

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

JPRS L/10493

5 May 1982

Near East/North Africa Report

(FOUO 19/82)

FBIS FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

NOTE

JPRS publications contain information primarily from foreign newspapers, periodicals and books, but also from news agency transmissions and broadcasts. Materials from foreign-language sources are translated; those from English-language sources are transcribed or reprinted, with the original phrasing and other characteristics retained.

Headlines, editorial reports, and material enclosed in brackets [] are supplied by JPRS. Processing indicators such as [Text] or [Excerpt] in the first line of each item, or following the last line of a brief, indicate how the original information was processed. Where no processing indicator is given, the information was summarized or extracted.

Unfamiliar names rendered phonetically or transliterated are enclosed in parentheses. Words or names preceded by a question mark and enclosed in parentheses were not clear in the original but have been supplied as appropriate in context. Other unattributed parenthetical notes within the body of an item originate with the source. Times within items are as given by source.

The contents of this publication in no way represent the policies, views or attitudes of the U.S. Government.

COPYRIGHT LAWS AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING OWNERSHIP OF MATERIALS REPRODUCED HEREIN REQUIRE THAT DISSEMINATION OF THIS PUBLICATION BE RESTRICTED FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY.

JPRS L/10493

5 May 1982

NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

(FOUO 19/82)

CONTENTS

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- Causes for Worsening Palestinian Relations With Iran Discussed
(AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI, 15-21 Jan 82) 1

OPEC AFFAIRS

- Briefs
Meeting on Nigeria 11

EGYPT

- Interview With Butrus Ghali
(Butrus Ghali Interview; JEUNE AFRIQUE, 7 Apr 82) 12

IRAQ

- 'Aziz Views Conflict With Iran
(Tariq 'Aziz Interview; AFRIQUE-ASIE, 12-25 Apr 82) 16

SYRIA

- 'AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI' Interviews Syrian Muslim Leader
(Shaykh 'Ali Sadr al-Din Bayanuni Interview; AL-WATAN
AL-'ARABI, 26 Mar 82) 21

TUNISIA

- Impact of Bourguiba's Rule Discussed
(Hedi Dhoukar; AFRIQUE-ASIE, 15 Mar 82) 24

- a -

[III - NE & A - 121 FOUO]

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

CAUSES FOR WORSENING PALESTINIAN RELATIONS WITH IRAN DISCUSSED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 257, 15-21 Jan 82 pp 23-26

[Article: "The Story on Palestinian-Iranian Relations"]

[Text] Dialogue, embracement... enmity. That was the course taken by the Palestinian-Iranian relationship, which ended last November with the demand by demonstrators in Tehran for the return of Yassir 'Arafat to the "House of Obedience" in the wake of his public endorsement of the Fahd Peace Plan for solving the Middle East crisis.

The Palestinians did not keep silent over the Iranian demonstrations that called 'Arafat a traitor and demanded his overthrow. They responded to the mass outcry in Tehran with a number of statements expressing disappointment in the Iranian revolution.

It was admitted by Khaled al-Fahum, speaker of the Palestine National Council, that relations with Iran are indeed "deteriorating." He attributed this to what has been publicized concerning a meeting of a number of officials of the PLO with the former Iranian president, Abol Hasan Bani-Sadr, and Mas'ud Rajavi, head of the Mojahedin-e Khalq organization, in their exile in Paris.

Hani al-Hassan, the PLO representative in Tehran, criticized the position taken by the Iranian revolution and its attack on Chairman 'Arafat. His brother, Khalid al-Hassan, member of the Central Committee of Fatah, the largest of the Palestinian organizations, confirmed that relations with Iran were "not good" and that his organization had cautioned the Iranians against attempting to export their revolution abroad and against creating problems for their Arab neighbors. He then displayed bitterness over the Ayatollahs and the "Wise men of Islam" who have denounced 'Arafat as a blasphemer, to be denied entry to paradise, because of his endorsement of the Fahd Plan just before he left for the Arab summit meeting at Fez.

However little the Palestinians may be saying publicly, it is clear that much more is being discussed privately among themselves and in their own councils. Moreover, everything stated so far, both publicly and privately, may be included within a wider framework of self-criticism of the Palestinian position towards Iraq at the outbreak of its war with Iran in September 1980.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

This new Palestinian view therefore represents a retreat from the rash accusations directed at Iraq at the beginning of the war and expresses the new Palestinian conviction (explicit or not) that "Iraq was right all along" and that "it's not easy to get along with the Ayatollahs of Qom and Tehran," according to one Palestinian official in a conversation with a correspondent of AL-WATAN AL'ARABI.

The truth demands that it be revealed that Palestinian-Iranian relations, though not yet broken, have entered a not inconsiderable phase of coldness that may yet prove to be the beginning of a complete break.

At any rate, it is impossible for any observer of the ups and downs of this relationship not to conclude that most of the Palestinian leadership, along with most other Arab leaders and politicians, were premature in their outpouring of praise for the revolution of the mullahs in Iran and in their efforts to identify with and embrace this revolution. It was this prematurity that was responsible for the degree of censure that Iraq encountered for its "counterproductive" position towards Iran. Indeed, some Arabs ignored entirely their historical, geographical and fraternal ties with Iraq and instead extended material and moral support to Iran in this war.

The disappointment of Palestinians and Arabs in the positions taken by the Iranian revolution is a hard lesson for all Arabs: the need for restraint in taking political positions and in passing judgment based on excessive zeal and emotion. Perhaps those Arabs who put the blame on Iraq at the beginning of the war realize now the extent of the jolt suffered by the Iraqi spirit as a result; perhaps they realize now that the Iraqis felt that their brethren either misunderstood or ignored the reasons and justifications that led Iraq to confront the Persian attack on the Arab identity of Iraq and the Gulf.

Palestinians Trained Hundreds of Iranians

But what exactly happened to cause this Palestinian bitterness toward the Iranian revolution, and what is leading their bilateral relations to coolness or breakup?

The correspondent of AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Beirut, who prepared this report, tried to trace the Palestinian-Iranian relationship from its inception, relying on the information and statements of a number of Palestinian officials who had witnessed the birth of that relationship and the stages it went through up to its present crisis.

The Iranian-Palestinian relationship dates back to 1968. It was then that the various Palestinian organizations opened their training camps in Syria, Lebanon and Iraq to hundreds of Iranians. Fatah undertook the largest role in training these Iranians. Training was followed by arms supplies, and the Palestinian resistance helped most of the trainees return to Iran with their weapons, where they played a vital role in shaking the shah's rule through guerrilla operations using Palestinian weapons and funds.

After the success of the revolution, the Palestinians trained large numbers of Iranians who formed the nucleus of the Revolutionary Guards and its

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

officers. The same applied to the leftist Iranian organizations, particularly the Mojahedin-e Khalq. When Khomeyni took refuge in Paris, 'Arafat sent some of his men to guard him.

After the success of the revolution and Khomeyni's victorious return to Tehran, 'Arafat was the first Arab official to visit Tehran. He flew from Damascus to the Iranian capital without notifying Khomeyni first. Some Palestinians who accompanied 'Arafat on this trip say that Iranian F-4's intercepted 'Arafat's plane after it entered Iranian airspace and asked it to land at the nearest Iranian airport. After much effort, the Iranian formation was told that the plane carried 'Arafat, and then the threat turned into a welcoming formation accompanying the Palestinian leader. 'Arafat said, after the trouble was over, "Thank God! This is the first time I saw American aircraft that did not bomb me."

The Iranians anticipated 'Arafat's visit by changing the name of the street where the Israeli diplomatic mission was. They called it PLO Street and put up a huge picture of 'Arafat on the Israeli building. Then they handed the building to the PLO, giving it full diplomatic recognition. Mr Hani al-Hosseyn, a political advisor to 'Arafat, was appointed to head the office.

