Persian enemy and the evening editions, which were published in the first weeks of the war. In addition, there were excellent special editions that were actually historic documents, highlighting the most important facts and dimensions of the Qadasiyah Saddam war. Moreover, they embodied the extraordinary heroism of the Iraqi army. These issues also highlighted the profound accomplishments of the pan-Arab, socialist 17 July revolution, with serious studies, field studies and precise information. The most prominent of these issues were the special edition published by the newspaper on 6 January, the anniversary of the heroic Iraqi army, the special edition on the anniversary of the 8 February revolution, the edition especially for the anniversary of the founding of the party on 7 April, and finally the special edition for the 13th anniversary of the 17 July revolution and the second anniversary of President Saddam Husayn's taking over the foremost positions in the party and state."

The Rifle and the Pen Are One Voice

He added: "On this newspaper's anniversary this year, we also wish to acknowledge a group of martyrs affiliated with it, who embody that marvelous slogan that our historic leader Saddam Husayn coined: 'The rifle and the pen are one voice.'

"The spirit of victory has been personified by our newspaper's workers who have given twice the effort, since the cadre that remains to do the work is measurably smaller than that before the war. Despite that, qualitative and quantitative progress has been made with respect to the paper's editions and publications, since the comrade workers have been able to make up for the labor of their comrades,

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who have gone to the fighting fronts in the people's army or in reserve service in the army. AL-THAWRAH has fulfilled its media role in the war through firm and committed media forms. Moreover it is a lofty media forum for the Qadasiyah Saddam war."

[Question] It is well known that AL-THAWRAH is the party's paper. What additional things can it offer on the intellectual levels?

[Answer] In fact, the intellectual additions of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party always are derived from two basic supports. The first source is the party's pan-Arab conferences and the theoretical analytical ideas that result. They are studied from all aspects of the party's intellectual and ideological experience, and are expanded, within the framework of ideological reports and studies. The other source is fundamental as well; the contributions made by historic party leaders in enriching party thinking.

Perhaps the most prominent of the party leaders, who were able to contribute distinguished additions to party thinking, is our historic, fighting leader Saddam Husayn, excellent additions which prove maturing concern for truth, through "The Theory of Revolutionary Labor" which put the party's ideological premises to the test of practical application, and transformed them into achievable practical terms.

With regard to myself, as one of the involved writers in Iraq, my participation is confined to attempts to clarify and explain the ideological additions of President Saddam Husayn as best I can.

From time to time, I feel that whatever I offer only forms a small part of my mission. I feel very unimportant about my participation, by virtue of my belief which our leader taught us. "He who is not at one with experience in the fields of practical labor for the socialist structure cannot accurately write about the facts." Our sitting in a closed room sometimes, pursuing the journalist's daily work, has deprived us, to a great extent, of field experience of the truth of socialist application in agriculture, industry, commerce and the services.

In my estimation, field experience in these sectors is what enables the involved writer to write passionately about reality, free from ideological generalities, within the special qualities of socialist application and Ba'thist democracy in these vital fields.

I also believe that culture, in this sense, is not a literal occupation, but only a fighting task, which can best be fulfilled in light of concern for the masses and in the field of applied labor, through becoming begrimed with the soil of this application. Then one is refreshed, and the writing pulsates with life.

[Question] How do you evaluate the Iraqi-Iranian war after one year has passed?

[Answer] Iraq's battle with the Persian enemy is not a tactical, military fight, but is a comprehensive, cultural battle, into which Iraq has plunged with the spirit of the Arab Nation against the Persian foe, striking a blow for its deep

roots in the Arabs' history and their honorable values. Consequently, it expresses the vitality of the Arab Nation in confronting various challenges, and thereby the ability to defeat them.

The marvelous thing is the cohesiveness of the fighting fronts with the domestic front, stemming from the fact that the Iraqi army's marvelous heroism on Iraq's eastern border and deep within Iranian territory is, at the same time, the heroism of all Iraqis, who are bearing this war with the Mujahedin spirit of optimism and patience.

Despite month following month, they increase in determination and resolution in the spirit of victory. This is a decisive result of the historic role of our leader, Saddam Husayn, in building the unity of the Iraqi people on the firmest of foundations.

[Question] A year after the democratic experiment, represented by the National Assembly, how do you evaluate this experiment, especially since you published two books about the democratic process?

[Answer] I am proud of two books in this field, "Distinguishing Characteristics of Ba'thist Democracy" and "The Democratic Process and the National Assembly Elections," in addition to some miscellaneous writings about the revolutionary democratic experiment in Iraq. In my opinion, under the circumstances in which I wrote, these offerings concentrated on the importance of democratic consciousness and the interaction with the democratic process, and the vital dialectical connection between the two. In other words, democratic consciousness is the broadest field for a healthy democratic process. Moreover, the steps of democratic application are an expression of democratic consciousness and the democratic culture.

I reacted emotionally to the National Assembly elections.

A year after this course of action, I feel that the experiment has gained notable dimensions. This is because of the way in which the elections of the people's representatives were conducted, in affording the opportunity to all Iraqis to join the course of the revolution, to be committed to its programs, and to exercise the right of nomination and election.

Despite the party's excellent leadership role in building the revolutionary structure, it did not allow any preference or favoritism for its members in the elections, whether with respect to election propaganda or complete freedom of expression.

Therefore, the launching of the National Assembly was a link in the development of the democratic process. The Assembly has a share, through its legislative function during the last session, in the debate over and promulgation of several important laws. The Iraqi people have perceived positive returns from this process. Arab and world public opinion also perceived the dimensions of this experiment, through the interaction of the National Assembly with Arab and world parliamentary assemblies.

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LIBYA

PROSPECTS OF COOPERATION WITH USSR REVIEWED

Moscow FOREIGN TRADE in English Dec 81 pp 33-35

[Text]

Soviet-Libyan economic and technical cooperation greatly contributes to the strengthening of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (SPLAJ) economic independence. The cooperation follows from intergovernmental agreements and protocols signed in 1972-1981 creating a sound foundation for the equal and mutually beneficial cooperation which has developed rapidly. Today it covers the most important sectors of Libya's economy such as: electric power, oil and gas, ferrous metallurgy, and agriculture. Future prospects of this cooperation development on a stable and long-term basis have been defined.

