



YEMEN TIMES

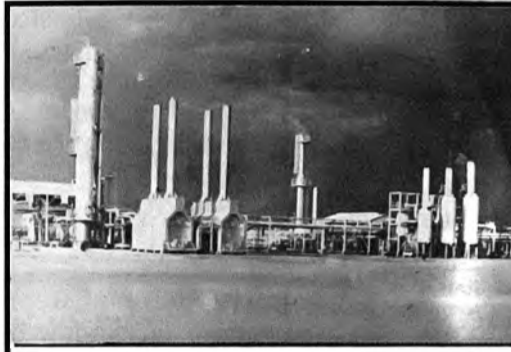


YEMEN'S ONLY ENGLISH - LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER

SANA'A; 12 - 18 AUGUST 1992; VOL II, NUMBER 33

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OUR VIEWPOINT



THE TIME FOR ACTION HAS COME

The Republic of Yemen hopes to conclude the transitional period on the 22nd of November, 1992. To achieve that, a lot of work needs to be done, and our lethargic leadership (in this matter) needs to be pushed into action to prepare for the elections properly. In other words, the time for action has come! What needs to be done?

There are many things that are still pending. To start with, the members of the Supreme Elections Committee have to be named. Second, the by-laws and regulations of the elections law have to be worked out. Third, the electoral constituencies have to be defined in a final way, and detailed maps of the boundaries have to be distributed showing which villages are in which constituency. Fourth, registration of voters has to be started as soon as possible. Fifth, the do's and don'ts of election campaigns have to be agreed upon as soon as possible.

To wait until the last minute before action is taken would only add to the complications of the events. What is stopping the leadership from deciding on so many of these matters, I don't know. Wavering and hesitation would only increase the problems and the chances of many things going wrong. Sometimes, I get the feeling the leadership is sorry it has embarked on the road to democracy, because it cannot control as many people and to the same extent as it did before. That feeling is strengthened by persistent wavering and vacillation, instead of going straight ahead and carrying out the tasks needed for elections, and for terminating the transitional period.

I sincerely hope our leadership will rise up to the occasion and do what is right.

Publisher

THE DIVIDE AND RULE CONCEPT AND APPLICATION IN YEMENI POLITICS

The People's General Congress has been able to impose its will on the Yemeni political parties. First, it got its partner in power, the Yemeni Socialist Party, to agree to its terms and conditions regarding the upcoming National Conference. Then, it gathered around it several of the political parties which are beholden to itself or the YSP.

By yesterday, Tuesday, August 11th, the opposition political parties were badly split regarding a number of superficial issues such as the name of the conference and its timing.

The Preparatory Committee for the National Conference, in its sincere drive to bring everybody into the conference hall has been considering several concessions. However, some members have expressed their concern whether the PGC will be satisfied with anything short of the cancellation of the whole thing.

"Appeasement has never been a good policy in politics," exclaimed one senior delegate.

It is ironic that the National Conference, which was launched in a meeting in the house of the patriot Sheikh Sinan Abu Luhum, is being killed in a series of meetings in the house of another Abu Luhum.

PRESIDENT SALEH MAKES A YR.50M. PERSONAL DONATION

Yemen Times has learnt from informed sources at the UNDP in Sanaa that H.E. President Ali Abdullah Saleh has made a personal donation of YR.50 million to help the Yemeni returnees. The amount was passed on to the Governor of Hodeidah last week, and was already put to "good use" according to a telephonic declaration by the Hodeidah Governor.

It is to be noted that some 60-80 thousand Yemeni returnees are stranded in camps in and around Hodeidah. Their conditions continue to deteriorate in spite of an emergency investment program designed to help them.

The Somali refugees are far better taken care of than the Yemeni returnees, according to sources knowledgeable of the circumstances of both groups.

السُّفَّارِي
EL SOFFARY

CONDOLENCES

Yemen Times presents its condolences to H.E. Eng. Jamal Mohammed Abdo, the Vice Minister of Transportation and Acting Chairman of YEMENIA on the death of his father.

