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20 May 1982

Near East/North Africa Report

(FOUO 20/82)

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NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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BAHRAIN

LONDON 'TIMES' ON 'ATTEMPTED COUP' TRIAL

PM291625 London THE TIMES in English 29 Mar 82 pp 1, 20

[Robert Fisk dispatch: "Iran Involvement in Attempted Coup Emerges at Secret Trial"]

[Excerpts] Manama, Bahrain, 28 Mar--The graffiti on the walls of Bab Al Bahrain Street have been carefully doctored. The Arabic words have been spray-painted over with childlike doodles, but just round the corner from the crowded Gold Bazaar, you can quite clearly make out the words Yasgat Nizam Al Khalifah (down with the Al Khalifah regime) inscribed on the side of a disused shop.

There are black stencil portraits of Ayatollah Khomeyni on the walls as well, most of them obscenely defaced. The Islamic Republic of Bahrain is a concept which the island's ruling dynasty rather naturally wishes to discourage.

Just 12 miles down the coast from Bahrain's futuristic capital, however, the dangers of an Iranian-backed Shia Muslim state on the island are being more seriously debated. In the little village of Jao, 73 men--13 of them Saudi nationals--are being tried for allegedly planning sabotage operations in Bahrain.

That, at least, is what the indictment claims, though the Al Khalifah family are well aware that the defendants were preparing a coup d'etat, a violent and potentially bloody putsch that would have marked Iran's first successful exportation of its Islamic revolution to the Arabian peninsula.

Shaikh Muhammad ibn Mubarak Al Khalifah, the foreign minister, is quite blunt about the whole affair. "The plot," he told THE TIMES, "was against the Arabism of Bahrain. It was foreign, non-Arab intervention in our affairs. These people should be punished."

And so they probably will be--perhaps with death--though Bahrain's minister of information goes to some lengths to emphasize that the Al Khalifah government is a tolerant regime which will always consider mercy.

A far more sensitive issue for the Bahrainis, however, is the patently obvious--even brazen--involvement of Iran in the planned coup. It is

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primarily for this reason that the trial of the 73 men, which resumed this weekend, has been held largely in secret. Journalists are politely but firmly barred from the proceedings.

Inquiries in Bahrain by THE TIMES, however, have established that the court, where the accused are defended by 17 lawyers, has heard evidence that:

1. Almost all those on trial were given arms and guerrilla training in Iran.
2. Most of the weapons found in carefully-hidden caches in the East Rifaa District of the island last December--including Israeli-made UZI sub-machineguns, a heavy machinegun, grenades and explosives were all brought into Bahrain from Iran.
3. The Iranian charge d'affaires in Bahrain, Mr Hassan Shustari, imported dozens of two-way radio sets for the conspirators under cover of diplomatic immunity.
4. More than 50 Bahraini police uniforms found with the weapons, complete with the Bahraini insignia of crossed swords, were manufactured in Tehran. This was confirmed by the Farsi identification on the back of the "official" police buttons.
5. The conspirators expected military assistance from Iranian troops were apparently to be landed in the island by sea. One source suggested that the Iranian Navy's British-built hovercraft was to be used in this operation.

Most of the accused are followers of Hojatolislam Hadi Modaressi, an Iranian Shia prelate who is a member of the Islamic Republican Party in Tehran, and who lived in exile for three years in Bahrain during the shah's reign. He was sheltered by Shaikh 'Isa ibn Salman Al Khalifah, the Bahraini ruler, who did not realize that he was secretly building up a range of contacts in the area.

The fact that the accused men include Arabs other than Bahrainis has prompted the cooperation of other Arab Gulf countries under the auspices of the newly-formed Gulf Cooperation Security Council. Shaikh Muhammad Mubarak, foreign minister, revealed to THE TIMES that an Omani and a Kuwaiti were also among the defendants.

It further transpires that Prince Nayif, the Saudi interior minister, flew to Bahrain with a squad of Saudi security men to interrogate the Saudi suspects.

The Bahraini authorities are aware that several dozen other Arabs are still in training in Iran, and that the full facts of last December's planned coup may still not be known. Officials in Manama are, for instance, particularly interested in a car bomb explosion that occurred in London last December, at the time of the discovery of the coup. Three men died in the bomb blast; two were Iranians, but the other was a Bahraini.

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The Iranian charge d'affaires has been expelled from Bahrain, but the island is almost defenceless, and the Bahrainis are anxious that their unpleasant discovery should not be sensationalized.

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IRAQ

'AZIZ VIEWS NONALIGNED SUMMIT, MIDEAST

PM291421 Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French 26 Apr-9 May 82 pp 13-15

[Interview with Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz by Simon Malley:
"The Nonaligned Movement Needs New Impetus"—date and place not given]

[Text] Simon Malley: What role could the forthcoming nonaligned summit play in solving the conflict between you and Iran? Do you intend to raise that question? If other countries were to raise it, would you object?

Tariq 'Aziz: We will receive any intention or plan to discuss that conflict in a constructive spirit. There is no question of our opposing that debate, and we are prepared to put our viewpoint to all the other countries. And if the heads of state conference intended to take an initiative with a view to settling that conflict, we would certainly not oppose it. We see absolutely no reason why the seventh nonaligned summit should not examine that affair.

Simon Malley: Do you not think it useful and necessary for concessions to be made to ensure the triumph of that peace which is vital for protecting our countries against imperialism and Zionism and for all energies to be mobilized against the peoples' common adversaries?

Tariq 'Aziz: We have no intention of keeping territories which belong to Iran and we have no designs on any Iranian city. All we ask is for a just and equitable solution to be found to this conflict, whose underlying causes must be settled so that war does not break out again later. It is by recognizing the rights of both sides that a reasonable basis for agreement can be found. Anybody who talks about "agreement" is naturally talking about reciprocal concessions.

Simon Malley: Let us discuss the nonaligned summit for a moment. Iraq will chair the movement for 3 years. How do you view the role which President Saddam Husayn will have to play in his capacity as nonaligned chairman? You know that there are two fundamental views which clashed in particular at the sixth summit in Havana on the very doctrine of nonalignment: The view which wants nonalignment to be "strictly neutral," so to speak, between the socialist and capitalist camps, between West and East, and the view which rejects that concept and instead insists that nonalignment should be an effective contribution to supporting the peoples against the domination of imperialism, its agents and its interests.

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Tariq 'Aziz: Here in Iraq we feel that the Nonaligned Movement needs a new impetus in the development of cooperation and solidarity among its members. Although Iraq is not a big country it nonetheless has major economic, cultural and human capabilities. We have given substantial aid to many African, Asian and South American countries and, although our capabilities in that sphere are somewhat reduced by the war with Iran, we will pursue that policy without any hesitation. Owing to its geographical position, Iraq can form a major link within the movement. It is in that spirit that the Iraqi chairmanship will act to strengthen ties between the three continents which form the Nonaligned Movement.

Nonetheless, as far as the Iraqi Government is concerned your question can only have one answer: The Nonaligned Movement should take clear and balanced stances on all international questions. But the very essence of objectivity imposes on us a fact which we cannot escape: The United States and the Soviet Union cannot be placed on the same level. In our view the fact is that the United States supports Israel and South Africa and its racist regime. The fact is that the United States is doing nothing practical to oppose the aggressions against the Arab nation, especially Palestine, the southern African nations (Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, the Seychelles or Madagascar) or the Latin American countries (Cuba, Nicaragua, El Salvador and so forth). The fact is that the United States supports the anti-people reactionary regimes in South and Central America.