USSR-Libya economic and technical cooperation on practically all projects is realized according to a general contract. This is the form of cooperation best answering the interests of both Soviet and Libyan organizations.

Soviet assistance is of real significance for the development of the Libyan economy. The atomic research centre, Tagiura, now being constructed for the utilization of atomic energy for peaceful purposes is the first in the country and the largest research centre of this kind in the Arab countries. The first stage of this centre was put into operation in December 1980.

The scheme for the development of a high voltage grid system elaborated by Soviet specialists is very important for the creation of Libya's unified electric energy network by 1995. Soviet organizations have completed the construction of 220 kV power transmission lines stretching a distance of

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about 200 kilometres. Putting the above transmission lines into operation in December 1980 extended the distance of the 220 kV power transmission grid system by 14 per cent. Construction of the 370-km long new Syrte-el Brega 220 kV power transmission line will soon be started. Possibilities for cooperation in constructing thermal power stations and other new power transmission lines are under consideration.

The leaders of the Libyan Jamahiriya pay great attention to the development of the national oil-extracting industry. Oil is the main wealth of the country. It plays the decisive role in developing the national economy. Oil production accounts for more than 60 per cent of the country's gross national product. The incomes from the oil industry are the main source of currency revenue. Soviet oil drilling teams have been successfully working in the severe conditions of the Libyan desert since 1979. Cooperation of the Soviet and Libyan organizations in drilling for oil has helped Libya increase its exports and receive considerable additional currency.

Recently the Libyan leaders have been actively pursuing a course for creating a national gas industry. Libya possesses a great raw material base for the comprehensive development of this branch of industry and this is where Soviet organizations are rendering great assistance. A general development scheme for the Libyan gas industry up to the year 2000 was prepared for and passed to Libya. In line with this scheme Soviet organizations are constructing the 570-kilometre-long Marsa-el Brega-Misurata gas pipeline for supplying industrial enterprises distributed along the Libyan coast, including the metallurgical complex in Misurata, with natural gas. After completion of this gas line the distance covered by the country's gas pipelines will be greater by 40 per cent.

USSR-Libya cooperation in agriculture is progressing favourably. The development of this most important branch of economy, employing about 20 per cent of the country's population, is limited due to the lack of land suitable for cultivation and water for its irrigation. With the assistance of Soviet specialists soil and ecological researches were made and a soil map of the country's coastal part over an area of 3.5 million hectares was drawn for the first time in Libya's history. Agreement on further cooperation in conducting soil and geobotanical researches in other regions of Libya was reached.

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The USSR-Libyan Jamahiriya economic and technical cooperation is not limited to the above-mentioned fields of activity. There are good prospects for cooperation in geology, health care and possibilities for cooperation in constructing railways in Libya and other fields of endeavour are under study.

The Intergovernmental Soviet-Libyan Commission for the development of economic, scientific and technical cooperation as well as trade, set up in 1974, greatly contributes to the strengthening of friendship and multilateral cooperation of the two countries. The Commission at its sessions constantly considers practical questions concerning realization of the sides' commitments according to acting intergovernmental documents and contracts and discusses ways for further expanding the mutually beneficial economic and technical cooperation in close connection with the two countries' development plans.

Regular meetings of the leaders of both countries are of special importance for further strengthening the ties of friendship and cooperation between the Soviet Union and the Libyan Jamahiria.

The official visit of friendship by Colonel Mouammar Kadhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution, to the Soviet Union in April 1981 gave a new impulse to the consolidation of Soviet-Lybian ties and the development of favourable cooperation between the two countries. During the talks with L.I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, and other Soviet leaders, M. Kadhafi discussed a large number of questions concerning Soviet-Libyan cooperation in various sectors. The main directions for the future development and widening of versatile cooperation of the countries on a bilateral and long-term foundation were finalized.

The further reinforcement and widening of economic relations between the USSR and Libya were assisted by the working visit of A.S. Jalloud, a member of the Libyan revolutionary leadership, to the Soviet Union in June 1981 during which negotiations on the development of economic and technical cooperation took place.

As a result of the negotiations N.A. Tikhonov, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and A.S. Jalloud, member of

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the SPLAJ revolutionary leadership, on June 29 signed a Protocol in the Kremlin envisaging wide participation of Soviet organizations in the Libyan industrialization programme, especially for the development of such industrial sectors as energy, ferrous metals, oil, gas, the petrochemical and chemical industries as well as the training of Libyan personnel on the basis of a long-term plan.

The above cooperation is to be accomplished through a long-term comprehensive programme which both sides are to draw up.

In particular, an understanding has been reached on building the second stage of the metallurgical complex (capacity five million tons of steel per year) in the Libyan town of Misurata which will help satisfy not only the home requirements of the country but also will enable it to export a considerable quantity of its production. Soviet organizations have already completed and passed the technical-economic substantiation for the construction of the complex to Libya.

The construction by Soviet organizations of a plant for the production of nitric fertilizers which will raise soil fertility and increase crop yields will assist the intensification of agriculture—a paramount branch of Libya's economy.

A major project in Soviet-Libyan cooperation in the chemical industry will be the complex for the production of magnesium and chlorine using the Marada deposits which are unique in the content of their components. The manufactured products (magnesium) will be widely used in different machine building sectors and also will have great export potential.

Agreement has been reached on the building of an enterprise to produce protein from oil crude.

The products of this enterprise will be of great importance for the intensive development of animal husbandry, which due to insufficient fodder has had its growth rate limited. Protein being a source of valuable substances (albumen, vitamins, microelements) for feeding animals increases the nutritiousness of fodder, accelerates their growth and fattening rate.

Soviet-Libyan cooperation will greatly progress in the oil and gas industry, particularly in the survey and drilling for oil and gas, development and

exploitation of oil and gas fields, building of underground storage reservoirs and new pipelines. Following this aim Soviet organizations will render Libya assistance in the elaboration of general and comprehensive development schemes for the country's oil-production industry.

During A.S. Jalloud's visit to the Soviet Union the intention of both Sides to mutually beneficial cooperation between the USSR and SPLAJ in the interests of the peoples of both countries and strengthening mutual understanding and friendship between them was confirmed.

