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Near East/North Africa Report

(FOUO 14/82)

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NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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PERSIAN GULF AFFAIRS

STATUS OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN GULF STATES EXAMINED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 261, 12-18 Feb 82 pp 18-21

[Article: "They Refuse to Give Her the Right to Vote, to Travel or to Drive; The Argument between Conservatives and Liberals: Gulf Women Are a Burning Political and Social Issue"]

[Text] In Kuwait the parliament has refused to give women the right to vote. In Saudi Arabia, His Eminence the Mufti has issued a decree prohibiting them from driving, and in some Gulf countries, women are not allowed to travel abroad to complete their education. A correspondent from AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI who visited the Gulf recently wrote this report about the political and social aspects of the Gulf women's issue in the midst of the controversy between traditional, conservative institutions and liberal social circles.

The women of the Gulf are a touchy political and social issue. They are part of a confrontation that is sometimes silent and at other times vociferous between conservatives and liberals in the Gulf countries. They are always in the line of fire, a fact which educated, learned Gulf women know quite well.

They join in the current controversy and have ambitions and hopes to see to fruition their progress and liberation. However, the majority of average, uneducated or slightly educated women are satisfied and content with their marginal role in a society dominated by men, both in political and religious institutions and in the spheres of labor, economy, business and information media.

Even educated, learned women who participate in this controversy do not hasten change, for they know the limits of their abilities and prefer to let time play its role, for opportunities will undoubtedly come in succession for them to achieve their rights and equality with men.

Perhaps the Gulf women are slow and deliberate because Islam itself upholds the woman's position in the family and in social institutions, gives her respect as a mother and a wife and guarantees her divorce and inheritance rights.

There are also unwritten, inherited traditions and customs which make women realize that their ability to make changes is limited. Gulf society is still

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a society of tribes, bedouin and large families where men are dominant. A woman's role in this family society is still the role of a wife who devotes her life to housework, rearing children and taking care of her husband. He is the only man in her life and she does not talk to any man other than her father and brothers. Associating and meeting with men are prohibited. However, the religious establishment issued a decree last April permitting a suitor to see a girl's face, but forbidding forcing her to marry against her will. Nonetheless, young men are turning away from marriage because of the high cost of dowries, and polygamy is on the wane. One can thank the telephone, the only means of contact, for a quick conversation between the new generation of boys and girls, far removed from the eyes and ears of others, or perhaps for a date to meet at a distance in the supermarket or library.

The tremendous speed of development in Gulf society, which has skipped the lengthy, traditional stages gone through by other societies, is the cause of all the controversy surrounding the role and position of Gulf women. The abundance of oil has spurred a great leap in economic development, but has not yet succeeded in imposing social and political development at the same speed because of tradition and customs.

The Gulf women's problem is that they see the economy and development growing faster than social freedom. They find themselves in the society of the modern city with all the housing, cars, videos and televisions provided by civilization, but their role in society is still backward and marginal and does not parallel the role of their Arab sisters in countries which are still economically underdeveloped, such as Egypt and Syria. It is also not comparable to the role of women in a Gulf country like Iraq, where women have obtained all their rights, and educated women carry out this role in complete freedom under the auspices of the government, without any opposition from conservative institutions.

Confusion and Concern of Gulf Women

This confusion about the Gulf women's position in political and social forces and the concern about their political and social role dominate the thoughts of educated, learned Gulf women today.

In spite of all this and despite the common characteristics of Gulf women, there are minor differences in their views from one Gulf country to another.

In Saudi Arabia for example, women are hostages in the home before and after marriage, even when they have obtained the highest level of education; they devote their lives to rearing their children, and if they go out, the aba covers them from head to toe.

This almost total absence from productive society makes them the subject of controversy between conservative institutions and liberal circles in society. The liberals want to attract educated Saudi women to the work force to fill the deadly unoccupied time that the women have and to make up the shortage in the Saudi labor force. However, the conservatives disagree and see the role of women as Islam defines it, in the home, and believe that their associating with men at work is temptation for both men and women.

Saudi women are in the line of fire in this ongoing argument. In general, they are satisfied and do not see themselves as repressed socially. The exceptions to this are educated, learned women who have completed secondary or higher education. They are anxious for change, but know that they cannot challenge customs and powerful traditional institutions. They are optimistic that change will come slowly, but through persistence. One indication of this is that the field of banking has been opened for them, as the teaching and nursing fields were earlier.

The lack of opportunities for social activity and jobs make Saudi women spend their lives waiting--waiting for the husbands that their mothers try to find for them or that their fathers will choose for them. This waiting may be filled by means that the electronic revolution has afforded--videos, televisions and radios. They prefer waiting to breaking with tradition and customs. They do not want to bring shame upon themselves, their families or their fathers.

Saudi women do not go out often. If they do go out, they go in their cars which are driven by their husbands or the family driver. To go on a trip, they must consult a religious advisor, and going out does not mean associating with men. If they have to frequent public buildings, banks or universities, they must use special entrances, meeting with men in any way is forbidden and the punishment for fornication is death, if there is a witness.

The ruling family in Saudi Arabia takes a moderate position on the argument which occasionally heated argument about women's role in society. In general, they encourage a gradual widening of opportunities for women, but this within the framework of religious law, tradition and customs.

King 'Abd al-'Aziz, the founder of Saudi Arabia, took the first step in this respect. His son, King Faisal, reaffirmed this position when he argued with the people of Baridah in the Najd who were protesting the opening of a girls' school in their city. He asked them to find one Koranic passage that forbade educating women. He was supported in this stance by his wife 'Iffa, who deserves the credit for opening the first modern girls' school in 1956. She still oversees a number of social and educational centers dedicated to serving Saudi women.

Although the trend toward opening up opportunities for women grew after the death of King Faisal, it has slowed down since the spread of the Salafi movement.

His Eminence Shaykh 'Abd al-'Aziz Bin Baz, the Mufti of the Wahhabi sect followed in Saudi Arabia, recently issued a religious decree forbidding women to drive cars or hire foreign drivers or servants of a different religion. In Qatar, where the Wahhabi sect is also followed, the law does not forbid women to drive, but they do not do so out of tradition, while in Kuwait, women take pride in driving their Mercedes.

In the United Arab Emirates, women live outside the society of men, but do so more freely than their Saudi or Qatari sisters and less freely than their sisters in Kuwait and Bahrain.

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In Kuwait, you find yourself in a completely different society. The Kuwaiti women you see are often unveiled in the markets, government offices, companies, banks, shops and universities. They wear the most up-to-date European fashions, yet the parliament recently refused to give them the right to vote--which it did for the second time in less than 10 years--so astonishing and angering them that they protested and demonstrated. Here, women are the ladies of the house and of society also, they enjoy wide social influence, their voices are audible and courageous and their power to challenge men is stronger in a more flexible and less strict society.

Education Is Universal, but Associating with Men Is Generally Forbidden

Education is one of the true instruments of change which work like fire in straw. The first girls' school in Saudi Arabia was founded just a quarter of a century ago. The credit for this goes to 'Iffa, the wife of King Faisal. Today the number of girl students has grown to 700,000, and the number of female university graduates will reach 40,000 in 1985.

Associating with men is forbidden in the various levels of education in Saudi Arabia "because it deprives women of their femininity," as the conservatives say, and schools are usually surrounded by high walls. A sharply-worded warning was issued recently to students and young men against gathering in front of girls' schools and harrassing female students. Statistics show that 50 percent of Saudi young women finish elementary school, 40 percent attend junior high school, 20 percent reach high school and a minority attend universities.

There are four vocational institutes for women in Saudi Arabia giving them the opportunity to study home economics, nursing, accounting and secretarial skills. At 'Abd al-'Aziz University in Riyadh, female students can study arts and sciences, including medicine, taught by female teachers. If a male teacher is required, he will give his lecture through closed circuit television. There is a plan to combine the scattered university colleges in one location, but mixing of the sexes will of course remain forbidden.

However, female students in the UAE can travel abroad for their education, usually at government expense. In Bahrain, education for women began in the 1920's. Coeducation there is common, especially at higher levels. Two-thirds of the 3,000 students at Qatar University are females. This development occurred when Shaykh Khalifa Bin Hamad al-Thani sent his two daughters to study at the university. In Kuwait there are a quarter of a million male and female students in 400 schools. Sixty-five percent of the 20,000 students attending Kuwait University are female, and this large university is co-educational.

A Diversion and Profession, but Forbidden

Although the field of education is wide open to Gulf women, the work force is relatively closed. Nonetheless, work would fill the deadly empty time that educated, learned women have and is the goal for practically every educated or university graduate woman. In Saudi Arabia, for example, it is

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a diversion more than a source of income, but is not available except in the fields of education and nursing, which the government encourages, and in the banks for women which now number 13.

Educated Saudi women are anxious to work, but husbands forbid it, families refuse, society does not approve, religious institutions fear that they will be tempted and the Saudi labor law of 1970 forbids women from working if they would be forced to associate with men. There are inspectors who make surprise visits to companies and institutions to arrest women who work as secretaries. Fines are large, sometimes as much as 60,000 riyals.

Despite these restrictions, Saudi women are gradually moving into the work force. The trend for the future is women working in the private sector by using the wealth that they have attained through inheritance, for example. There are scores of specialty shops for women which were opened and are managed by women, such as those for fashions, perfumes and "nouveau-tés," as well as beauty salons and perhaps even restaurants. There are respected veiled women in this field, such as the wife of Mr Nabih Fir'awn, who has opened a shop to sell objet d'art, and Mrs Layla Yusuf Bin Ladin, who has opened a shop for Yves Saint Laurent fashions.

Female students go to their schools or universities wearing the most fashionable European clothes under their abas, including jeans, as do working women.

The debate about women's working is furious. The problem is no longer "Should women work?" but "What should they do and in what field? Would their working limit the increasing immigration of foreign labor, especially from Asia?" Even the present 5-year development plan encourages opening the work force to women, and it is expected that the number of working women will reach 120,000 in 1985.

Saudi women have recently entered the field of journalism. Some are editors, authors, writers and editors-in-chief for women's magazines. However, pictures of women are forbidden in Saudi newspapers and magazines, although love poetry is not. Arab and other foreign newspapers are forbidden if they exceed the standards for publishing pictures of women.

Saudi men generally, as fathers, brothers and husbands reject the idea of women working and consider it a step down for themselves and their wives socially, aside from their being influenced by the religious establishment, which rejects working with men in any way.

University women in the UAE are able to find jobs, but finding husbands is much easier. Women in Bahrain are 20 percent of the work force, and the government encourages them to work. The percentage of women in the government has grown to 40 percent, and women even serve on the police force. Women there generally receive equal pay with men, even if they do not have equal opportunities for promotion to the upper levels of employment.

Educated Bahraini women are very courageous, despite their respect for the conservative family system. They can go out unveiled if they wish, and husbands have started accepting the idea of their wives' working to help them economically.

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In Qatar businessmen petitioned the government several years ago asking that women be encouraged to work, but the government is still hesitant to approve the petition. The conservative families in a small society guided primarily by Wahhabi ideology refuse to accept working women, and therefore, women here constitute only 2 percent of the total work force.

The picture is completely different in Kuwait. Women here make up 12 percent of the labor force, and there is no discrimination between men and women in government. Women receive equal pay with men, have equal opportunities and can be promoted to the highest positions, becoming undersecretaries, directors general, foundation directors or factory managers.

For the above reasons, Arab women in the Gulf countries are one heated aspect of the political and social issues in the area and are always the subject of debate and argument between proponents of the old and proponents of what is new, between the conservative, traditional school and the liberal, emancipated social and political circles.

The future of the Gulf rests to a great extent on this argument and debate, as a society which will progress politically and socially to the same degree that it has progressed economically. In the framework of this future, the position and role of Gulf women will be defined socially and politically.

Foreign Women in the Gulf

Arab women who come from Egypt, Lebanon or Syria and non-Arab women who come from Europe to the Gulf countries to work or to accompany their husbands will feel a jolt. They must follow the customs and traditions that Gulf women are bound by, especially in Saudi Arabia, as far as complete separation from the society of men and wearing the aba, which covers the face and body down to the feet.