تعزیه

تتقدم «يمن تايمز» بالتعازي للأستاذ المهندس جمال محمد عبده القائم بأعمال رئيس مجلس إدارة الخطوط الجوية اليمنية لوفاة والده أسكنه الله فسيح جناته وإنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون.

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PERSONAL VIEW

Crisis Management or Management by Crisis



Ali Mohammed Abdullah
Member of Parliament

It looks like our leaders, intentionally or unintentionally, confuse two concepts - crisis management and management by crisis. While the first concept refers to the ways and means the decision-makers address a crisis in order to minimize its damage to society and the system, the second concept refers to the artificial fabrication of crisis in order to mask the problems and short-comings of the system. This is based on the local proverb which states, "If you threaten someone with death, he will acquiesce to sickness."

Thus we all remember the numerous crisis created by the rulers every now and then to distract our attention and efforts from the real problems to the fabricated crisis. Thus we have continuously acquiesced to the many problems we lived with in the face of potentially greater "crisis".

The irony of the situation is that we see our leaders fully capable of crisis management, as visible from the way they handle external problems. However, they do not use the same approach, skill or interest when handling internal problems. The difference is that foreign parties will not acquiesce to the whims of the Yemeni leaders, whereas our people have done so, and continue to do so.

Since unification of Yemen, we've had an additional new concept - management by partition. Thus the ruler partitions everything, and then blames the partitioning process for the paralysis and lack of progress in everything. At the same, the management-by-crisis concept has attained new levels of professionalism. We hope our leaders adopt crisis management and not management by crisis.

LOCAL BRIEFS, LOCAL BRIEFS, LOCAL BRIEFS, LOCAL

YEMEN PREPARES TO CELEBRATE 30th ANNIVERSARY OF SEPTEMBER REVOLUTION

The Republic of Yemen has gone into full gear to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the 26th September Revolution, as well as the October 14th Revolution.

In a meeting chaired by the Vice Prime Minister for Internal and Security Affairs, and attended by several minister and senior officials, the Festivities and Celebrations Committee discussed the details of the preparations. The committee will continue to hold regular meetings until all preparations are completed.

PARLIAMENT APPROVES EDUCATION LAW

The House of Representatives has finally approved the law of education in Yemen. The law calls for a total restructuring of the educational system. One of the changes is to make the grades 1-9 (known as basic education) compulsory to all children.

The law also calls for the merger of the religious schools into the regular schools, and that they fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. This point was one of contention between the Yemeni Congregation for Reform (the Islah) and the rest of the parties. The Islah was finally overwhelmed last week.

EDUCATION SEMINAR CONCLUDED

The 4-day Education Seminar sponsored and organized by the Syndicate of Education Researchers was concluded on Tuesday August 4th. Specialized papers on the curricula, student achievement, and teaching aids were presented to the seminar.

Participants in the seminar were from the Colleges of Education in Sanaa, Taiz and Aden, researchers from the Education Research Center and its branches in Aden, and specialists from various ministries.