Vyacheslav Kuzayev,
*Executive Secretary of the Soviet Side
of the Intergovernmental Soviet-Libyan Commission
for the Development of Economic, Scientific
and Technical Cooperation, and Trade*

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LIBYA

EFFECT OF OIL PRODUCTION DROP ON ECONOMY UNDERLINED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 246, 30 Oct-5 Nov 81 p 69

Article: "Libya: The Liquidity Crisis Resulting from Foreign Adventures"

Text Libya has started to feel the negative effects of the tremendous spending on projects of foreign adventures which the regime of President Mu'ammr al-Qadhafi has carried out in recent years.

These negative effects take the form of a drain of the country's hard currency resources. Making matters worse has been the blatant drop in Libya's income from oil this year because of the oil glut in the international free market and the drop in oil prices on the other hand.

As long as Libya adheres to the official price which it has set for its oil, which is \$40 per barrel, it appears that it will be compelled to reduce the price, now that a number of countries and companies have canceled their previous contracts to buy Libyan oil or have reduced their purchases of it to a minimum, as the American companies have done, for instance.

Libyan oil production in the recent period dropped from 1.5 million barrels a day to 600,000 barrels a day, and half this amount goes for local consumption.

Informed experts here expect that Libya's income from oil this year will not exceed \$10 or 12 billion as compared with its income of \$22 billion from oil last year.

In fact, President al-Qadhafi recently called for the pursuit of a policy of asceticism and belt-tightening. It is not yet known if that will also be applied to foreign spending or will only embrace domestic development plans.

To limit the liquidity crisis the Libyan treasury is suffering from, the authorities have started to put pressure on the Japanese, German, Italian, South Korean and Indian companies helping to carry out development projects, in an attempt to persuade them to accept the principle of barter, that is, payment in oil instead of dollars.

These companies are greeting this principle hesitantly. On the one hand they are worried about the contracts they are carrying out and on the other hand they reject the official high price set for the oil. In addition they are not confident that they will find a consumer market for disposing of the oil, especially since the free international market is currently suffering from a real glut.

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It is certain that the plan of asceticism will be applied to the present ambitious development plan, whose allocations come to \$70 billion, and consequently the execution of a number of development plans will be delayed.

In addition, supermarkets have started suffering from a shortage of food and supply commodities as a result of limits on imports. These markets and complexes were established after the government took over wholesale and quasi-wholesale trade and determined to inundate these markets with goods to persuade citizens that it had been correct in nationalizing domestic trade.

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MOROCCO

RESULTS IN MINING EXPLORATION FIELD PUBLISHED

Paris MARCHÈS TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1884, 18 Dec 81 p 3359

[Text] Starting with the 1980 activity report of Morocco's BRPM (Mineral Prospecting and Investment Office), we reviewed last week (MTM No 1883, p 3297) in broad outline the accomplishments of that organization in the respective fields of oil and mining operations. On the latter subject, we indicated that there had been a significant upturn during 1980, with BRPM's prospecting activities continuing to be oriented primarily toward solid energy substances, without however, neglecting the precious metals, base metals and useful substances. We will now supplement that information by publishing the results recorded in the mining exploration field. First, however, we must present in detail the prospecting permits issued last year by BRPM, the one we already published being obviously incomplete, and further misleading because a line was unfortunately dropped. Our readers should take note that the 52 prospecting permits were broken down this way: 1 permit for solid combustibles, 13 for radioactive energy substances and 38 for metallic substances. This correction now made here by product, is the principal results recorded last year in the field of mining exploration:

Uranium--Exploration work continuing in Wafaga, in the western High Atlas, made it possible to cross-check the depth of a mineral deposit, and also produced evidence of a new area of irregularities.

The third phase of the Haute Moulouya project has been completed. An area of 39 square kilometers covering a certain number of irregularities has been the object of detailed geological investigation and of a series of borings which traversed decolorized strata showing strong radioactivity.

Oil Shale--Following decisions made to upgrade the Timahdit oil shale deposit, additional surveys were made of the Tassemakht plateau, and these confirmed the continuity and homogeneity of the bituminous section and made it possible to determine the area in which open-air mining could take place.

Lignite--Exploratory drilling continued for this substance in the Guercif Basin, and it confirmed the existence of lignite veins with a thickness varying from 5 to 50 cm.

A geological study undertaken in the Haut Aoulai Basin, northwest of Ghafsai, has discovered a number of outcroppings of very good quality lignite justifying continuation of prospecting activity.

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Silver--The additional mining carried out at the silver deposits of Roc Blanc, in the central Jbilets, at Vein V, has been the most productive. The initial results of the analysis confirm the presence of deep mineral deposits.

Lead/Zinc--The lead-zinc deposit at Jbel Kitem received new attention this year with a study of the characteristics of the deep mineral deposits and identification of the reserves downstream from the old site where the principal vein was worked. Early results are encouraging.

Tungsten--Work on tungsten at Sidi Bou Azzouz yielded a provisional estimate of the reserves at this deposit, on which experimental processing has begun.

The Azegour tungsten deposit, whose reserves have been assessed, has been the subject of various tests which led to development of a suitable process for refining this ore.

Barite--Several veins of barite in the Ougnat region (Errachidia Province) were the subject of geological study aimed at determining the potential reserves.

Asbestos--All of the geological work that has been done in the Anti-Atlas has made it possible to select several deposits which show indications of exploitable asbestos.

Marble--The size as well as the quality of reserves at the Idchfar marble deposits, south of Tiznit, justified planning for their exploitation by a company named SOGEMAK, in which SODECAT, a subsidiary of BRPM, holds a 25 percent interest.

General Prospecting

Studies made as part of the overall prospecting effort covered:

--Prospecting for signs of gold and silver near Iknioun, south of Boulmane, signs of silver and antimony at Bou Jaada and signs of antimony at Sidi Kacem.

--Survey and update the status of different geological and mineralogical prospecting permits to find out their expiration dates.

--Carrying out geochemical work in several parts of central Morocco.

Also, BRPM affiliates or subsidiaries carried out, either themselves or through BRPM, various prospecting programs enabling them to increase the reserves of deposits and thereby to prolong the life of the operation, with the majority of financing coming from the Deposit Restoration Fund (PRG).

The main accomplishments of those companies in terms of exploration were as follows:

--Follow-up prospecting by SMI at different depths has disclosed substantial mineralized surfaces with rather high concentrations.