So how can people hesitate between what you describe as the two views of nonalignment? In our view there can only be one nonalignment--the one which is a guarantee against all threats from imperialism, Zionism and racism. Although we think it necessary to be able to establish diversification in international relations, it is especially important not to alienate our independence and sovereignty for anything.

Let us be strictly objective. It is clear that the two superpowers obviously prefer alignment with their positions. That is a fact which nobody could deny. But, unlike the United States, the USSR is helping many nonaligned countries against imperialism and against the threats of colonialist and racist powers. It is supporting the Arab nation against the Zionist enemy. It maintains good relations with several nonaligned countries. The views held by some nonaligned countries are probably not identical with those of the USSR, but that disagreement cannot be compared with the acute hostility which exists between our countries and U.S. imperialist policy.

Simon Malley: Do you think that the nonaligned countries could play a role in reducing world tension, as they did in the period of acute crisis between Washington and Moscow?

Tariq 'Aziz: Yes, I seriously think they can. Once it has assumed chairmanship of the movement, Iraq will be able to play an active role in mobilizing as many countries as possible especially those whose policy is truly independent, in order to try to reduce world tension.

Simon Malley: How do you explain the fact that, after adopting a clear-cut stance against the Soviet policy of aid to Afghanistan, the Iraqi Government

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is now adopting a more serene attitude and is no longer talking about that problem?

Tariq 'Aziz: Through President Saddam Husayn Iraq proclaimed a position of principle back in November 1980. That position has not changed, and the fact that we proclaimed it means not that we were launching or participating in a campaign against the USSR but that we were drawing up an independent and sovereign policy. Nonetheless the USSR is still our friend and we continue to guard that friendship just as we will continue to make every effort to ensure that a satisfactory solution for all the parties concerned is found to the Afghan question, so that the Afghan people's sovereignty and dignity can be protected.

Simon Malley: But do you not think that Kabul was entitled to call for the USSR intervention, as moreover the UN Charter specifies?

Tariq 'Aziz: Yes, but Iraq has its own political principles which it certainly cannot impose on others. And I tell you that if Iraq is threatened by any force at all it will not resort to a foreign power to protect its security and sovereignty....

Simon Malley: Even if that power is stronger than the country's human, political and economic capabilities and you are likely to suffer military occupation and to lose your independence?

Tariq 'Aziz: We will never resort to a foreign force to protect our sovereignty. We will face any foreign intervention with our own mens. President Saddam Husayn has stated that, if a great power wanted to attack Iraq, it could occupy the land but would find a land without people because the entire people would fight....

Simon Malley: Some Arab circles, including some progressives, think that Iraq has hegemonist ambitions. What do you think of that?

Tariq 'Aziz: However strong it is Iraq will never be any threat to its Arab partners. Remember that in February 1980 President Saddam Husayn proposed a "national pact" to the Arab nation proposing that the Arab countries pledge never to use armed force among themselves. Is that pact not therefore a guarantee of our good faith? If anybody imagines that Iraqi forces could be used as aggression force against the Arab countries, he is very sorely mistaken. Iraq's entire strength is and remains available for protecting and winning back Arab lands against the imperialist and Zionist threats.

Simon Malley: Vital questions will once again be raised at the seventh nonaligned summit: Palestine and the Camp David agreements, southern Africa and Pretoria's racist and aggressive policy, Namibia, U.S. imperialism's threats, Kampuchea's status, North-South and South-South dialogue....

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Tariq 'Aziz: First let me say that the Palestine problem is a problem for us all...Well before the summit we will start detailed discussions with our Palestinian brothers in the PLO and the Arab nation to determine the best attitude to adopt....

Simon Malley: In that connection do you see an improvement in the prospects for a comprehensive settlement of the conflict since President al-Sadat's assassination?

Tariq 'Aziz: Unfortunately I do not see a noticeable improvement as regards a solution to the Palestinian problem. However, what must be stressed is that the Palestinian cause enjoys support which has been considerably increased at international level, especially in the past 3 years. That support is a considerable contribution, an impressive psychological strength on the path to the Palestinian people's liberation. You mentioned al-Sadat's assassination. Of course that assassination was a symbolic act. Nonetheless it is still certain that Camp David has been a lamentable failure. The plan which al-Sadat built with force and passion and which he regarded as his life's work, collapsed with the death of its author. But what was that assassination if not the historic failure of the "peace" to which al-Sadat devoted himself? Today the whole world witnesses that and will eventually admit it. Al-Sadat is no more and his death is positive in that it shows that the path which he took had no future and contained no hope....

Simon Malley: Do you think that Egypt will follow a more reasonable path and return to the great Arab nation under Husni Mubarak's regime?

Tariq 'Aziz: We in Iraq do not try to prophesy. Of course the post-Sadat period is relatively better, but there can be no question of falling into blind optimism. That is mainly because the dangers of the Camp David agreements still exist and because they have not been denounced or abandoned by al-Sadat's successors. Camp David has failed but the United States has not stopped believing in it. Moreover nor has Israel or the Egyptian Government.

As for President Mubarak, we think that he is a responsible man. He can say and do what he wants. That is why it would not be right for us or Arab leaders to become caught up in conjectures, to say what he will or will not do. We will have to judge the Egyptian head of state by his actions and dealings.

Simon Malley: What about the problems of colonialism, of South Africa and its aggressions? Is it not necessary to go further than condemnations and "Sunday vows," as they say in the West? Would it not be possible to include the movement to adopt and implement more practical measures against the racist Pretoria regime? The African peoples and the democratic forces are tired of making do with resolutions and condemnations....

Tariq 'Aziz: You are absolutely right. But you know that the movement adopts resolutions and that it is up to its members to implement or forget them. Nonetheless that should not prevent the seventh summit from considering

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and deciding how it can ensure that its resolutions will be accompanied by practical measures and will not ultimately be ignored. We know that there are several countries which are still ignoring the resolutions which have been adopted. The time will come when they will have to answer for their respective machinations. That applies to South Africa and to Israel and to all those who threaten the sovereignty and independence of oppressed, threatened and attacked peoples.

Simon Malley: A question which the world press, notably the French press is raising concerns your relations with the French Government following the victory of the leftwing forces on 10 May 1981. You were the first Iraqi statesman to talk with President Francois Mitterrand. What is the present state of Franco-Iraqi relations?

Tariq 'Aziz: I would like to divide your question into two parts. As regards bilateral relations I must say that they are good in the economic, military and nuclear spheres because the French Government has officially pledged to continue existing cooperation in those three spheres and it has promised to conclude new agreements. Since my visit to Paris on 18 and 19 August 1981, our relations have continued in a satisfactory way. As for the political aspect of your question, we examined a whole series of questions in a constructive way during my talks in Paris and then during the visit to Baghdad by [French External Relations Minister] Cheysson and [French Foreign Trade Minister] Jobert. We agree with the French Government on a number of international policy issues, especially the new government's desire to have a policy which is independent of the two superpowers. We are fully in agreement with that line. However, we are not in agreement with Paris on the Middle East question. The new government maintains ideas and defends initiatives on which I prefer not to comment at present because they do not seem to be very clear and we do not know where they are leading....That is why we informed Claude Cheysson of our desire to have more political meetings so that each can gain a better understanding of the other's position.

Simon Malley: Are you mainly referring to the Palestinian affair and to President Mitterrand's visit to Israel?