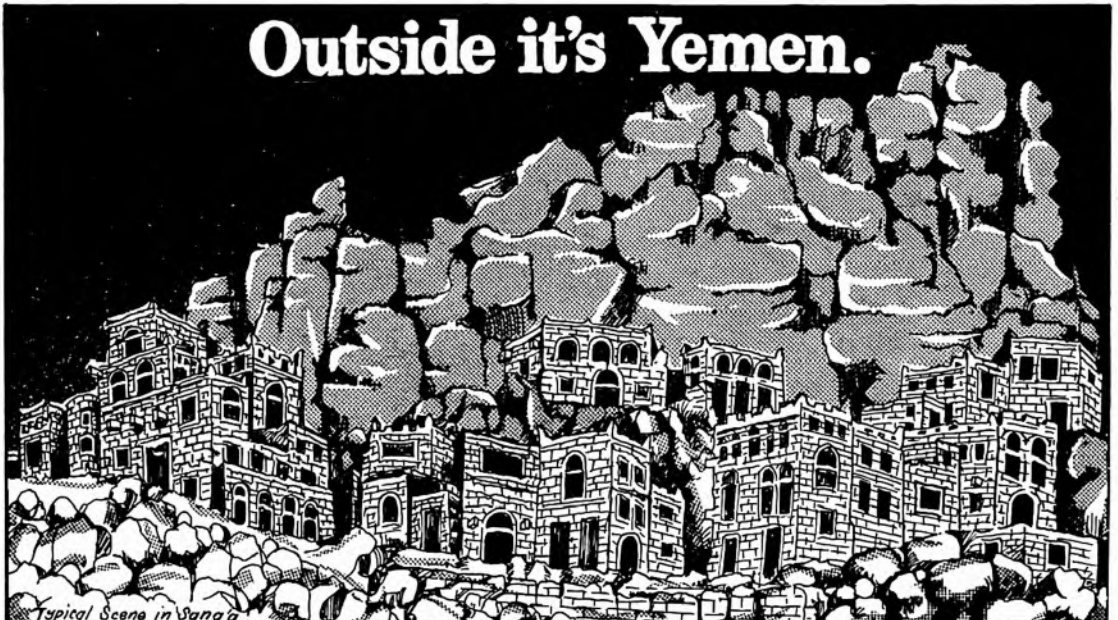
According to Abdullah Daifani, Head of the Syndicate, the seminar concluded that the achievement levels of Yemeni students are very low, and it proposed many steps in this regard. Yemen Times will run those steps and proposals in the coming weeks.

FOR RENT

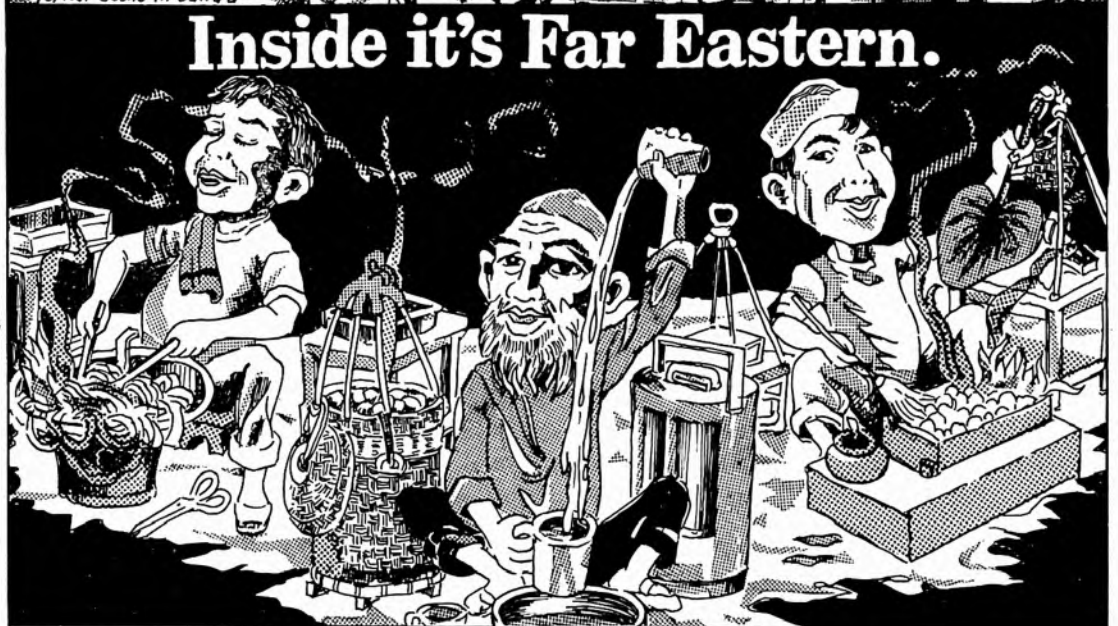
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NEST '92

Kuwaiti Charge d'Affairs:

"We await a bold step from Yemen to activate bilateral relations."