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--Mining and geochemical work carried out by BRPM at Zgounder on behalf of SMS has made it possible to locate new silver-bearing irregularities in the northern and western parts of this deposit.

--The preparatory and prospecting work performed by BRPM on behalf of SONIMA [Mining Company of Mauritania], basically in the western part of the copper deposit at Ouansimi, continues at a good pace.

--The program of supplementary work carried out by BRPM at Asfalou for SODECAT should confirm the assessment of copper and silver reserves at this deposit.

--The large copper mine at Bleida being prepared by SOMIFER [Mikamba Iron Mines Company] has been very active and substantial investments have gone into it. BRPM teams participated in the developing of the research work carried out at this deposit in an effort to increase reserves.

--The major prospecting and preparation program carried out at the Aouli lead deposit has brought to light new reserves with a lead content in the neighborhood of 4 percent, at well IV and Engil II.

--The drilling work carried out by BRPM at the Zeida lead deposit has yielded positive results which are presently being studied and interpreted by SODIM.

--The major prospecting effort made by SMA for lead-bearing mineralizations in its own domain at Jbel Aouam and at Moulay Bou Azza as well as for copper at Tabaroucht (Beni Melial) and tungsten in the granite at Zaers, carried out by BRPM, increased that company's reserves and provided indications of new minerals.

--The major prospecting program which CTT continued built back up the cobalt reserves at the Bouazzer deposit and revealed new indications of this mineral in the region.

--SACEM [Moroccan Mining Studies Corporation] continued with its intensive manganese prospecting at Imini. SACEM has also done a series of surveys for uranium in the Zaers region.

--The sample surveys carried out by COMABAR at Jbel Irhoud disclosed major reserves of barite.

--Exploratory and preparatory work continued at a good pace downstream from the El Hammam fluorine deposit, and has yielded mineralizations with high ore content.

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SYRIA

CONFLICT BETWEEN COMMUNIST PARTY, REGIME ANALYZED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 250, 27 Nov - 3 Dec 81 pp 42-45

[Article: "Where Does Moscow Stand on 'the Comrades' Struggle?' The Full Story of the Struggle between al-Asad and the Syrian Communist Party"]

[Text] The secret struggle between Damascus and the communist party in Syria, one of the most important Arab communist parties, was suddenly out in the open after the communist party was ousted from the National Progressive Front and the names of communist party members who were candidates in the recent legislative elections were removed from the ballot. Consequently, the regime's candidates won all the seats in the People's Assembly.

The struggle reached a peak last week after Syrian sources confirmed that the secretary general of the Syrian Communist party, Khalid Bakdash, and a large group of the party's members had fled to Bulgaria. Their flight was an escape from the broad campaign of arrests that was being carried out by Syrian authorities against party supporters.

The party authority of the Syrian Communist party abroad--in Paris--issued a harsh statement 2 days ago denouncing the practices of the Syrian regime and the authority of intelligence agencies.

With regard to the development of internal conditions in Syria itself the significance and the gravity of the struggle are due to the close relationship that exists between the Syrian Communist party and Moscow.

Therefore, this development and its sequels are to a large extent tied to Moscow's posture on confronting "yesterday's comrades."

How did the confrontation begin? What were its causes? What are its domestic and foreign effects with regard to the future of the Syrian regime? Where does Moscow stand on this confrontation? What will become of the Soviet-Syrian relationship after this furious struggle?

AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI answers these and other questions in a special report from Damascus.

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New parliamentary elections held in Syria in the last few days ended with an announcement that the National Progressive Front had won a sweeping victory. The National Progressive Front is the front that is led by the ruling party in Syria. It includes some political parties and organizations that are allied with the ruling party.

A few weeks before the elections were held, there was a political development a small aspect of which was highlighted by the elections. Other aspects of that development are still being acted upon secretly.

One of the most remarkable indications of this development was the fact that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad decided to oust the Syrian Communist party, which is led by Mr Khalid Bakdash, from the National Progressive Front. This decision resulted in the removal of the party's candidates from the ballots in the various Syrian districts where they had declared themselves candidates of the National Progressive Front. All communist candidates automatically lost the election. The new Syrian People's Assembly has no one representing the communist party, whereas the ruling party won 60 percent of the seats. The remaining 40 percent were distributed among the various parties of the National Progressive Front and a few independent candidates who are basically considered supporters of the regime.

The Critical Point

President Hafiz al-Asad did not make this decision until relations between him and his party [on the one hand] and the Syrian Communist party [on the other] had reached a critical point following a period of political disputes and clashes that went as far as separation and the placement of the Syrian Communist party leaders and domestic and foreign activities as well under the close scrutiny of Syrian intelligence agencies. This led a few observers in the Syrian capital to anticipate harrassments and arrests in the ranks of these leaders and organizations if the dispute developed and turned into open political confrontation or rather open struggle before Moscow should stage an 11th hour intervention to settle the situation or at least to put under control the fires [of hostility] between the Syrian regime and one of the most important Arab communist parties, the one with the closest ties to the Soviet Communist party.

At first the political opposition between the ruling party in Syria and one of its strongest and most prominent allies, the Syrian Communist party, assumed the character of a disagreement over the government's domestic policy and its practices in various areas.

The Veiled Women Incident

A neutral Syrian figure says that these disagreements began to be vehement and to create tension in relations between the regime and the party after the agencies of the ruling regime lost their temper as a result of [their] failure to put down and oppose the secret activities of the regime's opponents. The regime's opponents had expanded their operations from the

assassination of a few figures who are considered supporters of the regime to the destruction of a few of its institutions. The most recent of these was the explosion [that occurred] in the air force command in the heart of the Syrian capital. The air force command is located in one of the areas that has had the tightest security measures.

The government's failure so far to put down and contain these violent actions, which are all attributed to the Muslim Brothers, has created in the Syrian capital, especially recently, an environment of anxiety and terror. This is not the result of the fact that the operations and activities of the opposition forces have been expanded, but it is rather the result of the reactions which the forces of the regime are beginning to have. The regime's forces restricted personal liberties; and they raided [homes] and assassinated [people]. Many divisions that are affiliated with the Defense Companies, a large armed organization led by Rif'at al-Asad, the Syrian president's brother, set up road blocks especially at night and during the day in various parts of the Syrian capital.