Arab women usually follow tradition and accept this situation, while European women rebel, especially if they have been subjected to punishment in the public street by the stick of a volunteer who will not hesitate to hit a woman on the back if her face shows, part of her aba is turned up or if she bends to check whatever she is buying and part of her body shows.

In Saudi Arabia the issue of associating with men is very difficult for European women, even in the large hotels where mixed swimming was forbidden recently.

The problem of European women has increased with the influx of tens of thousands of Europeans and Americans. An interim solution has been found to this problem by the creation of closed societies, or "ghettoes," for these communities where women can exercise a large part of the social freedom which they enjoy in their own countries.

Within these closed societies, women mix with men, go out unveiled and also work with men. However, if they go to the local Saudi market, they must follow tradition.

Nevertheless, some European women rebel, unable to tolerate these restrictions, and return to their countries without their husbands.

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ALGERIA

ENERGY POLICY REPERCUSSIONS EXAMINED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1892, 12 Feb 82 p 359-360

[Text] Coming a few days after the signing by France of the contract for the supplying of gas by the USSR, the agreement with Algeria for delivery of liquefied gas has given rise to passionate commentaries and criticism. Relations between France and Algeria have apparently retained their emotional content on both sides of the Mediterranean. In the case of both agreements, it is a matter of a political decision on the part of the French Government, despite the embarrassed explanations of the prime minister. Although commercial conditions obviously cannot be ignored, it is therefore essentially this policy that must be judged and from this standpoint, the contract with Algeria must be approved because it translates into fact the stated determination of the government to make overtures to the Third World.

It is not customary to officially divulge certain details of such agreements, particularly prices and indexing clauses. Consequently, the precise cost of the Soviet gas was not given by the French Government. Nevertheless, official statements and indications from various sources enable one to have a rather accurate idea of the terms of the contract.

The latter provides for an annual shipment of 5.1 billion cubic meters for 20 years, adding to the 4 billion cubic meters supplied by Algeria in accordance with the 1964 and 1972 contracts. The first deliveries under the new contract should come in March, but it will not be until the end of the year that the annual "cruising" rate of 5 billion cubic meters will be attained. About half of the deliveries will be carried by Algerian methane tankers.

The price that will henceforth apply to all gas from Algeria is reportedly \$5.10 per million BTU (FOB price).* This is the figure given by the MIDDLE EAST ECONOMIC SURVEY published in Nicosie, which is generally well-informed, and by the French and international press, including the FINANCIAL TIMES of London. To the price leaving Algiers, one must add about \$1.00 for transport and regasification in France. The cost price for France is reportedly about \$6.00, very close to the

* 1 million BTU (British Thermal Unit) represents 293 kilowatt-hours and 25 cubic meters of gas in the gaseous state. 1 cubic meter of liquefied gas represents 600 cubic meters of gas in the gaseous state or some 7,000 kilowatt-hours.

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price charged by SONATRACH for contracts now being carried out but which the French Gas Company (GDF) never accepted, content to pay an advance on the increase demanded by its supplier. Recognizing the worth of part of SONATRACH's arguments, the French Gas Company did in fact agree, through a 1979 rider, to arrange a price higher than that in the contract. According to the general manager of SONATRACH, Yousfi, the new price should apply retroactively to deliveries made for the past 2 years, but Yousfi gave no details on how the retroactivity would be calculated.

The price will be indexed on rates for eight crudes to be chosen by common agreement between Paris and Algiers. Finally, payment will be made by the French Gas Company (86.5 percent) and the French Government (13.5 percent).

French Minister of Foreign Relations Claude Cheysson said that the price was "higher than certain long-term contract prices, but lower than that of certain deliveries now being made." The general manager of SONATRACH said, for his part, that the price "is at the level seen on the international market."

Why should this contract, whose financial conditions are not particularly favorable to France -- according to semi-official estimates, the price is some 15 to 20 percent higher than the price of the contract signed with the Soviets -- nevertheless be considered beneficial to France, despite the fact that the agreement in no way forces Algeria to use all or part of the "surbonus" accepted by Paris upon the purchase of French products or to go to French firms in order to carry out its equipment program? The response is obvious: for political reasons whose advantages will, in the opinion of the French Government, largely make up for the financial effort made.

First of all, France has long wanted to diversify its sources of energy and reduce its dependency on oil for security reasons. It now depends 50 percent on imported oil, mainly from the Near East, a particularly unstable region and one with vulnerable lines of communication. The government wants to reduce that oil dependency to 42 percent by 1985 and 32 percent by 1990, by which time oil imports should represent only 75 million tons, compared with 93 million today. This concern for security is one of the constants of the French policy and was shared by previous governments, which planned for the development of alternatives to oil and began the now-completed negotiations with the Soviet Union and Algeria.

For the French economy, the "fallout" of the Algerian contract must be substantial, independently of the startup of the Montoir-de-Bretagne gas terminal, representing an investment of 1 billion francs and unused since its completion in 1980. With a capacity of 10 billion cubic meters, it will not only receive gas going to France, but 2 billion cubic meters that will cross French territory on its way to Belgium.

There was concern immediately following the signing of the contract regarding the will of Algerian authorities to entrust contracts to French industries. On 4 February, Beregovoy, secretary general of the Elysee, stated that the contracts already "acquired" numbered about 15, according to a list drawn up by the Ministry of Foreign Trade, and that they represented some 12.5 billion francs. This statement was disputed by members of the opposition and part of the French press, emphasizing that Algeria has entered no agreement to give counterparts to France and that the

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firmness, not to say ruthlessness, of Algerian negotiators in the past did not augur well for the future. These doubts are being wiped away. One after another came official announcements of the successful conclusion of an agreement with SOFRETU [expansion unknown], a subsidiary of the RATP [Independent Parisian Transport System], for the study and engineering on the Algiers underground railroad for 150 million francs, the signing of a contract for 525 million francs with TECHNIP [expansion unknown] and Saint-Gobain for construction of a plate glass plant at Jijel, while NECIM [expansion unknown] obtained a 450-million-franc contract for an aluminum anodization and extrusion plant at Stresa. In evaluating this contract, one must therefore consider fiscal income received by the French Treasury and the social security for workers extended to French personnel, as well as the cost of unemployment compensation thereby avoided.

That the signing of these initial contracts with French firms has closely followed the signing of the gas agreement means that Algeria and France share a determination to give their relations a much broader significance than that of commercial trade carried out strictly according to the rules of the market.

It is this determination, clearly stated by the French Government, which has clearly resulted in the successful conclusion of negotiations underway for 2 years, negotiations that were particularly hard and during which French authorities went far in trying to understand the Algerian point of view. Andre Giraud, minister of industry under the previous government, revealed in a Parisian daily that he had already accepted the principle of the equivalence of the price of gas with that of oil, increased by a quality factor, one of Algeria's essential demands.

In the definition of its policy regarding Algeria and developing countries in general, the French Government was inspired by long-term considerations.

The first stems from an analysis of the results of France's foreign trade in recent years. Our commercial trade with other industrialized countries regularly results in a net deficit. In contrast, we register a positive balance sheet (20 billion francs in 1980, essentially due to manufactured products) in our trade with developing nations, trade that represents one-fourth of our foreign trade. According to all commonly accepted projections, the economies of those developing nations must, in the years to come, enjoy stronger and more rapid growth than those of the industrialized countries, meaning that their import needs will offer promising prospects for our own exports. It is therefore in our own interest to broaden our commercial relations with them and to assure ourselves of solid positions for the future, trying to join with them in defining a real co-development policy.

Speaking more generally, France is convinced that the world will not emerge from the current economic crisis except by helping the development of the Third World. This conviction, based on an economic analysis and not moral considerations, is also shared by many independent economists, specialists from the major international institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank, and by World Bank President Clausen himself, who said, at the time of his Paris visit in September, that the development of economically less advanced countries is in the interest of the West. That is what the French president has constantly repeated since he came to power, trying to persuade the heads of other industrialized countries in Ottawa and Cancun. Going further, Mitterrand tried to translate into action the French determination to help improve the operation of trade between the North and the South by upgrading

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the natural resources of countries which derive most of their exports from one or a handful of basic products, as is the case of Algeria.

This is the essential reasoning behind the French decision to sign the contract with Algeria, which for its part will derive substantial profits through greater returns from its gas exports, not only to France, but obviously, with other buyers as well, particularly Italy, buyers that will probably be forced to accept conditions comparable to those in the French contract. Should one then accuse France of having failed Western solidarity? If the French analysis is correct, the other industrialized nations that buy Algerian gas will find in Algeria a solvent partner whose equipment and consumer goods needs are enormous, as are those of any developing country whose population is growing at a very fast rate.

Finally, the new relations that France has tried to establish with Algeria fit into a much broader political picture. An average-size power, it can become a pole of attraction for Third World countries desirous of reducing their dependency on the two superpowers. As the new secretary general of the United Nations, Javier Perez da Cuellar, recently said in an interview with a French daily, "One undoubtedly expects, more than in the past, that France will be a link between the North and the South. Nothing would be more pleasant for me than to see that hope confirmed."

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EGYPT

FAHMI: EGYPT MUST AVOID SIGNING ANY DOCUMENT ON AUTONOMY

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 263 26 Feb - 4 Mar pp 33-35

[Interview with Former Foreign Minister, Isma'il Fahmi, by AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Cairo; date not given]

[Text] The aristocratic native stings you with his Egyptian sarcasm and jokes, half a cigar not leaving his fingers and another cigar showing in the pocket of his trim jacket. They have said of him that he was the engineer of Egyptian-American relations and that he was the skilled architect who rebuilt the bridges of the relationship between Egypt and the United States after years of hostility and lack of trust. In fact, they have gone further than this and have said that he was America's man in Egypt and, in fact, was the man through whom Washington was able to move Egypt from the stage of absolute hostility to the stage of a strategic alliance with Sadat's Egypt....until he surprised the whole world with his famous resignation in opposition to al-Sadat's visit to Jerusalem. To the same extent that the resignation was a surprise and embarrassed al-Sadat's regime, it also made the chair of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry an undesirable seat for a multitude of politicians for almost 2 years. He made his resignation a tradition the basis of which were laid down and reaffirmed by the late Muhammad Riyad and which reached its peak during Camp David when Muhammad Ibrahim Kamil also resigned (see his important interview in the previous issue of AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI.

Isma'il Fahmi appeared to get very emotional when we asked him about the mistakes he should have avoided when he was Egyptian foreign minister; his diplomatic phrases with a golden polish turned into punches and bullets, relating his achievements and successes during those critical years in the life of Egypt, and then closed off the dialogue, saying: "Enough, I'm tired."

However, we did not get tired during our important interview and here is the text of our dialogue with Isma'il Fahmi:

[Question] If the Israeli withdrawal from the occupied part of Sinai is completed of 25 April, how do you view Egypt's relationship with the Arabs on the one hand, and with Israel on the other, and how do you view the map of relations in the area in the post-April stage?

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[Answer] The key to building bridges in the Arab world is in Egypt's hands. Consequently, the issue depends on what decisions Egypt makes from now on and until the date of the complete Israeli withdrawal from Sinai on 26 April. I mean, to be precise, if Egypt concentrates on implementing the clauses of the peace treaty with Israel fully, some bridges can then be established, not all bridges with the Arab world. To put it more clearly, if Egypt signs no paper of any kind involving autonomy before 26 April, then a start can be made in building bridges with the Arab world. If Egypt puts its signature on a document involving autonomy in any form and under any name whatsoever in the form of general principles or special principles or with any approach of any kind accomplished as an American-Israeli departure, then I do not believe that bridges can be restored with the Arab world. The reason is clear--Egypt signed a unilateral peace treaty with Israel involving only the Sinai. Any evaluation of the Camp David agreement outside this context is to be regarded as incorrect on the level of politics or international law. The overall framework of autonomy was originally, as is well known, Begin's plan which he presented to Carter in November 1977 and then raised in al-Isma'iliyah when he came to visit Egypt for the first time. It is an Israeli plan, and Begin's plan in particular, designed ultimately to enable Israel in stages (over a period of years) to wipe out Palestinian rights, the Palestinian entity and any process whatsoever that would help to form the Palestinian state or help to enable the Palestinian people to exercise its right to self determination. It is clear that since the visit of the late President al-Sadat to Jerusalem, Israel has been continuing intentionally--not before the visit--to take steps which it had never taken since the 1967 war, including, by way of example but not confined to this, increased building of settlements, plans to annex Jerusalem and Golan and the process of changing the military government system to a civil system by applying Israeli law in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and changing the geographic and demographic character of the Bank itself. These are actions which Israel had not been bold enough to take and, in fact, had not taken any of them whatsoever before al-Sadat's visit. Why? For the obvious reason that before the visit, the southern front of Israel was open because Egypt was in the battle with its power, strength, army, potential and radiating influence. After the visit and after the peace agreement was signed, Egypt was no longer present as a threat to Israel from the south, the strongest front that Israel could fear.

