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(FOUO 24/82)

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NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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INTER-AFRICAN AFFAIRS

NEW RIFTS IN TUNISIAN-ALGERIAN RELATIONS DISCUSSED

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French No 1116, 26 May 82 p 36

[Article by Souhayr Belhassen: "A New Quarrel?"]

[Text] Tunis--Against whom is the armaments race in which Morocco and Tunisia are engaging, as well as the strengthening of their military alliance with the United States, directed? This is the question the Algerian press is asking and it sufficed for the Tunisian prime minister, Mohamed Mzali, to visit Washington (24-29 April) for the papers to warn of the imperialist threat. The daily newspaper AL-CHAAB went so far as to speak of an "infernal plot." The Tunisian government was not long in reacting: the Algerian ambassador was summoned by the minister of foreign affairs. This incident is the last in a long series.

To speak the truth, the relations between the two countries, encumbered by the "Gafsa coup" (January 1980), had improved substantially since the appointment of Mohamed Mzali to the post of prime minister. After siding wholeheartedly with Morocco in the Sahara affair, Tunisia had assumed an attitude of relative neutrality, reserving for itself only the possibility of participating "in a solution on a regional scale."

Bilateral talks confirmed this change. President Chadli Bendjedid paid a visit to Tunis, followed shortly afterward by his prime minister, Mohamed Ben Ahmed Abdelghani (February 1980). Then Mohamed Mzali traveled to Algeria (September 1981). Similar annual meetings had been planned and various joint projects were commissioned, such as the Bank of the Grand Maghreb (January 1982), established to finance interindustrial projects and to balance trade exchange.

This has not continued to the present. Tunisia gets the lion's share, the ratio being seven to one. Its needs would include, among other things, steel, rail-road cars and spring leaves, but it cannot obtain them from Algeria, where the domestic market absorbs all such production. Tunisian imports are thus leveled off at about 3 million dinars (about 1.5 billion CFA francs). At the same time, 800,000 Algerian tourists represent a considerable contribution to the Tunisian economy, with an average expenditure of 41 dinars (about 21,000 CFA francs) per person per half day--as much as a European spends in 48 hours.

The situation began to deteriorate in January 1981. The reason? A statement by Mohamed Mzali referring to "contacts on the highest level" among the various

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leaders of the Maghreb concerning the Sahara. Algeria, which has always claimed not to be directly involved in the conflict, termed this indiscretion "clumsy." Suddenly, Mr Abdelghani, who was to attend the ceremonies to commemorate the bombing of Sakiet Sidi Youssef during the Algerian war, canceled his trip.

The impromptu visit paid to Tunisia by Colonel Qadhafi (again in the month of January) and the rapprochement between Tunisia and Libya following his official visit in the month of February did not settle matters. The withdrawal of Tunisia when the moment came for the controversial admission of the SDAR [Saharan Democratic Arab Republic] into the OAU and the fact that a new commando unit from Libya crossed the Algerian frontier into Tunisia, in the Kasserine region, on 21 March, revealed the tension. Young Algerians living in Tunisia had a bone to pick with the forces of law and order. A bus carrying 30-some Tunisian tourists was halted at the Algerian-Moroccan frontier (JEUNE AFRIQUE, No 1114).

It was within this context that Mohamed Mzali's trip to Washington took place. The fact that the Tunisian minister of interior attended the funeral services for Mohamed Benyahia, a former minister of foreign affairs for Algeria, in Algiers on 7 May, is perhaps evidence of the beginning of detente. If indeed Mr Driss Guiga did not meet with President Chadli, he did hold talks with Mr Abdelghani and his Algerian counterpart, Mohamed Hadj Yala. In addition, the new head of the diplomatic service in Algiers made a point of attending the dinner given for the Tunisian delegation. Mr Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi set forth pro-Maghreb considerations.

Mr Guiga, for his part, said that the problem between Algeria and Tunisia lay in the fact that the declarations of goodwill were not always followed by results. He also called the reactions of those who see the normalization between Libya and Tunisia as directed against Algeria "nonsense." And so on, reciprocally. All of these considerations suggested that Tunisian-Algerian relations were entering a period of calm.

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ALGERIA

BRIEFS

GAS EXPORTS INCREASED--Algerian gas supplies to France have increased. While the share of Algerian gas did not exceed 13.8 percent of French consumption in 1981, it reached 19 percent last March. This increase obviously reflects the latest gas agreement between Algeria and France. [Text] [Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 276, 28 May-3 Jun 82 p 64] [COPYRIGHT: 1982 AL-WATAN AL-ARABI]

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IRAN

RAJAVI CALLS KHOMEYNI 'FINISHED MYTH' DURING INTERVIEW

Paris AFRIQUE-ASIE in French No 262, 29 Mar 82 pp 8-10

[Interview with Mas'ud Rajavi, leader of the People's Mojahedin, by Bouzid Kouza, at Auvers-sur-Oise, France, date not specified]

[Text] [Answer] All right, since I have to talk about myself.... It was just after the riots in Qum in 1963 that I suddenly became aware. At the time, I was a high school student in the city of Mashhad.

[Question] This was a turning point that marked the break between feudal Iran and Iran at the threshold of a new stage. The 1960's were also marked by the prodigious development of the national liberation movement in the Third World countries.

[Answer] Yes, and I followed all these issues, not, of course, with the same acuity as a few years later, but I was already influenced and impressed by the debates which took place in the national movement, led by Mehdi Bazargan.* The founders of the Organization of the Mojahedin were militants in this movement, which they were constantly challenging and criticizing. For example, they asked Bazargan: "Is life a battle, or is battle a luxury?"

(This phrase seems to have greatly impressed Rajavi, who pauses, as if to stress its importance. Next, he tackles the role of Khomeyni, who began to gain a certain popularity after 5 July 1963 with the action against the Shah. He will mention this ayatollah frequently. But for the present, it is a question of grasping the content of this opposition on the part of the religious leaders at Qum.)

[Answer] This opposition came from reactionary positions. Thus, it was opposed to female suffrage and to the distribution of land.

[Question] The Shah's agrarian reform was of no real value....

[Answer] That is not the issue. Khomeyni was opposed to the distribution of land as a matter of principle, interpreting Islam in his own way.

*Subsequently Khomeyni's first prime minister.

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[Question] He was not the only one in the religious hierarchy to develop this feudal point of view....

[Answer] No, many shared--and still share (we will return to this)--this reactionary idea that the land is sacred.

[Question] Then the opposition grew, and its starting point was Qum.

[Answer] It reached such proportions that the Shah became alarmed and sent in the police. That was on 5 July 1963, which marked a break in our country's history.

[Question] A break, or a point of reference?

[Answer] Rather, a point of reference. Khomeyni was exiled in Turkey, then in Iraq. The unrest calmed down a bit, and a new transition period began. The shopkeeper bourgeoisie, newly installed with the help of the United States, strengthened the Shah's dictatorship.

[Question] Who was still on the scene?

[Answer] No one. The traditional parties had been eliminated; Bazargan and Father Taleghani arrested. The traditional forms of struggle had completely failed. Something else had to be found; another path had to be blazed.

[Question] And this is when you appeared....[Interview format interrupted at this point, as writer provides explanatory background passage that continues for next seven paragraphs.] Rajavi raises his hand as if to say: not so fact; that took a long time.

Indeed, many were the trials to be endured before he was welcomed on his release from prison by tens of thousands of Tehran people with arms full of flowers, crying, like millions of others, "Khomeyni! Mojahedin! Shar 'ati!"

But [Rajavi] gained world notoriety the day he landed at Evreux military field accompanied by Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, the first president of the Republic of Iran, removed from office by the assembly on orders from the strongest members of the Islamic Republic Party (PRI). Up to his disembarking from the Boeing 707 piloted by Colonel Moezi, a militant mujahid (of whom there are many in the army), few people knew this man with the dull complexion and the black hair parted severely on the side. The journalists who had observed the imperial regime's convulsions, who had "covered" the first months of the Iranian revolution, and who were continuing to follow the development of the situation quickly understood that of these officials to whom France had just accorded asylum, the real leader was in fact this young man with the unobtrusive manner rather than the other, although the latter was better known by the media.

Until then, Massud Rajavi's reputation had scarcely crossed the borders of Iran. At the time of our various meetings, he was always insisting at length that he was only "one mujahid among other mojahedin." And in fact, nothing in

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either his physical appearance, which is voluntarily neutral, or in his language, his soft and smooth voice--a sign of Iranian courtesy and savoir-faire--evokes at first glance the image of the leader of a powerful movement, capable today or tomorrow of being a solution to the replacement of the present government. He has already explained the reasons which prompted the leadership of his movement to send one of its representatives--him--abroad. It was necessary at all costs to break the wall of silence that had been built since June 1981 around this country, which no journalist could enter unless he gave pledges of fidelity to the official line. The Iranian people's struggle had to be made known; the Pharisees, the true munafiqin, who restored, then destroyed, the February 1979 revolution, had to be denounced. It was necessary to organize not resistance--that was being organized and led at home, in the field--but international solidarity, and especially to debunk the Khomeyni myth.

The statements and interviews that he has granted to dozens of international organs of the media, print and broadcast, are innumerable. But the very first was for AFRIQUE-ASIE. And he agreed to go still further for us, for our readers. To get that, we had to overcome his reserve, to force him to do violence to his natural modesty, since what we asked of him was to give a historical overview of Iran, to talk of his people and the struggles he had led and, in fact, to answer the question on which this overview is focused: who are the mujahidin?

Massud Rajavi will answer at length, giving many historical and anecdotal details on prominent figures, dead or still living. He will talk about former political groups, what they contributed as basic elements to expanding the revolutionary process, and about their limits as well. He will mention his years as a high school student, the debates in the student movement, the rebellions, the long reflections and decisions which were made to give Iran, its youth and its people, a revolutionary organization capable of countless sacrifices so that the voice of the disinherited can finally be raised. This talk took place at his "temporary" residence, he says, in Auvers-sur-Oise.

We are in a small, secluded room of the house which is closely guarded and where, in order to enter, one must raise his hands and submit to a thorough search. Two sofas covered with flowered fabric, two easy chairs, a coffee table and, in one corner, a television set; a file cabinet completes the furniture in this small study, where Rajavi receives visitors.