Some time ago passers-by in the streets of Damascus as well as city residents were astounded when large numbers of young women affiliated with the paratroopers of the Defense Companies were suddenly deployed in the streets and began using force to remove covers and veils women were wearing over their heads and faces.

This conduct provoked a wave of strong disapproval in the various ranks and classes of Damascus society, a society that is still known for its devotion to religion and its adherence to the principles of the Islamic faith. Reactions to this conduct also produced numerous clashes and fights in which a number of persons were killed and wounded. Total chaos almost prevailed in the Syrian capital, and it would have spread to the various provinces had not President Hafiz al-Asad and senior officials rushed to issue strict orders to remove the members of the Defense Companies from the streets. Al-Asad had to schedule an appearance on television in which he made a brief statement that harbored an apology of some sort and appealed for calm and national unity.

At the time the government tried to justify this conduct, especially in some of the media, by saying that these actions revealed a desire to do away with backwardness and with old social habits and customs. It was also said that removing veils and head covers from the faces and heads of women was a step toward social liberation from these customs and traditions.

Veiled Men

However, everybody knew that the conduct of one of the regime's forces was no more than a reaction to a few operations and incidents that had been carried out by men who masqueraded in women's clothes and wore women's veils.

The people of the regime were taken back by a statement issued by the Syrian Communist party condemning this conduct.

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Reacting to the fact that a few agencies had confiscated the communist party's statement and prevented its distribution, the newspaper, TARIQ AL-SHA'B, which speaks for the communist party headlined its front page on the following day with an article about that subject and inspired by the statement. The government quickly confiscated copies of the newspaper.

Suspicious Position

The government considered the communist party's position hostile and suspicious, and this escalated the dispute between the two parties. Consequently, relations became extremely tense, and this led President al-Asad's regime to decree that the communist party be ousted from the National Progressive Front. Accordingly, the candidates of the front in the elections of the People's Assembly were reconsidered, and the names of communist candidates were removed [from the ballot]. Therefore, the official announcement of these ballots was delayed for 3 or 4 days before the official date of these elections.

This delay as well as the statements and rumors that accompanied it contributed to the unrest that appeared among citizens, broad sectors of whom remained uncertain up to the final hours about who was and who was not a candidate and who was and who was not in favor.

The Straw and the Camel's Back

To informed observers in the Syrian capital the communist party's posture on the operation in which women were accosted in the streets and their head covers removed was tantamount to "the straw that broke the camel's back," as the common saying goes. This is because the period that preceded this incident saw mounting tension in relations between the people of the regime and their ally, the communist party. Some of those observers came to believe that the regime's relations with the communist party were on the verge of a new stage which one had to ponder so as to become familiar with the nature of these relations and the proportions they will assume. The [coming] days may be full of surprises.

But the more important question is still this: Did the conflicts and differences that existed on affairs and matters that were purely domestic cause the split and separation between the regime of President Hafiz al-Asad and the Syrian Communist party, or was the eruption of the dispute in this manner a reflection from the outset of something that was going on in Soviet-Syrian relations?

The question almost comes up naturally, but the indications that give it maximum importance at this stage are confined to two principal points:

First, there are close relations between the Syrian Communist party and the mother party in Moscow.

Second, new trends in Soviet policy toward the Middle East crisis and in Soviet dealings with parties concerned with this crisis, especially the Arab parties, have emerged.

Clouds between Moscow and Damascus?

Let us begin with the first point.

Ever since Hafiz al-Asad took over power in Syria almost 10 years ago, his relations with the Soviets, despite everything, have been subject to his relations with the Syrian Communist party.

Despite the fact that these relations have sometimes been cool and riddled with disputes, the Syrian regime's relations with the communist party never went beyond the dangerous level they are in at present. Relations always went back to normal or good due to the strong relations that existed between Moscow and Hafiz al-Asad's Syria. Therefore, there has never been a clash of this kind between Syria's communists and the regime's people and never have relations between them deteriorated to the point that communists were ousted from the National Progressive Front and removed in this manner.

Why then did the dispute occur now and not in the past? The answer to that question is not far from the point of view that states that something is not quite right in the current climate of Syrian-Soviet relations.

Questions and Questions

What is this thing? What is disturbing Syrian-Soviet relations at this point? Where are relations between Damascus and Syria headed?

The answers to these questions are diverse. Some of them so far are subject to deduction and individual opinion. Some of them are the subject of discussion in informed circles and sources where discussions of these subjects are based on a few incidents and stated factors.

The two explanations that seem closer to reality are:

The first explanation is that for months Moscow has been looking with disfavor upon some of the directions Syria's foreign policy has taken and the way Syria has been dealing with the Middle East crisis.

There is information that a long time after the Soviet-Syrian treaty was signed, Moscow began blaming Damascus and expressing its displeasure with Damascus's continued pursuit of a middle of the road policy, a policy that was somewhat balanced between Americans and Soviets.

The information also states that Soviet displeasure grew in the aftermath of the Syrian missile crisis with Israel, in the al-Biqa' area of Lebanon, and with the role played by Philip Habib, the U.S. president's envoy to the area. After that [episode] Syrian policy showed more openness toward U.S. policy in the area. In fact, Syria tried to set up more channels of communication and deliberation with the U.S. capital.

The same information adds that after the treaty with Moscow was signed and after the missiles crisis, Damascus showed constant care in assuring

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the west in general, the Americans in particular and some Arab countries as well that Syria has not and will not become a communist country and that it will not become a second Cuba in the area; it will not at least become another South Yemen.

To demonstrate that it was not a communist country and that it was not completely tied to communist policy in the area, Damascus adopted a strict policy toward the Syrian Communist party. Accordingly, it tried to clip the communist party's wings and to remove the party gradually from the Syrian political scene.

The Role of the Israeli Hand

This information, which comes from a communist source, makes other statements besides. It states that this Syrian attention to this matter stems basically from Syria's fear of an Israeli attack coming from Lebanon whose purpose would be to overthrow the regime or at least to undermine it further and render it incapable of standing up to the growing domestic opposition that it is facing. Therefore, the Syrian regime thought that a practical rapprochement with Washington and its allies in the area was the shortest route whereby Israel might be urged to change its mind about the Syrian plan. Furthermore, there are those who are saying that Syria's attention to the Americans is designed to strengthen the presence and the role of Damascus particularly in Lebanon. In addition, it would keep Syria's place in the effort to reach a settlement in the Middle East crisis.