Tariq 'Aziz: I admit that I do not yet know the real results of Mr Francois Mitterrand's visit. But that visit produced a generally negative impression which was reflected and conveyed by the Arab press. I do not want to say any more about that because I would first like to know the precise facts about that visit and the subsequent period. According to my initial information, although it is limited, President Mitterrand made relatively positive statements about the Palestinian problem. In my view he is the first Western leader to have made such statements in an official way to the Israelis and in Israel itself. But the general impression which prevails in the Arab capitals is that France should adopt a clearer attitude.

Simon Malley: But you met with Claude Cheysson in Baghdad before Francois Mitterrand's visit to Israel....

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Tariq 'Aziz: Claude Cheysson did indeed inform us about Mr Mitterrand's visit to Israel, and our answer was clear: The main thing, the essential thing is the results of the visit, especially those relating to the solution of the Palestinian problem. In my opinion the fundamental question is not the visit but its results. The question is also how far the French Government will go in its support of the right of the Arab Palestinian people, led by the PLO, to self-determination, to return to their homeland and to create a sovereign and independent state.

Simon Malley: What about France's reconstructing the Iraqi nuclear power station bombed by the Israeli Air Force?

Tariq 'Aziz: During my visit to Paris we reached agreement on the French Government's undertaking the construction of a new nuclear reactor identical to the one which was bombed by the Israeli aircraft. Since then negotiations have been continuing and things are entirely normal....They will be concluded at the appropriate time. But I would like to add that so far the French authorities have been faithful to the guidelines on which we agreed.

Simon Malley: Do you intend to reconstruct the nuclear power station destroyed by the Israelis?

Tariq 'Aziz: We will reconstruct it and we will construct others.

Simon Malley: What about the danger of new Israeli attacks?

Tariq 'Aziz: You can be certain that since that bombing we have taken all the necessary steps to ensure that no such attack can take place again and that, if such an attack is ever repeated, it will be repelled and crushed.

Simon Malley: Some Israeli leaders think that their "strategic space" extends from the Atlantic to the Gulf and also includes Africa and the Indian Ocean. Have they not stated that any Muslim Arab country hostile to Israel would not be "allowed" to possess such nuclear power stations?

Tariq 'Aziz: The Israeli leaders' Zionist mentality has a logic which prompts them to want to control the whole world if they could. That is why they think that there is no limit on the expansionist spirit which guides and inspires Israel. But if such intentions became dominant in Israel and if the Zionist leaders wanted to apply them, I am convinced that all the democratic forces in the world would unite to oppose them and prevent their success. For our part we have no fear of the Zionist leaders' threats, still less of their blackmail. The Arab nation will rise up as a single, homogeneous, united and powerful force capable of defending its rights, its sovereignty and its independence.

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LEBANON

AL-WAZZAN DISCUSSES ISRAELI INTENTIONS, FRENCH RELATIONS, OTHER ISSUES

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 265, 12-18 Mar 82 pp 20-21

[Interview with Prime Minister Shafiq al-Wazzan by Florence Ra'd: "Shafiq al-Wazzan Tells AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI, 'This Is the Required Solution';" date and place not specified]

[Text] Sarkis refuses an extension of his term in office. Deployment of the army in the eastern section is still being studied.

The Israeli withdrawal from Sinai; the possibilities of aggression against Lebanon; the presidential elections; the efforts to find a successor for President Elias Sarkis; and what is new on the Lebanese scene are the headlines of the interview with Mr Shafiq al-Wazzan, the prime minister of Lebanon.

[Question] Some sources are expecting Israel to attack in south Lebanon before 25 April. How does Lebanon view that possibility and what preparations has it made to confront it?

[Answer] There is no doubt that Israel's aggressive manner has reached a very high degree of arrogance and haughtiness; it no longer tempers and conceals its attacks. It is now announcing and publicizing plans of its aggressive strategy, and it is even announcing details of its military plans, including the most meticulous tactics and detailed instructions. Unfortunately, the Arab situation today is the worst it has been in modern history: there is a total breakdown and an unjustified reluctance on the part of more than one agency and more than one party to confront the crucial and serious conditions that are facing the Arab nation. These agencies and parties are not confronting these conditions with the determination, firmness and all-consuming drive they deserve to ward off the imminent danger. It hurts me and grieves me to say this, but the Arab nation has divested itself of most of its deterrent means. Egypt has been turned around; Arab solidarity has been lost; and Arab energies are preoccupied with wars, possibilities of war and violent disputes. All this is topped by an international situation that is out of control. Consequently, the entire Arab region today lies within reach of an Israeli strike.

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The possibility that the West Bank will be annexed is a real and a serious possibility. And here I wonder: How did the international community deter Israel from annexing the Golan and before that Jerusalem? So far, the only deterrents have been resolutions and denunciations. Israel's attitude about that ever since it was created has been well-known. Its archives abound with UN and non-UN condemnations which it does not hesitate to reject and ridicule on every occasion. Regarding the possibility that south Lebanon may be attacked and overrun, our appeal in this regard has for a long time sought to stir up Arab conscience against it. There is no doubt that the possibility of an attack is greater today based on the circumstances that you outlined in detail. You ask, what preparations have we made to confront all this?

The responsibility for south Lebanon, for Jerusalem, for the Golan and for the West Bank is an integrated Arab responsibility because all these areas are within the framework of the national opposition to a vicious Israeli enemy whose viciousness and sharp grip are growing every day. We have been working in that direction, and we did actually get a resolution at the Fez Conference regarding a uniform Arab strategy. A small committee was formed to prepare and approve such a strategy. We did our best and worked as fast as we could to prepare a working paper in this regard on behalf of the committee. That task had been entrusted to us by the secretary general of the Arab League. We were anxious to get a quick resolution due to the gravity of the situation and the imminence of the danger. You know about the position that was taken, and you know that the committee's meeting was postponed till next month. We are hoping that there are factors, which may be unknown to us, to allow for such a lengthy postponement. We hope that no Israeli action will soon take us by surprise and make us blame ourselves for failing to deal with the situation expeditiously on an emergency basis.

As far as Lebanon is concerned, it goes without saying that Lebanon will repel the attack with all the effort and energy it has left, and we hope that Lebanon will not find itself alone on the scene of confrontation.

[Question] There has been talk about a new French initiative on the Lebanese scene. What is new in that regard, especially after Mitterand's visit to Israel?

[Answer] First of all, there are no plans for the French president to visit Lebanon in the foreseeable future.

Second, we have no knowledge of a specific plan or plans the French president has with regard to Lebanon. [None has been] relayed to us during the course of a visit or through usual diplomatic channels.

At any rate our position on the creation of a multi-national force and our position on internationalizing the Lebanese crisis in general were declared; they are well-known matters. These positions are manifested in our rejection of this aim. What we see in it is not so much a solution as much as an increase in the parties and the causes of complications in the Lebanese crisis, particularly since there is a basic Lebanese group that is rejecting this aim and also particularly since at best that aim, wherever it was applied in the world, produced no more than a stunning and a numbing effect, but no solution and no safety.

Enlarging the present area of deployment for the multi-national force by turning toward the border strip would put into effect the Security Council resolution which created that force and defined its functions and the area of its deployment. Accordingly, achieving that does not represent the plan of any one country. It actually represents the international wish that stood behind the aforementioned Security Council resolution. At any rate Lebanon has specific demands in this regard, and these are recorded in the Security Council. These demands call for increasing the number and efficiency of the emergency forces. The Security Council has begun discussing those demands, and we are hoping that our demands will be met, especially the one about increasing the number of these forces.

[Question] There is growing talk about adding Arab forces to the Arab deterrent forces. What chances of success does such talk have, and what is the truth?