On the wall, five portraits show the world in which he has lived and lives: Taleghani, the "spiritual father," mysteriously dead at the very beginning of the revolution; Mussa Khiabani, brother in struggle and hope, whom he has never stopped mentioning since his death, weapons in hand, against the PRI forces; Ashraf Rabi'i his wife, a mujahida who was tortured under the Shah and who also died, weapons in hand, at the side of Khiabani and his wife, Azar Reza'i; Hanif Nejad, the founder of the Organization of the Mujahedin,

*Cf. AFRIQUE-ASIE No 248, 14-27 Sep 81.

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also a martyr of the struggle against the Shah, and finally Reza Se'adati, summarily executed by the present regime last July, despite a wave of international protest. [end of background passage]

[Answer] "Yes, that took time," Rajavi continues. "Two founding members of our movement, Hanif Nejad and Sa'id Mohsen, had just finished their engineering studies. They belonged to the opposition wing of Bazargan's movement. For them, the defeat of the June 1964 movement had just revealed a basic problem: that of the inefficiency of the liberation movement's forms of struggle.

[Question] How would you describe this movement? Nationalist? Islamic?

[Answer] The basic difference between Mossadegh's National Front and Bazargan's movement lies in the fact that the latter had an Islamic ideological base and for this reason exercised strong influence although it displayed no revolutionary features. The young people who belonged to it did not find their deep aspirations echoed in it. At that time they used to say: "When you're a student, you're all heart and soul, but once you finish school, you get married and that's the end of that."

[Question] So the future mohajedin that you were more or less did everything, a stint in Bazargan's movement....

[Answer] Yes, because of his ideology, which was both nationalist and Islamic.

[Question] And Taleghani?

(Rajavi smiles; his eyes toward the "father's" portrait.)

[Answer] He was much better known and more progressive than Bazargan. It was Taleghani who introduced Hanif-Nejad to the exegesis of the Koran, and it was he who brought out all the progressive content. But as is known, Taleghani was so modest that later he would say, speaking of Hanif: "I taught Hanif to read the Koran, but it was he alone who understood its essence."

[Question] He was pretty much the antithesis of Khomeyni.

[Answer] Taleghani was never a traditional mullah, and his life shows this: he spent the last 40 years of his life more often in prison, in exile, than at home. I will talk to you later about the pressures exerted on him not only by the Shah but also by Khomeyni himself. I would like to talk to you about Hanif-Nejad, a man of remarkable courage and strictness. One day there was a meeting uniting all the political and religious personalities in opposition to the Shah. We went there, took the rostrum, and said roughly this: "When people see your preoccupations, your quarrels, and the cars you drive, they understand that you can do nothing for the people. So close up shop and don't waste the people's time," He left the rostrum and left the hall without any form of courtesy.

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[Question] That was a provocation and an act of war.

[Answer] He didn't stop there. He continued his outright attacks by naming reactionaries who pretended to speak in the name of the people--for example, Ayatollah Borujerdi, who at that time (the 1960's) was the highest religious authority and who had sent a congratulatory message to the Shah after the 1953 coup d'etat.

[Question] We were talking about the break with the Bazargan movement.

[Answer] At that time, the young people were attracted by Bazargan, because he was the only one with a scientific view concerning Islam. They were receptive to this ideological opinion, but challenged it from a political and social point of view. In these two fields, it was Taleghani's analyses that they shared. Moreover, Taleghani was considered by some of the mullah to be an infidel, an unbeliever, because his analysis of the Koran was very progressive.

[Question] Did he publish his analyses? And why did he settle in Tehran?

[Answer] Yes, his texts were available. His choice of Tehran had two meanings. On the one hand, he wanted not to be considered a religious leader or to have followers and disciples like Khomeyni, but to establish contact with the intellectuals. On the other hand, he did not want to be assimilated into the traditionalists, whose fief is Qum.

[Question] On what were these analyses based?

[Answer] To simplify, it can be said that this hinged on a central idea: Islam is a religion of struggle; it is a religion for the disinherited masses and against despotism, colonialism, and the exploitation of man by man. Obviously this was not said in such a clear and simplified manner, but we understood him this way.

[Question] So, all the same, he had a certain freedom of expression.

[Answer] Yes, Relative, but real. He held many debates, and the ideas circulated widely. At the time I was in Mashhad. My classmates were the future founders of the People's Fedayin: Ahmed-Zadeh and Puyan. The meeting place for all revolutionary youth was in an Islamic club led by Ali Shari'ati's father. We were all opposed to the Shah and spoke with nostalgia of Mossadegh's era. But here, too, there was a religious content. And that was an important element. Hanif-Nejad and Sa'id Mohsen were doing their military service. They had a year and a half to think. And they put this period to good use by taking stock of the Iranian movement and especially by studying other countries' experience. At that time Algeria, whose struggle we had followed and supported, had just won its independence. And its experience was decisive for us, since the Algerian revolution had this Islamic content of which I have spoken.

[Question] What did you learn from it?

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[Answer] That struggle is a science, that our previous struggles had had no connection with the popular masses, that this struggle requires revolutionary organization, something that never really existed in Iran. Up until then, no distinction had been made between intellectual struggle--brewing up ideas--and professional combat. This was an enormous discovery. It is possible that now people will laugh at this and find it puerile, but that is like laughing at single-cell creatures.

[Question] Then this was no longer a debate on the way to reform the system, but how and by what means to overthrow it in order to transform it.

[Answer] Exactly. We knew then what the obstacle was: first, the reformist currents themselves. We understood why there were opportunists and what the organic and social motives of opportunism are. Previously, we had thought that opportunism was to be attributed to personal problems.

[Question] All of this debate lasted 2 years, at the end of which an organization resulted, that of the mojahedin.

[Answer] Yes. On 6 September 1965, the decision was made not to found an organization but to create a central nucleus whose task would be to prepare the ideological, political, organic, and military bases for a revolutionary movement.

[Question] So there was no official birth certificate of any kind.

[Answer] That is a date of reference; moreover, the name of mujahid was given to us by the people when our militants were in prison.

[Question] Why this total clandestineness, including in the formulation?

[Answer] We wanted to avoid all formalism and rigid structure with its congresses, commissions, etc. The central nucleus was composed, to begin with, of three founders: Hanif-Nejad, Sa'id Mohsen, and Ali Asghar Badi-Zadegan. Later it was to be enlarged and to have a dozen members.

[Question] Including yourself?

[Answer] Yes, I said then that future struggles must be thoroughly considered and prepared.

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ISRAEL

DEFENSE MINISTER SHARON VIEWS LEBANON OPERATION

PM221315 Paris PARIS MATCH in French 25 Jun 82 p 42

[Defense Minister Ari'el Sharon interviewed by Ben Porat--date and place not given]

[Text] MATCH: The operation which began as a raid entitled "Peace for Galilee" has ended at the gates to Beirut and could be called "Sharon's war"... What do you think of that?

Ari'el Sharon: Is that a compliment you are paying me? I rather doubt it.... But it is not true. There is nothing personal in it. No measure has been taken at my level alone. All the decisions down to the smallest detail have been made by the government, which was kept informed of the developments in the situation on the front as they happened. Prime Minister Begin did not make do with merely convening the war Cabinet: All the ministers took part in the debates, hesitations and discussions. And we hesitated a great deal. I do not remember there being so many government meetings during our previous wars.... I went from the front to Jerusalem every day without exception to report to the government and put forward my most minor suggestions. I also reported to our parliament's defense committee which includes the opposition, who did not go easy on me....

MATCH: You will not resent it, will you, if I say it is nonetheless you who inspired this whole operation?

Ari'el Sharon: Listen, as defense minister it was my duty to submit my program to the government and to shoulder the responsibility for implementing the decisions made by the government.

MATCH: You were in Beirut Sunday evening. How were you received and with whom did you have talks?

Ari'el Sharon: I visited the Beirut region late Sunday to follow the operations by our troops who were busy sealing off all access to the capital. The aim is not to besiege the city. The civilians, who have nothing to do with the PLO, are free to move around. The encirclement of Beirut is aimed solely at preventing the arrival of Palestinian reinforcements and preventing their leaders, caught in a trap, from fleeing. It is also aimed at

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preventing the return of the Syrian troops who, until our arrival, were stationed in the capital and who enabled the Palestinians to install themselves there. Now, our main objective is to remove that wound from the city. On my travels I met with Lebanese soldiers who recognized me, hailed me and even embraced me Arab-style. They were very surprised to see the Israeli defense minister in a halftrack, wearing a steel helmet and a big bullet-proof jacket and holding an automatic machinegun in his hand. Later, when passing through Ba'abda, which is to Beirut what Neuilly is to Paris, I met entirely by chance with a mayor and a group of senior officers from the Lebanese gendarmerie. Their welcome was very friendly and very warm.

MATCH: What did you say to them?

Ari'el Sharon: I told them that we had no interest in remaining in Lebanon and that we did not want to annex 1 centimeter of their territory. Our objective is to destroy the Palestinians' infrastructure in Lebanon since for many years they have perpetrated violent acts of terrorism in Israel and other countries. I told them that we had nothing against the Syrians either. If the Syrians had not intervened to support the Palestinians we would not have been forced to fight them.

MATCH: So you did not go to Beirut to install a new Lebanese government there?

Ari'el Sharon: What an idea! I have told you and I repeat: I met those people in Beirut by chance. I did so in complete friendship. I told them of our hope to see Lebanon become a free and independent country again soon.

MATCH: Is President Sarkis free to do what he wants, without any threat from you?

Ari'el Sharon: We are not interfering in what President Sarkis does or wants to do. We are not interfering in that country's political future.

MATCH: But surely your tanks standing a few meters from the presidential palace nonetheless constitute a threat? That is likely to influence people, to say the least.

Ari'el Sharon: Dear friend. Go there and you will see, as I did myself, how enthusiastic those people are about our presence. They told me so openly. They have no reason to fear us. Our tanks are directed against the Palestinians, not against the Lebanese. En route I visited several dozen Lebanese villages and I would like to stress that they remained intact after our troops passed through. Our tanks were not directed against them. Each of our officers was equipped with an accurate general staff map from the start which indicated the places in which the Palestinians were. They knew precisely where they had to seek them. It was necessary to launch fierce battles against the Palestinians or Syrians near Lebanese villages. But those villages were not hit.... To return to my talks in Beirut, I told the people I met that I want their country to regain its

independence and to be able to live free from the Syrian and Palestinian occupations which extended from the capital to the south of the country. I told them that all foreign armies should leave their territory. I say all armies, in other words the Syrian troops, the Israeli forces and, of course, the armed Palestinians, their terrorist organizations and their leaders who must all leave Lebanon.