Reference must be made here to the fact that the open battle which the United States of America has waged against the regime of President Mu'ammār al-Qadhafi did show results on the Libyan borders with Egypt and Sudan. Its results have also appeared regarding the destiny of the Libyan military presence in Chad. Its results are also appearing now in the business U.S. oil companies are conducting in Libya, and there's no end in sight.

Hence there is considerable apprehension in Syria of an open U.S. battle that would first target the Syrian military presence in Lebanon. The United States would try to remove that presence which so far constitutes one of the most important safety valves for President Hafiz al-Asad's regime. It is also the most important hand al-Asad's regime has with regard to its role in the Middle East crisis.

Moscow Turned Its Back?

The new Syrian attention finally stems from Syria's fear of the political and military consequences of a U.S. attack on the Middle East area. Syria fears the expansion of U.S. influence that will accompany such an attack and the decline of Soviet influence in return.

This is the first explanation. The second explanation--and there is a difference of opinion about the relationship between the two explanations--is inspired by informed Syrian sources which turn the tables to say that it

was Moscow that began [all this] by turning its back on Syria, taking actions in the area and dealing with the Middle East crisis without involving Damascus.

This Syrian information is accusing Moscow of pursuing its own interests in its actions and in its policy in the area without considering the interests of others who are its allies.

Damascus--or some ruling factions in Damascus--are also accusing the Soviets of practicing strange policies on the Arab and Islamic scenes. These policies were somewhat unusual, and they deliberately ignored some of these basic given factors.

First, after the events of Lebanon and the role Syria played in those events, any dealings with the Palestinian problem were to take place through Damascus because of the guardianship role Damascus has acquired and because any dealings whatsoever in this area take place through a comprehensive strategy that pertains to the movement of the Arab-Israeli struggle and its sequels.

Second, Moscow began a new attempt to deal with some of the Arab regimes and conditions without involving Syria, whereas the strategic relationship or alliance that exists between the two countries makes it incumbent upon Moscow to put Syria "in the picture" or at least to inform it.

What disturbed the Syrian capital most and aroused some doubts and fears in the Syrian regime was the fact that Soviet leaders asked PLO president, Mr Yasir 'Arafat to intercede in the matter of starting a dialogue between Moscow and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia regarding mutual recognition and the exchange of diplomatic representation. The Palestinian leader succeeded in a few preliminary steps on that course.

This Soviet initiative came as quite a surprise to the main figures of the Syrian regime. This was almost the first time that Moscow had gone to the Palestinian leaders and dealt with them directly on major, substantive matters without involving Damascus. Furthermore, the fact that the Soviets engaged in negotiations on subjects of that importance behind the Syrians' back was a blow to Syria's presence and role in the area, particularly since the matter had to do with the essence of the struggle in the area.

Tightening the Brakes

Stemming from Syrian fears the Syrian capital recently applied the brakes to its position on Prince Fahd's plan. It preferred to wait and adopt the course of dialogue with Saudi officials lest there be new surprises whose cost the Syrian regime would have to bear one way or another. The Syrian capital feared the presence of new plans that were being secretly prepared.

Those who have been following closely all the stages of these developments affirm that the Syrian capital has no interest at present in going any

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further than it has done so far in offending and antagonizing the Soviets. Therefore, the Syrian capital seems extremely intent now on bringing matters to a close.

The Fire Is Blazing

Those people admit that there is a fire burning now under the embers of Soviet-Syrian relations. Accordingly, the mutual dissatisfaction between Damascus and Syria and the inertia that is dominating relations between them is making even the blows they are exchanging seem light like lovers' quarrels.

But the question that is being raised is this: Will these blows continue to be like lovers' quarrels, or will they turn into quarrels that kill relations?

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SYRIA

COMMUNIST PARTY DECLARATION CONDEMNS REGIME'S OPPRESSIVE MEASURES

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 250, 27 Nov - 3 Dec 81 p 45

[Article: "The Weapon of the Intelligence Work and the Field Tribunals"]

[Text] The party authority of the Syrian Communist party abroad issued a strongly worded statement that revealed the extent of the danger of the ongoing struggle between the Syrian regime and the communist party in Syria. The statement denounced the authority of intelligence [agencies] and the imposition of a military siege around Syrian cities and villages. The statement urged all the leaders and forces of the Syrian people to establish a national democratic government. The text of the statement [follows]:

The Syrian regime set Monday, 9 November 1981 as the date to hold what it called "elections of the members of the People's Assembly." The regime shamelessly invited all citizens to perform their duty and participate in that process either by running for office or voting for the candidates [of their choice]. The regime is making that request as though democracy were prevailing normally in political relations between the regime and the popular masses and as though these masses were not daily experiencing the gory tragedy and the brutal massacres of the regime, the national fragmentation, the destruction of the economy, the monetary inflation, the plunder by the regime's figures and enoutourage, the abject poverty and the shame of national defeat that the regime and its figures have brought upon the country since 1967.

The dangers endured by democracy today in Arab Syria exceed those that are being endured anywhere else in the Arab homeland. The masses of our people are intuitively aware of the dialectical relationship that exists between the bloodthirsty regime's escalating repression of our people and their national and democratic forces and the capitulatory settlement projects that are being proposed now on the Arab scene. These proposals have the tacit approval of the Syrian regime.

Ever since it staged its military coup against its own party on 16 November 1970 the present Syrian regime has carried the seeds of destruction for all democratic life and national unity. Today, the signs of this destruction are emerging. The regime has designed a constitution according to

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its individual standards, and it has created suitable superficial institutions, such as the People's Assembly, the National Front and others. All citizens in Syria know that the wishes of the masses have been falsified and forged in all previous People's Assembly elections.

However, the regime suspended its own constitution and retained martial law and emergency law which hang like a sword over the heads of our people. Therefore, the courts are no longer controlling the courts, and the military field courts have become the weapon that is being used against our people all over the country.

Our people rose against the gory Fascist regime early in March 1980. There were popular demonstrations, and there were strikes in the cities. Everyone was asking for freedom, dignity and non-sectarian discrimination among citizens. People were asking that the authority intelligence agencies were exercising over the capabilities of the people be terminated, that the state of emergency be suspended, that the military siege around cities and villages be lifted and that religious rites and authentic social traditions not be infringed upon. Recently the regime has been engaged in further such infringements.