Last week (August 2nd), marked the second anniversary of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. On this occasion, Yemen Times interviewed H.E. Mr. Mansour Abdullah Al-Awadhi, Kuwaiti Charge d'Affair in Sanaa. Mr. Al-Awadhi holds an MA in Philosophy of the Social Sciences from the USA. He is in Kuwait's foreign service since 1978, during which time he served in many countries, including Iraq.

Excerpts of the interview:

Q: Two years ago last week, Iraq invaded Kuwait. How do you feel about the whole episode?

A: It is like a nightmare. This event will come down in Arab history as one of the darkest and saddest moments of our modern history.

Q: How are the economic conditions in Kuwait today?

A: You know that the war and its aftermath cost us dearly. A lot of money was wasted.

When Iraq was forced to pull out, it burnt behind it the oil wells. This was an additional cost. We have more or less come out of this now, because we are producing some 1.2 million bpd, as compared to about 1.5 million bpd before the events.

The destruction of the infrastructure, fixed assets, machines and tools is another aspect. The replacement and maintenance costs have been enormous.

The loss of professional manpower, whether local or foreign, is also another problem. Added to this is the loss of softwares, files, programs, and various kinds of documents and plans. Finally, new businesses and investments are not in full force, yet. One reason is the renewed threats from Baghdad.

As a result of all of that, our economic conditions, although steadily improving, have not yet bounced back to pre-invasion levels.

Q: At the political level, two issues mar the liberation of Kuwait. Let me start with the first: human rights abuse and chaotic vengeance which led to the suffering of many innocent people.

A: I do not deny such



happenings which were carried out by zealots who wanted to take the law in their own hands. However, this was only during the first month following the liberation of the country. As you yourself said in the question, these were chaotic times during which the government could not exercise full control.

As the government regained control of the situation, such actions were stopped. They were not government-condoned actions.

Q: Let me revert to the second issue - democracy and political reform.

There were promises on this count which many people believe have not been carried out.

A: Kuwait is now headed towards parliamentary elections which are scheduled for October 1992. The people will elect the National Assembly. This is an important step towards democracy and political reform for the country.

Other steps, especially in the form of up-dating the laws, are expected to take place next year.

I know that this drawn-out process is taking a long time, but the government had the priority of rebuilding the state before it could start in the various reforms. That is what is happening now.

Q: Women are still not allowed to vote, are they?

A: Unfortunately, according to the existing laws, women will not participate in the elections. I hope that the new parliament will address this issue and introduce the necessary amendments to the law.

Q: Do you foresee the normalization of relations with Iraq, given that neighbors must come to terms with each other?

A: I am afraid I do not think this is possible with the current regime in Baghdad. There are many reasons for this, the most visible one being their claims to Kuwait were repeated only last week. Iraqi officials and the government media just reiterated that Kuwait is part of Iraq.

There are also many pending issues. Iraq is still holding 850 Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti prisoners of war.

We have provided the list, but they refuse to respond. They even refused the Red Cross access to the prisoners. There is another issue, Iraq is refusing to demarcate the border once and for all. Unless, we agree on the borderline, there will continue to be difficulties.


Finally, there is the issue of compensation for the war. How can we talk about the possibilities of normalization of relations when all these issues are pending?

Q: Do you see that some flexibility on Kuwait's part is warranted on the compensations issue, given the Iraqi economic conditions?

A: There are two sides to this question.

First, please note that these are decisions made by the UN Security Council, and not by Kuwait.

Continued on p. 9



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WATER SUPPLY OF SANA'A CITY PROBLEMS & POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS: KHARID HEADWORKS

By:
V.G. Ganchikov

PART II:

In the littoral zone (Tihama Desert) all wadis are harnessed for irrigation purposes. The irrigation systems use extensively all surface and underground water resources. Unlimited water withdrawal has upset the natural balance of water resources and resulted in the sea water intrusion to groundwater aquifers. So, the improvement of water withdrawal pattern has turned into a major problem in that region. Thus, any attempt toward consumptive use of either surface or underground water for the needs of Sana'a water supply may lead to fatal economic and ecological effects in the now prosperous and highly-productive region.