MATCH: At the start of this operation you set out to clear an area of 40 km [in depth]. How do you explain the fact that you are now in Beirut?

Ari'el Sharon: First take a map. Draw a 40km-line from Mettula, the most northerly point of Galilee. You will then reach somewhere north of Sidon, which is on the coast around 70 km from RA's al-Naqura on the Israeli border.

Second, from the start of our operation, we have repeatedly stated our intention of smashing the Palestinians' military infrastructure in Lebanon. In the framework of a political settlement we ask for nothing more than the demilitarization of that 40- to 45-km zone in order to place Galilee out of range of the enemy artillery. Moreover, the Palestinian military infrastructure was 10 times bigger than we had imagined.

MATCH: Were you surprised by their infrastructure, despite the legendary quality of your intelligence services?

Ari'el Sharon: Yes. We discovered vast quantities of arms, munitions and explosives in underground depots.... We found masses of guns, mortars and even tanks. In the Sidon region alone you can now count more than 80 Palestinian tanks destroyed by our guns.

MATCH: Has that infrastructure now been destroyed in the south and in Beirut?

Ari'el Sharon: It has been only partly destroyed in Beirut. Everywhere else it has been or is being destroyed. That takes time.... We are still mopping up. There are still Palestinian snipers hiding throughout the area. The mopping-up operation to which I refer extends from the Israeli border to the Beirut-Damascus road. But believe me when I tell you that when the time comes for a political settlement we will insist that not one armed Palestinian can again enter this 40- to 45-km area. Just imagine what would happen after our departure from Lebanon if we had not first destroyed that military infrastructure beyond the 40-km limit.... They would quickly infiltrate again. As for the Syrians, whom we did not want to attack, our tactics are to push them northward so that they move the Palestinian positions installed in the middle of their lines and which threatened Galilee away from our border. We warned them in various ways, secretly and openly. It was in vain. They continued to protect the Palestinian positions. So we had no choice but to attack them in the south.

MATCH: You are aware that the whole world is shocked by the number of civilian casualties caused by the fighting?

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Ari'el Sharon: Listen. It is up to you to believe me or not. I do not think there is an army in the whole world which has taken such risks to cause as few civilian casualties as possible.... We only opened fire on buildings from which people were firing on us. And even then, before launching an attack, we warned the inhabitants by bullhorn and with leaflets. That is what we did in Tyre, Sidon and Beirut, suggesting that they take refuge outside their homes to avoid the fighting.... Nonetheless when operating in a city like Sidon where there were some 7,000 terrorists--including 2,000 foreigners who had come to train in PLO camps--it was inevitable that there would be civilian casualties. Moreover, we paid a high price for that. Most of our casualties were the result of the caution with which our troops executed their mission in the major inhabited areas. We did our best to spare the civilians, but there is a limit to everything and I know that it is a tragedy, as in all wars.

MATCH: There are children of 12 and 14 among your prisoners.

Ari'el Sharon: I will give you a piece of exclusive information: We discovered documents proving that Fatah long ago ordered the recruitment of all Palestinian children from the age of 12. Twelve years, do you hear. Moreover in another document which I am placing at your disposal it is clearly stated that it is absolutely forbidden to recruit children under 12....

There Is No Logic in Arab Terrorism

MATCH: Were the children taken prisoner bearing arms?

Ari'el Sharon: Yes indeed. And they are 12 years old.

MATCH: How do you explain the illogical behavior of the Palestinians who, by violating the cease-fire every day virtually played into your hands, enabling you to pursue the destruction of their positions?

Ari'el Sharon: If those people reasoned like you and I, there would have been no reason to carry out this operation. There is no logic in Arab terrorism, which we have seen in various forms for almost 1,000 years. That terrorism is the cause of all the misfortunes besetting the Palestinians. Behind that terrorism lies the desire to physically destroy Israel.

MATCH: Has the PLO been destroyed?

Ari'el Sharon: The PLO has suffered a very serious blow. But not fatal. At the present time (Monday evening) it still has a major military and political infrastructure in Beirut. But we have decided not to enter the capital and not to conquer it. It is up to the Lebanese authorities to ensure that the Palestinian command withdraws from Beirut. But those authorities will not be able to exercise their powers while the Syrian occupation continues in a large part of Lebanon and while the 20,000 armed Palestinians and the 40,000 Palestinians organized into militia in the capital remain there. It goes without saying that the withdrawal of the Israeli troops is also essential for the restoration of Lebanese sovereignty.

MATCH: I presume that you are not talking about the withdrawal of all Palestinians as such from Lebanon?

Ari'el Sharon: Not in the least. I am not talking about the Palestinian civilians. I am only talking about the terrorists. The departure of the terrorists, the Syrians and the Israelis is a vital precondition for the reemergence of a free Lebanon. That is also in the interest of the West as a whole. We accept as priority and without hesitation the need for our withdrawal in the framework of the settlement which I explained to you. Our villages in Galilee must never again be hostages to the Palestinians in southern Lebanon. I hope that that settlement will be found very quickly.

MATCH: So it is the Lebanese Government which must take responsibility for removing the PLO from Beirut and ensuring the departure of the Syrians and Israelis from Lebanon?

Ari'el Sharon: Precisely. Otherwise Lebanon will be no more independent in the future than it was in the recent past. As far as we are concerned, there will be no problem because we want to leave as quickly as possible.

MATCH: A final question: How did your air force manage to destroy 12 Soviet-made antiaircraft missile bases in 2 hours without losing a single plane?

Ari'el Sharon: I must content myself with telling you that we learned the lessons of the Yom Kippur war: We made a very serious examination of the problem of antiaircraft missiles. We trained for a long time and our pilots executed a brilliant operation. I leave the rest to your imagination.

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SAUDI ARABIA

DEFENSE MINISTER VIEWS IRAN-IRAQ CONFLICT

PM111127 Paris LE NOUVEL OBSERVATEUR in French 5-11 Jun 82 pp 39-40

[Interview with Saudi Defense Minister Sultan ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz by retired Gen Georges Buis in Geneva: "We Will Not Allow Iraq to Be Defeated"--date not given]

[Text] Georges Buis: Clouds seem to have gathered over Franco-Arab relations after years of smooth relations. Some people blame that on [French President] Francois Mitterrand's visit to Israel....

Sultan ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz: We were certainly not overjoyed by that visit. But Mr Mitterrand is a free man at the head of a free country and his gesture does not come under our jurisdiction. On the other hand it is our right--and even our duty--to judge the impact of that visit: What contribution does it make to the cause of peace and justice and in our region, to restoring a balance which has long been tipped in Israel's favor? Therefore we were not going to trip up your president on the road to Jerusalem. But we are busy sweeping away the jumble of propaganda. That is because we do not want to fall into the trap which Israel has laid for us by portraying that visit by the French president as the prodigal son's return to the bosom of his family.

Georges Buis: However, surely President Mitterrand's first trip was to Saudi Arabia?

Sultan ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz: Out of a desire to be exclusive the Israelis portrayed that visit to Saudi Arabia by the French president as a mere commercial traveler's tour. In short, absolute. We were happy to receive your president in our country. He was able to see that we were not a spontaneous generation of gasoline pump attendants but a line of men whose history is much older than that of oil.

By visiting my family birthplace at al-Dir'iyah and by acquainting himself with Arabia's history, Mr Mitterrand learned that my father, the late King 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Sa'ud liberated and reunified his fathers' land with a handful of men and without using Exocet missiles or AMX-30 tanks. Other times, other ways, you may say--but still the same determination to be master in our own country, and independent and dignified in our relations with others.

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Oil and guns aside--I do not deny their importance--we have another dispute with France, namely cooperation between our two countries as part of an international effort to restore a just and lasting peace in the Near East and to restore the Palestinians legitimate rights; in other words, in their own state Mr Mitterrand's friendship for Israel ought to be a source of hope, not a handicap. It should make it possible to warn Israel against its obsessive wanderings which are likely to put the region and perhaps the world to the fire and the sword.

Georges Buis: In that connection, what is the position on the Saudi peace plan?

Sultan ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz: It takes two to make peace. The Arabs for their part have put forward their proposals in this so-called Saudi peace plan. As for the Israeli peace plan, it is a series of excuses for annexing other people's land, for attacks on Lebanon and for official or unauthorized installations on the West Bank. You may argue that the Saudi plan has not been accepted by all the Arabs, but their criticisms relate to the form of the plan, not to its content. The Israelis reject the content--peace, and that is natural. Although a usurped people's legitimate rights can be clearly spelled out in order to be recognized and accepted, an impostor needs chaos, constant danger and pity in order to survive.

Georges Buis: Another major problem at present is the problem of Iran and Iraq. Their war is now taking a turn which may be decisive. How is Saudi Arabia's security threatened by the development of that war?

Sultan ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz: Nobody stands to gain from the war between Iraq and Iran. Indeed its harmful effects are not likely to be limited to the protagonists alone but to destabilize the whole region. You can see that we, like the other Islamic and nonaligned countries, are anxious to end this war and to see negotiations reopened. I feel that Iraq wants peace and would agree to a negotiated solution. But it is our Iranian friends who are reluctant and who are refusing to sit down at the conference table.

Georges Buis: The Iranians seem close to victory. Saudi Arabia has already given Iraq considerable aid. But what form of military aid do you envisage, should the need arise? Is it indirect aid with Jordanian and perhaps even Egyptian forces? Is there a purely military plan for halting the Iranian forces?

Sultan ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz: At present it would not be wise publicly to express an opinion on that point. Some official views may fan the flames and delay the advent of peace. But if contrary to our wishes, that war were to continue, the Arab states--or at the very least the Gulf states--would be forced to hold a heads of state or defense council meeting to adopt a clear stance on that danger. I hope that that day will never come and that Iran and Iraq will soon be persuaded that a negotiated solution is much more fruitful than an armed conflict. War is a last resort when all peaceful channels have been exhausted.

Georges Buis: Would this not be an opportunity for Egypt to rejoin the Arab League?