'Arafat descended from the plane and headed towards Khomeyni's residence, where he gave him one of his famous kisses on the cheek. But AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI revealed that this meeting in Iran was not the first between the two men. 'Arafat had established a close personal relationship with Khomeyni since the early 1970's, and he also took the opportunity to meet with him whenever 'Arafat visited Iraq, as Khomeyni was living in the Shi'ite holy region of Southern Iraq.

Promises, Promises

Informed Palestinians say that 'Arafat's visit was not only for congratulations, that he in fact wanted to build bridges between the Iran of Khomeyni and the Arab Gulf states. Apparently Khomeyni responded, telling him that Iran had decided to stop playing the role of policeman that the shah played in the Gulf, and that it had withdrawn its forces from Oman to emphasize this. Khomeyni also said that Iran was willing to discuss the case of the three islands in the Hurmuz Strait, which belonged to the United Arab Emirates and which the shah had taken by force in 1979, when the UAE declared its independence.

'Arafat placed another kiss on Khomeyni's cheek, said goodbye and took his plane to the Gulf, where he landed in Abu Dhabi. He met with the country's president, Shaykh Zayid bin Sultan al-Nuhayyan, and recounted what Khomeyni had told him, saying that all the problems pending between Iran and the Gulf states would be solved amicably and that the ayatollahs had stressed to him that Iran had no ambitions in Arab lands. 'Arafat's visit to Tehran was followed by a visit by Mr Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad), Fatah's military commander.

The relations between Iran and the Palestinian revolution reached their peak at that stage. Palestinians here say that 'Arafat went to Baghdad to mediate

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

so that the reopening of the case of the three islands would be postponed until Khomeyni's revolution completely sorted out its mess and that Iran was ready to discuss the matter in a positive spirit.

'Arafat was hardly back in Beirut, relieved, when Ayatollah Sadeq Ruhani, one of Khomeyni's men, issued a strange statement in which he said that Bahrain was part of Iran. This was followed with a series of contradictory statements from the men of the revolution, all of which brought to mind the Iranian ambitions vis-a-vis the Gulf states. Something more serious followed; a flood of propaganda provocation against Iraq and the other Gulf states started over the air, all of it directed at casting doubts around these states and around Arabism, calling on the people of the region to revolt and proclaim Khomeyni as the leader of Islam and declaring that the Iranian revolution was made to be exported.

This was soon followed by suspicious moves in Iraq and the Gulf states. Iranian voices inside the region were raised in warnings and threats. Everything indicated that the ayatollahs were behind the whole thing.

That was the first cloud in the sky of Iranian-Palestinian relations.

Khomeyni Wastes a Golden Opportunity for the Palestinians

Then came the crisis of the American hostages, and the Palestinian revolution tried to mediate between Iran and the United States late in 1979, without noticeable success. The failure of the mediation efforts led to a new coolness in Iranian-Palestinian relations and erosion of the influence of the resistance with Khomeyni and his circles.

Palestinians say that Khomeyni wasted a golden opportunity for the PLO to force the United States to establish a direct dialogue with the PLO, after Kissinger's pledge to Israel following the 1973 war that Washington would not talk with the PLO until the latter recognized Israel. But if the hostages had been handed over to the Palestinian revolution, this would have forced Washington to overlook this promise, which is unfair to both Palestinians and Americans.

'Arafat firmly believed that the attack on the American Embassy was a big mistake by the Iranians. But he continued to issue statements attacking the United States, paving the way for his mediation with Khomeyni. The Palestinian leader took heart when Congressman Paul Findley came to him once asking him, in one way or another, to intercede with Khomeyni on behalf of the American Government.

'Arafat accepted and sent his military operations leader, Abu Walid, to Tehran for this purpose. Abu Walid is an experienced and respected Palestinian leader who had supervised the training of Iranians in Fatah camps. He also knows many of the leaders of the revolution who now held leading posts in the state and the revolutionary guards.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Abu Walid was surprised to find that in Tehran the young men who held the hostages were proud of the operation and considered it a great victory over the United States. Their leaders, who had been his students, treated him with obvious coolness, voicing their anger at the statements issued by Zuhdi Taraze, the PLO representative at the United Nations, in which he expressed the willingness of the Palestinians to mediate.

It was a strong shock to Abu Walid when Khomeyni himself refused to receive him. Abol Hasan Bani-Sadr, then acting foreign minister, came to him to complain about the Palestinian mediation efforts, telling him they were expected to side with Iran against the United States, not act as mediators.

Abu Walid then answered that he came to Tehran driven by his support and love of the revolution and of Khomeyni, to address everybody with the candidness of the military and the devotion of the revolutionary, and to tell them all that breaking into the embassy and holding the hostages would not serve Iran's cause.

The Palestinian version goes on to say that Abu Walid expressed to the Iranian leaders his fear that the United States might exploit the hostage crisis to send its forces to occupy the Gulf and the oil fields. He pleaded with them not to become with their rash action a direct or indirect tool of such an American move.

His warnings were in vain. When he was told that Khomeyni was angry with the Palestinian mediation effort, he left Tehran for Beirut. And, indeed, the United States sent its fleet to surround the entrance to the Gulf while the Soviet Union pushed into Afghanistan, making use of the world's preoccupation with the hostage crisis.

Still the Palestinians ignored the Iranian outcries and their range and went on with their cautions. In fact, Hani al-Hassan told the observer Iranian delegation that came to Tunis to attend the Arab summit there in 1979 that the Arabs were upset by the hostage crisis, although they did not denounce it for the sake of the Iranians.

That was a big dark cloud in the sky of Iranian-Palestinian relations.

Iran's Intransigence Frustrates Palestinian Mediation Efforts

When the Iran-Iraq war broke out, many Palestinian politicians blamed Iraq, proclaiming their unreserved bias toward Iran. The Palestinians then were still fooled by the Palestinian slogans that the Khomeyni revolution had raised, and no great attention was given to the reasons and the circumstances that led Iraq to confront the Persian attack.

Some Palestinians considered Iraq's defense of its entity, the unity of its people and the Arabness of the Gulf as an "attack" on revolutionary Iran. Some sloganeers even hastened to offer all kinds of interpretations casting doubts on Iraq's progressive stance, whereas some of them hastened to say that the war was unjustified because it stole the limelight from the central cause of the Arabs--the Palestinian cause.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

The Iranians were quick to stop broadcasting Palestinian national songs, and the Palestinian flag disappeared from the streets, along with the pictures of 'Arafat. Iraq maintained an uncomfortable silence, biding for time to reveal to the Palestinians the reality of the attitudes of the Khomeyni revolution.

The Palestinians tried their luck again at mediation to end the war between Iraq and Iran. 'Arafat was a member of the Islamic mediation committee formed by the Islamic Conference; he was also a member in the committee sent by the nonaligned bloc. He visited Tehran several times with both delegations and employed his diplomatic skill in vain to convince the Iranians.

Soon both sides were presented with proposals to end the fighting in the name of the Palestinian revolution. Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad), a prominent Fatah leader, summarized them in October 1980 as follows:

Iraq announces its readiness to withdraw its forces.

Iran announces its readiness to enter direct negotiations with Iraq in a neutral country to be agreed on by both parties.

The Islamic and the nonaligned countries supervise the withdrawal and the ceasefire.

It was a severe shock for 'Arafat and the Palestinians, who in the beginning rushed to support Iran, when the Iranian side refused the proposals of the Islamic mediators, then the nonaligned mediators and the Palestinian mediation efforts. Each time Iran would insist on its impossible conditions to thwart the mediators. These conditions are:

Withdrawal and a ceasefire.

Revival of the Algiers Agreement of 1975, although it was Iran itself that did not fulfill it.