[Answer] This talk started abroad, and Lebanon has nothing to do with its development. At any rate, we support [efforts to] find an Arab solution to the Lebanese crisis. The solution that is required is one that fellow Arabs will agree upon; it is one whose realization will put an end to the crisis or at least alleviate its burdens and woes which have almost finished off what is left of the territory, the people and the future of Lebanon. Accordingly, any solutions that can be separated from the over-all Arab framework could complicate matters further and increase the imputation of fractiousness and perhaps [even] explosiveness. We are hoping that all efforts will be joined together and that Arab consensus and solidarity will be achieved through a uniform Arab strategy on the Lebanese situation in general and on the situation of south Lebanon in particular. This is an urgent Lebanese demand which we are striving to realize by various means and in various fields.

What Is New in the Presidential Elections

[Question] What are the constitutional, political, security and regional merits of the upcoming presidential elections?

[Answer] In this regard we are facing several facts. The first one of those is the fact that the presidential term is expiring. This requires that constitutional conditions in the country continue through the election of a new president. The second fact is that the delicacy, critical nature and gravity of our conditions are unprecedented for Lebanon; the whole area has not experienced such conditions in its recent history. The third fact is that President Sarkis is refusing extension or renewal of his term for more than one personal and public reason; he insists he will turn over the leadership office to a new president. Hence, the constitutional authority, represented by the Chamber of Deputies, has to do its duty in this regard--it is only a matter of a few months--in the context of a full awareness of its national responsibility. In this the Chamber of Deputies will undoubtedly have the full and whole-hearted support of the people who today, more than any time in the past, believe that the only salvation for this country lies in its unity, in maintaining the legality of its conditions and in having the lawful government meet its obligations and regain its authority over all the territory of the country, and that includes places, public facilities, fields and battlegrounds.

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Now that this small country with limited capabilities has become the principal starting point and troubleshooter for the rights of the area, and even perhaps for some of the rights of the world, there is no doubt that many people are now prepared to spread news about where they stand on and what their attitudes are about the presidential elections. Some of these methods of spreading news in Lebanon are almost ordinary and classic. In all presidential elections held in Lebanon under normal conditions, we came to know major voters who had an opinion and exercised influence in this regard. Others are practicing a new kind of participation that falls into the context of applying pressure, causing explosions and dealing with others in a violent manner.

We are then in a stage that requires extreme caution, awareness and a sense of responsibility. In saying this I am referring to all the sincere national forces on the Lebanese scene that are interested in keeping Lebanon away from the sites of explosions, fragmentation and destruction.

We are hoping to do this, and we are striving in different directions and various fields to achieve it. We are hoping that [by keeping trouble out of Lebanon], power will be transferred to a new president under conditions that we are striving to make normal.

[Question] What has become of the attempts to urge the government to resign? What are the reasons for these attempts?

[Answer] In democratic countries there are those who, rightly or wrongly, are always trying to force government to resign and bring others to power.

In principle we find no fault with this matter in a country that prides itself on maintaining a parliamentary democracy, despite the turbulence and setbacks it has had. Lebanon has at least maintained the principal features of that parliamentary democracy. As far as my own position as prime minister is concerned regarding the resignation of the government, I would not accept having anything determine the resignation of the government, especially under the crucial circumstances that the country is going through, except the country's supreme national interest and what that interest dictates. The positions I and the government will assume will manifest that supreme national interest. If these interests dictate that the government be changed, I will not wait 1 day in office, especially since holding office under these conditions has become a personal difficulty and a hardship that is difficult to endure. The fact that we are continuing to hold office amidst these storms is a manifestation of some of Lebanon's steadfastness against storms and dangers.

[Question] There is talk about deploying the army in the eastern and western sections of Beirut. To what extent can this be achieved?

[Answer] This matter is still under consideration due to the fact that the subject of the army is an important and sensitive subject. Because of the positions and counter positions we encounter in this regard, we are becoming more convinced every day that this is a subject that cannot be solved so as to benefit everyone unless there is national accord in which this matter would be a principal article and a starting point for solving many matters that can only be solved by a capable and an efficient power. That power is that of an integrated national army whose structure is materially and morally sound.

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What Happened to the Fez Resolutions?

[Question] The recent Fez Summit ended in a unanimous resolution regarding Lebanon's demands. What happened to the application of that resolution, and what are the obstacles that are impeding its implementation?

[Answer] Despite the sharp and difficult disputes from which the recent Fez Conference had suffered and which produced only one resolution that had to do with the situation in Lebanon, the Arab consensus on Lebanon's demands at that conference was an indication of the fact that Lebanon's demands have merit. They are an urgent and integral part of supreme Arab interests and over-all national security. The main points of the Fez resolutions were manifested in the appeal for a uniform Arab strategy on south Lebanon. On that basis a small committee was formed. No sooner had it held its first meeting than that meeting was adjourned and postponed for reasons that were announced at that time. We do not wish to go into the reasons or the details of the postponement. What we are hoping for--and we have begun taking a few detailed practical steps in this regard--is that efforts to achieve a uniform Arab strategy on south Lebanon continue and that efforts in that regard be increased and intensified. The dangers that are all around us do not wait on our own private conditions and on our preoccupations and problems everywhere and every place. What we are also hoping for here is that existing Arab disputes do not once again become the reason for the floundering of this strategy, for the loss of south Lebanon and for making Lebanon endure more damage and more tragedy.

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LIBYA

AL-QADHDHAFI GIVES VIEWS ON CHRISTIANS, NASIRITES

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 270, 16-22 Apr 82 p 18

[Text] During the meeting which took place last March in Tripoli, Libya between the delegation of Lebanese University professors and Col Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi and during which a two-stage dialogue lasting more than 20 hours took place, al-Qadhdhafi brought up a number of new ideas and opinions which aroused a great deal of sharp criticism, as well as disapproval and condemnation. Al-Qadhdhafi denied the existence of Arab Christians and then said, "Their hearts are Israeli."

As for the Nasirites in Lebanon, he said that they were "brigands and frauds." About the role which Libya is playing in connection with the supporting of group after another, he admitted the error of this policy. However, he reflected philosophically on the military support which Libya had given in the past, saying that it was to create "a balance of terror" so that one group would not be victorious over the other.

During the dialogue, al-Qadhdhafi directed sharp criticism at 'Abd-al-Nasir and the Nasirite experiment. He said, "The Nasirite experiment was very unsuccessful, just as the [Arab] Socialist Union as a formula for the alliance of the working people was unsuccessful."

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LIBYA

BRIEFS

WAGE REDUCTION FOR FOREIGNERS--It has been learned that the Libyan leadership, under the pretext of "belt tightening," has decided, because of the financial crisis from which Libya is suffering, to reduce by 25 percent the wages of all non-Libyan workers and employees. The majority of these are Arab citizens who work in various educational, medical, agricultural, and industrial fields and who number more than 1 million. [Text] [Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 270, 16-22 Apr 82 p 19] [COPYRIGHT: 1982 AL WATAN AL ARABI]

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SUDAN

AIRPORT PROJECTS UNDERWAY DESCRIBED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1899, 2 Apr 82 p 905

[Text] The Sudanese Department of Civil Aviation plans to extend the runway at the existing Khartoum airport by 450 meters. An offer submitted by the Yugoslav company Partizanski, which has just completed reinforcement of the runway, should be accepted very soon when financing (2 to 3 million Sudanese pounds) is assured, probably from local sources. In addition, an entry hall is now being constructed with local financing. The existing building will then be reserved for departures.