Sultan ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz: We all want that, because Egypt has a prominent place on the Arab and international scene. That would be a return to the bosom of the family, but it could not take place outside the Arab League charter's stipulations and the decisions taken by many Arab summits.

Georges Buis: What is the position on the U.S. plan for a joint military committee with Saudi Arabia?

Sultan ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz: We rely mainly on ourselves to defend our country. We are not accustomed to relying on others to protect our heritage or our territorial integrity. But we can also appreciate the efforts of influential nations in the service of peace, human rights and justice.

Georges Buis: Does what is now happening in technological terms in the Falklands give you a new view of how to defend the Gulf?

Sultan ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz: Strategic conclusions and accurate assessments of a particular piece of military equipment used would be premature at this point in the conflict. Once the arms have been laid down and the ins and outs of that war made clear, we will then be able to gauge, judge and learn from the gains and losses. There are, nonetheless, some conclusive experiments, like the Exocet missile which the Saudi armed forces have acquired. And, while adopting no stance on the circumstances in which it was used, we concluded that we had bought an extraordinary weapon. That is a judgment made exclusively on the weapon's efficacy.

Georges Buis: Let us remain on the shores of the Gulf. What might happen if Iraq is defeated?

Sultan ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz: It is difficult to accept Iraq's defeat. If Iraq is defeated, the whole situation in the region will be upset. We will not allow Iraq, or Iran, to be defeated.

Georges Buis: If Iraq is in serious difficulty, is Syria not likely to intervene?

Sultan ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz: I do not think that the Syrians will reach the point of wanting the end of Iraq as a nation and a people, despite all the current disputes between the two regimes and the two leaderships. No, I do not think that Syria could go to such extremes--to want Iraq to surrender and collapse.

Georges Buis: So, Syria will not deal the final blow?

Sultan ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz: I do not think that the Syrian people or the Syrian Army would take the responsibility of attacking Iraq or any other Arab country. And I think that is the case irrespective of who leads Syria. Nonetheless I am not pointing a finger at the present regime, I am talking in general terms.

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Georges Buis: What do you think of Oman's stance on the deployment of U.S. forces?

Sultan ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz: I do not think that Oman has the right to meddle in a conflict which does not directly concern it, and I find it difficult to imagine a developing country, without its own means, entering into conflict with a big nation for a cause which would not directly affect it. But, if it is directly concerned, it will defend itself.

Georges Buis: Do you agree with the fact that the little island of al-Masirah has become a kind of American aircraft carrier?

Sultan ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz: Our policy is plain and clear: We are opposed to any foreign presence on Arab land.

Georges Buis: So no military bases in your country?

Sultan ibn Abd al-'Aziz: No to military bases. No to military presence. Yes to cooperation through arms supply. Yes to technicians for a specific mission. No more.

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SYRIA

AKRAM AL-HURANI CRITICIZES CURRENT REGIME

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 269, 9-15 Apr 82 pp 35-38

[Interview with Akram al-Hurani, co-founder of the Ba'th Party by Walid Abu Dahar: "This is How to Save Syria"; date and place not specified]

[Text] Akram al-Hurani: 71 years old, his face lined with the modern history Syria and the heroic nationalist movement of confrontation and liberation from all forms of oppression...In his eyes is a deep sadness over the tragic events which took place in his home town of Hamah and from which all of Syria is suffering. But it is the sadness of a strong man that meets a great blow with even greater stoicism and determination. As he speaks, the furrowed lines of his face seem to vanish to reveal a young man brimming with zest, confidence, and faith. It is a face which suggests heartfelt faith, clarity of mind, and sharp skill at analyzing events and at drawing the picture of the future. A great Arab warrior with an optimistic eye, confident of our nation's eventual victory over its enemies.

It was only natural that AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI should seek an interview with the man who has played such a crucial role in the destiny of Syria. We were finally granted a meeting with "Abu Jihad" in the garden of his lovely home. It was a frank and spontaneous session, yet bold and trusting at the same time...It began with a question about the role of the National Alliance to Save Syria, and ended with a call of support for saving Syria.

I asked Abu Jihad: Is the National Alliance to Save Syria a consequence of the Hamah events, or had the idea already existed previously?

He replied: The call for the constitution of the National Alliance to Save Syria was issued by a number of national leaders and conscious individuals during the June 1967 disaster. Many serious and difficult attempts to realize this alliance were undertaken on several occasions. Unfortunately, the internal and factional conditions of Syria and of the Arab and international community precluded the realization of these attempts.

We Syrians believe that the only way to rid Syria of Hafiz al-Asad's regime, which supported by Zionism, Western Arabs, and the international community, is to establish the National Alliance among our people's sons. This alliance will offer the opportunity to establish a patriotic regime in Syria.

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A patriotic regime in Syria would place a limit on the massacres occurring all over the Arab world, in Syria, in Lebanon, and on the eastern borders of our Arab homeland. And, as everyone knows, Syria accomplished the most in the fifties under the oppressive rule of the National Coalition, a coalition in which all political factions, from the extreme right to the far left, including the communists, participated...At the internal level, the Coalition achieved some basic social and economic gains. The Council of Deputies passed some important legislation regarding the peasants, the workers, and the economic, industrial, and cultural rebirth...The nationalization of foreign companies was carried out, and the bigger ports passed into public... Even the national budget--which is a mirror that reflects the extent of general economic growth--increased by an average of 30 to 40 percent each year. All of this was possible despite the economic blockade, despite the fact that Syria was denied any foreign aid; Syria was one of only three nations that did not get foreign aid after World War II.

Even under the shadow of the National Coalition, Syria at that time managed to confront all of the foreign plots hatched against it and against the Arab nation. This list includes the Mutual Defense Pact, the Baghdad Pact, the Eisenhower Doctrine, to the Tripartite aggression against Egypt...The official records on the Baghdad Pact, which were revealed after the 14 July 1958 revolution in Iraq, expose the devilish lengths of the plots aimed at Syria...But in the shadow of the Coalition, Syria was still able to suppress all plots and emerge victorious.

Indeed, Syria was encircled by some Arab and Islamic states allied with the West against it. But thanks to the democratic parliamentary national government, Syria emerged victorious from these battles. At that time, Syria was a radiating beacon in the Arab world, a shining light of liberation for the peoples of the Third World. It was even called "heroic Syria." The world could not imagine that a small country deprived of human and natural resources could survive in the face of all these powers conspiring against it, and ultimately emerge victorious. What allowed Syria to bring about these miracles was democracy and the national unity that sprung up in the shadow of the National Coalition.

It is unnecessary to mention the amount of aid given by Syria to the Algerian revolution and to Egypt against the Tripartite aggression and the conspiracy against the National Union there. Our support reached fruition with the establishment of the Egyptian-Syrian union in February 1958.

Question: You were the defense minister at the beginning of the rule of the National Coalition. You must have keen insights into the Syrian army's composition. What is your explanation for the massacres that took place in Hamah?

Answer: We need to understand the Syrian army's structure from the beginning. In the mandate period France formed what it called the "mixed army." It included French officers of different ranks and officers and soldiers from certain Syrian sects, the most prominent from Latakia Mountains, Jabal Druze, al-Sharaksa, and al-'Asha'ir. France upheld this racist, tribal, and

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sectarian composition. It would not give the majority of the young men of the country, i.e., of the towns, the opportunity to enter the military college or the army, except in a very few cases, and from only certain families.

When the popular uprising of 1945 occurred to end the mandate, a large number of these officers joined it. Three years later they were to play a supervisory role in the fighting for Palestine, despite their small numbers and little artillery. The fatality rate of these officers was relatively high in Palestine in 1948 because they fought at the head of their units.

In the nationalist period following the mandate, the sectarian composition of the armed forces was abolished by a law making military service obligatory for all men. Admission to the military college was made conditional upon the applicant's personal merits and the attainment of a secondary school diploma. In this way the Syrian army became a national army that all Syrians could join in to protect their country and to realize the goals of the Arab nation. And in Syria's Golden Age, during the rule of the Progressive National Front, the Syrian army witnessed its greatest period of strength and national solidarity...This admirable state of affairs was a contributing factor to the realization of the above-mentioned accomplishments by Syria during this time.

Indeed, the biggest blow to befall the army's structure occurred after the movement of 8 March 1963, when steps were taken towards restoring the methods of the mandate period. A large number of officers were dismissed, especially after the coup of 22 February 1966...Then Hafiz al-Asad completed the sectarian approach by concentrating the leading positions in the hands of men from his own clan and sect.

Question: We understand that Hafiz al-Asad opened a gaping wound in the unity of Syrian society by affirming the sectarian character of the government and the army. How can this wound be treated?

Answer: When the French entered Syria in 1920 after noble popular resistance at the battle of Mislon, they divided the country into sectarian mini-states, in the Alawi Mountain and Jabal Druze. They granted each area fiscal and administrative independence, and a flag. They tried their best to attribute to each one of them a separate cultural character, history, and distorted heritage...until the people's struggle toppled their attempted artificial sectarianism. Complete popular and political unity was achieved after the 1945 revolution when the French were expelled from the country for good.

What France tried and failed to achieve, America and Israel are now attempting--not only in Syria but in the entire region. Zionism and the West understand very well that Israel's strategic superiority over a handful of Arab states is an artificial, superiority that could be undone and demolished. Israel's leaders do not try to hide the fact that their policies are based on carving up the region into paltry sectarian entities...

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...After the June 1967 defeat, Moshe Dayan and others stated that the Middle East is not an Arab region but rather a mosaic of several nationalities...he meant by that a cluster of sectarian and racist entities.

And in fact without slicing the region into sectarian, racist mini-states, it would not be possible for Israel to maintain its ascendancy in this Arab region in perpetuity.

Here the savage, sectarian regime in Syria links up with Israel's expansionist designs in the Arab world...the regime has crushed national unity in Syria and has exposed the destiny of the Arab nation to grave danger.

The Syrian army has lost its military might in the face of this suppression of national unity by the regime. For military might is a function of internal, domestic cohesion...Without national unity, military potential is minimal, regardless of what the army might possess in terms of arms and artillery. In such cases, the military machine can only be used against the people.

This sectarian regime has fitted nicely into Israel's expansionist designs in Lebanon, as was made clear in a communique by the National Alliance to Save Syria.