Formation of an Islamic committee to study the aggression.

The Iranian conditions were unacceptable and unpalatable to the members of the two committees and to the Palestinian mediators.

In time, the Iranian deceit that shrouded the eyes of the Palestinians was gradually removed, and they found out that the Iranians were the ones responsible for prolonging the war, that they were the ones who obstructed and wasted the energies of the Arabs and of Iraq, preventing these energies from being directed at serving the central Arab cause and at supporting the line of confrontation with Israel. All the Iranian talk about the readiness of the Khomeyni revolution to participate in confronting the Zionist state began to appear like empty talk and verbal maneuvering devoid of any real sense.

The failure of the Palestinian mediation efforts to end the war was also another big dark cloud that gathered in the sky of Iranian-Palestinian relations.

FOR OFFICIAL USE

Palestinian Suspicions of Iran Mount

There are other reasons and factors that also helped bring dark clouds to the Iranian-Palestinian skies. In addition to the fact that the Palestinians were more convinced that ever of the justness of Iraqi demands on Iran, so that they perceived that Iran could respond to them without losing face, there was a feeling that continuing the Iranian propaganda campaigns against the Arab regimes in the Gulf, plotting against these regimes and inciting the minority sects, in the end would not serve the Iranian-Gulf entente that the Palestinians sought so fervently at the beginning of the Iranian revolution and therefore would not serve the Palestinian strategy that sees in this entente a bolstering of the Arab cause and the confrontation of Camp David and Israel.

Hence came the recurrent Palestinian advice to Iran, about which Khalid al-Hosseyh has spoken publicly, of the necessity to stop thinking about exporting the revolution and creating trouble for Iran's neighbors, especially since the Iraqi stance has proven to the Iranians that the Arabs are ready to resort even to arms to defend their entities, their national unities and their national identities.

In fact, the Palestinians began to see in the slogan of exporting the revolution a burden on Iran after its defeat at the hands of the Iraqis, since the danger of the Iranian call has receded, and the enthusiasm of the minority sects in the Gulf decreased when it saw the revolution, in its weakness and deterioration, turn into a bloody and terrorist nightmare that burdens the Iranian peoples themselves.

The Iraqis have often spoken of the Israeli arms that are being showered on Iran. But the Palestinians considered this to be a sort of exaggerated propaganda, necessitated by the war. But Palestinian suspicions of an arms-supply relationship between the Iran of Khomeyni and Israel mounted when the Soviets last year shot down an aircraft on a mysterious trip between Nicosia, Cyprus, and Tehran via Turkey, close to the Soviet borders with both Turkey and Iran, carrying an American arms shipment that was sold by the Zionist state to Iran.

The Iranians sought the help of the Syrians to clear their name vis-a-vis the Palestinians. But the Palestinians did not need a messenger to the Soviets to verify the incident. Abdul Halim Khaddam strongly defended Iran, stressing that "it did not and could not deal with Israel," saying that there was no evidence. But of course the Palestinians, with their close ties to the Soviets, did not have great difficulty in obtaining this "evidence" from Soviet intelligence, which proves beyond doubt that Iran bought spare parts from Israel.

Amal Disappoints the Palestinians

There is another reason for Palestinian disenchantment with Iran; this reason is closely connected with what is happening in Lebanon.

Since the 1960's, the Palestinians have established close relations with the Shi'ites, the largest sect in Lebanon numerically and the most disadvantaged.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

A whole generation of Palestinians and Lebanese Shi'ites lived together in the camps, the towns of the South, and the misery belts surrounding Beirut, together undergoing the same bitterness and misery--the Palestinians for the world's refusal to acknowledge their rights and the Shi'ites for their neglect by the state, with its sectarian structure.

After the defeat of 1967, the Palestinians were armed and grew in strength, but did not forget their Lebanese Shi'ite brethren. They coalesced with them and helped them raise their voices calling for equality; they even trained and armed them.

The Shi'ites then were fortunate to have a talented religious leader who appeared suddenly to guide their march and curb their emotions. The most glorious success of Mr Musa al-Sadir was in preventing the leftist political currents from infiltrating the sect, or stopping this infiltration and underwriting the loyalty of the greatest majority of the sect to his moderate religious-political leadership.

When the Lebanese war broke out in 1975, the Shi'ites fought with the Palestinians and suffered the siege of the Maronite militia in the Karantina and al-Maslakh slums in the heart of eastern Beirut; they both stood before the militia of the renegade major Sa'd Haddad that supports Israel in the South.

Then, suddenly, the unexpected happened. Al-Sadir suddenly disappeared while visiting Qadhdhafi in 1978, and his disappearance revived the rage and sadness of his followers. They were not content to point an accusing finger at the Libyan regime but also suspected that al-Sadir was a victim of a "water-tight plan," in the implementation of which the Libyan regime cooperated with some of its allies on the Palestinian left to get rid of his strong religious leadership, which had become a stumbling block against the infiltration of radical movements into his sect.

Sadness and rage did not last long, for the Iranian revolution soon came, and a number of its leaders who were trained in the Palestinian camps in the South came not to return the favor to their Palestinian trainers but to embrace the organization Amal that al-Sadir had formed as the military branch of his religious-political movement.

Amal grew stronger and Iran filled it with sectarian feelings, which were inflamed by what happened in the south of Lebanon, where the Shi'ites are concentrated, through the continuing Palestinian-Israeli war that had destroyed and depopulated the south. Some Shi'ites blamed the Palestinians for what befell them at the hands of the Israelis and their client, Major Haddad.

The Palestinians say that it is natural under such conditions for hatred between the parties to grow, fed by parts of the security apparatus in the Japanese regimes, encouraged by the Maronite "Lebanese Front" that had suddenly felt Lebanese brotherly love towards these Shi'ites, who have been dispossessed for decades.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Thus, Amal grew more and more, and yesterday's allies turned into enemies. But this growth, say the Palestinians, did not safeguard the cohesion of the Shi'ite organizations. The loyalty of its diverse branches spread out between various sides, starting with Iran and ending with the Lebanese security, through Syria and its deterrent and security authorities in Lebanon.

Therefore, Amal became, from the Palestinian point of view, a dire obstacle facing their free movement in Lebanon. Indeed it was felt to threaten their existence in the south and their communication and supply lines going to either Beirut or Syria.

It is true that Amal fighters number only a few thousand, and their training and armament is not to be compared with the Palestinian forces that are estimated at 30,000 fighters carrying arms. But Amal has caused severe problems for the Palestinians and their allies in the National Movement and caused armed clashes in the south and in Beirut, where many civilian and military casualties were caused. This is a source of embarrassment to the Palestinian revolution, especially since the fighting takes place in the heart of the capital or in its southern suburbs where the population density is high. With every round of fighting, the popularity of the Palestinians and their leftist allies recedes among their Muslim Lebanese allies who long more and more for the umbrella of official Lebanese authority and who look across the dividing line to eastern Beirut where relative calm prevails after Bashir physically liquidated his allies the Ahrar, leaving a pale shadow in his region for official authority.

The Iranian Role in Lebanon

Thus, the Iranian role in Lebanon did not please the Palestinians, for instead of having the Khomeyni apparatus help them close ranks with the Lebanese, they are increasing the pains and problems of the Palestinian presence in Lebanon through their support and encouragement of Amal.

The Palestinian bitterness towards Iran is expressed on every occasion and at the least negative initiative or mistake by the Iranians, when Hosseyn Shaykholeslam Zadeh, Iranian assistant foreign minister who headed his country's delegation to Beirut last November, boasted before journalists that the Palestinians had told him they considered the Gulf war and "American war launched against Iran to prevent it from widening the circle of the Islamic revolution and liberating Jerusalem from Zionism," the PLO hastened a few hours later to issue a statement denying the allegations, saying that the remarks of Shaykholeslam were not correct and that the PLO continued to support the efforts of the nonaligned countries and the Islamic conference to end the struggle. The Lebanese National Movement denied that it even discussed the war with the Iranian delegate.