The regime became furious; it thought it had closed the door in the face of our popular masses and their political, democratic struggle. But the crisis of crushed liberties became part of our people's struggle. They wanted to deliver themselves from the gory, tragic situation in which the regime had established the law of the jungle and wholesale massacres as its means [to an end].

Our people still remember the massacres at Tudmur prison, in Aleppo, Hamah, Jisr al-Shughur and other Syrian cities and villages. The impulse to kill has become a principal impulse of the regime in our country. Schools have been turned into detention camps in which thousands of nationalists and democrats suffer. There they are subjected to the most brutal kinds of physical torture. Many of them have become disabled, and the lives of many are in danger. Among those nationalist and democratic fighters are hundreds of interred communists. Chief among them is Comrade Riyadh al-Turk who is still in isolation. He has had no contact with the outside world since the morning of his arrest on 28 October 1980. His life is still in danger as a result of the continuing brutal torture to which he is being subjected.

It is under these stifling conditions, when the future and national independence of the country; the unity of the homeland; and the national cohesion, the freedom, the dignity and the lives of our people are in certain danger and at the crossroads, that the regime holds this mockery of elections for the People's Assembly.

Our people and their national, democratic forces who outlined with their noble blood the blueprint for overthrowing the Fascist regime will not be satisfied with a mere boycott of the regime's mock elections. Our popular masses will rather rise with all their leaders and vital forces, with all

their national and democratic parties, with all their professional unions and associations, with all their labor and farm forces, with all the honorable officers in our army and with all the soldiers of our army, and they will pave the way to the establishment of the broadest national front that would save the country from its national and pan-Arab tragedy and establish a national democratic government. It is then that a truly free legislative body can be elected. This body would approve a permanent constitution that would guarantee basic freedoms to all citizens without exception.

Our people then will turn [their attention] to rebuilding their destroyed national economy. They will raise the standard of living of our popular masses; they will protect sovereignty and national unity; and they will oppose all capitulatory settlement plans.

There is no doubt that a radiant future lies ahead for Arab Syria after this rotten Fascist regime is overthrown. Arab Syria will then assume its honorable leading role in all the battles for freedom, liberation and national unification.

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WESTERN SAHARA

DEFECTOR SAYS POLISARIO HAS LOST ITS LEGITIMACY

Brussels POURQUOI PAS? in French 10 Dec 81 pp 42-45

Interview with Sidahmed Larosi by Jacques Wiame, titled "A Siberia Without Snow"; date and place not specified

Text It was suspected that POLISARIO is an instrument in the hands of Algeria, and accessorially of Libya. That is but a deception;

It was also suspected that the refugees under the tents at Tindouf are Mauritaniens, Malians, South Yemenis, and nomads from southern Algeria, and that there are but few true Western Saharans among them. That is but an imposture;

But that POLISARIO, which is supposed to defend the cause of Western Sahara, should make itself the accomplice of a regime which makes mass arrests of Western Saharans, imprisons them in camps, tortures and liquidates them-- that is called an infamy.

Who makes so grave a charge? Western Saharans. And particularly Sidahmed Mohammed Larosi, 28, former technical director of Radio Tindouf.

A native of Layoum, the capital of Western Sahara, and a founding member of POLISARIO, he is now exiled in Holland. This man with the mobile afro haircut, lean as a desert animal--"much too thin to be dishonest," as Jacques Brel sang--does not stop at revealing when and how the Algerian regime infiltrated POLISARIO's political and military management, and took it over. He accuses the present POLISARIO and Algiers of imprisoning in disciplinary camps, brainwashing in "re-education schools," and liquidating Western Saharans not docile enough for their taste.

Sidahmed Larosi replies to questions by Jacques Wiame:

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I declare that POLISARIO no longer represents the Western Saharan people. The executive committee, the political bureau, the military staff are made up of foreigners who do not have the slightest genealogical link with Western Sahara. The present secretary general, Mohammed Abdel Aziz, is Algerian. The president of the SDAR Saharan Democratic Arab Republic, Mohammed Lamine, is a Moroccan opponent of Tan Tan. Eighty percent of the members of the political bureau and executive committee are either Mauritians or Algerians. Their presence in positions of command in POLISARIO proves that Western Saharans are no longer masters of their destiny. I declare that the majority of refugees in the camps of Tindouf are foreign to Western Sahara. They are namads originally from southern Algeria, Mali, South Yemen, and especially Mauritania.

Question Why did you wait so long before denouncing Algerian seizure of POLISARIO?

Answer You forget that at Tindouf Western Saharans have no freedom: neither freedom of movement nor freedom of action. We were under constant surveillance by Algerian military security forces. Even to go from one camp to another we needed Algerian authorization. True Western Saharans did indeed try to regain control of POLISARIO. They formed the "committee of 20" of which I was a member. They contested the designation by Algiers of a secretary general who was not a native of Western Sahara. But all those who dared oppose the political or military choices of the Algerian government were arrested, tortured, eliminated, or threatened with firing squads.

Question When did you leave Algeria?

Answer In November 1979 I went to Geneva for medical treatment at the expense of the Algerian government.

Once recovered, I concerned myself with the fate of Western Saharans held in Algerian camps. I asked the secretary general of POLISARIO to free them unconditionally, and to determine which of those at Tindouf were true Western Saharans, and which were foreigners whose presence perverts POLISARIO's struggle.

Abdul Aziz demanded that I return to the camps before negotiating. But I was too familiar with the fate reserved for those who do not bow to Algerian decisions to consent to return to Tindouf. I then applied to Amnesty International in Holland for action to be initiated on behalf of Western Saharans held in Algeria.

POLISARIO merely replied that I was lying. It is Algeria and the present leaders of POLISARIO who are engaged in widespread lying and imposture. But they will not absolve themselves by denying the truth.

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Question What has become of Ikhil Ihana and Aini Babahash, the representatives of the Western Saharan Red Crescent? And Saruj Mohammed Jar, the Western Saharan teacher? And Salim Barka, the Radio Tindouf announcer? And Abidat Sharif, the refugee camp director?