So Israel secured the southern front by Egypt's total departure from the Arab cordon and from posing a threat to Israel. This, as everyone knows, was Israel's goal in making peace with Egypt and, to be more precise, removing Egypt from Arab unanimity, from Arab solidarity and from the Arab front, so that the entity would collapse since the Arab entity cannot stand without Egypt except through a new miracle.

Israel succeeded in this as the result of the unilateral peace agreement it signed with Egypt (Article 7). So, Israel's fundamental goal behind peace was to remove Egypt from the world and isolate it from the Arab world and to destroy the Arab structure from the bottom. For this reason, we find that at the start of the peace process and after the signing of the treaty, Israel was affirming that there was no connection between the peace treaty and autonomy, while at this time Egypt was so emphatic that there was such a

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connection that it appeared as if it would not sign a unilateral peace. However, Israel has recently begun--to be precise, during the past 6 months--to revive the linkage theory. This means that it urgently wants to obtain Egypt's signature to a document involving autonomy prior to the withdrawal. If Israel is successful in this, with support from the United States, it would mean that Egypt had left the Arab world. Why? Because Egypt will have signed a document involving the future of the Palestinian people and it cannot sign anything or speak in their behalf. This means that Egypt would enable Israel to obtain this document and to begin the policy of de jure or de facto annexation over 5 or 10 years, and Israel would confront the Arab world, the Western world and the Arab Islamic world with the statement that Egypt had signed so why all the emotion and clamor since it is the largest Arab country. So, Israel would begin to implement its policy under the protection and umbrella of the Egyptian signature, interpreting it as it wished, and then would enter the mazes of interpretation and vague, elastic formulae.

This objective finds acceptance in American policy in the sense that it is in America's strategic interests in the Middle East, and in the Arab world in particular, for Egypt not to return to the Arab world nor to restore solidarity to the Arab world nor to have an Arab-Egyptian front established that would cope with problems and discuss them from the Arab angle and from the standpoint of Arab interests. We, therefore, find that the United States has suddenly begun to get active after having been snoring in a deep slumber. The American secretary of state has come to the area twice during one month and is beginning to talk about new plans and about hope of coming up with a plan on autonomy, or at least general principles, shortly before or during the withdrawal stage.

So, the issue is clear. The important thing for Egypt is to digest all this. We know precisely the nature of the factors hidden behind this rapid movement and heavy pressure which I expect to increase. If we assume that Egypt--justly--were to refuse to sign any agreement whatsoever on autonomy or even the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai, there is no American, non-American or Israeli power that could coerce Egypt into signing any document of any sort concerning the Palestinian people following the withdrawal.

[Question] How do you think Egypt can get out of this dilemma?

[Answer] By not signing anything and by urging Israel to apply and respect its obligations regarding Sinai, an international agreement or treaty that must be implemented and adhered to unless one of the parties shows bad faith. The agreement is international and has absolutely no connection with the subject of the Palestinian autonomy agreement.

[Question] You have profound and lengthy experience in dealing with American foreign policy. In fact, Isma'il Fahmi built the bridges of Egyptian-American relations after the October 1973 war. Given this experience and this role, how do you evaluate the policy of the Reagan administration compared with the course of the Carter administration?

[Answer] During the era of Nixon, Ford or Carter or even now, there has been no pure American policy on solving the Middle East crisis. Anyone who claims

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otherwise knows nothing at all. Were Reagan to have a policy on solving the Middle East problem, he would have presented it. Where is this policy? If we go back to the platform of his Republican party during the campaign, we find it to be a disaster for the Middle East crisis. Anyone, even from the American side, who claims that they have a policy is evading the truth. I challenge any American whomsoever who claims that they have a definite American policy in the area, based on the principles which America advocates in other areas and for other peoples. The fact is, America has at no time presented a specific policy. I used to deal with them on this basis, that is, on the basis that everything they submit and propose had been discussed with the Israelis and that they had reached agreement with them on it and that it was originally an Israeli plan on which the Americans have put some embellishments and justifications, presenting it as an American plan. I know that it was not originally an American plan because there was not originally any American policy.

[Question] Is the lack of this specific American policy toward the area in itself a policy or is it a real inability to formulate a specific policy in the area and with regard to the Middle East crisis?

[Answer] We can view it as a policy and an inability simultaneously. It is a policy in the sense that America has felt and still feels that Israel is its extension in the area, strategically, militarily and psychologically from the standpoint of regional political geography and from the standpoint of political geography internationally. All of America's commitments to Israel are quite clear, starting with what Egypt promised Israel and America's full commitment to it which was primarily against Egypt and going on to the rapid deployment theories and military strategic cooperation agreements. The basis of all these things is that there is a policy supported by the Pentagon people which states that Israel is America's extension in the area and ultimately America can depend on no one but Israel. So, it is a policy. At the same time, it is an impotence since America is now unable to freely reach a decision. Things have developed to the point that any American decision on the Middle East crisis, supposed to emerge from Washington, now is issued from Tel Aviv. The United States cannot move unless it is completely confident that Israel is satisfied with this movement, in total and in detail, even if it is an interim movement.

American-Israeli Fraud

[Question] In the light of this analysis, what is the importance of the abrogation of the strategic cooperation agreement between America and Israel?

[Answer] Nothing was abrogated. This alleged abrogation is nothing more than an American-Israeli fraud. The agreement stands. This decision to suspend it temporarily is a public relations decision to influence the Arab world, as usual, and to polarize it. Secondly, because the Americans knew that the proposal to impose sanctions on Israel would be submitted in the Security Council where Washington has the right of veto, they did what they did from the public relations standpoint. Behind the scenes, they apologized to Israel and gave it sufficient guarantees, following the same approach as when they

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postponed delivery of some aircraft to Israel after the bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor. So, it is a publicity operation with a specific, dedicated objective which has absolutely no effect nor will it have any effect on the American-Israeli strategic relationship.

[Question] Can Egypt continue to ignore the Soviet role in the peace process?

[Answer] The Soviet role can absolutely not be ignored and America itself cannot ignore it. It is not in the interest of the Arab parties, including Egypt, to ignore the Soviet role. The Soviet Union is a great power like America and has more than one overt and covert policy in reaching its objectives and to protect its strategic objectives. If we move beyond the boundaries of the regional competition in the area between the Soviet Union and the United States to the competition between the two big powers on the broader scale, we find that the relationship between the two is very close and there is no separation between them. You may remember when Carter began preparing for and advocating the Geneva conference (before he did this with the parties to the dispute), he consulted with the Soviet Union and came up with the announcement which was released on 1 October 1976 and which defined the overall framework of the comprehensive peaceful solution based on the perspective of the two big powers. In other words, they reached agreement between themselves on the Americans' initiative without consulting with the parties to the dispute. The game of the big powers in the Middle East is an inseparable part of their game on the broader international scale.

[Question] So America will go it alone in the area?

[Answer] Wrong, wrong. That is not in the interest of the Arab countries or of Egypt itself. Rather it is in their best interests that there be a non-aligned country, a country with its own capabilities and its own international weight in the area and that country is Egypt. It is able to play the game of benefitting from both big powers and to deal with them at the same time on the basis of preserving the international balance in the area. It is not essential that the benefit be equal as it is very difficult to deal with the two countries on the same level of relationship.

[Question] Was Egyptian policy at any time able to operate under this balanced formula?

[Answer] We almost accomplished that at one period of time but special circumstances then arose that were not conducive to this. During the time of the late leader, Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir, Egypt threw its weight on the Soviet side and during the time of Anwar al-Sadat, particularly in his last years after I resigned, Egypt threw itself completely into the arms of America.

[Question] Do you see in the Egyptian-Indian-Yugoslav dialogue that took place recently any attempt to revive and renew the nonaligned movement and to revive the Egyptian role in it?

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[Answer] The nonaligned movement is passing through a very grave and sensitive phase. The reason first of all goes back to fundamental changes in the countries that pioneered the nonaligned movement. Radical changes have occurred in Egypt, India and Yugoslavia which have had an impact on the nonaligned movement and its philosophy. Therefore, I feel that the nonaligned movement needs a new conference designed to evaluate and improve the movement itself. Bilateral conferences will only be a repetition of what is happening in the UN or in other international conferences. Therefore, as I view it, the nonaligned movement needs new preparatory conference of no less importance than the first conferences.

[Question] Do you feel that the faltering of the policy of nonalignment now goes back to the lack of clarity of the formula itself or to the fact that the movement was born in conditions of the cold war and has not adapted itself to the formula of international detente or international relaxation as a new characteristic?

[Answer] No political movement whatsoever on any level whatsoever can disregard existing international political conditions. The era of colonialism had its own values and manifestations. During that time, colonialism gave birth to the reasons for solidarity among the small countries and this made peoples "explode" toward independence and freedom and to sacrifice themselves and adopt clear and explicit positions. The independent sources of wealth of peoples, the exploitation of the peoples themselves and international monopolies--all these things were in themselves sufficient to strengthen the solidarity of the peoples of the Third World, making them forget their local and regional disputes to counter the sense of being threatened. As part of these specific components, a new system was born called nonalignment, a system created by changes and crises of that time. When that time with its own conditions ended, a sort of lassitude occurred, as if the world had become clean and free of the approaches involving subordination, exploitation and colonialism, despite the existence of something called neo-colonialism, colonialism wearing various hats, a Russian hat, an American hat, a French hat and a British hat, as well as the hat of technology and exploitation of the need for it on the part of countries of the Third World and the exploitation of the resources of small countries in a covetous, delicate manner.

We say again that nonalignment needs a new preparatory conference, not for reaching decisions but to study the nonalignment philosophy, what has happened to it and what methods and decisions need to be adopted to cope with developments, both negative and positive, in order to reevaluate the policy of nonalignment. This is what I advocate.

[Question] What is the thrust of Egyptian policy toward Africa? Is it an attempt to escape the isolation Egypt is suffering in the Arab homeland?

[Answer] I view any talk about Egyptian-African relations from the political standpoint as constructive. Africa needs Egypt politically, and as a model as well, in the sense that if the African countries see that Egypt is a truly nonaligned country and gives special status to neither the Soviet Union nor

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the United States, Egypt becomes a model to the emerging African countries politically, especially if these countries find that Egypt still retains its power to radiate influence both in Africa and among the Arabs. If Egypt loses some or part of this ability to radiate influence in the Arab world and to adhere to it, in this event the African countries will search for another lighthouse or in another direction.

Besides the political and psychological aspects, we will find that from the practical aspect the African countries need real technical and technological assistance. This is what used to happen under the aegis of the leadership of Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir. During this time, Egyptian-African relations received very large appropriations--to be precise, millions of dollars--both in the budget of the Foreign Ministry and the Presidency for development of bilateral relations in the form of missions and scholarships. There were Egyptians sent there, working in all fields as technicians and experts so that Egypt could in fact be with the African on the farm, in the factory and at the hospital. This was the Egyptian-African connection and there is no other approach. A simple comparison of numbers of heads of state and foreign ministers who used to visit Cairo in those years with the number during the last 5 years reveal some alarming indications; the issue is not merely one of attending African conferences, voting with their countries and giving speeches and reiterating slogans about incontestable facts.