But that was not the end of it. The ayatollahs were enraged to hear that some Palestinian leaders had met last summer with Bani-Sadr and Mas'ud Rajavi in Paris. They gave free rein to their shameless statements calling the people involved "hypocrites" of the stripe that support the exiled leaders and that get executed by the dozen in Tehran daily.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

The Palestinians were forced to deny that such meetings took place, at a time when the news agencies were distributing photos of the meetings. What the Palestinians did not say was that their meetings aimed at containing the rift in the Iranian revolution, or at least stopping the river of blood on both sides, that has smeared the reputation of Khomeyni's revolution before the whole world, and presented it as an example of a revolutionary mob that ignores all definitions of dignity and the simplest human considerations.

The ayatollahs did not stop there. At the height of the Arab discussion of the Saudi plan to solve the Middle East crisis, they unleashed the mobs in the Iranian streets to shout against 'Arafat, calling him a blasphemer and a traitor. Once again the Palestinians kept silent and let the storm that accompanied the Fez summit pass. Then they expressed their displeasure at the Iranian stance and noted for the first time that the Iranian-Palestinian relationship is flawed.

- The story is not over yet. There are still so many things the Palestinians
- can say to their "friends" the Iranians.

And in any case, whether the Palestinians speak or not, they inwardly feel the injustice that befell their Iraqi brothers when Arab and Palestinian voices were raised denouncing their confrontation of the Iranian attack.

- And if the Palestinians speak or not, they now know exactly the kind of
personalities and mentalities that rule Iran today. The least that can be
said about them is what the Palestinian official said to AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI:
"It is impossible to deal with these Iranians who now rule in Iran and Qom.
Between us there exist many years that have to be crossed before Iran can
have a real revolution that believes in a healthy and honest relationship
with the Arabs."

COPYRIGHT: 1981 AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI

CSO: 4404/270

OPEC AFFAIRS

BRIEFS

MEETING ON NIGERIA--Abu Dhabi, 26 Mar (REUTER)--Oil ministers will call an immediate emergency meeting unless oil companies stop trying to force Nigeria to cut its prices, OPEC President Mana' Sa'id al-'Utaybah said today. Dr al-'Utaybah, the United Arab Emirates oil minister, told reporters he had consulted fellow ministers yesterday and today on Nigeria's situation. He said that unless the companies changed their stance "we will call for an extraordinary meeting immediately." OPEC (Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries) held emergency talks only last weekend in Vienna and decided to cut output to defend itself against a world oil glut. [Text] [JN261855 London REUTER in English 1836 GMT 26 Mar 82]

CSO: 4400/220

11
FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

EGYPT

INTERVIEW WITH BUTRUS GHALI

PM071135 Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 7 Apr 82 pp 54-55

[Interview with Egyptian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Butrus Ghali by Abdelaziz Dahmani: "Self-Confident Egypt"--date and place not given]

[Text] JEUNE AFRIQUE: In Addis Ababa at the end of February Egypt strongly condemned the "illegal nature" of the Saharan Democratic Arab Republic's [SDAR] admission and the "illegitimacy" of the session, but it did not join the camp of 19. That is rather an ambiguous attitude....

Butrus Ghali: At the Monrovia summit in 1979, Egypt abstained on the Sahara affair. At that time it did not have relations with Algeria or with Morocco. We adopted a neutral stance. We also abstained at the Freetown summit. Egypt has not recognized the Saharan Republic. At the Nairobi summit Egypt agreed to take part in the vote, following the consensus achieved by the heads of state assembly. When the Addis Ababa incident occurred last February, Egypt suggested postponing the session in order to hold an informal conference. Throughout the session we tried to find a compromise to prevent the OAU from breaking up.

That is why Egypt did not withdraw. On the last day of the session Egypt was the only state to declare clearly that the meeting had become illegal since the two-thirds quorum was no longer guaranteed. Thus our attitude is one of condemning the irregularities which brought the SDAR into the OAU while continuing our efforts to encourage a rapprochement between the two hostile blocs. The OAU's unity is much more important than the Saharan conflict.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: How do you hope to find a compromise likely to save the OAU?

Butrus Ghali: I admit with all modesty that I do not yet know. Many colleagues from both sides came to see me in Addis Ababa to ask me in my capacity as doyen--which annoyed me a great deal, because they know how old I am!--to find a solution. But I will consult Africa's wise men, visit them and ask their advice. And on the basis of those contacts, which I hope will take place soon, I will propose a compromise solution to President Husni Mubarak. If he accepts it, we will then be able to try to find a solution to this very serious problem.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

JEUNE AFRIQUE: If I remember rightly, when he was Vice President Husni Mubarak prevented open war between Morocco and Algeria following the battle of Amgala at the very start of the Sahara conflict....

Butrus Ghali: That is true. He discretely played the role of mediator between Algiers and Rabat. He did so successfully, since direct war between the two countries was averted.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Will that kind of initiative be possible once again after 25 April, when Egypt has recovered the whole of Sinai?

Butrus Ghali: Our initiative is not linked with 25 April. It will be taken in an African framework: We could put solutions to Mr Arap Moi in his capacity as OAU chariman or to the implementation committee which draws its legitimacy from the last heads of state summit.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Is not the Sahara affair, which has been poisoning inter-African relations for a long time, likely to move from the OAU to the super powers?

Butrus Ghali: I entirely agree. And that is why we must take action to find a temporary solution to the Sahara affair. By so doing we will prevent the OAU from breaking up.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: The reply to the boycott by the 19 countries which left the Addis Ababa session is the threat from the 26 countries which have recognized the SDAR to take similar action if the SDAR's admission is called into question. What will happen in that case?

Butrus Ghali: We are in danger of returning to the situation which existed before May 1963, when two blocs confronted each other: The Casablanca bloc and the Monrovia bloc. The most powerful weapon which Africa has is its unity. The OAU has given the African states a diplomatic strike force in the international organizations and specialized agencies.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: The states which were formerly calling for Egypt's expulsion from the OAU now want you to remain. You must be pleased about that....

Butrus Ghali: We should forget about the conflicts which existed at the last summits and think only of African unity. Egypt fought in Monrovia not only to defend itself against those advocating its expulsion but also to preserve African unity. And we are continuing the same policy today.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Your country has been invited to attend the forthcoming nonaligned meetings. Should it be deduced from that that Mubarak's Egypt is immediately rejoining the Nonaligned Movement?

Butrus Ghali: We have never stopped being a full member of it.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: But an attempt was made to expel you from it....

.Y

Butrus Ghali: A tiny minority made a great deal of noise about that, but there was also the silent majority. At the last Nonaligned Conference in Havana in 1979 there was talk of a protest against the Egyptian presence. But no mention was made of our fight against the "natural alliance" between the nonaligned countries and the socialist camp.... And we won in Havana by prompting several countries to change their attitude. Egypt has always played a major role in nonalignment. The Camp David agreements concealed that role somewhat. But the facts are there.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: A new chapter will be opened on 26 April. How would you react to the pressures already being exerted on a large number of African states to restore relations with Israel?

Butrus Ghali: We take a neutral stance. It is up to the African states to shoulder their full responsibilities.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Nonetheless there is a strong movement in Egypt for a real rapprochement with the Arab world....

Butrus Ghali: Continuity will characterize Egyptian policy: Continuation of our relations with Israel, negotiations with the United States and Israel to solve the Palestinian problem. If the Arab states wish to return to Egypt, great and generous Egypt will welcome them. But Egypt will not take the first step. The Arabs must accept that Egypt will continue to have relations with Israel. Three Arab states have already set an example: Sudan, Somalia and Oman.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Is that enough to break your isolation?