Answer "We never saw those people," POLISARIO insists. A strange blindness. For those so-called unknowns nevertheless appear in official photographs published a few years ago by POLISARIO. Thus Aini Baba Hach is clearly recognizable on a negative taken at the time of the third POLISARIO congress (26-30 August 1976) and distributed by Algerian propaganda services. And Saruj Mohammed Jar, who taught in the camps, was filmed in 1976 by the Dutchman Jan Kees van de Rooi.

All those Western Saharans have disappeared, as have hundreds of others. Are they still imprisoned and tortured? Or have they met with the fate reserved by Algerian military security for the Reguibat Salam tribe? That fraction of Western Saharans in Algeria (6,000 persons), who refused to go and fight in the western desert for POLISARIO, was quarantined at Tindouf early in 1977.

Then, one fine day, they vanished from the sight of all, and inquiries about them were forbidden.

Question Since when have Western Saharans been in opposition to POLISARIO, and experienced detention in camps, and ill treatment?

Answer There have always been many contradictions within the POLISARIO movement, for aid was given under conditions set by Algiers and Tripoli. But after Louali, the notoriously pro-Libyan secretary general, was killed in Nouakchott, the Algerians undertook to control the movement more closely. They imposed Mohammed Lamine as SDAR prime minister.

That designation, which was contrary to the movement's by-laws requiring broadly based election, shocked Western Saharans. For Lamine was not even a native of the region. There was a revolt. The Western Saharans, all tribes and ideologies mingled, then elected the "committee of 20" charged with discussing and determining orientations and policy. At that time, in February 1975, the Algerian authorities formed a Western Saharan military unit, into which all elements of the Louali branch, totaling over 200 persons, were incorporated. On 12 April 1975 that unit left Tindouf. In mid-desert, far from prying eyes, it was surrounded and disarmed by Algerian troops. I shall never forget those 8 months in the desert. We had to dig fortifications; we were whipped; we got very little food, barely enough to stay alive. Those who did not obey quickly or work fast enough were tortured. I still bear on my back the marks of those brutalities. In December 1975, Algerian military security organized a "demonstration." A Western Saharan was picked at random and shot before our eyes. The Algerian officer then warned: "Those who tell what they have undergone or question our policy will meet the same fate."

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Back in Tindouf, we were permanently controlled and followed by Algerian military security.

In July 1976 we were arrested a second time. I stayed in prison only 24 hours, the POLISARIO executive committee having vouched for me, for they needed me to insure proper operation of the Tindouf radio station. As for the hundreds of other Western Saharans arrested, their whereabouts are not known. Are they still compelled to do forced labor in the desert, whipped and tortured? Are they alive or dead?

In Tindouf no one dares ask questions concerning them. There is dread of being returned to the 12 October school, a re-education center where Algerian technicians practice brainwashing, torture with electrodes--a Siberia without snow.

Question What can be done for those Western Saharans?

Answer World opinion, people who love justice and freedom, must be alerted. Humanitarian organizations must feel for the fate of those thousands of Western Saharans who are playthings and victims of a scenario which in no way accords with their true aspirations. There are still in Algeria about 12,000 Western Saharans whose birthplaces can be verified from the Spanish census. They must be free to express themselves under international guarantees, to determine their own destiny free from all constraints. It is for them to say under what legal or political system they wish to live. But the most urgent and important issue, in our view, is the fate of Western Saharans held in Algeria. The international community must bring pressure on the Algiers government to free Western Saharan prisoners and improve the local situation--that is, separate the natives of Western Sahara from the Algerians, Moroccan opponents, Malians, and Mauritians. Once those conditions are met, international recommendations in accordance with the interests of Western Saharans can be carried out.

It was thought in Europe that with the OAU decisions and the referendum planned for 1982 the Saharan question was on the point of resolution.

In my view, and in that of many Western Saharans, the decision by the king of Morocco to accept the referendum is a good thing. But it does not serve the interests of POLISARIO and Algeria. That is why the attack was launched against Gueltat Zemmour with dozens of T-54 tanks and SAM 6 or 8 missiles. Never had such sophisticated weapons been used in the Saharan theater of operations. Those tanks and ground to air missiles were provided by Libya and transited through Algeria. The latter accepts continued financing of the war by Qadhafi, but does not allow him political influence within the POLISARIO leadership. Since the death of secretary general Louali and the arrest of "committee of 20" members there are no longer any pro-Libyans within the Saharan liberation movement. Abdel Aziz, the new secretary general, was completely unknown before he was imposed by Algiers. True Western Saharans in Tindouf consider him an Algerian puppet, and are suspicious

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concerning his predecessor's death. Clashes between Algiers and Louali had been growing in recent days. In whose interest was it to liquidate him?

Question The Dutch section of Amnesty International has started a campaign for the freeing of Western Saharans held in Algerian camps. Is that an isolated initiative?

Answer I am convinced that Amnesty's action in the Netherlands will lead to others elsewhere in Europe. At the UN the Commission on Human Rights will take up the question. We, the Western Saharan dissidents in POLISARIO, will not let silence fall on the fate of our brothers who are imprisoned and maltreated in Algeria. For my part, and if I obtain the needed guarantees, I am prepared to accompany any international mission of jurists to Tindouf. I am ready to go into the camps and point out the true Western Saharans and the foreigners, and to unmask the usurpers.

Question Are the Western Saharans who have broken with POLISARIO many?

Answer In a few days we shall establish an authentic Western Saharan front. For POLISARIO, which has become a docile tool of Algiers' diplomacy and army, has lost its legitimacy and its representative character. This popular and revolutionary Western Saharan front will gather men of all tribes and ideologies in the western Sahara, and defend the true interests and aspirations of our people.

In the face of POLISARIO's breakup and rapid discrediting, I cannot but think of those European parliamentarians who, out of ideological affinity or kindness, have defended that movement, thinking they were defending the cause of the Western Saharan people.

Did they act on an ideological group reflex, or in a spirit of demagogy, or did they allow themselves to be deluded by an Algerian-Libyan propaganda suffeited with petrodollars?

At bottom, that interests me but little. Above all, I bear in mind that POLISARIO has made itself the accomplice of those who oppress Western Saharans. And my compassion I reserve for the old men, the women, and the children of Western Sahara who have paid the price of a policy of hegemony.

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