With respect to the new Khartoum airport project, the final report and the drafting of the call for bids will be finished in April. It will be recalled that the average total cost of phase 1 is \$250 million, \$50 million from local sources. With respect to the rest, \$100 million have been allocated by Abu Dhabi, but the remaining \$100 million have not been found. Despite certain rumors circulating in Khartoum, it would be unlikely that with the funds now available, the Civil Aviation Department would decide to build the main runway (3,700 meters long), the taxiways and parking areas soon. Actually, the airport will be nonoperational (lack of services) and the obtention of the additional financing remains rather hypothetical at present. The airport will be located in North Khartoum, 20 kilometers from the downtown area, and will probably require construction of a new road and perhaps, if the alternative is accepted, of a bridge over the Blue Nile.

Regarding the new Port Sudan airport, the contract has not yet been awarded. The two companies that still have a chance of obtaining the contract are Sir Alfred McAlpine (Great Britain) or the Costain-Amey Roadstone Construction Company (Great Britain). Work is scheduled to begin in July 1982 and will take 20 months. As for the financing, \$23 million have been allocated by the Saudi Fund and \$7 million by the Islamic Development Bank.

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SUDAN

BRIEFS

ARAB LOAN—The Arab Monetary Fund has just granted a long-term loan of \$18 million to Sudan. After meeting with the Sudanese minister of finance and planning, Ibrahim Munim Mansur, who is paying an official visit to the United Arab Emirates, the president of the fund, Jawad Hashim, said on 14 March in Abu Dhabi that the loan is intended to help the Sudanese Government carry out its program of economic and financial reform. Furthermore, Sa'id Ghubash, minister of planning of the United Arab Emirates, examined with Mansur the means of implementing joint projects and bilateral and technical cooperation. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1897, 19 Mar 82 p 785] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1982.] 8796

LIVESTOCK MARKETING PROJECT—The main purpose of the Sudanese project for the marketing of livestock (Sudan Livestock Marketing Project) is to create, over a 6-year period, a marketing distribution chain and an industrial infrastructure capable of providing an adequate supply of meat for the country and of starting a flow of exports to countries of the Arabian Peninsula. Since most of Sudan's livestock is in the west of the country, the main problem lies in transporting the livestock. A system of transportation by special trains will be introduced on the rail line between Nyala, Al-Ubayyid, and Khartoum. The project has a total cost of \$43 million; the foreign currency portion will be financed by the World Bank to the tune of \$25 million and by the British Overseas Development Administration to the tune of \$3.1 million. The Livestock and Meat Marketing Corporation is the recipient of these funds. The project includes purchasing locomotives and cattle cars, building cattle pens, creating a telecommunications network and a chain of major and secondary markets, and acquiring vehicles for transportation by road. An additional project (Stockroute Project) envisages the establishment of 70 watering points (sinking wells, and installing pumps and water tanks), service facilities, veterinary control posts, and fodder depots along the railroad line between Nyala, Al-Ubayyid, and Khartoum. The same agency will be in charge of this project, which has an estimated cost of \$17.5 million, with the World Bank financing the foreign portion of it. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1897, 19 Mar 82 p 785] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1982.] 8796

NEW BANKS—The National Bank of Sudan is opening its offices in Khartoum. With an initial capital of \$8.5 million, due to increase of \$20 million between now

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and June 1982, this bank was founded by the following partners; Patra Bank of Jordan, Micro Bank of Lebanon, and a group of Sudanese businessmen. Another banking establishment, the Middle East Bank of Dubai, reportedly wants to start operating in Sudan. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS No 1897, 19 March 82 p 785] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1982.] 8796

JAPANESE AID--At the beginning of the year, Japan granted the Sudan \$12 million in nonrepayable aid to be used to finance the following projects: food production project, \$4 million to purchase fertilizer, chemical products for agriculture and machinery; water and electricity improvement project, \$2 million to buy generators; Jebel Aulia Lake fishing project, \$2 million to purchase and supply the necessary products and services for the construction of packing units, boats and various types of equipment; social project, \$2 million to purchase powdered milk by the government; and the Blue Nile health project, \$2 million to purchase insecticides, medicines and equipment for the prevention and control of malaria. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1899, 2 Apr 82 p 905] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1982] 11,464

AIR COOPERATION WITH ETHIOPIA--As the result of a cooperation project between Sudan Airways and Ethiopian Airlines, the maintenance of the Boeing 707's and 737's will be done in Ethiopia and no longer in Great Britain and Ireland. Ethiopia actually has the largest Boeing maintenance unit in Africa. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1899, 2 Apr 82 p 905] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1982] 11,464

PORT PROJECT--The port that is to be built for the Sudan on the Mediterranean at a site given to the Sudan by President Sadat (see MARCHES TROPICAUX of 31 July 1981, p 1989, and of 1 January 1982, p 20) will be called New Sudan. The South Korean company Daewoo has been given responsibility for studies, which have already begun. The cost of these studies is an estimated \$1 million. However, Khartoum admits that the project, which results from a decision that is more political than economic, will not fail to encounter financing difficulties, especially since three other major port projects are planned on the Red Sea. Fears of an overcapacity have already brought into question the rehabilitation of Old Suakin, financed by the EEC, and the second phase of work to expand Port Sudan, financed by the IDA [International Development Association]. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1899, 2 Apr 82 p 905] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1982] 11,464

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SYRIA

OFFICIAL DISCUSSES PROPOSALS FOR MIDEAST PEACE

PM221519 London THE TIMES in English 22 Mar 82 p 1

[Report by Edward Mortimer: "Syria Demands 'Not To Be Ignored'"]

[Text] Syria cannot be ignored in the search for a peaceful settlement of the Middle East conflict, Mr Ahmad Iskander, Syrian information minister, told THE TIMES this weekend. It genuinely wants peace with Israel but sees little or no chance of achieving it in the light of present Israeli and American policies.

This is the gist of what Lord Carrington will hear when he visits Damascus next month having previously been to Israel, said Mr Iskander, who was visiting London for a medical check-up. He had a brain operation here last year.

Mr Iskander criticized Lord Carrington for "ignoring" Syria during the second half of last year when he was chairman of the European Council of Ministers. In that capacity Lord Carrington visited the Saudi capital in October and expressed strong interest in the Saudi eight-point peace plan. Subsequently this was not adopted at the Fez Arab summit, due partly to Syrian opposition.

Since then, however, Mr Iskander has restated Syria's own views on the elements of a just peace which, in substance, are not very different from the Saudi plan. In one respect they are more explicit, since they refer to "ending the state of war between the Arabs and Israel," where the Saudis speak only of "the right of all states in the area to live in peace."

The Syrian proposals contain only three points. These, according to Mr Iskander are: first, unconditional and complete Israeli withdrawal from all Arab territories occupied during the June 1967 war, including East Jerusalem.

Second, assurance of the legitimate and inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people. This includes the right of the Palestinians to return to their homes in accordance with United Nations regulations, the right of self-determination, and the right to build an independent state on Palestinian soil under the leadership of the PLO.

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Third, as a result of the first two points, "the ending of the state of war between the Arabs and Israel."

But he said, since Israel had declared Jerusalem its indivisible capital and had also declared the Golan Heights part of Israel, he did not see what Israel expected the Arabs to negotiate about.

The road to a comprehensive, just peace in the Middle East was blocked by American support for Israel and by the military imbalance between Israel and the Arabs "which enables Israel's leaders to behave with the arrogance of power," he said.

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SYRIA

NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR LIBERATION OF SYRIA FOUNDED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 267, 26 Mar-1 Apr 82 pp 32-36

[Article: "Damascus: The Charter of the New Republic--A Historic National Alliance to Bring Down the Regime"]

[Text] A Parliamentary Constitutional System Will Give Back to Syria Its National, Pan-Arab, Islamic and International Role.