Butrus Ghali: It is the others which are isolated. Egypt and Sudan alone represent more than half of the Arab world.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: You can talk like that because there has never been a complete break between Egypt and the Arab world....

Butrus Ghali: It is true that despite the Arab pseudo, boycott Egypt has continued to give aid: 2 million of our technicians are working in the Arab world when we have great need of them in our country. We are still receiving thousands of Arab students when our own students cannot find places in our universities. Look at the figures: 17,000 Palestinian students out of a total of 28,334 Arab students in the universities, not to mention technical institutes and other schools.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Nonetheless the 2 million technicians in foreign countries bring you some \$3 billion per year.

Butrus Ghali: There are two schools of thought. According to some studies the \$2.6 billion they bring back are less than the loss of earnings caused by their absence. To give just one example: We brought in South Korean workers to construct the Salam Hotel in Heliopolis. But the decision to send workers, technicians and teachers to the Arab world is primarily a political decision aimed at maintaining Arab solidarity.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Since al-Nasir's days you have constantly given the impression of wishing to deal with the Arab countries from a dominant position.

Butrus Ghali: That is untrue. For instance, we have never claimed that the way in which we approach the peaceful settlement of the Middle East crisis is a model for others. If our Arab brothers find an alternative, we will have no criticism to make.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: And what if that alternative called Camp David into question?

Butrus Ghali: Don't count on us if we have to hand Sinai back to the Israelis in order to embrace the Arabs. There can be no question of back-pedaling.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: If Egypt restores relations with the Arab world, will you ask the League to return to Cairo?

Butrus Ghali: It will be welcome. But we will certainly not go to Tunis. We still regard the transfer of the Arab League to Tunis as illegal.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: Nonetheless it was a unanimous decision by the member states, aside from Egypt of course....

Butrus Ghali: Under the terms of the League charter, dated 22 March 1945, the seat of the League is in Cairo. To move it requires amendment of the charter. The transfer is therefore illegal, as is Egypt's suspension.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: You seem very sure of your rights. According to you it is always the others who are wrong. Husni Mubarak's policy was thought to be more flexible....

Butrus Ghali: We are perfectly within our rights. It is the other Arab countries which have failed to understand anything. Switch off that tape-recorder and I will tell you what I think. I will tell some truths, without being unkind....

COPYRIGHT: Jeune Afrique GRUPJIA 1982.

CSO: 4500/149

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

IRAQ

'AZIZ VIEWS CONFLICT WITH IRAN

PM191221 Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 12-25 Apr 82 pp 8-11

[Interview with Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz by Simon Malley in Baghdad--
date not given]

[Text] [Question] The date of the Nonaligned summit is rapidly approaching and your capital gives the impression of being a real hive of industry. Construction work is going on everywhere. Nonetheless the atmosphere of war predominates; the fighting continues and Iraqis are dying on the front every day....Do you think that the Iranian authorities' warnings, the alerts and even threats which their leaders are making are serious? Can they paralyze the summit's work or even, more especially, prevent it from being held?

Tariq 'Aziz: Of course we are at war with Iran. Of course all our material, administrative and diplomatic capabilities are directed toward and mobilized for that war. But at the same time we are aware of the essential fact that the overwhelming majority of nonaligned countries want the conference to take place in the place and at the time appointed. All the contacts we have had, all the discussions we have had have convinced us that the state of war with Iran in no way justified postponing that conference or holding it in another country. For if that happened, it would be very harmful to the Nonaligned Movement itself, especially since one of the movement's most important traditions is that its conferences are always held at the appointed time and place.

You are aware of the great sacrifices made by Iraq to host such a conference. More than \$1 billion has been allocated to the organization of that summit by our government in order to ensure that the delegations which come and their leaders have as much comfort and security as possible. In any case, the main point to remember is that the main leaders of the Nonaligned Movement are fully aware of all that and that they have already expressed their conviction of the need to hold the seventh summit in Baghdad next September.

You mentioned the question of Iranian threats against the holding of that summit. In reply to that I would like to say first that the Iranian attitude is absolutely immoral. Since the sixth Nonaligned summit decided that the next summit would be held in Baghdad, and since that decision has since been confirmed, in other words after the launching of the Iranian aggressions and

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

of the conflict between us and Tehran, all we can say is that the Iranian threats are a challenge not to Iraq but to the whole movement, to all the heads of state and all the delegations which will attend that conference. Moreover, what contribution has Iran made to the Nonaligned Movement? It has only been a member since 1979 and has not assumed any responsibility in it. It has no special activity or role. Still less is it a traditional participant, whereas Iraq was one of the movement's founders since we took part in the Bandung conference in Indonesia and then in the Belgrade conference which founded the movement.

To turn to the practical aspects of your question, I would like to tell you, taking full responsibility for my words and my pledges, that Iran is incapable of taking any action against the conference. Some people mention the danger of the threats of aerial bombardment. But go and put the question to foreign observers and diplomats posted to Tehran and you will be convinced that the Iranian Air Force no longer exists on the battlefield. Throughout 1981 and to this day no Iranian aircraft has been able to enter Iraq's airspace, still less reach Baghdad. The Iranian threats are therefore both immoral and vain. They are immoral and vain because they are not based on any tangible facts and can in no way jeopardize the holding and course of that conference.

Allow me to assure you that for our part, as host state for that conference, we feel immense responsibility toward the leaders and prominent people who honor us with their presence, and there could be no question of inviting them if we were not fully and completely sure and convinced that we are capable of providing them with the necessary protection. You know that we have established excellent relations throughout the world, especially with the Third World countries. We have a reputation which we are anxious to keep. Do you think we would risk it if we were not sure of being able to honor our commitments? When the Iranians make their threats they prove two important things: Their total lack of responsibility with regard to the international wishes and their lack of respect for the decisions and opinion of the nonaligned countries' peoples and governments.

[Question] What about the danger of an Israeli attack like the one which destroyed the Tammuz nuclear power station? Do you not fear that the Tel Aviv authorities might launch an air attack during the summit, or make threats against Iraq?

Tariq 'Aziz: First I must say that so far we have not heard of such threats. In any case if Israel has such intentions--but personally I do not think it would dare to confront almost 100 heads of state--Iraq is perfectly capable of defending its airspace.

Nonetheless allow me to assure you that what happened last June (the attack on Tammuz) will not happen again. Practical proof of that is given by the fact that Israeli aircraft have indeed tried to penetrate Iraqi airspace in the past few months. They were unable to get any further than 60 km inside our territory--and you know that an aircraft travels 60 km in a few minutes--because our air force immediately gave chase and forced them to turn back.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

We are sure that the Iraqi forces are strong and powerful enough to protect our airspace against any kind of threat....The heads of state and top international figures who have visited our country since the outbreak of hostilities with Iran 18 months ago can bear witness to the fact that they were able to land in our country night or day without being troubled in any way by any threats, be they Iranian or Israeli. Moreover such threats have not prevented our country hosting various Islamic and nonaligned conferences, among others.

If the aim of the campaigns launched by Tehran was to create and maintain an atmosphere of anxiety over the seventh Nonaligned summit then I think it has completely failed. Moreover most of the countries which the Iranian representatives have contacted in an attempt to discourage them from coming to Baghdad have replied that the Iranians' attitude was irresponsible and that it would be preferable for them to end the war before the conference is held.

[Question] You mention the war....Why did your troops cross the Iranian borders in September 1980?