It is indicated in the Red Line agreement over which America took upon itself to start a mission of negotiations and understandings between Hafiz al-Asad and Israel...It is indicated in the despicable and cowardly acts committed in Lebanon, whereby the army has lost its reputation for patriotism and fighting spirit. The army has been transformed into a night watchman on the streets and an instrument of mischief in the hands of smugglers and thieves. It has been made into an instrument of slaughter of Palestinians and Lebanese. A band of sectarianists are to be found within the ranks of the Muslims themselves in Lebanon.

The collusion of al-Asad's sectarian regime with Israel's expansionist plans to carve up the region was clear during the rebellion of the agent Barzani in northern Iraq. Despite the fact that Israel was supplying Barzani with arms, money and officers to train the rebels during the late Shah's rule, Hafiz al-Asad was also giving aid to Barzani. And when this agent Barzani was defeated and died in America, Hafiz al-Asad summoned Barzani's son, Mas'ud, and cajoled him into rekindling the rebellion. It is well known that Mas'ud now spends his time between Syria and Iran.

There are eyewitnesses that claim that Hafiz al-Asad enjoyed good relations with the shah. When the shah was in the prime of his power, al-Asad used to get financial aid from him. Even more dangerous is the fact that Khomeyni's regime of ayatollahs currently established in Iran is openly in league with the sectarian regime in Damascus and no longer hides it. This is the same regime of ayatollahs which still calls up to this minute for the annexation of Iraq and the Arabian peninsula to Iran, in the name of Islam...Al-Asad knows that Israel is supplying the Iranian rulers with all kinds of military aid.

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The Zionist plan for carving up the region was revealed in the famous document handed over by the late Jamal 'Abd al-Nassir to the Indian journalist, Karinjia, and is the subject of the latter's book, "The Israeli Dagger." This book exposed the Israeli plan for dividing the Arab region into sectarian, racist mini-states. Hence, the sectarian, racist regime of Hafiz al-Asad, is a tool to be used by Zionism and imperialism to carry out their plan.

Question: What in your view is the best way to solve the Lebanese crisis, in light of the conflict between the Palestinian issue and the Lebanese issue?

Answer: The Lebanese crisis cannot be solved until the Syrian army withdraws from Lebanon and a patriotic, democratic government is established in Syria. It was the Asad regime that brought Israel to Lebanon in fact...It added a new sectarian wedge in Lebanon when the popular leadership of Amal and founded Ali Eid's organization in Tripoli. It was also an inhibiting factor in bringing about conciliation between the different sects (factions) in Lebanon, including the Palestinians.

Hafiz al-Asad's propaganda that claims that it was necessary for his forces to move into Lebanon to protect the Palestinians from Israel and prevent sectarian massacres between the Lebanese only confirmed the truth that his presence in Lebanon was a contributing factor in the increase of sectarian slaughter within the ranks of both Muslims and Christians. Events showed that these forces did not fire a single shot to protect the Palestinians during Israel's attacks on Lebanon, especially during the barbaric shelling of Palestinian dwellings in Lebanon that obliged the Palestinians to accept a ceasefire with Israel.

The facts also suggest that Hafiz al-Asad's presence in Lebanon served, and continues to serve, as a pretext for Israel's occupation of large parts of southern Lebanon, especially where large clusters of Palestinians are found, and aimed at annihilating them.

Question: As one of the long time greats of Syrian patriots, how did news reach you of the events at Hamah, and how true do you think they are?

Answer: I think that the atrocities committed by Hafiz al-Asad in the heroic city of Hamah are truly unprecedented in the annals of the most uncivilized conquerors in all history, including Genghis Khan and Timurlane. I don't think there has been anything like it anywhere in the world. An estimated 20,000 people were killed, including old men, women, and children. Atrocities, destruction, mutilation, looting and pillage occurred of an order unlike anything you are likely to read about in books...Women's honor was defiled and word-of-mouth tells us of several women who committed suicide in their struggle against the bestial forces of Hafiz al-Asad, protecting their honor. One young girl exploded herself in the midst of some of these savage soldiers, killing 20 of them. At least one-third of all the buildings in the town were destroyed.

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Bodies lay strewn on the streets until the town started to fester with diseases. News is still reaching us about bodies being pulled out from under the ruins...Whole piles of bodies are being buried in mass graves dug out by steamshovels. They say that that butcher's forces have even resorted to burying some of the martyrs' bodies...just as they burned some of them alive!

The city of Hamah used to boast a population of 300,000. Now it hardly has 15,000. The authorities are still barring any journalists from going into the city. What is really sad is that the Arab and the international news media, east and west, are keeping quiet about this foulest deed in contemporary times.

Question: During the Hamah events, the official Damascus news media targeted only the Muslim Brotherhood. Was it a conflict between the authorities and the Muslim Brotherhood only, or was it a contest between the authorities and all of the patriotic opposition forces?

Answer: We mentioned that the city of Hamah once held 300,000 people. It is incredible to think that the whole town, including its men, women, and children, consisted of Muslim Brothers...But it was only natural, considering the encirclement and barbaric destruction of the town, that everyone should have rushed to protect the inviolability of their town and join in the fighting without fear of death, regardless of the fact that they were out-matched in arms and ammunition...The noble patriotic resistance displayed by the people of Hamah accounted for a loss to the butcher of 150 armored cars and tanks.

If what the sectarian regime's news media says is true, then were Hamah's Christians who met death in the city and the surrounding countryside, also members of the Muslim Brotherhood?

More than this...There is an intuitive sense of the lies and falsity of these claims.

In the period of parliamentary government, Hamah used to elect its own representatives to Parliament. The Arab Socialist Ba'ath party would propose a complete list of candidates and all of them would win seats in free, democratic elections...Therefore, since when have the old men, women and children of Hamah's 300,000 population, including the Christians there and in the surrounding countryside, all been part of the Muslim Brotherhood?

From another angle, the number of political prisoners in Syria today has reached the thousands, and run from all sections of society. These include members of the unions of workers, engineers, doctors, teachers, students and the military. So the battle is not only between Hafiz al-Asad's regime and the Muslim Brotherhood, despite the efforts being made to portray it as such.

Some have raised questions about the savagery shown to Hamah by Hafiz al-Asad...What could be the reason for it?

The number one reason was to deepen the sectarian differences in Syria to the point where they became irreconcilable. The tyrant has been working towards this end throughout his rule. The second reason is to spread fear and terror among the people in order for the tyrant to maintain silence over his savage crimes, over his support for the regime of Khomeyni, and the ayatollahs in Iran, and over crimes committed against the Arab nation and its rightful future.

Question: In your opinion, why didn't any Alawites rise up after the events of Hamah?

Answer: It is regrettable that there are no young men to be heard in the Latakia mountain region raising their voices against the barbaric crimes committed by Hafiz al-Asad against Syria and the Arab nation. It is regrettable that they would voice no protest even if it meant their death.

That is why I direct my words to the patriotic conscious and the Arab sentiment existing in the minds and hearts of the youth of this honorable sect. They must determine what their position towards this regime is going to be. We want them to rally to the banner of the National Alliance to Save Syria, the only way to save the Syrian people and the Arab nation from this traitor's rule...It is the only effective response to Hafiz al-Asad's attempts to deepen sectarian differences in Syria.

We await the news of our sons in the Latakia mountains to fight at the side of their brothers in Syria together against this criminal butcher's regime.

Question: Do you think that the Syrian regime is ready to follow in the path of Camp David, if given the opportunity?

Answer: The full answer to that is contained in the charter of the National Alliance to Save Syria.

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SYRIA

PLANS TO ELIMINATE OPPOSITION ABROAD CITED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 273, 7-13 May 82 pp 19-20

[Article: "Syrian Plan to Eliminate the Opposition Abroad"]

[Text] Up until last Tuesday evening, the closing date for this issue of AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI, the French authorities had not given out any final information regarding the results of the investigation. The cause of this silence is two-fold. The first part concerns the fact that serious information has reached Paris concerning an official Syrian plan to eliminate the opposition in Western Europe, and the second part is other information concerning a counter-plan, which has not yet crystallized, being prepared by the Syrian opposition to convulse the pillars of the regime abroad, and especially in Europe.

AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI, which is following the investigation and its ramifications, has uncovered some of its aspects in light of the Syrian plan and the possibilities of a counter-plan.

More than two weeks after the Rue Marbeuf explosion, which was aimed at AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI, the judicial investigation has not obtained any significant results, in terms of discovering the perpetrators, although it has specified the "Syrian role" in the massacre in an undeniable fashion, in terms of making the decision to punish and intimidate AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI.

It has become clear today that the Syrian regime's responsibility for the attack is not debatable, since it was aimed at killing two birds with one stone, as various French political circles have stressed.

1. To inflict the most damage possible on AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI.
2. To prompt the French authorities to clamp down on AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI's freedom and perhaps on the emigre Arab press as a whole, on the one hand, and to send a direct warning to the French Government because of its intervention in the Lebanese crisis behind Syria's back, on the other. The French criminal police last week interviewed a number of persons, including Hamidah Na'na', Lebanese correspondent for AL-SAFIR, who is a supporter of the Syrian regime, the Egyptian writer Ghali Shukri, and the Syrian journalist, Ghassan al-Amam, for 3 hours. They were then all released except for one person, whose name has not been disclosed.

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Evaporated Like Salt

The French police have also distributed a composite picture of the driver of the Opel car that blew up on the street. Police experts determined the features of the man's face in light of information from the eye witnesses who saw the driver of the car up close hours before it exploded. The picture, which AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI is publishing along with this report, shows a face with Arab features, distinguished by thick black hair, streaked with some gray, and a thin mustache.

This photograph was circulated to Interpol and European police organizations, since the first expectations were that the perpetrator might have been successful in leaving French territory.

On the other hand, a team of French police went to the Czech city of Jablonec to interview the woman responsible for the car agency where the orange Opel was rented.

It has become clear that the young woman who rented the car presented the agency with a false Swiss passport, in the name of Margit Stadelman. It is known that she has brown skin and is about 30 years old, but she has "evaporated" without a trace. The land or air route that she used to reach Jablonec is also not known, nor is the hotel where she stayed, although there is the belief that she carried several passports and travelled under various names.

The young woman's description has been passed to other European police forces charged with combating terrorism, in order to identify her, but the results were negative. This proves that the Syrian regime, and specifically the Defense Companies' intelligence, prepared the attack with extreme care and precision. They took all the time they needed to prepare for it, in cooperation with their informants and spies in Europe.