[Question] How do you view the Arab League outside Cairo and the Arab summit without Egypt?

[Answer] The issue is not whether it is outside or in Cairo. Let us suppose that the Arab League still were in Cairo with the situation between the Arab world and Egypt just as it is now. Of what value would the Arab League be? The effectiveness, the positive or negative character of any regional organization depends on the actions of the countries which formed it.

Were the Arab League now in Cairo, would it be reasonable for it to hold any meeting whatsoever there? Even were some meeting held, could any decisions emerge from it if they were not in agreement on the ABC's of Arab policy?

Egypt in itself is the cause of all this. There is not doubt about that. The reason for the deterioration of the Arab situation is attributable to Egypt and to its departure from the Arab ranks. If the Arab world is unsuccessful, we are a part of it. No one can claim wisdom unless we are with the Arabs. Egypt claims that it established the Arab League and that there is no Arab world without Egypt. The story is not words, mere words, but action and policy and adopting positions. I would add that even if I combined with my brother and my colleague on an error, when I tried to correct the error, I would have to consult with him, talk with him. Al-Sadat should have consulted with his Arab brothers, not adopt a position and communicate it to al-Asad at the last moment. It is not essential to get their views but they have to be put in the picture. Al-Sadat did not do this. After he returned from Israel and from giving his speech in the Knesset, he could have called for convening an Arab summit conference before the situation deteriorated any further. He could

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have convened an Arab summit conference and related to the kings and heads of state what happened, that he had challenged Israel, as he claimed, on its own ground, that this was the situation and that we must reach agreement, unite and impose a comprehensive peace on Israel. Al-Sadat did not do this although he announced that he would convene an Arab summit conference after he returned from his visit to Israel. He was unable, no, was unwilling to do so. Those are the facts.

[Question] If we can go back to the year when you had the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, what are the mistakes which should have been avoided at that time and which led to what we are facing now.

[Answer] In my days, when I was minister, there were no mistakes, not one. I would remind you of an example to show you how our policy was. Go back with me. I am ready and I challenge you or anyone in this regard. We achieved the first disengagement and Syria got a little upset. We worked out the disengagement on the Syrian front and then accomplished another one and Syria also got upset. Then al-Asad came to Cairo after Syria had been so vexed and we were able to reach agreement on establishing a unified political command between Syria and Egypt. I then went to Khartoum with al-Asad and al-Sadat and we were able to bring Khartoum into the agreement on the unified political command between Egypt and Syria and the agreement became tripartite between Egypt, Syria and Sudan. In my time, we signed the first, and most significant mutual defense treaty between Egypt and Sudan to run for 20 years, something that had not happened in Egypt during the past 50 years. During my days there, Egypt did not sever relations with any Arab country. Then there was what Egypt saw approved at the Tunis conference in November 1977. At that time, the Arab countries approved everything to the letter that Egypt advocated. Those at the conference praised the resolutions and said that the credit went to Egypt's representative. This was before al-Sadat's visit to Jerusalem. In the past this is how Arab solidarity was. For this reason, I could not take these positions and then go back to Cairo from Tunis and get on a plane to go to the Knesset. What a thing to happen. That's not Isma'il Fahmi. I'm not like that. It was Isma'il Fahmi who worked out the program for Egyptian-Sudanese integration and then the Sudanese treaty, the basis of everything you see today that is unprecedented in Egypt's history, even in the days of the King, the days of the British and after the British and the days of the leader, Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir.

Lebanon? Who stopped the fighting in Lebanon? Egypt. We held a six-party conference in Riyadh and from Riyadh we returned to Cairo. In Cairo we held the Arab League conference which brought stability in Lebanon and formed the Deterrent Forces and...and...in Cairo.

There's more. The first Arab-African conference for economic cooperation in the history of the area and of the world was held in Cairo. It was a highly successful and constructive conference at Egypt's initiative in which all the Arab and African countries took part. The record speaks for itself. Up to now they study him and what Isma'il Fahmi did. This is history. It will tell you that no one did this except Isma'il Fahmi. I can't go any further into detail. Egypt did not sever relations with any country whatsoever, be it Arab,

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African, European, American, Latin or even the Soviet Union at any time whatsoever, even after we abrogated the treaty of friendship with it. Al-Sadat abrogated the treaty with Moscow but Egypt did not break off relations. I met with Gromyko in Sofia 6 months after abrogation of the treaty and I went to Moscow and then Brezhnev was coming to Cairo. The decision to visit Egypt was reached in January 1975 with Isma'il Fahmi, no one else. It had been 10 years since he visited Egypt. After this the man became ill and I met with him in the hospital. After the abrogation, it was decided that he would come to Cairo.

[Question] How do you view the Saudi role in bringing peace to the area?

[Answer] The Saudi role is fundamental and is to be regarded as the focal point in the area. It is a natural transformation following the slackening of the role of Egypt. It is quite natural for Saudi Arabia, with its potential and its special relations with America and the West, to be a vital and positive focal point. The issue is: How should Saudi Arabia exploit this situation?

I think that it is important for Saudi Arabia to continue to play its role. Prince Fahd's plan should be pushed, with a possible rephrasing of Paragraph 7. I don't know with any certainty what the Arab world can do without Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia paid for the rearming of Egypt in cash and without any argument whatsoever, even after the Egyptian-American aircraft deal (it was abrogated after Camp David) for which Saudi Arabia paid in full. It paid the full cost of the French aircraft for Egypt. Any arms requested by Egypt were paid for by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries without argument and the sums of money were not recoverable. These are facts attested to by history. The statement that Saudi Arabia or the Gulf countries were remiss with regard to Egypt are wrong. It should suffice for us to recall that Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries were also helping Egypt economically. When Egypt wanted to replace the short-term high interest debts with short-term low interest debts, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries agreed to earmark a sort of balance totalling \$2 billion to be collateral for Egypt in the international market. This happened and we cannot deny it.

Yes, indeed....and as of now...they say that Saudi Arabia is helping Egypt, they do say that.

The interview ended when Isma'il Fahmi said: "Enough....I'm tired." He stood up and we shut off the tape recorder.

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IRAN

AHWAZ LIBERATION FRONT LEADER COMMENTS ON OPPRESSION OF ARABS

Paris AL-WATAN AL-ARABI in Arabic No 261, 12-18 Feb 82

[Interview with Secretary General of the Arab Front for the Liberation of Ahwaz Mahmud Mashari, by Ahmad Hafiz in Paris; date not specified]

[Text] The Arab Front for the Liberation of Ahwaz recently organized a trip to Europe to explain its cause to Western public opinion. AL-WATAN AL-ARABI met with the members of the delegation in Paris and had an interview with Mahmud Husayn Mashari, the front's secretary general, regarding the liberation of Ahwaz, the Iraqi-Iranian War and the Arab situation in general.

We shook hands and I studied him closely. His face bore genuine Arab features, and I was surprised at how well he spoke Arabic.

Question: Is it true that the Iranian authorities have endeavored to wipe out Arabic in Ahwaz, or is that merely a rumor?

Answer: It is not a rumor; it is the painful truth. Ever since 1925 when the forces of Emperor Reza Pahlavi, the father of the late Shah, arrived in the Arab principality of Ahwaz, which was then ruled by the last of the Arab rulers Shaykh Khaz'al, Persian colonialism has spared no effort to wipe out all traces of Arab culture, including language, customs and traditions. It has even replaced the Arab style of dress. This went on during the reign of the Shah--both the father and the son--and it continues in much the same fashion under the Khomeyni regime. There are harsh laws banning the establishment of any school for teaching the Arabic language. Moreover, the laws ban the speaking of Arabic, which is the language of the Koran, the message of Islam and the voice of heaven on earth, despite the claim of the rulers of Iran that they are the "defenders of Islam."

Question: Nevertheless, many Iranian nationals, including those of both Persian and Arab extraction, speak Arabic. You are the best example of this. Is that not so?

Answer: This is true; however, it is due to the fact that many Iranians have emigrated to neighboring countries, especially Iraq, where they learned Arabic in the schools and universities. The people of Ahwaz also do their best to teach Arabic to their children at home since it is a crime to speak

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it in public in the streets or markets. To sum up, the people of Ahwaz have a very intense passion for their national language. This is what has helped to keep Arabic as the primary language in every home in Ahwaz.

Question: What did you come to do in Europe?

Answer: Our mission is limited to acquainting officials and public opinion in Europe with the cause of the Arab people of Ahwaz. Actually, this is not the first trip to Europe. A delegation representing the front previously attended the conference on "The Struggle in the Arab Gulf," which was held in Spain in May 1980. Now we are in Paris, after having completed a successful trip to Austria where we took part in the "World Youth Conference" and met with a number of Austrian officials. In Paris, we have held talks with officials in the Gaullist Party. We also held other talks with the Franco-Arab Friendship Society and some of the French liberation organizations inside France. Our trip will also include a number of other European capitals, following which we will return to Ahwaz.

What About Ahwaz and the Arabs?

Question: That was in regard to your activity in Europe. What about the Arab world?

Answer: Bonds of friendship and understanding link us to our sister country Iraq. It is the neighboring Arab state and the one to which we have joined in close bonds for some time. Moreover, we are fighting against one enemy, that is, the Iranian authorities represented by the Khomeyni regime. As for the Arabs in general, we have contacted Arab organizations, starting with the Arab League, and we have submitted memoranda to the recent Arab Summit Conference in Fez and before that of the Ta'if Conference.

Question: What exactly are your basic demands? Are you, for example, demanding secession from Iran and the formation of an independent state?

Answer: Our basic demand is the right to self-determination. We are an Arab people occupied by the Iranians. We are living just like any other occupied people and we are treated as second-class citizens in Iran. Therefore, we are demanding the right to our own self-determination. Our strategic goal is the establishment of a progressive national Arab society in the Ahwaz through the liberation of the land and the people.

Question: Is the Arab Front for the Liberation of Ahwaz the only political organization involved in political activity inside Ahwaz?

Answer: At the present time, yes, although political organizations had been established before the Arab Front at different periods. All of them were aimed at liberating Ahwaz from the Persian occupiers.

Question: Why had Arab public opinion not heard of the demand to liberate Ahwaz until the outbreak of the Iraqi-Iranian War?

Answer: The fact is that the Arab people of Ahwaz never stopped demanding this, nor have they ever stopped trying by every means to liberate themselves from Persian imperialism ever since the Persians took our territory in 1925 and abducted Shaykh Khaz'al, the last Arab ruler of the region. Our Arab people in Ahwaz have never stopped struggling against their occupiers and the usurpers of their land. Less than three months after the Iranian occupation in 1925 the "Youth Revolution" broke out against the occupiers. It was so called in reference to the supporters and helpers of Shaykh Khaz'al who launched this revolution. They were called the young people. However, this revolution was met by the harshest types of violence, mass murder, and deportation. Nevertheless, Ahwaz witnessed a second revolution in the very next year (1926). This was known as the "Bani Tarf" Revolution. Then came the "al-Hoveyzeh" Revolution in 1936, the "al-Mirav" Revolution of 1940, the revolution of Shaykh Hasib, the son of Shaykh Khaz'al, in 1943, and the revolution of Shaykh Abdullah in the following year. In 1946 there was the "al-Nussar Revolution" and in the same year came the first of the political party organizations. Some of the young people and the tribal heads formed a party known as al-Sa'adah Party and were based in Abadan. They sent letters and envoys to the Arab countries. However, the Persian authorities, in coordination with the British Petroleum Company and elements of the Iranian Communist Party, attacked the headquarters, killed at least 30 Arabs and put an end to this group. Beginning in 1956, revolution consciousness began to take on a new form of organization. In that year the "Arabistan Liberation Front" was established. This was followed by the "Popular Front for the Liberation of Ahwaz" in 1958. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Arabistan was established in 1960, but changed its name to the Ahwaz Liberation Front. In 1968 the Popular Front for the Liberation of Ahwaz appeared, and so on, until the "Arab Front for the Liberation of Ahwaz" was formed. It issued its first historic statement on 22 September 1981.