Tariq 'Aziz: We were facing an Iranian aggression which threatened our national sovereignty and security. Before the war that aggression took various forms: Threats, interference in internal Iraqi affairs, calls to overthrow our country's regime. And when the aggression took a military turn in September 1980 with direct attacks on Iraqi cities we decided to react, and our forces then rapidly entered Iranian territory, thus forcing Tehran's troops to move away from our borders and our urban centers.

[Question] Some 18 months have already passed since the start of these hostilities which are causing bloodshed in two neighboring countries. World opinion is wondering what are the minimal conditions for a final settlement.... What therefore is the Iraqi Government's fundamental position?

Tariq 'Aziz: Iraq's basic demands are known: That Iran recognize the international borders established by agreements reached between the two countries and institutionalized by international agreements previously recognized by Tehran and Baghdad; that it also recognize Iraq's sovereignty over the Shatt al-Arab which throughout history has always been an Iraqi river.

Another basic demand is that Iran officially express, in a responsible spirit, its respect for Iraqi sovereignty, good-neighborly relations and nonintervention in the internal affairs of Iraq and the countries in the region, so that the political, economic and social options of all peoples are guaranteed without the need for anybody's protection. We respect such principles and are prepared to guarantee them. The Iranians, however, have never expressed their intention either of respecting them or of working to reach a peaceful solution to the conflict on those bases.

[Question] There is some doubt about the famous Algiers agreement reached between Baghdad and Tehran and which have been repudiated. Do you think those agreements can form a basis for agreement between the two countries?

Tariq 'Aziz: Those 1975 agreements were abrogated by the Iraqi Government for two main reasons: First, they had been imposed on Iraq by force in

exceptional circumstances due to the fact that the former shah of Iran interfered, with Israeli and U.S. support, in internal Iraqi affairs by giving very large-scale support to a reactionary internal revolt. That is a perfectly well-known fact which was published by the world press and confirmed by official U.S. congressional documents.

The second reason is that Iran, under the Khomeyni regime, was not willing to respect those agreements, which were based on a number of elements: The delimitation of territories, sovereignty over the Shatt al-Arab and the principles which should govern relations between Iraq and Iran, namely non-intervention in internal affairs. Now Iran interfered in internal Iraqi affairs, did not hand back Iraqi territories as stated in the 1975 agreements and bombarded our border cities with its artillery. Consequently those agreements became null and void since the other side was not honoring them. Moreover, how can we ignore the fact that several top Iranian officials condemned them immediately after the shah was overthrown? And how can Iran's [current] "attachment" to those agreements be explained when they formerly condemned them? The position now is that we have abrogated them and that we think that a new agreement should be negotiated if Iran agrees to the conflict being settled on a peaceful basis.

[Question] What progress has been made by the mediation efforts of Olof Palme, the UN secretary general's representative, and of the missions sent by the Islamic conference and the Nonaligned Movement?

Tariq 'Aziz: All those initiatives have been blocked by Tehran's insistence that Iraqi troops be withdrawn from its territories without any precondition. But it refuses to take part in negotiations once the withdrawal has been carried out, or to commit itself to accepting principles or bases for settling the conflict between our two countries. That Iranian position is unacceptable and we reject it. The various missions which have tried to find a solution to the conflict understand us well. We are prepared to give all the necessary guarantees and to make all the necessary promises with a view to our complete withdrawal from Iranian territories if an all-embracing agreement is reached between Tehran and us.

We have also explained to those missions that we have no territorial ambitions regarding Iran. But if there is a conflict it is vital to find a solution to its fundamental causes before withdrawing our troops. For if we withdraw our troops without any reply being given on the causes of the conflict, the conflict will remain in full. And it will still be possible for Iran to attack Iraq later from more secure military positions. No Iraqi will give it such an advantage....

[Question] The Mojahedin-e Khalq leader recently said he thought that Tehran did not want an end to the war because it was helping to maintain the regime in power. What is your view of that?

Tariq 'Aziz: That is perfectly true. Tehran really wants to continue the war because it thinks it will help it rid itself of internal adversaries but also because it enables it to keep the army away from Tehran. All international

diplomatic and political circles think that, if the war ends, the Iranian Army will have some role to play in the country's future. I do not know what that role will be, but the fact is that it will have a role. It is to prevent that that Khomeyni is keeping the army occupied with war....

There is another point, and it is a fact which the whole world accepts: The Iranian regime has failed on the political, economic, social and ideological planes. Consequently the continuation of the war gives it an excellent pretext for not tackling the serious problems facing its country. Each time one of those problems is raised it merely says that it is necessary to wait until the war is over. What it fears most is that the end of the war might lead to the total isolation of its regime....So what does that position reflect if not despair and failure? Did you know, for example, that more than 100,000 Iranians have been killed, 300,000 are wounded and maimed while 2 million Iranians are refugees and 6 million are unemployed? Did you know that Iran has been exporting no more than 15 percent of its oil since the start of this conflict?

And yet Iran needs peace. It needs that peace more than anything else. If the present Iranian Government was really patriotic, if it was aware of its responsibilities, if it intended to shoulder them fully it would first seek ways of reaching a settlement to its conflict with Iraq. If it really was revolutionary should it not harness itself, like all revolutions in the world, to the crucial task of peace in order to be able to devote itself to the tasks of national rebuilding?

Just look at how true revolutions have behaved throughout the world: In the Soviet Union, in the PRC and even here in Iraq. When we signed the 1975 agreements--it was President Saddam Husayn himself who signed them--in particularly difficult conditions it was because we were in the middle of a revolution and wanted to safeguard our country's unity and sovereignty....

If the Iranian regime has not followed and is not following that path, is it not basically because it is engaged in an "adventure" and not a revolution?

COPYRIGHT: 1982 Afrique-Asie.

CSO: 4400/220

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

SYRIA

'AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI' INTERVIEWS SYRIAN MUSLIM LEADER

JN281134 Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 26 Mar 82 pp 37-38

[Interview with Shaykh 'Ali Sadr al-Din Bayanuni, member of the Muslim Brothers' Command in Syria by AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI--date and place not given]

[Excerpts] [Question] What is the impact of the historical charter to liberate Syria on the armed struggle in Syria?

[Answer] We say that the armed revolution against the current regime in Syria, which was launched by the Muslim Brothers, expresses the aspirations of the various factions of the people and is a natural result of the regime's criminal measures against all the people without exception. In the past, Hafiz al-Asad sought to restrict the struggle between him and the Muslim Brothers. But the new national alliance confirms that the Syrian people with all their political trends, religious affiliation and national figures, are determined to topple the regime with all available means, particularly by armed struggle.

The impact of this charter is that it is now possible to mobilize forces which had not participated in the confrontation of the regime in the past on the political, military and information level.

[Question] The Syrian media and some Western news agencies speak about divisions and differences within the Muslim Brothers movement in Syria. How true is this and have all the groups of the movement signed the charter?

[Answer] We do not need to comment on what the aforementioned media report. It is very well-known that since mid-March 1980, all the groups of the Muslim Brothers in Syria united in one organization and under one command which has and continues to supervise the operations of Jihad against the authorities in Syria. The field command of these operations is linked to this command which represents all the parties since that date. These groups have signed the charter with the exception of some parties which have not signed the charter as individuals and not as representatives of parties or groups.

[Question] Through the national alliance, you are calling for armed struggle to topple the regime. Are you optimistic on this level and can it really be done?

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

[Answer] Yes, this can be achieved. The new alliance gives the revolution in Syria a new momentum and wider support which it needs. A regime which subsists on shedding blood cannot remain in power for long. We shall not allow the regime to repeat the Hamah experiment and to single out every city by itself. If it tries to do so, we shall not remain as bystanders. One must not forget also that the regime is bankrupt on the domestic level and is becoming more and more isolated on the Arab and international level. All these are indicators that the countdown has started.

[Question] How do the Muslim Brothers view the situation in Iran at present?