The Richest Man

The French media, for the third consecutive week, has continued to play up the massacre and its perpetrators. The newspaper FRANCE SOIR published a factual report about Rif'at al-Asad and his terrorist activities both at home and abroad, as well as concerning his secret wealth. It considers him the richest man in Syria today. Other magazines have also published pictures of some of his real estate holdings in France, including a huge villa in the western outskirts of Paris, specifically, in the middle class area of (Saint Ne L'Eau) Provence, which is about 35 kms from Paris. It also published a picture of the villa and the opulent gardens surrounding it. A large group of cars was shown parked outside the house.

The French press mentioned that Rif'at al-Asad registered his property in the name of a real estate company called "al-Janan," which is managed by his lawyer brother-in-law, Najj al-Khuri. They added that Rif'at al-Asad recently visited this villa, and apparently secret meetings were held there to plan the operations and actions of his intelligence organization on French soil.

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The Liquidation Plan

It is evident that these activities were in the context of an extremely dangerous secret plan, which certain French political circles disclosed this week. The plan calls for pursuing opponents of the Syrian regime and either liquidating them or kidnapping them back to Damascus. It is based on huge resources and a vast network of terrorists.

AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI is alone in focusing on this plan in all its aspects and background, backed by facts, figures and names.

It was decided to put the plan into use in a secret meeting held in Damascus on 14 February. On that day, the forces of the al-Asad brothers completed the destruction of most of the districts of Hamah and were mopping up pockets of armed resistance in its streets and buildings. As a result of that, the Syrian president summoned his chiefs of intelligence to an urgent and secret meeting. It was attended by 'Ali Haydar, responsible for eliminating oppositionists in Western Europe, 'Ali Duba, responsible for military intelligence, Muhammad al-Khuli, responsible for general intelligence, as well as Rif'at al-Asad.

The plan was prepared and in Rif'at's pocket.

The meeting was aimed at putting the finishing touches on the plan and at discussing some of its operational details. Its goal was "to hit the opposition hard, to pursue them everywhere and to create consternation in certain Western capitals that have accepted Syrian oppositionists and have given them freedom of movement, in order to make these capitals expel them or impose restrictions on their activities, including the media."

This is the first time in the history of international relations that a country has adopted a plan of this kind and has shown such disdain for the simplest principles that govern relations between nations and peoples, through direct terrorist intervention in foreign nations.

At the secret meeting, ways of implementation were discussed "in light of President Hafiz al-Asad's guidance and instructions." Rif'at spelled out the role of the "soldier" in the pursuit operation. It was decided to make use of the most capable elements from the 'Alawite sect, after furnishing them with diplomatic passports and the necessary equipment.

This equipment is another story.

American Expertise

Syrian intelligence sought the assistance of an American arms dealer, notorious for his past relations with American intelligence, in order to furnish them with the most effective means of killing and with his practical advice in this regard.

This dealer's name is well known in arms dealers' circles and in the world of intelligence. He is George Gregory Korkala. He was sentenced by an American court to 53 years in prison for violating an official ban on supplying arms to

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Libya. However, Korkala was successful in fleeing American territory, and in offering his services, along with his two partners, Wilson and Terpil (under 10 year prison sentences, charged with collusion with Korkala) to those organizations and groups who wished them.

However, American intelligence has not forgotten the fugitive "troika" and continues to pursue Korkala, Wilson and Terpil. The three were successful in staying out of the clutches of the police and Interpol, until the most dangerous of them fell into a trap.

That happened on 25 February in the city of Madrid. Interpol surprised Korkala at an exhibition of electronic listening devices and equipment. He was arrested and "shipped" at once to New York.

After a series of prolonged interrogations and investigations, Korkala agreed to "cooperate" with the police and facilitate their job. He revealed everything with facts and figures.

The confessions were startling. Both the American CIA and FBI had thought that Korkala and his two partners only worked for the Libyan regime. However, Korkala revealed for the first time that he also worked for Syrian intelligence. What were the details that he gave?

His confession was a very serious document concerning the Syrian regime's terrorism. Let us read it and also hear the story of his relationship with Rif'at al-Asad's intelligence organization.

"In 1977, I and my partner Terpil were invited to visit Damascus secretly. There, I met with General 'Ali Duba who told me he was interested in obtaining the American Ingram machine gun, used by American intelligence. He urged me to get him a sample of this machinegun for him to test.

"A few weeks later a Syrian delegation came to New York, led by the foreign minister, 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam. A captain in Intelligence, Haytham Sa'id, was a member of the delegation. He contacted me, and we agreed on a date to meet at my factory, Amstech International, in the city of New Jersey [sic]. Haytham came; he asked me if I was able to supply him with advanced silencers, magnifying scopes that use rays, and other sophisticated equipment used by American intelligence.

"Later, there was a series of meetings between us in Damascus and Geneva to discuss these matters."

Korkala also confessed that the Syrians provided him with a contact in Frankfurt, Germany, who was purchasing on behalf of the Syrians the following items: booby-trapped toys, pistols, and explosive ink pens and lighters. The shipment was to be via Lufthansa.

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Poisons for the Opposition

"The Syrian military people then asked me," Korkala went on to say, "for very powerful explosives that the American army uses and for toxic substances that kill immediately, such as thalium, strychnine, digitoxin and aconitum. "I brought this stuff to Paris, and according to the instructions that had been given to me, I waited in one of the hotels. An emissary came to me from 'Ali Duba, under the assumed name of Ziyat. All of this was done through a special "code" that had been agreed upon at the start of our cooperation. Ziyat asked me to go to Damascus, specifically to the Hotel Meridian, where I would be contacted."

Accordingly, Syrian Intelligence was supplied with the most modern and technically sophisticated equipment to be used in the liquidation plan in Europe. This equipment was shipped in diplomatic pouches to Europe, where groups of kamakazi commandos waited to declare war on the opposition in Paris, London, Frankfurt, Aachen, Madrid and elsewhere in other European capitals, in execution of the plan which Hafiz and Rif'at al-Asad discussed last 14 February.

From al-Muhaysan to Delamare

Informed French circles, including the French magazine V.S.D., which published details of the plan, put the European war of liquidation in the context of the Lebanese war and the series of Syrian liquidations which have been going on in Beirut for several months. The officer who carried out the kidnapping of the former Jordanian charge d'affairs in Beirut, Mr Hisham al-Muhaysan, was none other than Syrian Captain Muhammad Yasin, who also tried to hijack one of the Arab airplanes at Beirut airport.

Muhammad Yasin is the righthand man of Col Muhammad Ghanim, who is in charge of Syrian intelligence in Lebanon. He is the one who devised the plan to assassinate French Ambassador Delamare in Beirut, and delegated its implementation to al-Musawi.

Therefore, the Syrian plan to eliminate the opposition in Europe is merely an extension of the liquidation going on in Lebanon. However, it is more dangerous, in the sense that it is being conducted in complete secrecy and with the most modern equipment that leave no traces: kidnapping (the case of the Syrian opposition officer, Barid al-Baridi, who was kidnapped from Strasbourg to Damascus), assassination, strangulation, poisoning, etc. French authorities are expecting a new wave of these "operations" soon in other European countries, in which there are Syrian or Arab opposition elements, for the purpose of "convulsing" both the opposition and the West. It was revealed in Paris that Rif'at al-Asad recently visited France (the city of Bordeaux), under the guise of seeking treatment, in order to supervise some of the technical touches to the plan.

However, the unexpected anger against the Syrian regime, which resulted from the Marbeuf massacre, in addition to the expulsion of the two Syrian diplomats, Hassan 'Ali and Mikha'il Kasuhah, and the imposition of strict security precautions all over Europe, have shuffled some cards and closed some channels to Syrian terrorism, which might delay the implementation of some foreign operations.

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The question that arises is: Can the European security authorities manage to stop the terrorism coming from Damascus, and paralyze their intelligence organizations, or will war develop between the two sides, with some European nations resorting to direct response and using the same methods, as a senior French official indicated?

For its part, this question brings up another one: Will the Syrian opposition enter the foreign "arena," in order to respond to the terrorism, and how?

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TUNISIA

INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS LAUNCHED IN KEY INDUSTRIES

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1906, 21 May 82 pp 1329, 1330

[Article: "Industrial Projects in Tunisia"]

[Text] During the Fifth Tunisian Development Plan (1976-1981), the total investments of manufacturing industries were lower than scheduled: 791 million dinars instead of 950 million dinars (million dinars: MD; 1 dinar = about 11 French francs). As a result, the realization of certain large projects has been affected (iron and steel industry, cement, ammonia, sugar production, etc.). Nevertheless, private investments have exceeded the Plan estimates by 30 MD (313 MD against 283 MD).

In 1982, manufacturing industries were to make investments amounting to 245 MD, representing 17.5 percent of the total investments (compared with 195 MD and 15.9 percent in 1981). Private investments represent a large percentage of the total, especially in the mechanical and electrical engineering industries.

NOTE: For this study, we have considered only the projects that are now in progress or the realization of which is scheduled to start during 1982.

Table 1. Investments in Manufacturing Industries (in Millions of Dinars)

	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>Increase in added value 1982 (%)</u>
Agriculture and food industries	33	55	50	0.3
Building materials industries	40.1	49	60	17.6
Mechanical and electrical engineering	21.2	25	44	11.6
Chemical industries	13.2	34	40	8.1
Textile and shoe-making industries	15	19	27	9.6
Miscellaneous industries	11.8	13	24	14.6
Together	134	195	245	9

In 1982, the rate of growth in this sector will be 9 percent, whereas the average rate of growth adopted in the Sixth Plan (1982-1986)--which has just been the object of a large national consultation--is 11.5 percent. This rate is

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based on the recovery of the textile industry, a slight decline in the mechanical and electrical engineering industries as well as in the chemical industries, and a stabilization of agricultural production.

Agriculture and Food Industries

For technical reasons, the expansion of the Beja sugar refinery--to increase its capacity from 80,000 to 145,000 tons of beets--was not realized in 1981.