Taking Up Arms Is a Natural Reaction to Political and Sectarian Discrimination, Subjugation, and Dictatorial Repression.

Islam Will Be the Official State Religion, [Islam Will Provide] Strategic Depth for the Arab World, and the [Non-Arab] Muslims Will Back the Arabs. Deep Commitment to Total Liberation and Non-Alignment in Foreign Policy.

The creation of the Charter of the National Alliance for the Liberation of Syria was a decision which puts a historic responsibility on the shoulders of those who signed it. The responsibility is that of saving Syria and restoring Syria its national, pan-Arab, Islamic, and international role. For the first time the real representatives of the Syrian people are getting together in a front which is fighting to bring down the current regime and establish a parliamentary constitutional regime on the basis of separation of powers, granting of freedoms, and respect for human dignity.

For the first time we find the Muslim Brotherhood, Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, Islamic Front, Arab Socialists, Nasserites, and Independents alongside each other in the same trench. In doing so, their purpose is to proclaim that the Arab world has made peace with Islam, to declare their determination to rebuild the Syrian army and economy, and to reaffirm their absolute belief in the liberation of Palestine and their battle solidarity with the Palestinian revolution and the struggle to achieve Arab unity and to take practical steps of unification in this direction.

This is a pan-Arab national awakening which aims at "saving" Syria from rule by a single family and which also aims to establish close fraternal ties

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between Syria and the Muslim world, to liberate it from the policy of polarization, and to have it follow an independent foreign policy which is committed to the principles of the non-aligned movement.

It is a plan to have a new republic of Syria, and there are great hopes for the success of this plan both in the Arab world and throughout the Muslim world.

The charter was signed 11 March 1982, and its text was broadcast in Paris. It had the force of an explosion among Arab and Muslim circles, and it also attracted the interest of the Western media. The reason for this was that the announcement of this charter occurred after a series of international reports which condemned the excesses committed by the Syrian regime and the bloody suppression by this regime of the rights of the Syrian people as well as the rights of the Lebanese and Palestinians. The Hamah massacre was the evil culmination of these excesses.

The charter also has arisen at a time when we are witnessing a collapse of all of the human and moral values and principles which have justified the establishment and continuation of any government authority in Syria. The Syrian regime has been diverted from its crucial national concerns by the process of internal repression and massacre during the [current] state of emergency. During the last few years there has been an intensification of the tyranny which it has been practicing. Furthermore, Syria has been afflicted with the sickness of political sectarianism which it had never known during its long history.

By means of this charter, Syria, which is [now] a weak country, will regain its belief in itself and its capability to achieve advancement. This will be true even though the road toward achieving this is still difficult and will involve new sacrifices through armed popular resistance. The complete text of the charter is as follows:

The more severe hardships are, the greater people's determination becomes and the more their collective will merges, and the more sincere they are, the fewer differences they will have and the more their resources and potential will come together. Is there any cause greater than the cause of Syria--in terms of ideology, nation, and territory--which can gather people together and unite them?!

The glorious and independent nation of Syria has asked its loyal sons to render their duty as sons, to preserve what is sacred, and to shoulder their noble mission. All of the representatives of Syria's people met, held a serious dialogue, and are impelled by great hopes and by a feeling of responsibility for the future. They have created a charter which they have called the National Alliance for the Liberation of Syria. Those participating in the shaping and formulation of the charter were the leaders of the popular political orientations and organizations in Syria, especially the Muslim Brotherhood, Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, Islamic Front, Arab Socialists, Nasserites, and independent political personalities who represent all of the various national orientations in the Syrian arena. The charter will throw

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light on and guide this alliance which has been sought both for the present and for the future.

The great tragedy which the people in Syria are experiencing under the heel of the Hafiz al-Asad regime is something which is unparalleled in history. This regime has imposed upon its people forms of bloody domination and terror which have made this regime cease to be nationalist in nature and have made it a real enemy of our Syrian people and all of the Syrian people's values and aspirations.

This criminal regime has resorted to suppressing both public and private freedoms, filling Syria's jails with arrested people, practicing the worst forms of torture on them, and killing hundreds without either investigating them or giving them a trial. This is what happened in the Rastan prison when 120 women were killed, and this is what happened in the horrible Palmyra prison massacre when--by direct order of Rif'at al-Asad--700 detainees were killed there. This regime has unleashed gangs of murderers and criminals, and they have come to constitute the regime's basic support for ruling the country. The regime has given them a free hand in Syria's cities and they have been allowed to commit all manner of savage and barbarous acts, to rob and plunder, to violate people's honor and dignity, to step on and tear apart the pages of the Koran, to destroy mosques and churches, to slaughter and mutilate Syria's citizens, to tear of women's garments of modesty, and to kill anyone who stands in their way.

During the last 2 years this tyranny and oppression has intensified. Whole cities and areas of cities have been subjected to search and destroy operations. These search and destroy operations have included Damascus, Aleppo, Homs, Hamah, Dayr al-Zawr, Idlib, Jisr al-Shughur, Sarmada, and Latakia, and they have involved robbing, plundering, killing and assault.

We have clearly seen the regime's purpose in humiliating the Syrian people, ignoring their dignity, and challenging their religious beliefs and national feelings. The regime even went so far as to issue Law Number 49 of 1980 which stipulates the execution of anyone who is proven to be a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, and tempting rewards were offered to anyone who kills any of the Brotherhood's members. This law was used as a pretext to kill anyone who raises his voice or opposes the regime's crimes. The purpose of this was to induce the largest possible number of the regime's henchmen and cutthroats to participate along with the regime in these crimes.

The tyranny and crimes of the head of this regime reached the stage where they made him unfit for any responsibility and rule when he proclaimed, numerous times, that he would physically eliminate his opponents and those in opposition to him and pursue them both inside Syria and abroad. An abominable statement of this sort was also made by his brother Rif'at, and the two murderers together undertook numerous assassination operations both inside Syria and abroad.

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The Hamah Crime

The regime's destruction of the city of Hamah was a crime which surpassed all tyranny ever recorded by history. This city, fighting for its freedom, was surrounded, water and food were cut off from it, and then its buildings, houses, mosques, and places of worship were shelled and bombed by all sorts of weaponry, including artillery, rockets, airplanes, and tanks. Whole areas of the city were destroyed, the people in those areas were killed, and the regime's henchmen were allowed to commit unprecedented acts of robbery, plunder, and rape there. Then Hafiz al-Asad prohibited those who had managed to leave the burning city from returning to it, just as the Zionists had done in Palestine.

The objective of this bloody policy of repression on the part of the Hafiz al-Asad regime is to change Syria's historic and demographic character. The regime wants to do this by means of combatting Arabism and Islam, imposing an alien and artificial status quo upon the country, eliminating the Arab nationalist of the country, cutting its profound ties with Islam, and threatening to dismember it into sectarian petty states.

This regime has afflicted Syria with the disease of political sectarianism which it has never known throughout its long history. In Syria relations between the peoples of the various religions and doctrines have served as the model of a country where relations between the country's citizens have risen to the level of brotherhood and friendship.