[Answer] At the beginning, the brothers were optimistic in view of the principles that the Tehran rulers had proclaimed at the time. Then came the Iranian regime's practices in Iran, its alliances with outside forces and its relations with neighbor countries to have us review our optimistic stand. The Muslim Brothers contacted the Iranian regime to have it refrain from this course and avoid any connections with Hafiz al-Asad's regime. The Iranians, however, insisted on pursuing these practices. We recently attacked Iranian Foreign Minister Velayati and at the time that the world was grieving over the Hamah incidents 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam was in Tehran to conclude more agreements with Iran.

[Question] What type of rule do you want to establish in Syria after this alliance?

[Answer] We have announced our program and it is clear that the regime we want will restore to the people their freedom and dignity and not a regime that will be a dictatorial one in which one community, party or group will replace the current regime.

In light of the declared national alliance principles which are meant to be the basis of the current movement and a framework for Syria's constitutional future and political action, we support a regime which completely contradicts the practices of the Khomeyni regime and one that stresses that Islam is a religion of tolerance as evidenced by the fact that the alliance itself acknowledges the plurality of parties and opinions.

[Question] How was the alliance born?

[Answer] Dialogue among the Muslim Brothers, the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and the other sides began more than 2 years ago. The formula of this alliance became clear during the past months through 10 principles which were to be submitted for discussion by the various sides. The Hamah incidents hastened the process after all were convinced of its importance not only to topple the regime but to define the landmarks of the future republic in light of the 16 principles which had been made public.

[Question] Will you broaden the platform of this alliance in future?

[Answer] The door remains open for all the other organizations.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

[Question] I wish to pose a previous question. What substitute do you want?

[Answer] We repeat and say that the regime we want will not be a sectarian regime and will not be directed against the 'Alawite community. It will save the masses of this community from the henchmen of the regime. We shall allow the people to elect their representatives in a free and democratic manner. In short, the movement took place to eliminate injustice.

[Question] What are the groupings which made up the Islamic Front and which are signatories to the charter?

[Answer] The Islamic Front includes all the Islamic groups, organizations, parties and figures including the Muslim Brothers. The secretary general of the front is Shaykh Abu al-Nasr Bayanuni. The activities of this front were highlighted in particular in Hamah through various Jihad operations.

COPYRIGHT: AL WATAN AL ARABI

CSO: 4400/220

TUNISIA

IMPACT OF BOURGUIBA'S RULE DISCUSSED

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French No 261, 15 Mar 82 pp 25-27

[Article by Hedi Dhoukar: "The Stamp of Bourguiba"]

[Text] Pierre Mauroy, accompanied by, among others, Alain Savary, his minister of education and a veteran socialist pioneer, who gained his early experience in the anticolonial struggle in Tunisia, should not have felt himself too much of a foreigner in this country to which he paid his first visit as the head of a French cabinet. This visit was not much different from various other trips made by the French foreign minister in France itself, when it came to rallying as many as possible of the business leaders displeased with a political change which did not, unfortunately, please the homeland of the "supreme combatant" on the other side of the Mediterranean, either.

Thus it was a part of Pierre Mauroy's task to reestablish an atmosphere of trust between Paris and Tunis. This undertaking seemed moreover to be facilitated by recent political developments in Tunisia itself. This explains the warm complicity which characterized the meeting between Pierre Mauroy and a revived and expansive Bourguiba, the key author of "change" in his country. Would such a meeting have been possible if the leaders of the Tunisian workers' federation (UGTT [Tunisian General Federation of Labor]) were still in prison, where they were hastily locked up just after the bloody events of 26 January 1978, or if the monologue of an omnipresent party, the PSD [Destourin Socialist Party] had not yielded to a dialogue with numerous interlocutors, with so few false notes that some see therein an indication of political "maturity"?

Relations between Tunis and Paris are in any case "privileged" to such an extent that one even wonders if what happened in Tunisia, which was the product of specific local evolution, did not after all benefit from the finishing and accelerating touch of a Bourguiba whose actions are inspired by France-- which "made" him what he is, to use his expression.

The Tunisian partners in Pierre Mauroy's delegation were therefore only the more justified in proving exigent. Their desire was to profit from the "spirit of Cancun" which pervaded Algiers at the time of the signing of a gas contract with France. Their proposals have to do, among other things, with an increase in French economic aid, French participation in an investment bank in association with Tunis (40 percent) and Qatar (30 percent), and the financing, undertaken entirely by Paris, of a second French-language television network, the estimated cost of which comes to 105 million francs.

These are all proposals, the Tunisian leaders stress with satisfaction, which serve the interests of France as much as, if not more than, those of Tunisia. The economic aid requested, which would come to a billion francs (instead of the 230 million granted by the preceding government) would indeed allow Tunisia to purchase French products (industrial plants, light infrastructure installations and farm equipment). But it would also contribute to the economic recovery sought by the socialists in France. Similarly, French participation to the extent of 30 percent—to which it appears agreement has been obtained—in the tripartite bank, with capital totaling \$70 million, would allow that country to invest in the Arab market. The high-level joint French-Tunisian commission which will meet during this month is supposed, moreover, to find a solution to the problem of the French assets blocked in Tunisia (200 million francs), just as it will have to decide on the proposed second French-language television network.

Integrity and Security

The idea is indeed attractive to the leaders in Paris. But they are not unfamiliar with the hesitation felt by the majority of Tunisian citizens, concerned about the constant and debilitating deterioration of the national network, which is now almost entirely discredited in a country the development and requirements of which it falls short of reflecting.

Other aspects of the bilateral relations were raised, not the least of which is that having to do with Tunisia's "security." Pierre Mauroy, as did Minister of External Relations Claude Cheysson and Minister of Defense Charles Hernu, who visited Tunis last summer, expressed the interest of France in "the territorial integrity" and "the security of Tunisia." The terms used were almost identical to those which the French prime minister used in this country, the headquarters of the Arab League, to defend the right to exist enjoyed by Israel, a nation which bases its entire policy on a code of aggression.

Be that as it may, there can be no doubt that the Tunisian leaders were sensitive to the renewal of the commitment of the Paris government toward them, particularly since, unlike the Americans, which subject them to lengthy ideological-military lectures¹ of a sort which plunge Tunisia into the torments of the East-West conflict, the message of France is accompanied by hard cash.

This explains why, in a spectacular culmination of the beginnings of a new Tunisian-French idyll, President Bourguiba invited Colonel al-Qadhafi to pay him a visit forthwith, putting an end to 7 years of the tensest relations between Tripoli and Tunis precisely following the failure of the union, still-born at the time of its signing on 12 January 1974 in Djerba. Colonel al-Qadhafi's visit, crowning it all, coincided with the publication of the verdict of the International Court in The Hague in the suit between Tunis and Tripoli on the subject of the Mediterranean continental shelf. The dividing line on this shelf--thought to be rich in oil--established by the International Court is more or less the same as that which had been agreed upon by France and Italy in the colonial days. Although not satisfactory to Tunisia, the settlement of this dispute without a doubt offered the advantage of enabling it to embark, on a calmer basis, upon a process of complementary economic and cultural exchange with Libya, whose leader showed surprising understanding in this connection.

Not only did the chief of state of the Jamahiriya abandon his peremptory demands for immediate unity to endorse economic and social integration of the two countries by "stages," but he is even reported to have said, following the three talks he had with the Tunisian president, that he has decided not to boycott Arab summit meetings any longer and to honor that which is to be held again in Fes to discuss the Fahd plan² with his presence.