The Gulf states' experience in industrial desalination of sea water testifies to engineering feasibility of this option in Yemen. If desalination plants were built on the western coast of Yemen, they could fully meet the water needs of the people and agriculture. That would make it possible to divert some portion of the flow of wadis of the Red Sea coast to meet the demands of Sana'a. However, practical implementation of the sea-water desalination option is impeded by at least two obstacles.

First, the lack of hard currency to purchase highly-productive desalination plants from abroad. For example, a hyper-filtration plant producing up to 40 cubic meter of fresh water per day costs US\$15,000-20,000, while a similar plant producing up to 600 cubic meter of fresh water per day costs over US\$100,000.

Second, the absence of readily available electric power sources. In the area under study, electric power may be provided by diesel, atomic or tidal power stations. But the environmentally-friendly tidal plants would not work because of insufficient daily tidal range in the Red Sea. Atomic power engineering might be developed in Yemen provided the country discovers a possibility to purchase the necessary equipment and nuclear fuel from abroad. But this would entail the need to safely bury the radioactive wastes and create effective air defence of atomic power stations, which would require more

hard-currency spending. Thus, the projects of APS construction remain a task for indefinite future. If the choice is made for diesel power stations as a source of energy for desalination plants, too many of them will have to be constructed, since diesel plants have rather low power generating capacity. But products of burnt diesel fuel under highly humid air conditions would contribute a great deal to the pollution of the littoral zone and the sea. The negative environmental effects might be counterbalanced through vast spendings on environmental protection, which are likely to outstrip the cost of desalination plants themselves. Therefore, this option is not seriously regarded by designers for producing large amounts of electric energy.

Measures on rational and economic utilization of surface and groundwater resources are not considered here. However, a lot of attention was paid to them in the Scheme. One may agree with the Scheme authors' opinion that the

internal reserves are big enough, and that they could be utilized for a long time provided that there is a systematic improvement in the water consumption technology both in urban and rural areas. In order to accelerate the introduction of the achievement of the scientific and technological progress into all water utilization spheres, large volumes of financing are required both in the foreign and local currencies.

The financial abilities will determine the scale and the tempo of mastering new technologies of the rational use of limited water resources. Utilization in the Republic of Yemen is only under study presently.

That is why, at present, there is no alternative to the Kharid Headworks as a first-priority project in the program of raising the water supplied to Sana'a. The technical solutions on the Kharid Headworks have been elaborated in such a way that guarantees the supply of potable water to Sana'a of at least 9.48 m. cubic meters per year.

The Kharid Headworks

has the following structures:
- a 70 meter high dam;
- a reservoir of 35 m. cu m useful storage (full storage capacity is 45 mln. cu.m);
- a water supply system (two water intakes, pipelines, pumping stations, water treatment plant, 45-km long Kharid-Sana'a water conduit, gate valve chambers, clean water tanks);
- automatic, telemetric and communication systems;
- a power transmission line;
- access roads.

The Kharid Dam is located some 60 kms. north-east of Sana'a. The design of gate valve chambers on the conduit provides for a possibility to deliver, if needed, a part of the water transmitted in it to the population living along its route.

The planned period of the execution for the Kharid Headworks is four years. It is assumed that some 2.4 mln. cu.m of water per year should be delivered during the third year after the project commencement.

The designed total water supply rate may be reached within 1-2 years after the project is completed. The cost of the project, in 1991

prices, makes up YR 1.4 b. Feasibility studies of the Kharid Headworks indicate that the project will operate without state subsidies and yield profit.

Tender documents on the Kharid Headworks will be completed in 1992 that will allow work to start in 1993. The authors of the Scheme have shown that the latest permissible term for putting this project into operation is 1996.

Unfortunately, the practical implementation of the technically feasible water supply projects, both within and outside the Sana'a basin, is hampered by the financial limitations of the Republic of Yemen.

That is why it is necessary to turn the attention of international organizations to such an important and complicated problem that needs an urgent solution, given the rapidly aggravating water situation of the city of Sana'a.

Ecological disaster should not be the fate of the city which UNESCO has named as one of the world heritage cities.