Why Did the Revolution Fail?

Question: But all these revolutions and political organizations have not yet achieved the aspirations of the Arab people in Ahwaz? What are the reasons?

Answer: (Another member of the delegation, who was obviously completely conversant with the history of the revolution in Ahwaz, responded. He preferred not to give his name, for security reasons.) There are many reasons, but they can be summed up as follows:

- these revolutions did not rely on a comprehensive precision organization;
- morale was weak and material, educational and other resources were also weak and limited;
- revolutionary activity was limited to small specific geographic areas and did not encompass the entire region;
- careful and attentive revolutionary thinking was not used as a guide for keeping the revolution on the right track since positions must be determined and conditioned by events;

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-- the establishment of these revolutions occurred when the Arabs in general were weak and off balance, with the result that these revolutions lacked any possible material or moral support which they might have had from Arab organizations which existed at that time;

-- the Persian government did not hesitate to use any method, no matter how harsh or barbaric, to stamp out all elements which were suspected of belonging to these groupings;

-- the authorities relied on a plan of penetration into the ranks of the strugglers by planting suspect elements inside the organizations to strike them from within.

He went on: In any event, we in the Arab Front for the Liberation of Ahwaz are attempting to learn from all the mistakes which were committed. We are doing our best to take advantage of the new realities in the arena of the struggle in order to create a spirit of revolution among the ranks of the masses in Ahwaz. Perhaps what we have done so far against the Khomeyni regime provides reliable and reassuring evidence that the policy which we are pursuing to achieve our goals is sound.

Question: Throughout Iran at the present time there is more than one movement opposed to the regime. What are your relations with them. Specifically, what are your relations with Abol-Hasan Bani Sadr and Mas'ud Rajavi?

Answer: We are meeting on a common ground with all movements which are currently opposed to the Khomeyni regime regarding one strategic goal, that is, the downfall of the Khomeyni regime. From this standpoint, there is no dispute with Bani Sadr, Rajavi or others. The important thing is to bring down the regime; after that, we can talk about everything.

Black Wednesday

Question: But did you not join up with all the Iranian parties and organizations in the struggle to bring down the Shah before that? And did you not form an alliance with various factions of the "Islamic Revolution Under the Leadership of Khomeyni," which turned against you as soon as it achieved victory? Could this situation not be repeated?

Answer: Naturally it could be repeated. However, in order for us to reach the strategic goal, we must work in stages. The first stage is the downfall of the Khomeyni regime, which is against us, which does not hesitate to employ all sorts of bloody measures against us, and which has rejected all attempts at persuasion and dialogue which we began with them on the eve of the take-over by Khomeyni. We asked for no more than the recognition of our national rights as Arabs, such as permitting us to teach Arabic to our sons, reviving our Arab traditions and customs, and developing the Ahwaz region with economic and social projects, because this region, unlike most regions in Iran, suffers from severe backwardness, poverty and illness, despite the fact that it is one of the richest regions in Iran. Iranian oil, for the most part, comes out of the land in Ahwaz, but the people of Ahwaz do not

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benefit from the bounties which God has bestowed upon it. Thus we find ourselves in the situation described by the Arab poet:

Like camel dying of thirst in the desert,
While carrying water on its back!

The Khomeyni regime has rejected all forms of dialogue. In fact, he refused to meet a delegation of inhabitants of Ahwaz which went to congratulate him on the success of the revolution and the end of the Shah's regime; instead, he sent us Rear Admiral Adhmad Madani, the commander of the navy, who committed mass murder and wreaked havoc in every region. He was no more merciful to us than the army of the Shah before him. Khomeyni crowned his methods and his crimes with the bloody and harsh slaughter committed by his "Revolutionary Guards" in the city of al-Muhammarah [Khorramshahr] on Black Wednesday, 25 May 1979. On that day, more than 100 Arabs were killed and 500 were wounded. In addition, a large number of them were arrested, most of whom were executed later.

The official from Ahwaz added: If you go to Ahwaz and to the areas which have not yet been liberated, you find that the policy of persianization which the Shah pursued against Arab nationalism was pursued and is still pursued even more harshly and more viciously. One example will suffice: the people of Ahwaz, as I said before, were not allowed to speak Arabic; moreover, they were not allowed to learn to read and write since only very few schools were opened in the region. They were also forbidden to wear the Arab style of dress, and the Arabs were deprived of the right to work, hold positions, or own property. In addition, commerce and commercial dealings depended on the native Persians. The Khomeyni regime has already begun to launch organized campaigns intended to weaken the Arabs economically in the long run. The government cut off the water supply to many areas in the Hoveyzeh sector and other rural sectors in the Iraqi border area and they diverted this water to the areas where Persians lived. Their methods also included the encouragement of foreign establishments to exploit arable land and to deprive its Arab people of its use. In addition, they continue the policy of forcing the Arabs to emigrate to other areas inside Iran and resettling Persians in their place after building them modern villages, including the village of Yazdasav in Hoveyzeh and the village of "The Crown Prince" in al-Muhammarah [Khorramshahr]. We should also add to this the persistent attempts to replace the Arab names of cities and villages with Persian names.

For all these reasons taken together, says the official from Ahwaz, the road is now closed to any dialogue or any dealings with the Khomeyni regime. Therefore, our strategic goal is to use every possible method to bring down this regime regardless of whom we might ally ourselves with. If a new regime in Iran were to give us our national rights, then there would be no problem. If that does not happen, we will continue our struggle until the end. We are Arabs; we cannot be anything else. We have been in Ahwaz for hundreds of years. This is what the history books say, and they stress that there was a strong Arab state in this area throughout history. It radiated its own distinct culture and it was a strong state. If we were to compare the presence of the Arab and Persian races in Ahwaz, we would find that the

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Arab race is more deeply rooted, for the Persians came to the area only as invaders. They occupied Ahwaz as they occupied the Middle East in the days of their kings Cyrus the Second, Darius and Cambyses until they reached Egypt. The Arabs lived with the Elamites, who were not Persians. In both civilization and government, ancient Iraq and Ahwaz had a common history and were joined by events which were all intertwined by virtue of many factors, including similar topographical features since the area includes the level plain between the southern part of Iraq and Ahwaz. When the rule of ancient Babylon ended, there remained Arabs in Ahwaz who had their Semitic laws in Susah, one of the most important cities of Ahwaz at that time. When the armies of the Arab conquest arrived at the time of 'Umar Ibn Khattab, they found support among the Arabs there since these were genuine Arabs.

All We Know Is Ahwaz

Question: Your country has more than one name; sometimes it is Arabistan, at other times it is Khuzistan, and now it is Ahwaz [with Arabic spelling in text], or Ahvaz [Farsi spelling in text] as the Iranians call it. What is the reason for all the different names, and which is the most correct one geographically and historically?

Answer: Whatever the case, all these names attest to the Arab character of the region. In ancient times, 3,000 B.C., it was called the "Land of the Elamites," a reference to the Elamites who inhabited the area; they were Arab Semites. There is still an area in northern Ahwaz called "Elam" to this day. As for the word "Ahwaz," it harks back to several centuries before the dawn of Islam, when Arab tribes of the Bani Marrah, Al al-Kathir and the Bani al-'Amm came to the region. They established sites and farms and divided them up into plots and called each plot a "hawz" and they gave each such parcel of land to the tribe whose members farmed it or to the individual who owned this parcel of land. It was called the parcel of so-and-so, or the so-and-so parcel. "Hawz" is from the root "haz" and denotes possession or ownership of a specific piece of land by an individual. It belongs to him and is known by his name. The plural is "ahwaz," and this name gained currency in the area. It is a genuine Arabic name since the original Arab inhabitants called this land by this name. As for Arabistan, it is a non-Arabic designation. It is said that the Ottomans, when they controlled most of the Arab nation, applied that name to the lands of Greater Syria, the Hijaz and Ahwaz to distinguish them from their own territory. The name means "Land of the Arabs" and consists of the word Arab, which is understood, and the word "ostan," which means province or region in Turkish.

In any event, it is a word which indisputably attests to the Arab character of the area. The Persians used it as an official designation of this region during the rule of the Safavids and the Qajars and continued to do so until 1925, that is until Emperor Reza Khan, the father of the late Shah, occupied it and imposed his military control over it. He then began planning to wipe out the Arab character of the region and incorporate into the melting pot of the Persian state. The first step was to change the name of the region from Arabistan to Khuzistan, since the word Arabistan indicates the Arab character of the region and since the word "khuz" has a number of meanings in Persian, including "al-khuz," which means "the place" or "the site." It also

means faction or group or mixture. Thus the foreign name of "Khuzistan" was circulated as part of the plan to persianize the area. The original Arab designation remains Ahwaz, which is the most correct historically, culturally and socially. When the Iranians do sometimes say Ahwaz [Farsi spelling in text], the letter "h" is softened because there is no Arabic "h" in the Persian language.

The Failure of Persianization

Question: What is the Arab population of Ahwaz at the present time and how large is the area in which they live?

Answer: According to the latest census, which the Iranian authorities conducted in 1962, it appeared that the population of Ahwaz was 4.7 million, including both Persians and people of other nationalities. The Arabs constituted 70 percent of the population, that is, there were more than 3 million Arabs. But those were just the ones who had Persian identification and Persian birth certificates. Most of the population in the countryside do not have Persian identity papers. Thus it could be said that the Arab population of the region at the present time ranges between 3.5 million and 4 million people inhabiting an area of approximately 159,600 square kilometers. It should be noted that the Arab area before the Persians came to settle it was 185,000 square kilometers. In the framework of the policy of racist persianization by the government of occupation, it was decided to cut off part of the territories of the Ahwaz region and join it to Persian provinces, the provinces of Isfahan, Fars and Khorramabad. What remains is the area mentioned above.

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KUWAIT

INVESTMENT STRATEGY DISCUSSED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 260, 5-11 Feb 82 p 55

[Article: "Kuwaiti Investments in Britain Expanding and Diversifying in Industrial and Financial Spheres"]

[Text] Kuwait is expanding and diversifying its investments abroad by not limiting them to one industrial country, but dispersing them throughout many countries and in different financial, commercial and industrial sectors.

The Kuwaiti Investment Office in London is considered one of the most active and secretive outside Kuwait. It is managed by a group of eminently qualified British financial experts, the foremost being the two Scotsmen, Bruce Dawson and David Buchanan.

Kuwaiti investments in Britain have multiplied during the last 5 years and are estimated at about 441 million pounds sterling (\$900 million). The office usually prefers not to help direct or manage the companies in which it is majority stockholder, and its representatives do not always attend board of directors' meetings. However, when it is necessary, and in rare situations, it will exercise its right to vote to prevent transfer of ownership of some of the companies in which it has stock to other companies or investors.

This secrecy and centralization have helped the office to expand investments without any clamor in political and media circles, which are usually sensitive about Arab investments, especially when Zionism plays an important role in inciting political and public opinion against the Arabs. However, financial and industrial circles in general welcome Arab capital and consider it new blood circulating through the almost dry veins of British industry.

Kuwait's public investments in British stocks and bonds are estimated at 200 million pounds sterling and control a large part of a great number of real estate companies, textile mills, banks and fuel and electronics distributorships.

In West Germany, Kuwait owns a significant share of the largest German companies and industries. For example, it owns 25 percent of the KORF STAL AG, 10 percent of the Metallgesellschaft Ag [Metal Company Ltd.] and 10 percent of the Daimler-Benz Company.

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Kuwaiti investments are also expanding in the American market, where they recently purchased the Santa Fe Oil Company for \$2.5 billion, but failed to obtain 14.6 percent of the Getty Petroleum Company although they offered \$1 billion.

Kuwait also owns the Western and Trust Banks in the State of Arizona, which are valued at \$40 million, and owns 10 percent of the West German Volkswagen subsidiary in Brazil.