Construction of a new sugar refinery at Ben Bechir is scheduled to start in 1982. This sugar refinery complex, which will have a processing capacity of 4,000 tons of beets per day, and a production capacity of 41,000 tons of sugar per year, will also include a yeast manufacturing plant producing 7.5 tons of dry yeast per day. For its realization, Tunisia has signed an agreement with an Italian-West German consortium. The total cost of the project is 47 MD and production should start in June 1982. The German Bank for Development and Construction is providing a 45 million mark loan to finance the second unit of this complex.

In addition, two flour-mills are scheduled to be completed, in Kairouan and Gabes; also, 5 MD will be invested to complete the Port of Tunis dairy station which is managed by STIL [Tunisian Dairy Industry Company] (200,000 liters of milk per day), and 2 MD to continue the expansion work at the Sidi Bou Ali dairy station.

In the tobacco industry, 2.6 MD represent the cost of starting the expansion program of the Tunis plant. The construction of an egg and food packaging equipment plant in Mateur accounts for a total investment of 1.5 MD, with a participation from the Koweiti Development Bank.

Building Materials Industries

The total investments for 1982 amount to 60 MD, including 40 MD to finance cement works projects.

In Enfidha, the Central Tunisian Industrial Cement Company (SICC) will build a cement factory with a capacity of 3,000 tons of clinker per day, corresponding to an annual production of 1 million tons of cement and 120,000 tons of artificial lime. This project will cost 71.5 MD, of which 20 MD will be spent in 1982. The construction of this factory has been entrusted to the Japanese company Kawasaki Heavy Industries and production is expected to start late in 1982. The Export-Import Bank of Japan is contemplating a loan of 45 million yens to Tunisia.

The Jebel Oust Cement Company and the French company Polysius will build a sixth cement factory at Jebel Oust. It will have a production capacity of 1 million tons per year, and will increase Tunisian cement production to 4 million tons. The project will cost 79 MD and will be realized over three years.

The other projects deal essentially with the realization of the Bir Mcherga cement factory (15 MD), the hydraulic lime unit (1 MD) and, finally, the white cement unit (2 MD).

Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Industries

It is expected that 44 MD will be invested in 1982 in the realization of large mechanical engineering projects.

In 1981, Tunisian authorities started negotiations with automobile manufacturers, and three manufacturers appear to have agreed with the government requests.

STIA (Tunisian Automobile Industry Company) and Peugeot have signed an agreement for the assembly of 10,000 model-504 vans, 1,000 model-504 station wagons, and 2,500 model-305 cars. Some of these cars will be exported. The agreement provides for a progressive increase of the industrial integration coefficient in van production, with a medium term coefficient of 30 percent; it also provides for the production of spare parts for these cars, and for the purchase by Peugeot of industrial products (automobiles and others) made in Tunisia. The project will cost 12 MD and its implementation is scheduled for the end of 1982, after the expansion of the STIA workshops.

A second manufacturer--Renault--will realize two units for the assembly of 4,000 5-HP and 7-HP cars (4 MD), and for the production of brake levers, remote controls, ignition coils, etc., all of which are to be exported (5.6 MD).

The third manufacturer will realize an unit for the assembly of 10,000 vans, half of which to be exported (cost: 10 MD).

The Tunisian Economic Development Bank (BDET) has launched a series of automobile components projects. It has signed an agreement with the German mechanical engineering enterprises Kloeckner-Humboldt-Deutz (KHD) for the realization of a mechanical engineering complex in Mateur, where light mechanical accessories will be manufactured. This complex will include a unit for the construction of 6,250 Diesel engines and a unit for the assembly of agricultural machinery (2,200 tractors, 80 combine harvesters, and 700 other machines). The estimated cost of the project is 45 MD.

A Tunisian company, COTREL [expansion unknown] has been created; it will produce 6,000 tons of springs for automobile vehicles, mostly for the export market. A five-year agreement has been signed with Fiat for the sale of 2,000 tons of leaf springs. Technical assistance from the Japanese company NHK [expansion unknown] has been secured. The project will cost 4.5 MD, of which 1.5 MD will be invested in 1982.

Other investments in this sector (21.5 MD) will be for modernization and expansions, and for a series of projects dealing with metallic structures (5.3 MD), electrical engineering (6 MD), a machine-tool production unit in Jerissa and a factory to produce radiators for all types of vehicles in Gafsa (1.4 MD).

In the iron and steel industry, 4.6 MD will be invested in 1982, including 2.2 MD for the overhaul of the El Fouladh blast furnace. The structural steel shortage reached 100,000 tons in 1982 and will reach 300,000 tons in 1986. A

preliminary feasibility study made by Atkins and Partners recommended a two-stage development of the plant to adapt it to the production of long products with a direct reduction process. The estimated cost of the operation is 144 MD.

Table 2. Investments in Mechanical Engineering (in Millions of Dinars)

	<u>Cost of the project</u>	<u>Realized prior to 1982</u>	<u>1982</u>
Automobile assembly	27.7	4	9.4
Automobile components	31.8	-	5.3
Handling equipment	1.9	-	1
Tools and machine-tools	2.2	0.4	1
Mechanical engineering complex	38.8	-	1.1
Others	-	-	4.7
Total	102.4	4.4	22.5

In addition, 1.3 MD will be devoted to the expansion of the SOFOMECA [Iron Works and Engineering Company] foundry so it can produce tubing (1.3 MD); 2.6 MD will be invested in metal works, and 3.5 MD in the expansion of metallic packaging.

Chemical Industries

The total investments allocated to this sector for 1982 are estimated at 40 MD (compared with 34 MD in 1981). They include essentially the completion of the new ICM-3 [Maghreb Chemical Industries] phosphoric acid production unit (10.3 MD). This project is part of an effort to increase the phosphate processing capacity. Its realization would make it possible to optimize the use of existing equipment in the first two ICM units by raising their production capacity to 280,000 tons, and to increase the total ICM capacity to 445,000 tons of phosphoric acid. The total cost of the project is 39 MD and it is expected to start in June 1982.

The Phosphate and Nitrogen Fertilizer Company will continue the realization of the SAEPA [expansion unknown] project (15.5 MD) and will start work on the new IC [expansion unknown] projects (4 MD) and on the project for uranium extraction from phosphoric acid (2 MD). The SAEPA project will cost a total of 82.5 MD and includes essentially two units for the production of sulfuric acid from imported sulfur (990,000 tons per year), two units for the production of diluted phosphoric acid (330,000 tons per year), and one binary fertilizer unit (330,000 tons per year).

A French 220 million franc loan will be used to increase the capacity of the local phosphate processing industries and to finance the purchase of equipment for the M'Dilla (Gafsa) phosphate fertilizer complex. This complex will include a sulfuric acid production unit (1,500 tons per day using the Heurtey Industries process), a phosphoric acid production unit (480 tons per day using the Tusinian SIAPE [Phosphoric Acid and Fertilizer Manufacturing Company] process), and two triple superphosphate production units (672 tons per day using the SIAPE process). Production is scheduled to start in 1984.

The realization of a project for the extraction of sulfuric acid and cement from gypsum and phosphogypsum will start; it will ensure the production of 80,000 tons of sulfuric acid per year and of the same amount of cement. The plant will be built in Meknassy, will cost 12 MD and will recycle the residual phosphogypsum from the Gabes and Sfax phosphate processing facilities.

In the other branches of activity, we should note that BDET and the Italian group Pirelli have signed an agreement for the realization of a tire factory in M'Saken (Sousse). The project will have a production capacity of 490,000 units, will cost 35 MD and must meet 30 percent of the local demand.

A furfural plant--the first of its type in the Arab world--will be built in Mahdia, and will produce 10 tons of furfural per day. Furfural is used for the production of synthetic materials, colors and hydraulic alcohol; it is essentially produced from spent pomace, almond shells and other vegetal products.

The Central Pharmacy has a 9 MD investment program (Sixth Plan), including 2 MD in 1982, for the expansion of its production line.

The German company Reifenhauer and SIAPE have signed an agreement for a plastic bag factory. The factory will be built in Mezzouna and will produce 2 million bags per year starting in 1983 (cost: 5 MD).

Textile Industries

In 1982, 27 DM were allocated to this sector. Three fourths of these investments will be in various activities of the private sector: clothing and hosiery (9.5 MD), spinning, weaving and finishing (6 MD), tanning and shoe-making (4.5 MD).

It is expected that 7 MD will be devoted to the modernization and optimization of the equipment of SOGITEX (General Textile Industries Company) subsidiaries. The World Bank has agreed to give an 18.6 million dollar loan for this project. In addition, 3.4 MD will be invested in the expansion and modernization of SITEX [expansion unknown], and 3.5 MD in the modernization of the equipment of TISSMOK [expansion unknown], SOMOTEX [expansion unknown] and SITER [expansion unknown].

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TUNISIA

ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH GULF STATES EXPANDED

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French No 1117, 2 Jun 82 pp 53-54

[Article by Souhayr Belhassen: "Heading for the Gulf"]

[Excerpts] For the period covering the Sixth Plan [1982 to 1986], Tunis is counting on a total sum of 1.2 billion dinars in Arab transfers (500 million in the form of long-term loans, 400 million in capital market loans and 300 million in joint venture loans). These funds will represent 30 percent of Tunisian foreign capital requirements which are valued for the period 1982 to 1986 at 3.4 billion dinars, i.e., twice the amount which had been obtained during the Fifth Plan. Until now, Arab money has primarily been invested in banking and tourism. Four banks grouping Tunisians and non-Tunisian Arabs exist in the country. A fifth offshore Kuwaiti bank with 14 million dinars in assets opened recently. In the field of tourism, the Kuwaitis have invested more than 80 million dinars, not counting the 17 million resulting from a recent agreement for projects in Sousse and Sfax. What is new is that today the Arab investors are as equally interested in non-touristic facilities. Among such projects, as diverse as they are numerous, are the following: a Gabes-Medenine railway (20 million dinars), telecommunications and a fishing port in Bizerte (14 million), chemical industries (17 million), expansion of the Tunis-Carthage airport, etc. Mines and agricultural projects themselves attract petrodollars. The Saudis have participated in financing the Sidi Saad Dam and in the purification of the Lac de Tunis. Abu Dhabi will no doubt contribute to the expansion of the Bizerte petroleum refinery. The tour made by Mohamed Mzali in the Gulf states in March did not merely result in new financial agreements amounting to some 120 million dinars; rather, it enhanced his public image in the Arab world. "Tunisia's new orientation," says one Saudi newspaper, "proves that it is possible to make a success of all Arab policies which take into account the interests of each party."