When we say "political sectarianism," we do not mean plurality of religions and doctrines. That is a problem which has its roots in history and which finds its solution in people working together and coexisting. We are speaking of a political sectarianism which is the fanaticism of a faction constituting a regime which is isolated from the people and which has been utilized by the regime in order for it to survive, rule, and tyrannize the people. Such political sectarianism is one of the inventions of this regime--a small group of people who deal in sectarianism and sow disunity. It is a regime of a ruling tribal sectarian minority which spreads terror among some of the sects and gives them the impression that they are threatened with danger from the other sects if they do not support the regime and rally around it. It is a regime of opportunistic sectarianists who have occupied basic and sensitive positions in the government, army, and security apparatuses as well as positions of power where decisions are made and the implementation [of such decisions] is overseen. It is a regime which has practiced a policy of sectarian discrimination which has harmed all of the citizens of our nation. This even includes those belonging to the sect of the ruling regime which the regime has attempted to exploit and has consequently put in the category of being hostile to the Syrian people and nation.

The Disastrous Regime

The regime of Hafiz al-Asad is a real disaster which has befallen our people and nation. It is a disaster because it has resulted in Syria losing its pioneering role in the Arab world, bloody military domination of Lebanon after

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the destruction and dismemberment of the Lebanese people, destruction of the National Movement in Lebanon, the assassination of a number of this movement's leaders, and the slaughter of thousands of Palestinians in Tall al-Za'tar, al-Karntina, the Nahr al-Barid [River], and other places. It has also been a disaster because it resulted in the bloody confrontation with the Palestinian Resistance movement in Lebanon after Syria closed, in the face of the Palestinian Resistance movement, its border with the occupied territories. The purpose of this action was to curtail the Palestinian Resistance movement and transform it into being merely a pliable tool in the marketplace of international bargaining which seeks to impose upon the Arabs a solution which involves their capitulation and seeks to insure the existence of the Zionist entity.

The regime in which Hafiz al-Asad was minister of defense, commander of the army, commander of the air force, and a member of its higher political leadership, bears responsibility for the Arabs' defeat of 1967. Hafiz al-Asad also bears the greatest responsibility for the disaster which occurred when he did not permit the Syrian Arab army the honor of doing battle with the enemy and handed over territory to the Zionists without a fight. This is what happened when he arbitrarily ordered the army to withdraw and announced the fall of al-Qunaytirah before the enemy had even reached it.

The responsibility which he bears concerning the 1973 War was even greater and more significant. When the officers and soldiers of the army believed that the opportunity had come for the army to regain its honor, liberate all of Syria's territory, and contribute to the liberation of Palestine, Hafiz al-Asad acted in a way which was against the wishes of the army and the aspirations of the people. When the courageous Iraqi army reached the battle front and helped to repulse the Zionist advance toward Damascus, and when the two armies began to prepare to undertake their counteroffensive, he gave orders to cease fire. The practical results of this war were that the Zionists occupied more territory belonging to our country. He continued his conspiratorial policy and concluded the disengagement agreement with the Zionist enemy, and then UN observer forces were stationed inside our territory. Hafiz al-Asad officially accepted UN Security Council Resolution 338 which recognized the Zionist entity and demanded that the Arabs capitulate to it be means of negotiations.

The Conspiracy Against Iraq

His actions in the Arab or international arena were no different from his disgraceful actions against our people in Syria. Hafiz al-Asad attached no importance to Syria's national interest nor to Syria's Arab and Muslim aspirations. He made Arab unity a game to be fooled around with, something to be indulged in and then abandoned, and something to be plotted against--without any feeling of responsibility toward it. He regarded it as something to be entered into together with this or that Arab country only to be later abandoned and forgotten. The aim in all of this was to dilute the feeling of Arab unity and sow the seeds of doubt concerning the possibility of achieving it. Even when the higher Arab interest required Arab solidarity which would achieve a minimum of coherence and steadfastness on the part of

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the Arab nation, Hafiz al-Asad did not hesitate to sabotage this solidarity and conspire against it. This is what happened when he mobilized his forces along the border with his fellow-Arab country of Jordan, when he tore apart the Arab ranks, when he boycotted the Arab summit conferences, and when he endeavored to keep the Arab nations unable to formulate any serious policy for confronting the Zionist entity.

In view of the center of power which Iraq represent when any Arab confrontation is concerned, Hafiz al-Asad has made special efforts to conspire and commit treason against this fellow-Arab country. He entered into an alliance with the shah of Iran, with Zionism, and with imperialism in order to dismember Iraq and keep it occupied internally. Today he is allied with the Persian regime, backed by the Zionist entity, in order to exhaust the human and material resources and capacities of Iraq and in order to keep the Arabs unable to put an end to the deterioration [in their situation] and unable to resist the challenge of Zionism and of the enemies of the Arab nation.

The policies of the Hafiz al-Asad regime amount to the following: Its internal policy is to weaken and exhaust Syria, to spread fighting and destruction throughout it, to cause forced migration in the country, to threaten to dismember the unity of its people and its territory, to combat its Arab character, to attack Islam within the country, and to ruin its academic courses of study, especially Islamic educational courses of study. Its policy with regard to the Palestinians and the Arab world is to dismember Lebanon into mutually hostile sects, to conclude agreements with the Zionist enemy in order to partition Lebanon--as in the famous Red Line agreement--to conspire against Arab unity and effective Arab solidarity, and to ignore the profound historic ties which exist between Islam and the Arabs.

These policies of Hafiz al-Asad, in reality, merely serve the interests of Zionist plans in the Middle East, turn him into an instrument which executes Zionist policies, and transform him into a poisonous dagger for the Zionists to plunge into the body of Syria as well as into the body of the Arabs and Islam.

When this regime deprived our people of all rights of citizenship, imposed this fearful poisonous atmosphere upon the country, and made sectarian discrimination its permanent policy, our nation saw itself forced to fight for its existence and to defend its rights and freedoms--with all possible means, especially by means of an armed struggle.

The fact that our people took up arms--although this is a right which has been established by all laws, both divine and man-made, and although this is a duty imposed by the demands of religion, patriotism, self-respect and honor--was a natural reaction to the fact that the regime has engaged in suppression, injustice, political sectarian discrimination, military and dictatorial repression, intellectual terrorism, deception by the informational media, confiscation of freedoms, abandoning human rights, causing the disappearance of justice and law, allowing corruption to set it, and allowing the spread of illicit wealth.

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This grave, treacherous, and criminal role which is being played by this regime and which has impelled our people to reach for their arms, shoulder the burden of courageous resistance, and offer up the lives of thousands of righteous martyrs, requires that all national figures, organizations, and parties completely shoulder their responsibilities in an effort to support the revolution of our freedom-fighting nation, to promote the revolution in order to cut down on pain and suffering, and in order to enable the wounded national body of our nation to regain its health and strength.

An Open National Alliance

For this reason, the national figures, organizations, and parties which are determined to save Syria--by means of a serious and responsible dialogue--are in agreement about bringing about the downfall of the treacherous regime of Hafiz al-Asad and establishing a parliamentary constitutional regime, on the basis of separation of powers, which would guarantee a plurality of parties and orientations and which would provide equality to all of Syria's citizens in terms of rights and duties. This regime which is aspired to would be based on respect for human dignity and would guarantee both public and private freedoms within the limits of the constitution and the law. This regime would reject all discrimination among Syria's citizens of different religions, doctrines, and [political] orientations. Only a regime like this would be able to enable Syria to once again play its national, pan-Arab, Islamic and international role. This is something that Syria can never do as long as it has an individualistic orientation, tyranny, a return to a regime of one-man rule and political sectarianism, repression, and terror.