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SUDAN

INTERNAL, EXTERNAL FORCES AFFECTING NUMAYRI'S SURVIVAL

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 264, 11 Mar 82 pp 40-41

[Article by 'Isam 'Abd-al-'Aziz: "The Game of Chicanery between Washington and Khartoum: 'The Palace Coup' Is Coming from Outside the Palace"]

[Text] The question that is being raised today in Sudan is this: When will Lt Gen 'Abd-al-Majid Khalil return to the presidential palace in Khartoum, not as vice president but as president? Ja'far Numayri is finished, and the preventive ouster of Khalil has increased Khalil's popularity and "saved" him from the responsibility of taking part in the new austere economic measures. "The palace coup" is being postponed, at least this time, from outside the palace.

What has been said about "a palace coup" in Sudan led by Lt Gen 'Abd-al-Majid Khalil has been magnified and re-broadcast directly to the presidential palace. Maj Gen 'Umar Muhammad al-Tayyib did not have a good relationship with Khalil's group in the army. When Numayri's fears about a blow against him coming from within his camp increased, al-Tayyib's broadcast news about Khalil's communications on the side with the Muslim Brothers became clearer. The Sudanese president preferred to begin with his vice president rather than have his own fate sealed by his vice president.

However, Khalil's political demise did not come about with the decision to remove him from office, nor has al-Tayyib advanced a step closer to succeeding Numayri. Despite the close surveillance imposed by Sudanese security on the home of the former first vice president, a group of Sudanese politicians see in 'Abd-al-Majid Khalil a possible successor to Numayri. Regarding al-Tayyib, Numayri knows that his popularity in the ranks of the army is at its worst, and he is confident that Washington which finds Maj Gen al-Tayyib "a suitable man" may not think of making him president because he lacks the necessary popularity to manage affairs in the armed forces.

A review of recent events that took place on the scene of power in Khartoum affirms that Maj Gen 'Umar al-Tayyib "played his hand," or rather played Numayri's hand, as a professional would. Lt Gen 'Izz al-Din 'Ali Malik, chief of general staff and 'Abd-al-Majid Khalil's best friend was quickly surrounded, and a number of "trusted" officers was charged with serving notice to Lt Gen Badawi, commander of the presidential guard and to Lt Gen Nasr al-Din al-Mubarak, commander of the armored division about the decree to remove them from office. All of them were then placed under mandatory house arrest.

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But for how long will al-Tayyib's fortunes continue to climb? There are limits which Numayri himself defines carefully, and these cannot be overlooked by aides. First, he tempts one who is far [from power] to move towards one who is closer [to power]; then he uses [the former] to get rid of the one who was close [to him], sending him to a new "farther" position so he can repeat the same old-new game. Proximity and distance are measures used in calculating the distance between the men of the regime and the seat of Numayri himself.

In Khalil's case the game was more complicated. Despite his limited intelligence, Khalil was able to establish his own following in the Socialist Union, in the ministry and in the army. When the situation became critical on the economic scene and Numayri was forced to accept the conditions set by the IBRD, conditions which began with removing the subsidies on popular foods, the Sudanese president was faced with harsh choices. He could either accept having Khalil and his group continue in office, or he could remove him from office and dismiss his group.

It was obvious that Ja'far Numayri could not accept the continuation of Khalil's group for a simple reason: the president's position had become so weak after the outpouring of popular displeasure because of the economic measures that the existence of a relatively homogeneous group in the highest levels of power could not be allowed without risking liquidation by that group at an opportune moment.

Numayri thus chose the second solution: to weaken everybody because he had become the weakest. He removed Khalil from office, disbanded the Socialist Union and accepted the resignation of government.

It is certain that Numayri thought many times before removing his first vice president from office. The political moment in Sudan was extremely volatile. There were demonstrations in the streets, and the voices of the opposition were being heard even inside state institutions. There was nothing to induce optimism regarding the future of the regime. However, all this affirms the fact that Numayri chose the road of a calculated risk by making the decision to remove his vice president from office. He had not been able to postpone this decision, for every day that went by brought more support for Khalil and his group.

Pitting People against Each Other

The fact is that the Sudanese president excels in the art of pitting his aides against each other. At the outset he backed up the communists, and then he cut off their heads after the coup of Hashim al-'Ata. He cooperated with a division of the religious movement and later had airplanes bomb them in Aba island. Then he began the maneuvers of national reconciliation to cover up later the fact that he kept the decision making power to himself. He promoted Khalil only to remove him from office [later], and he is now promoting Maj Gen 'Umar al-Tayyib and moving beside him Maj Gen 'Abd-al-Rahman Sawar al-Dhahab. If it occurs to him one day to remove al-Tayyib from office, Sawar al-Dhahab will be there to carry out the operation and to get the promotion in preparation for the moment he too will be removed from office. It is a moment that will undoubtedly come about, for Numayri does not like to change his habits in the political game.

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This reminds one of a story about a monkey who was sought to serve as an arbiter and divide a piece of cheese into two equal halves. He brought the scales and divided the cheese into two unequal pieces and placed each piece on one side of the scale. Then he cut himself a large piece of the heavier piece of cheese and ate it saying, "We must make this piece equal in weight to the other." When the other piece turned out to be heavier, he cut another piece of that and ate it making the same statement. He went on doing this until he ate all the cheese.

Numayri "balanced" the political forces so he can devour a portion of them each time until he liquidated them or almost did. Now he finds no one who will cooperate with him except those with raw opportunism, that is, those who have reached the point of risking themselves for a position. Everyone knows that an alliance with Numayri is a temporary alliance no matter how much the Sudanese president insists that it will continue. Thus the cheese was finished, but how can Numayri go on?

It is evident that the Sudanese president's "cleverness" in the balancing act [in which he is engaged] will bring about his downfall. This cleverness which can reach unexpected limits in the small details that have to do with the daily management of power is a cleverness that can serve Numayri in his efforts to overcome tactical crises, but it cannot get him out of the strategic crisis in which he has hurled his entire regime.

The Crisis Policy

There is an economic crisis [in Sudan], some of whose principal features are debts which exceeded 3.5 billion dollars; a deficit in the balance of payments that amounted to 630 million dollars; demonstrations in the street protesting the high prices of popular foods; and "development" projects which have become a reason for backwardness with the opportunities they created for the international companies and the "fat cats" inside the country to plunder the country's resources.

There is a political crisis that manifested itself in the fact that all the political forces, except for a limited exceptions, moved to the ranks of the opposition. Even al-Sadiq al-Mahdi who was part of the national reconciliation pact with Numayri in 1977 announced that that pact had come to a dead end and that "the Sudanese president's program was economically erroneous and socially destructive."

There is a national crisis that began to unfold in the south after the reformation of the South Sudan Unity Council. Then 17 provincial leaders were arrested, and this was accompanied by the separatist tunes which surfaced [on the scene]: the oil of the south for the south; the poverty of the north for the north and Numayri for no one.

Finally, there is a military crisis that Numayri has not been able to solve easily. The Sudanese president's reliance on Cairo's military support is provoking some old sensitivities with the Sudanese people, especially since this reliance is not proceeding on a road that would serve the interests of the Sudanese people themselves. Furthermore, Numayri was forced to pay the price for

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his reliance on the United States: he met with the Israeli minister of defense Ariel Sharon in Khartoum; he shook hands with Prime Minister Menahem Begin in al-Sadat's funeral in Cairo; and then he accepted the Bright Star maneuvers which brought to the area the largest U.S. military presence in the region's history. This provoked the staff officers and the junior officers in the Sudanese army.

Numayri's reliance on Cairo and Washington is naturally not confined to the military field. Relations between Sudan, Egypt and the United States are reflected first on the political scene inside Sudan. Numayri finds no one he can count on inside the country, so he counts on people abroad, but to what extent can he trust these people he is counting on?

Egyptian Support

On 28 January, at the height of the Sudanese crisis, Numayri traveled to Aswan to meet with Mubarak and took Maj Gen 'Umar al-Tayyib with him. The principal purpose of the meeting was for the Sudanese president to explain to Mubarak the reasons for removing 'Abd-al-Majid Khalil from office and the effects this action could have in the ranks of senior army officers.

But can Cairo offer Numayri disinterested "fraternal" support if the army were to take action after the removal of Khalil?

The reply to that question is the same as that [one would give] to a question that pertains to the extent to which the Americans wish to keep Numayri. This is because the fact that the Sudanese president has fallen into Washington's and al-Sadat's arms has made the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency the only source--at least at present--that can reply to the question: who should rule Sudan?

Numayri asked Mubarak to rest assured about the safety of conditions in Khartoum. However, this is not the question. The Sudanese president asked his Egyptian "brother" to affirm this to Washington and to persuade Washington that only Numayri can restore matters to their former state. He would thus intercept any Washingtonian ideas of having him replaced. He himself had intercepted such ideas by removing Lt Gen 'Abd-al-Majid Khalil from office.

It seems now that Washington did agree to give Numayri a chance after he observed all the conditions of the IBRD. What would he do now?

The question of all questions in Sudan now is that of the Socialist Union: whether that organization is to remain or be disbanded is not the problem, but the problem is briefly that of the political formula which Numayri will try to put into effect.

The Socialist Union is finished. Everyone knows that it is "a prop" whose purpose is to confiscate political freedoms in Sudan, except for those of the ruling group like Dr Baha' al-Din Idris and Muhammad 'Abd Rabbuh who are among the millionaires of Sudan; Mustafa Numayri; Maj Gen 'Abd-al-Salam Salih 'Isa; and the brothers of Brig Gen Mustafa Kamil who are related to the president and married to his relatives. This is the only "party" that has full freedom in Sudan.

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With the outbreak of events early this year Numayri came to a crossroads where he found himself facing the problem of the political formula that was being applied in the country. He could either accept the opinions proposed by some members of the independent popular committee which he had formed to reorganize the Socialist Union and which went as far as calling for multiple political organizations even within the Socialist Union as a way for solving the problem, or he could insist on the narrow formula that is being applied now and presided over, behind the scenes, by a group of millionaires who are actually ruling [the country].

Numayri chose to keep the Socialist Union, and he called those who suggested that there be multiple organizations within the organization cowards. Then he continued to sympathize with the religious groups and said, "Some people want me to become prince of the faithful and to rule an Islamic society. We have not yet achieved such a society, but we are proceeding in that direction."

Such "jests" are not good enough to persuade even elementary school children in Sudan who demonstrated last January. Despite his cleverness in maneuvering, Numayri is falling into the trap into which any dictator before him fell: the trap of imagining people to be so naive as "to swallow" everything "the leader" says.

Al-Sadat, for example, used the enormous Egyptian propaganda and information machine to set forth similar tunes, but in the end he was felled by the bullets of a religious group. Numayri has not only overlooked this lesson, he has also overlooked the fact that his position on the Socialist Union Committee means letting a rare opportunity go by for persuading Washington that he deserves to be charged with the task of managing the "Sudanese ranch."

The Sudanese president thus proved that he is less intelligent than al-Sadat. When the question of democracy became an urgent question in Egypt and a source for domestic disturbances, al-Sadat permitted the formation of independent platforms within the Socialist Union. He preserved these platforms despite the temporary political thrust that he realized after the October war.

Numayri does not have an October war and does not have an opportunity to catch his breath. Nevertheless, he insists on rejecting impulses for reform tendencies that can prolong the life of the regime at least for a few months. This alone is enough to make one expect the fall of the Sudanese president. His hardening position may prove to be the strong good fortune of the Sudanese opposition.

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SYRIA

AL-ASAD BROTHERS FEUD ANALYZED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 264, 5-11 Mar 82 pp 21-22

[Article: "The Two Enemy Brothers"]

[Text] The internal crisis in Syria has reached into the ruling family. Western diplomatic reports assert that more than one reason is deepening the dispute between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and his brother, Rif'at al-Asad, commander of the Defense Companies and the actual commander of the Syrian army and that loyalty to the Syrian president in some aspects is opposition to his brother and vice versa. Why are the two brothers disagreeing after the Hamah volcano has quieted down?

A Western diplomat in Damascus was quoted last week as having told a number of businessmen from his country who had been visiting Syria: "The country is experiencing a bloody tragedy and the family of President al-Asad is suffering from a serious problem. The regime is staggering between the tragedy and the family problem."