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YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC

ASSESSMENT, IMPLICATIONS OF VARIOUS POLITICAL PARTIES

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 275, 21-27 May 82 pp 32-34

[Article by Sa'd Zaghul Fu'ad: "Where Did the Missiles in the Mountains of Yemen Come From? The National Democratic Front Facing the Last Choice"]

[Excerpts] The attempt to depict the relationship between both parts of Yemen graphically will inevitably show a line rising, falling and even fluctuating. There are indications, however, albeit inconclusive, that the recent meeting of the two presidents in Ta'izz has begun moving that relationship in the direction of a straight line. What are these indications? Is it possible to determine the course of the present stage in a historical perspective? The correspondent of AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in San'a' will try to answer these questions.

The Political Front

During the revolution's battles and the battles that were fought to defend the republic, political movements and beliefs became widespread among the vanguard revolutionary forces until these were ultimately formed into seven political parties. Five of these parties are Marxist; one is national; and the other is religious. These parties do in fact exist today even though officially, political parties are still prohibited by law. But the government is satisfied with a superficial application of the law and is preventing [the establishment of] public party centers and newspapers. The government overlooks the actual activities and the objective presence of these parties and forces perhaps because they are confined to intellectuals and have not penetrated deeply among the people for reasons that have to do with the tribal nature of the people and the high rate of illiteracy among them. The government may also be overlooking these activities because it prefers to play it safe; it wants a life of stability, and it wants to provide security.

Individualism in Yemen is synonymous with tribalism. It may be related to the geography of Yemen, especially in the mountains where if a tribe were to mutiny because of an obligation to get even, it would seek refuge behind the rocks and vegetation and resist in its own way the fiercest of armies. Hence the state found itself compelled to accept this fact; it did, however, ban the carrying of weapons in hospitals, in government offices, in schools and in universities.

Foremost among the Yemeni parties is the Arab Socialist Ba'th party which states:

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"Comprehensive Arab unity is the noblest goal of the Arab struggle. It is the great hope of the masses of our nation. Through unity our independence is strengthened and our Arab nation acquires actual control over its natural riches and resources so it can put them to work for comprehensive development in an integrated economy that is based on the masses, that operates in their favor and that meets the basic needs of the toiling and producing classes. This overall framework of unity has a social content that clarifies independence, bestows the principal means of production on the people, brings about ultimate deliverance from backwardness and builds a united Arab socialist society that is based on democracy and freedom."

The last one among the parties in Yemen is that of the Muslim Brothers, which is basically a political party operating in a religious framework. "Islam is a religion and a state.... It is worship and leadership.... The Koran is our constitution, ... and death for the sake of God is our highest hope." However, the Muslim Brothers do not have a specific political program; nor do they have a clear economic theory or view. They do not have their own idea of constitutional, administrative, political and financial institutions upon which a state can be built. To them the revealed law of Islam is the most important source of positive law. Hence, they are very active in giving religious counsel and urging good moral conduct. Recently, on the basis of a religious premise opposing Marxist atheism they established training camps in the mountains for Marxist rebels, even though they have not taken part in any battle so far because the government has succeeded in paving the way for a solution to the dispute and the achievement of a national reconciliation. The outcome of that is expected next September along with the celebrations for the revolution's 20th anniversary.

The following five leftist and Marxist parties fall between al-Ba'th party and the Muslim Brothers: the Revolutionary Democratic party, the Democratic People's Alliance, the Revolutionary Resistance, the Labor party and the leftist group of the al-Ba'th party which recently broke with that party and formed another which it called al-Tali'ah al-Sha'biyah, [the Popular Vanguard]. When national reconciliation is brought about it will be these seven political parties that will cooperate with the secular and independent elements that are ruling the country today. All the political and ideological forces and movements will then become one; [they will work in unison] to overcome backwardness and to build a united Yemeni society. This will be the society of efficiency and justice that is based on democracy and self-acting cooperation, as President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih says. Despite the fact that today political parties are banned by law and confined to intellectual groups, they represent the political facade of future Yemen whose purpose is to overcome backwardness and move beyond [the confines of] a tribal society to become a progressive and a developing society.

Missiles. . . Where Did They Come From?

Thus despite their different orientations, the five parties were calling upon each other to unify their struggle throughout all the stages of tension, anxiety and dispute. They called for the formation of a national, democratic front that would include the progressive parties. The function of that front would be to overthrow any government in the north that would not adopt scientific socialism and would not achieve unity with the progressive southern portion of Yemen. These five parties then formed an alliance in the National Democratic Front. Their

members armed themselves and sought refuge in the mountains of the central region, especially in the area of (Shar'ab) where they declared their insurrection. This was how the struggle became an armed struggle. Government forces were able to flush out the insurgents from most of the mountainous central region, and the signs of danger and factors for a major insurrection began spreading into neighboring areas and perhaps into the entire Gulf area. Besides, foreign elements would have been dragged into the situation under the pretext of putting out the fires "to protect oil interests and strategic locations."

The government in San'a' was surprised when SAM missiles shot down two MIGs belonging to the Yemeni air force. This incident almost broke relations between both parts of Yemen. Aden was suspected of giving the insurgents the Soviet missiles. Thus Saudis and Yemenis issued their joint threatening communique stating that "Riyadh and San'a' pledge to stand as one against all the clandestine and public conspiracies that were being contrived to destabilize the area's peace and security, regardless of their source.... The [two countries] pledge to oppose anyone who tries to infringe upon the unity of the area's soil and the independence of the area's countries or impose any kind of hegemony or influence over the area." It was reported that military forces in a state of alert were being amassed on what was assumed to be the borders between both parts of Yemen. The situation was about to explode, and people on all sides held their breath in anticipation of the impending explosion. However, there were communications between the two presidents after which they met in Ta'izz between 5 and 7 May, and [as a result] the fires were put out and serenity was restored. The efforts of the joint committees that have been working to bring about unity between San'a' and Aden were stepped up, and it was determined that the Soviet missiles had come to the insurgents from one of the distant Arab capitals. Aden closed its borders to the insurgents, or it promised it would, and it promised it would support the efforts of San'a' to achieve independence in the north part of Yemen.

The Proletarian State

At the same time President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih made it possible for the National Democratic Front to turn over its weapons, and he appealed to its members "to assume their positions among the masses in the course of the revolution and the quest for democracy to build a new Yemeni society, a society of progress, efficiency and justice." The National Dialogue Committee in San'a' stepped up its contacts with its leaders to prepare for the popular elections during which the people will elect their representatives to the General People's Congress which will be held in the next few months. The proposed National Charter will be presented to that congress for ratification. That charter will be tantamount to a national action program during the coming period for all the national forces in Yemen, including the five parties of the National Front.

One of the uncommon qualities of the ideological struggle in Yemen lies in the fact that one of the intellectuals of the front described the old Yemeni society of the Sabaean state as a society of slaves. He was being consistent with the Marxist materialistic interpretation of history, beginning with the primitive state of collective ownership, the age of slavery, the age of feudalism, the age of capitalism and the society of scientific socialism. An independent writer replied [to that statement and said], "The title or name he gave to the system of the Sabaean state is inconsequential. This system of slavery produced a civilized

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city, and anything that will produce a civilization benefits people and the state. If the purpose [here is to state that] scientific socialism is the highest form of cultural evolution because it is based on a collective system and that the power and accomplishments of scientific socialism under the leadership of the proletariat, that is the workers, as was the system of the Sabaeen state, are derived from cooperation and the collective participation of the people in completing public projects, then the people of Yemen in the Sabaeen state did constitute a class of toilers, that is, a proletariat who were under the aware leadership of a monarch. By comparing the time difference between the age of Sabea in the eighth century B.C. and our present age with regard to workers' wages and living conditions, it becomes evident that the toilers who worked on the Ma'rib Dam, for example, after the harvest did so to comply with the king's orders. Thousands of them would be rounded up and put to work to build a dam, dig a canal or build a road, a city or a temple. The state would take care of their food and their drink. Thus came about a spirit of civilization and cooperation in building this city. It was done by a cooperative society with the least cost and with no foreign loans and aid. Those toilers from the proletariat of Sabaea were satisfied with a few thousand camels, cows and sheep that were slaughtered to feed them, and they were satisfied with a few thousand sacks of dates, flour, shortening and oil. With such modest provisions they were able to build an urban city that they are still proud of, a city whose memory is everlasting. However, we the Yemenis of this age have received hundreds of millions in assistance and in loans after the revolution, but these have had no commensurate effect in developing our economy. We are still asking for more, and we are still backward because we have lost the spirit of civilization which our Sabaeen forefathers had.

Two Objectives, Two Targets

In less than 1 month San'a' hit the target twice in the political arena. The first time was when it received former Syrian president, Amin al-Hafiz, semi-officially thereby blocking the Syrian regime's attempts to extend its influence into the mountains of Yemen. The second time San'a' hit the target was when it pulled the rug from under the National Democratic Front when it staged an expanded, large and official Labor Day celebration on 1 May. That celebration was attended by the president. There were processions that included more than 1 million workers who make up the newborn class of workers who were urged by President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih to form their general federation expeditiously. Workers had worked last year on forming their associations whose processions joined the parade grounds on the morning of 1 May in San'a'. There were official Labor Day celebrations also on a small scale in the remaining provinces and principal cities. In his speech to the workers assembled on the parade grounds the president of Yemen wanted to proclaim the country's willingness to let bygones be bygones with the Democratic Front and to look forward to the future, if the members of the front were to join the march for revolution and the quest for democracy and work on building tomorrow's advanced society.

Unity through Dialogue

Some people are saying that in addition to the pacts and agreements that exist between the two parts of Yemen, such as the Cairo Agreement, the Tripoli Pact and the Kuwait Agreement, the Ta'izz meeting outlined a new framework for the relationship between the two Yemens. Both the meeting and the agreements led the

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presidents of both Yemens to form a council that would work for unity. In addition, constitutional, economic and cultural unity committees were formed. A constitution of unity will be presented to the people at the next people's congress which is expected to be held in the next few months.

So far, the two presidents of Yemen have held six summit meetings; these were held in San'a', Aden and Ta'izz. If unity is achieved, it will have been achieved by democratic dialogue and objective principles.

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