Minimum Conceded

This will without a doubt considerably facilitate the task of Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali in Saudi Arabia, where he went in the hope of obtaining Riyadh's financial participation in the achievement of the 1982-1986 Sixth Plan. If this effort is successful, as the very close bilateral relations between Tunisia and the Wahhabite monarchy suggests that it will be, this Sixth Development Plan, based mainly on improvement of the farm sector, may benefit from the cornucopia of this double dialogue established by Bourguiba between his country and France, on the one hand, and with Libya and Saudi Arabia, on the other. Still with the launching of the Sixth Plan in mind, the agreement reached on 18 February, the day Pierre Mauroy arrived in Tunisia, by the government, the employers and the UGTT was signed within a rather discouraging domestic context.

Coming after spectacular increases in the price of a number of foodstuffs (butter, milk, meat), the strikes called throughout the country several weeks prior to the signing of the government-employers-UGTT agreement occasioned a government attitude very similar to that adopted just prior to the events, so sadly remembered, of 26 January 1978. The UGTT was subjected to concealed threats and blackmail! The government allowed hundreds of enterprises to shut down in order to break the strikes and itself had recourse to the army to break the strike of the transport workers. In this test of strength imposed upon it, the trade union federation found itself, just as it did prior to 26 January 1978, alone against the state, that is to say the PSD, as Mohamed Mzali made a point of proclaiming loud and clear. This is a state which is, moreover, the chief employer in the country, in which it holds 60 percent of the industrial, agricultural and financial stocks.³

In relation to the wage demands of the UGTT, the agreement signed by the "social partners" conceded the minimum under these circumstances: the Inter-occupational Guaranteed Minimum Wage for a 48-hour week was increased by 30 percent. It was established at 85 dinars, instead of the 120 initially demanded by the UGTT. The agricultural guaranteed minimum wage was established at 2.4 dinars per labor day, and an increase in the form of premiums and indemnities ranging between 27 and 35 dinars was granted workers and government employees.

Now even those tempted to be content with such an agreement, but unable to ignore the parasitic and anarchic nature of the country's economy, particularly its private sector, know perfectly well that these gains are likely to be eaten up soon by inflation.⁴ This is the more inevitable since, their bad faith contributing, the employers will find themselves tempted to inflate their profits, even if it means pursuing a policy courting disaster by

profiting from the increase in purchasing power to which these measures lead. For it falls within the logic of the balance of forces which prevails in the country today that the upper and petite bourgeoisie will seek to exploit this balance to their advantage. The state-PSD, which cannot abandon support of it, can only place reliance once again on the signing of a new "social pact"⁵ which will allow it, among other things, to play the role of an arbiter rather than a representative of certain social categories.

Bipolarization

This is well and truly what it attempted to do by submitting a first "social pact" of "limited duration" to the UGTT. The nature of the exchange which the regime proposed to the representatives of the unions says a great deal, moreover, about the real role of the state-PSD. It wants in fact to effect a price increase on a very broad range of products, foodstuffs in particular, without UGTT support of any strike for higher wages. In exchange, the regime undertook to guarantee that plants would not be shut down because of strikes (lockout) and that the prices on certain goods of first necessity will not be increased (bread, oil, grain).

Although the trade union officials rejected it, this social pact will nonetheless be the subject of further negotiations. It is a harsh test for the trade union federation, which finds itself in a position almost identical to its situation just prior to 26 January 1978. With the difference, however, that its legitimate leadership, back in the same position, derives new strength from the experience it has accumulated since, which cannot fail to contribute to the combativity of its base levels. But what purpose, then, was served by the "opposition" which developed after that bloodbath? It certainly did not serve to tip the balance of forces somewhat in favor of the representatives of the workers class. The "consensus" its members claim (social democrats in the MDS [Socialist Democratic Movement], the socialists in the MUP [Popular Unity Movement] and Mohamed Harmel's Communist Party) is certainly built on converting analyses of the lessons to be drawn from the events of January 1978 and January 1980 (Gafsa) which are blamed on the PSD policy. But this criticism has given rise to nothing but appeals for "democracy," which carefully refrain from offering concrete proposals, which would, it is true, presuppose an otherwise more profound challenge to the regime.

There can be no doubt, on the other hand, the regime is utilizing this "opposition" as a buffer between itself and the other main organized force in the country--the UGTT.

What is more remarkable is that the basic characteristic of the Bourguiba policy as it marked the Destour, in which two poles have always coexisted, thus allowing the "supreme combatant" to play one against the other alternately, is found within the "opposition," in which the social democrats split into two factions (Mestiri, Hassib ben Ammar), as well as the MUP, the division of which into two movements is confirmed by the facts. This is also the case, if less well known, with the PCT [Tunisian Communist Party], wherein one of the members of the Politburo, Nouredine Bouarrouj, along with other members of the expanded Central Committee, is sponsoring the Communist Party-Seventh Congress organization.

During the sixth and seventh congresses (1958 and 1962), the PCT underwent a corrective sweep which destroyed the compromise policy of the colonial era, characterized in part by evasion of the national question in the direction of a so-called socialist revolution without which, it was claimed, Tunisian independence would have no meaning, and on the other hand, by opportunism involving compromise with the French authorities and the protectorate, against which it scarcely waged any serious battle. Following this courageous correction, late though it was in some respects, the communists supporting the seventh congress line believe that there has been regression. They say that just as the PCT chose legality within the colonial framework, it has today swung back toward legalist opportunism within the framework imposed by Bourguiba, and has opted for a policy they say is based on democracy and a "consensus," as well, they claim, as fidelity to the fatherland of socialism. However, these breaks are but a pale reflection of the Bourguiba policy, marked at birth by a major and bloody split.

A Senseless Myth

If it is not possible to expand here on the cultural nature and extroversion of the Bourguiba ideology in comparison to what that of Youssef was in its time,⁶ since having undergone another development, it must be recognized that it was well and truly into the breach created by this first break that the voices stifled by history tried to plunge in January 1978 and January 1980, only to be met immediately by a hail of bullets and to be drowned in blood. And it is this same break which projects its threatening shadow today over the PSM-UGTT confrontation, while the "opposition," which one could situate without risk of error around rather than face to face with the regime, is not even able to examine this schizophrenic split nor to grasp the meaning of the historic ferment for which it is the privileged site, where cultural repression and class struggles clash and merge.

Those who reduce the matter of the "pro-Islam trend" to an "extremist" phenomenon or a problem pertaining to the "rights of man" no longer have much of an alternative, under these conditions, to nurturing, for their part, the senseless myth of the Bourguiba faction, that is to say the myth of a man who has emptied the concept of class struggle of its entire content in order to rally a whole people around himself as a single individual. This myth, like that of Ataturk in Turkey, will certainly not survive him, even if, as can be predicted, the "consensus" carries over to the successor he chooses.

FOOTNOTES

1. The Reagan administration gave Tunis \$95 million in military aid (instead of 15 million) for the 1982 fiscal year.
2. Colonel al-Qadhdhafi nonetheless was quick to go back on these statements in a violent indictment of Saudi Arabia and the Fahd plan.
3. LE MAGHREB, 20 February 1982.

4. It is expected to be about 15 percent in 1982.
5. See AFRIQUE-ASIE, No 253, 23 November-6 December 1982, "The Destour Lock."
6. This break within the Destour occurred in 1955, during the bloody clash between the supporters of "independence by stages," whose ranks were led by Bourguiba, and supporters of the pursuit of the war within the North African context, with the goal of liberating the three countries simultaneously. This strategic line--defended in Tunisia by the FLN in Algeria and by the radical wing of the Moroccan movement, headed by Mohamed el-Basri--came within the context of the planned construction within the Greater Maghreb struggle. Salah ben Youssef was assassinated in Frankfurt in October 1961. The leadership of the faction he headed (called the Tunisian National Opposition Movement at that time) was later taken over by Ibrahim Tobal--editor's note).

COPYRIGHT: 1982 Afrique-Asie

5157

CSO: 4519/154

END