The Western diplomat had been speaking after the recent events which had exploded in the city of Hamah to the businessmen who had sought his advice as to whether they should continue with completing their projects in Syria or put them on hold. While making his statement in detail, the Western diplomat said that the civil war which had flared up in Hamah had not been the first nor was it the only one in Syria during the last 2 years, although it was the most violent and widespread, because the authorities had used various weapons, the air force, artillery, armor, and snipers against an armed populace which had defied it in groups resembling guerrilla groups in what could be termed a long-lived suicide operation. This is to be regarded as a special type of development in the approaches of the popular movement which opposes the regime and which has gone beyond the Muslim Brotherhood to various overt and secret groups alike of all orientations.

In a related vein, it has been established that numerous army personnel of various ranks joined the army popular groups for the first time, the number being from 300 to 500 officers and men with their arms. Accordingly, the bloody crisis has gone beyond civilians to reach into the ranks of the army which warns that there may be a split in loyalty in the armed forces and that a point of no return may be reached between the regime on the one hand, and a large segment of the army which supports the popular movement.

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The problem in the al-Asad family is expressed in the struggle over the exercise of real authority in the country between the President of the Republic and Commander in Chief of the Army, Hafiz al-Asad, and his brother, Rif'at al-Asad, Commander of the Special Defense Companies which have a special character inside the armed forces, not to mention the "Red Knights" from whom personnel reinforced the Syrian Deterrent Forces in Lebanon, effectively assuming responsibility for command. According to information from a number of sources, Rif'at al-Asad has revolted and has begun to make unilateral decisions on his own, implementing them despite the opposition of his brother, the president. At the same time, Rif'at al-Asad is accusing his brother of weakness and the president, in turn, is charging his brother of recklessness, adventurism and lack of appreciation of responsibility, saying that he is like the bear who killed his master on the grounds he was protecting him from the fly which was flitting about his face. Some sources say that when Rif'at al-Asad heard what his brother was saying about him and comparing him to the bear, he said that the disaster was that the bear's master (meaning Hafiz al-Asad) was actually dozing away in a stupor.

This ends what the Western diplomat was telling his compatriots, the businessmen, in Damascus.

Syrian and Arab sources say that there is some basis to the Western diplomat's story and also his way of portraying the real situation in Damascus today. These sources confirm that relations between Hafiz al-Asad and Rif'at al-Asad are now sort of relations of "enemy brothers." The fact is that when enmity arises between brothers, it becomes so vicious and deadly that it cannot be compared with enmity among strangers and the viciousness mounts uncontrollably when the enemy brothers are in power and are competing in dividing it up and trading charges about who was causing power to slip from the ruling family through his recklessness or adventurism.

Observers have a stock of evidence about this struggle in progress between Hafiz al-Asad and his brother, Rif'at al-Asad. One item is the fact that it is now noticeable that pictures of Rif'at al-Asad are now competing with those of Hafiz al-Asad, President of the Republic, in governmental and party offices and various establishments, in addition to army units. A second item is that Rif'at al-Asad held a meeting of some of his supporters from the party leadership and his military aides before the Fez conference convened in Morocco in November 1981. He affirmed to them that President al-Asad would participate in the summit conference himself, supporting Prince Fahd's initiative, and this was communicated officially to Prince 'Abdullah. When President al-Asad suddenly decided not to take part in the conference, after his private bodyguard had preceded him to Morocco, and returned from Libya without going on to Fez, Rif'at al-Asad convened another party, military meeting and publicly criticized his brother's non-participation in the conference, viewing this as a grave mistake which Hafiz al-Asad had slipped into under pressure from Libyan President Mu'ammarr al-Qadhafi without taking Syria's vital interests into account.

President Hafiz al-Asad was in turn forced to convene a counter-party, military meeting in which he launched a harsh attack on his brother, viewing

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him as a "politically misled child" and compared him with the bear that killed his master. That situation put Syrian party members and military men in a terrible dilemma and they wondered: "With whom should we proceed safely, with Hafiz or Rif'at?"

Al-Khawli Saved Jamil

A third item: After Rif'at al-Asad discovered the "Free Ba'th Officers" organization whose commander, Col "Samman," committed suicide, he instructed forces from the defense companies to arrest Naji Jamil whom he accused of having been aware of the organization but not reporting it. Rif'at al-Asad issued a decree to execute him. Just a half hour before the execution, President Hafiz al-Asad learned of this and ordered a force under the command of Muhammad al-Khawli to free Naji Jamil from the hands of Rif'at al-Asad's group and to save him from execution at any price in order to avoid the grave complications that would ensue from this "stupid, irresponsible behavior" which would reveal to the world that there were people conspiring against the regime from within and this would wreck what power it had left to claim that it was stable and in control of the country. Muhammad al-Khawli surrounded defense companies' barracks where Naji Jamil was scheduled to be executed and threatened to blow them up unless he was handed over at once. A clash almost took place between al-Khawli's forces and those of Rif'at al-Asad but al-Khawli's strategem succeeded in persuading Rif'at al-Asad that President al-Asad was not opposed to executing Naji Jamil but only wanted to interrogate him himself to find out what secrets he might have. By this means Naji Jamil was rescued from the hands of Rif'at al-Asad.

A fourth item: It is understood that Rif'at al-Asad was intent on assassinating Khalid Bakdash, secretary of the Syrian Communist Party, by a faked automobile accident in retaliation for criticism and attacks taking place in closed meetings of the Communist Party over illegal commercial deals Rif'at was personally concluding against the interests of the country and over his encouragement and protection of a number of friends and relatives who engaged in the export-import business in return for huge commissions. Rif'at felt that Khalid Bakdash was responsible for the smear campaign against him and issued orders for the defeat of all candidates of the Communist Party in the pro forma parliamentary elections which were held recently, despite that fact that the party was in the so-called "Progressive Front." He sent someone to Khaled Bakdash to tell him that this was his first and last warning and that "it will not help that you are in the front and are meeting at the same table with President Hafiz al-Asad." When the Communist Party issued a statement of criticism after all its candidates were defeated and the regime had not respected the agreement with the party that no less than seven members would win, Rif'at al-Asad felt that the warning he had sent to Bakdash had done no good and issued orders to assassinate him in an automobile accident so that it would appear that his death had no connection with the establishment or politics. When Hafiz al-Asad learned of this, he rushed to instruct the presidential intelligence machinery to safeguard Bakdash's life and to move him somewhere else under the protection of the president's bodyguard and to spread a report that he had gone to Bulgaria while he remained in Damascus under the protection of the Syrian president, having not

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left the country at all. Khalid Bakdash has made only a few appearances, surrounded by the bodyguard of the president of the republic for fear of the vengeance of Rif'at al-Asad.

The Hamah Volcano

Finally, when the Hamah incidents flared up, Hafiz al-Asad felt that the air force should only be used to terrorize by dropping bombs around the city, not on the residential areas. However, Rif'at al-Asad jettisoned his brother's decision and refused to carry out his orders to surround the city and starve it out and then to use the military forces to assault the city. Rif'at al-Asad took command himself, feeling that it was a life or death issue for the regime and the ruling family and that it would be useless to treat it in any way but to use the maximum degree of violence and slaughter in "extinguishing the Hamah volcano," even if this were to cause the death of half the population. So Rif'at al-Asad took command of the army with all its weapons in the battle against the people of Hamah in a war of total annihilation which stirred up many nationalist elements in the armed forces, including some officers who were themselves 'Alawites, who joined the popular uprising.

Since the Hamah battle, two poles have been formed in the establishment and the ruling family, the Hafiz pole and the Rif'at pole, and, as the Western diplomat put it, the regime has entered the stage of staggering between the bloody popular tragedy and the quarrel of the "two enemy brothers" in the ruling al-Asad family.

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SYRIA

DETERRENT FORCE ACTIVITIES CRITICIZED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 264, 5-11 Mar 82 pp 22-23

[Article: "Three American Steps in Preparation for the Third Republic"]

[Excerpts] The story goes that the Syrian Deterrent Forces entered Lebanon first to prevent partition and secondly to restore calm. What has happened now that 7 years have passed since the beginning of the Syrian "mission" in Lebanon is that it is these deterrent forces that are preventing the unification of Lebanon and Syrian internal security is now the reason the Lebanese scene is exploding. Kuwait, probably before anyone else, has recognized this dangerous transformation and has decided to stop financing the Syrian operation. However, where is the Syrian role in Lebanon headed?

Persons who have followed the impact of recent events in Syria on the Lebanese scene--exploding vehicles in Beirut and bloody clashes in Tripoli--have rapidly perceived how there has been a reversal of the equation that states that "Syrian security is part of Lebanese security and that the Syrians entered Lebanon to quiet it." Events in Beirut and Tripoli have shown that what is going on in Lebanon is now part of what is going on inside Syria, not the reverse, and that the need now is to "deter" the deterrent forces more than it is to deter the Lebanese and Palestinians. To put it more simply, it is necessary to end the Syrian role in Lebanon if it is not possible to "strip it down."

The explosion of denominational strife in some Lebanese cities recently is not directly attributable to Lebanese-Lebanese disputes but rather to Syrian-Syrian disputes. Those Lebanese who had not yet been convinced are now sure that Damascus has in fact turned to a dangerous game, the game of igniting sectarian conflict between the Sunnis and Shi'ites in Beirut and the South and between the Sunnis and the 'Alawites in the North. In each instance it is trying to drag the Palestinian resistance into these deviations so as to make it appear as if the resistance is the cause for the turmoil which Lebanon is experiencing.

However, the black thread and the white thread are no longer mixed together for all the Lebanese and Arabs, or even for the Syrians themselves. Those who have taken a close look at the situation in Tripoli (the second capital of Lebanon) will testify that the recent clashes began when a group of

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armed men, the 'Ali 'Ayd group (the pro-Syrian regime 'Alawite organization) opened fire on unarmed citizens in the old markets with the objective of pushing the people of Tripoli into an open confrontation with the Syrian forces which would naturally lead, though it might take a while, to 'Alawite control of the city. The confrontation might spread to the Palestinian resistance which would ensure that the Syrians (?) could enter the Palestinian camps in the north (al-Badawi and al-Barid).

However, the alertness of some political organizations in Tripoli frustrated this Syrian plan. The populace stood firm in the face of the Syrian attack and they issued statements demanding that the Syrians withdraw from the city and leave the way clear for the Lebanese legitimate authorities to restore their control in the North in order to put a stop to the arbitrary killings to which the people of Tripoli had been subjected and to save them from the "kickbacks" which had been imposed by the deterrent officers in their sectarian capacity on shops, businesses, plants and factories, as well as the port and homes.

This alertness cut the ground from under the Syrians in their attempt to turn Tripoli into another Hamah since the Syrian forces were unable to twist the arms of the people of Tripoli and were unable to enter any quarter controlled by the popular resistance and the nationalist forces. When Muhammad Ghanim, chief of Syrian Intelligence in Lebanon, realized this, he hurried to get in touch with the Palestinian leadership and the leadership of the nationalist movement to set up a meeting at the home of Rashid Karami and to settle the problem, if only in an interim manner.

At the meeting held at the home of Karami, former Lebanese prime minister, Muhammad Ghanim tried to employ a deceptive approach by proposing formation of a monitoring committee which would include representatives of all factions and which would patrol various streets and quarters to prevent new strife. However, the representatives of the Palestinian resistance at the meeting demanded that the job of this committee be confined to monitoring the quarters where the Syrian army was present because only these quarters were experiencing continuous unrest and disturbances were not seeing so much as the slap of a hand.

It became clear to the Syrians that the Palestinian resistance would refuse to let the deterrent forces have a precedent for entering the Palestinian camps so the Syrians gave up any intentions about the monitoring committees and reignited the situation. This detonation bounced back on them negatively. The "old gentleman" kept to his house, thinking that this would be the best way to persuade the Syrians to refrain from carrying out their plan. When the situation deteriorated dangerously, President Sulayman Franjiah hastened to urge holding a "nationalist conference" in Tripoli after which it would become a "northern nationalist conference" to isolate the area of northern Lebanon from the Syrian internal climate.