Being confronted with this impending danger, which is threatening to tear apart Syria's national unity, fragment its people, and cause it to be the target of the Zionist and imperialist onslaught, there was no doubt that all parties would rise to the level of historic responsibility which they must assume due to the nature of this stage [of their history]. They are casting aside their differences, they are overcoming the negative phenomena, contradictions, and mistakes of the past, and they are seeking a joint framework which would include all of the citizens of this nation so that they can work together, by means of common principles, in order to put an end to the artificial separation between the Arabs and Islam, and in order to create a national alliance of these forces which would be open to everyone. By the grace of God, such an alliance will be able to bring about the downfall of the treacherous Asad regime and firmly anchor the sound bases of an open and active political life which will enable Syria to become a source of inspiration in all realms- national, pan-Arab, and Islamic.

The 16 Principles

In order to give expression to their lofty national aims and to their commitment to them, the parties in this alliance have come to agreement about the following principles:

1. Serious and persistent efforts to bring about the downfall of the current regime. This is to be done by all means--political and military means as well

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as using the media and the masses--in order to achieve this goal, with the principal means being the armed popular struggle.

2. Bringing to trial the high officials of this regime because of the crimes which they have committed against the Syrian people and their nation.
3. Formation of an interim government which will be established right after the downfall of the current regime and which will endeavor, as quickly as possible, to oversee the election of a constituent assembly for the purpose of formulating a permanent constitution for the country.
4. Islam shall be the state religion, and Islamic law shall be the nation's basic source of legislation and lawmaking. This is to be so by virtue of the fact that Islamic law is the civilizational and theological-legal heritage of all Arabs and Muslims as well as being a legacy to all of mankind. The application of Islamic law shall not affect the rights of non-Muslims as far as their convictions and religious observances are concerned, and they shall be permitted to apply their own laws among themselves with total freedom and security.
5. Guarantee of public freedoms to all of Syria's citizens. This involves, above all, freedom of belief, freedom of expression, freedom to hold meetings, and freedom to form political parties.
6. Rebuilding of the Syrian Arab army and all of the other institutions of the state on the basis of loyalty, capability, and the principle of equality of opportunity. This will restore and preserve national unity in Syria and will guarantee its pioneering role in the region.
7. Dealing with the deteriorating economic situation and rebuilding the Syrian economy on firm foundations. This will decisively put an end to the [current] situation which is characterized by exploitation, robbery, plunder, and bribery. It will also involve inviting experts and qualified personnel who are living abroad to participate in the rebuilding of the country.
8. Saving the workers, peasants, and laboring classes from the abuse which the regime has committed against their gains and achievements, and striving to consolidate these gains which they have been achieving during the course of their long struggle since independence.
9. Review of the academic curricula, scientific institutes, and all state institutions. This will save them from their current situation of deterioration and enable the country to fully shoulder its responsibilities.
10. Total compensation paid to the relatives of martyrs and those who have suffered damage or been injured during the course of the struggle against the treacherous regime [of Hafiz al-Asad].
11. Absolute belief in the liberation of Palestine from Zionist usurpation and imperialist domination. In order to achieve this liberation, all possible means which do not abuse the rights of Arabs and Muslims should be utilized,

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and efforts should be made to mobilize all human, military, and political resources and capacities.

12. Solidarity in battle with the Palestinian revolution and with its sole legitimate representative, the PLO, in order to achieve the goals of the Palestinian people which are national liberation and the regaining of their homeland.

13. Engaging in a serious struggle to establish Arab unity and making all possible efforts to take practical steps leading toward such unity.

14. Serious efforts to establish close fraternal Arab ties with Syria's fellow-Arab nations, and to mobilize all capacities and resources to deal with the dangers which threaten the existence of the Arabs.

15. Establishment of fraternal ties with the peoples, nations, and organizations of the Islamic world. This will reinforce the role of the mission of Islam in the whole world since Islam represents strategic and fundamental depth for the Arab world and since the Muslims constitute a strong pillar of support for the Arabs and basic supporting forces for the Arab people.

16. Non-involvement in international conflicts, non-alignment with international blocs, commitment to the principles of the non-aligned movement, and adoption of an independent foreign policy.

Syria, which was the first country in the Arab world to achieve total independence, is a country which deserves to overcome the tragedy afflicting it. The parties participating in this alliance hope that this charter will be the focus of this current movement and will be a framework for the constitutional and practical future of the policies followed by Syria. All of these parties hope that the future republic will be the cherished hope of all persons in the Arab and Islamic world.

The parties in this alliance desire, in the course of their movement, to pursue a policy of both authenticity and modern outlook, of both high moral standards and progress, and of both justice and the freedom to utilize capacities and resources. They ask that God grant them success and that He grant them victory. They ask the peoples and leaders of the world to support them in their just struggle to save Syria from the tragedy which it is suffering from. "God will bring victory to those who are fighting because they are being oppressed."

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SYRIA

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT ON SYRIA

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 267, 26 Mar-1 Apr 82 p 36

[Article: "Syria As Seen in a Swiss Painting"]

[Text] "Rights and Freedoms in Syria" is the title of a report recently put out in Geneva by the Swiss Association for the Defense of Freedom and Political Prisoners in Syria.

The report contains information furnished by the organization Amnesty International concerning the system of suppression of freedoms and tortures which is being practiced in Syria under the rule of Hafiz al-Asad.

Amnesty International says that its reasons for being concerned about the internal situation in Syria are due to information which it has received concerning "the lack of respect for human rights, particularly when this concerns the exercise of political rights, the long imprisonment of a number of persons in the opposition without any charges being made against them and without a trial, the kidnapping, by the Syrian authorities, of a number of Syrian, Palestinian, and Lebanese persons residing in Lebanon, throwing them into prison, utilizing means of torture in order to obtain particular 'confessions,' and finally the lack of any legal guarantees--which has led to the passage of many sentences of execution, with the crime being 'political opposition'."

The report says that a large number of political prisoners in Syria have not yet been brought to trial, the pretext being that of the state of emergency law which has been in effect since 1965. The report does not say how many such people have been involved in these internal developments.

There are various groups of prisoners involved, including those accused of belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood, members of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, and groups of people from communist, Nasserite, and Kurdish parties, in addition to a number of Palestinians and Lebanese who oppose Syria's role as guardian of the Palestinian Resistance movement and the Syrian role in Lebanon.

These people have also been put in a number of civilian and military jails, including the Halbuni, Qabun, Shaykh Hasan, Sha'a, Qisa', Rawdah, Mazzah,

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and Palmyra prisons. These prisons are characterized by a lack of sanitary conditions and hygiene, and they lack even the most basic necessities. Mostly they are places for various types of brutal torture to be conducted. The torture involved includes beating, "cracking" (where the prisoner is put into a rubber inner tube and is then beaten with rubber truncheons), electrical torture, pulling out their nails, and burning by means of fire and cigarette butts.

The report mentions the names of nine prisoners who have been subjected to torture. They are 'Abd al-Wakid [as published], Isma'il Khalif, Zuhary Shakir, Safi Mubarak, Subhi Salih, Tariq Haydari, 'Adil al-Kayali, 'Abd al'Wahid Tayib, Muhammad Aghab, and 'Abd al-Ghani 'Attar.

Furthermore, the Syrian authorities passed sentences of execution against 17 persons between 1975 and 1978. Ten of these executions were carried out in public squares. Also, 15 persons accused of being members of the Muslim Brotherhood were executed in June of 1979.

The report refers to the Syrian lawyers' strike which took place in January of 1980 as a protest against the regime's illegal practices. It also refers to the Palmyra prison massacre which claimed the lives of more than 600 prisoners.

Naturally, the report does not refer to the recent Hamah massacre because this occurred after the report came out. The horror of this massacre was greater than that which is taking place inside Syria's prisons, and it claimed the lives of more than 10,000 Syrians!

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