At the same time, Franjiah asked his group not to leave Zgharta for Tripoli because the explosive situation Tripoli was experiencing could lead to a clash between the people of Zgharta and Tripoli.

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The Hellish Vortex

Before things calmed down in Tripoli, the turmoil had again spread to Beirut to sow death in the secure areas through a series of bloody explosions targeting Syrian military centers and centers of their allies in Lebanon and reaping a harvest of dozens of innocent victims. The Syrian army intelligence center in the al-Rawshah area (West Beirut) was the target of a tremendous explosion. This was followed by the blowing up of a center of "Arab Army of Lebanon" in the same area, an organization which receives assistance, training and orders from Damascus. In the meantime some streets in Beirut were filled with graffiti on walls demanding the withdrawal of the Syrians from Lebanon.

The Lebanese capital had not yet collected the corpses of its victims when a third charge went off in a mined automobile in the Talah al-Khayyat area in West Beirut. It once again appeared that the open war between the Syrian regime and its opponents in Syria, as well as the "secret war" between this regime and the Palestinian resistance in its basic factions had begun again in the Lebanese noose tightening operation that had begun 7 years earlier and had not yet ended.

A Lebanese security report was prepared on the Tripoli clashes which incontrovertibly revealed that what had taken place in this city was a direct result of the tension which prevailed in all Syrian cities after the Hamah events. It also stated that large numbers of those persons who had fled Hamah had taken refuge in Tripoli, there being extensive family ties between the people of Tripoli and Hamah, not to mention the climate of revenge which had been stored up in the populace against the activities of the Muslim elements who were proteges of Syria and other direct activities of the Syrian intelligence machinery. The report pointed out that these activities had been accumulating since 1976 because the special forces which had entered Tripoli at that time had not been replaced while other troops in various Lebanese areas had been.

A report stating that the relative calm that Tripoli has been experiencing the past few days is very fragile; is it possible to predict new bombing incidents?

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TUNISIA

GENERAL, ECONOMIC BUDGET REVIEWED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1892, 12 Feb 82 pp 383-385

[Text] The first year of the Tunisian Sixth Economic and Social Development Plan, 1982 fits into the framework of the guidelines for the 5-year period.

The Tunisian economic budget for 1982 is characterized by the following elements: growth in the GNP on the order of 5 percent (6.7 percent annually for the 5 years of the plan), but the agricultural sector will have growth of only .4 percent; 9 percent growth for the manufacturing industries, with resumed growth of the textile sector; investments of 1.4 billion dinars (1 Tunisian dinar = 11 French francs), or 30 percent of the GNP (25.6 percent for the entire Sixth Plan); growth in consumption limited to 5 percent, a rate equivalent to that of the growth in the GNP; and control over imports of consumer goods, making it possible to limit the increase in the deficit by some 70 million dinars. Some 54,700 jobs would be created.

A. General Government Budget

The 1982 Budget sets the general government budget, in resources and spending, at 1,442,000,000 dinars, up 17 percent compared with estimates of the supplemental budget for 1981.

1) Regular budget: Regular expenditures are an estimated 797 million dinars (up 119.2 million, or 17.6 percent, compared with 1981). This level takes into consideration the creation of nearly 13,000 jobs, the evolution in the wage mass, an increase in payments of interest on the public debt (up 21.3 million dinars), and an endowment of 30 million dinars for the General Compensation Fund.

Spending for the operation of the ministries would be some 630 million dinars and interest payments about 86.5 million.

2) Capital budget: Capital spending is set at 645 million dinars, up 91 million, or 16.4 percent, compared with 1981. The rate of growth seems lower than in the general budget and the regular budget, due to the reorientation of certain financial operations, which will henceforth be taken over by the financial system and not the government. These operations total nearly 47.3 million dinars for 1982.

3) Resources: Concerning financing of the budget, the plan consists of increasing regular receipts to 1,168,000,000 dinars, up 16.2 percent over 1981.

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Resources in Tunisian Budget for 1981 and 1982 (in millions of dinars)

	<u>1981</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>%</u>
Fiscal Receipts	711.4	70.8	809.0	69.3
Direct taxes	202.5	20.1	225.0	19.3
Indirect taxes	494.4	49.2	569.0	48.7
Duties	14.5	1.5	15.0	1.3
Nonfiscal Receipts	293.6	29.2	359.0	30.7
Oil revenue	236.0	23.5	290.0	24.8
Other	57.6	5.7	69.0	5.0
Total	1,005.0	100.0	1,168.0	100.0

Fiscal receipts should rise 13.7 percent and nonfiscal receipts 22.3. The latter would substantially evolve as a result in a foreseeable improvement in oil revenue (up 54 million dinars), the increase in profits paid by the Central Bank of Tunisia (25 million dinars) and the contribution of the insurance and social welfare funds (15 million dinars). The regular budget would therefore contribute some 371 million dinars to the financing of the capital budget (330 million in 1981).

Budgetary savings will represent a rate of 32.5 percent of regular receipts and the budget deficit for 1982 will be increased to 261 million dinars, representing 5.6 percent of the GNP. This deficit will partially be absorbed by the issuance of a domestic loan of 166 million dinars and the rest from foreign resources from international cooperation (50 million dinars) and borrowing on the international financial market (45 million).

Resources in the capital budget are as follows (in millions of dinars):

Contribution of the regular budget	371
Resources from domestic loans	166
Surpluses from Post Office, Telegraph and Telephone	13
Resources from foreign loans and gifts	95
Total	645

B. Economic Budget

Updating the estimates of the different branches of activity enables one to situate the real growth in the gross national product at 6.5 percent in 1981 and 5 percent in 1982. This last rate is under that retained in the preliminary draft of the Sixth Plan (6 percent). The drop is explained by the stagnation of agriculture and fishing (.4 percent), a foreseeable decline in crude oil production, and takes into account a 9-percent rise in manufacturing industries and 5 percent in tourism.

Sectorial Estimates

Agriculture: The rate of growth predicted (.4 percent) does not seem easy to attain, considering the fairly poor prospects of oil-yielding crops (90,000 tons

of olive oil). Fodder production will be affected by late rainfall and grain production is not expected to exceed that of 1981 (12.3 million quintals).

Fishing: The year 1982 will see the startup of the Tunisian-Spanish Joint Venture and the Tunisian-French Company. Estimates refer to production of 73,000 tons (66,000 tons in 1981).

Energy: A slight drop in crude oil production is expected (5.3 million tons, compared with 5.4 million in 1981). The same will be true of gas (300 million cubic meters, compared with 330 million in 1981). Regarding electricity, projections put consumption at 2.7 billion kilowatt-hours (up 11 percent). The sector's added value is likely to drop 3.6 percent compared with 1981.

Mining: The mining sector should have growth of 6.9 percent (11.5 percent in 1981). This rate is based on phosphate production of 5.5 million tons, up some 500,000 tons compared with 1981. Production of nonferrous metals will decline.

Manufacturing industries: Growth of the sector will be about 9 percent. This level is down from the average objective set by the Sixth Plan (11.5 percent). This growth is based on recovery of the textile branch (9.6 percent compared with 4.9 percent under the Fifth Plan), a slight decline in mechanical, electrical and chemical industries and stabilization of the production of agricultural industries.

Growth Rate of Added Value (%)

	1981	1982	Percent of Total	Sixth Plan
Agricultural and food industries (1)	16.8	0.5	1	7.1
Building materials industries (2)	13.8	17.6	29	16.4
Mechanical and electrical industries (3)	15.2	11.6	17	17.6
Chemical industries (4)	8.3	8.1	8	8.5
Textile and shoe industries (5)	5.9	9.6	23	10.2
Misc. manufacturing industries (6)	14.2	9.0	100	12.0
Combined	12.4	9.0	100	11.5

1) The foreseeable drop in the growth of the agricultural and food industries includes a drop in the production of olive oil and wine.

2) The increase in production of building materials, ceramics and glass (17.6 percent) essentially stems from development of projects using cement (40 percent) and glass (27.7 percent), pottery (25 percent) and binding materials (12.5 percent).

3) The growth in the mechanical and electrical industries sector (11.6 percent) takes into consideration a 5-percent drop in the production of the El-Fouladh iron and steel plants and growth in the rest of the branch's activity (14 percent) as a result of favorable growth in machine construction (up 13.1 percent), the electrical industries (up 11.1 percent) and machine construction and shipbuilding (up 19.8 percent).

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4) The chemical industries will enjoy an increase on the order of 8.1 percent, essentially stemming from the startup, in June 1982, of the new phosphoric acid unit (CM-3), which would raise production of phosphoric acid from 480,000 tons to 560,000 tons.

5) The sector of textiles, clothing and leather will evolve at a greater rate than it did the preceding year (9.4 percent, compared with 5.4 percent). The growth will essentially stem from cotton weaving, hatmaking, ready-to-wear clothing, leather and shoes.

Transport and telecommunications: In these sectors, it is expected that the 1981 rate will be maintained for the transport sector (8.5 percent). There will be a major revival of transport by pipeline (19.8 percent), with the entry into service of the trans-Tunisian gas pipeline, and a slight improvement in telecommunications (10 percent). In this way, all sectors would achieve growth on the order of 9 percent (compared with 7.1 percent in 1981).

Added Value in Real Terms (%)

	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>
Rail transport	12.6	11.3
Road transport	6.5	6.6
Maritime transport	6.4	10.0
Air transport	9.8	8.5
Transport other than by pipeline	8.2	8.5
Transport by pipeline	-26.7	19.8
Postal service and telecommunications	9.2	10.0
Transport and telecommunications average	7.1	9.0

Tourism: Estimates are based on an increase in accommodations on the order of 3,600 beds and an improved occupancy rate. The latter should go from 48.1 percent in 1981 to 48.5 percent in 1982. The number of nights spent will go from 13.4 million in 1981 to 14.2 million in 1982. Sector receipts will be an estimated 370 million dinars, including 350 million in foreign exchange, making up 16.6 percent of export receipts from goods and services (15.7 percent in 1981).

Investments

The total investment in 1982 for all sectors combined is 1.4 billion dinars (1,225,000,000 in 1981), corresponding to 30 percent of the GNP. The preliminary draft of the Sixth Plan projected a rate of 27.2 percent of the GNP, but a revaluation of investments in hydrocarbons was made.

Investment Package, Distribution by Sector (in millions of dinars; percentages)

	1981		1982	
Agriculture and fishing	162	13.2%	196	14.0%
Nonmanufacturing industries	290	23.7%	367	26.2%
Manufacturing industries	194	15.8%	245	17.5%

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(cont.)

Services	491	40.1%	490	35.0%
Including tourism	36	2.9%	50	3.6%
Collective equipment	88	7.2%	102	7.3%
Combined	1,225	100.0%	1,400	100.0%

The orientation is to step up productive investments with a low and medium density of capital and which create jobs (23 percent of the total).

In nonmanufacturing industries, 233 million dinars would go to the hydrocarbons sector, related to the development of existing units (100 million dinars) and beginning construction of the new oil refinery for a capacity of 5 million tons. Second, investments would benefit the electricity sector (40 million dinars), considering progress on construction of the new Rades power plant. The mining sector would make investments of 40 million dinars.

In the manufacturing industries, 86 million dinars have to do with new projects.

Investments in Manufacturing Industries (in millions of dinars)

	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Agricultural and food industries	55	50	3.6
Building materials industries	49	60	4.3
Mechanical and electrical industries	24	44	3.1
Chemical industry	34	40	2.9
Textile industry	19	27	1.9
Misc. industries	13	24	1.7
Total	194	245	17.5

The increase over 1981, or 51 million dinars, would greatly benefit the mechanical and electrical industries (up 20 million dinars), textile industries (up 8 million) and miscellaneous industries (up 11 million).

Concerning services, predictions show more investments in tourism (50 million dinars) and transport by means other than pipelines (175 million) and moderate growth in housing construction (230 million dinars).

Finally, 102 million will be spent on education, training, health and urban sanitation and waterworks.

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