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Text of Investment Law #22 of 1991, Part V

4. Use of locally produced raw materials and commodity inputs.
 5. Projects contribution towards securing the basic goods and services needs of the community and other projects and sectors.
 6. Project impact on the environment and the biosphere at the project site.
 7. Any other factors the Board of Directors may decide on.
 8. Introduction of sophisticated modern technology that will assist in building up the national economy.
 9. Project contribution to developing remote areas in the Republic.
- The executive regulations shall indicate the principles and rules needed to appraise projects in accordance with the provisions of this Article.

Article (48):

The tax exemption provided for in Articles 25 (1) and (4) and 26 of this Law shall be granted according to the following procedures:

- a. The Authority shall be notified when the installation of fixed assets in the projects is completed and the date of commencement of production or pursuit of activity before any products are put on the market or services make available to the public, as the case may be.
- b. An application, with all substantiating evidence of entitlement to the exemption in accordance with the provisions of this Law, shall be made to the Authority within 90 days following commencement of production or pursuit of project activity.
- c. The Authority may examine the project and its records and assets to verify the conditions needed for the exemption requested.
- d. Having verified that all conditions required for the tax exemption requested have been met, the Authority may issue, within 60 days following receipt of all documents needed, the Tax Exemption Certificates granted to the project. The taxation authorities concerned shall execute the exemption promptly upon presentation of the certificate.

The executive regulations shall determine exemption application form and the supporting documents that must be presented for a decision to be taken, as well as the form of the exemption certificates issued by the Authority in this respect.

Article (49):

Any project may be expanded or upgraded according to the following procedures:

- a. The application submitted to the Authority to license a project may provide that the project will be executed, expanded or upgraded in phases, subject to the application including all information needed, as the case may be. In such case the license granted to the project may cover all phases needed.
- b. No expansion or upgrading not included in the license granted to the project may take place before an application to that effect is made to the Authority and its approval received. Decisions on applications for expansion and upgrading shall be governed by the same rules and procedures needed for applications to establish projects. The Authority may give its approval for expansion or updating either by issuing a new license or by amending the license given to the original project, as it may deem appropriate in light of the existing situation.

Article (50):

- a. A register of investment projects governed by the provisions of this Law shall be recorded all basic data and information relating to licensed projects and all modifications thereto. The executive regulations shall specify procedures and fees for registration, modification,

deletion, or for issue to those concerned or publication of formal extracts of the official record.

- b. Investors shall notify the Authority of any major modification taking place to licensed projects. A major modification shall be any change affecting how it is treated according to the provisions of this law. In the event of any modification occurring in a licensed project prior to its implementation, investors shall be required to suspend such modification pending completion of formalities relating to a decision on the modification. Major modifications in licensed projects shall be governed by the same procedures as those governing licenses for establishment set forth in this law and the executive regulations thereto.

Section VI INVESTMENT COMPANIES

Article (51):

When established, investment companies shall take any of the legal forms provided for in the Companies law, subject to joint stock companies that put up their shares for public subscription or limited stock partnership companies satisfying the following conditions:

- a. Founders shall number no less than two and the founders' subscription to capital shall be no less than YRls 6 million or the equivalent thereof in freely convertible foreign exchange.
- b. Non-Yemeni subscription to capital shall not exceed 45 percent of paid in capital. That proportion may, by decree of the Council of Minister, be increased according to exigencies of the public interest upon a proposal by the Board of Directors.

Article (52):

The founding of a joint stock company putting up its shares for public subscription, or amendment of its statutes, shall be by resolution of the Boards of Directors of the Authority upon a submission by the Authority's executive Administration in accordance with the provisions of this law.

Article (53):

Joint stock companies that do not put up their shares for public subscription and limited stock partnership companies may be founded, or may amend their statutes, by a decision of the President of the Authority in accordance with the provisions of this law.

Article (54):

The resolution licensing the foundation of a company or amending its statutes of articles of incorporation shall be issued within 45 days following the date of submission of a completed application. Should such period elapse without issuance of a resolution thereon the company will be deemed to have been legally founded or the amendment approved and publishable in the Official Gazette. It shall be required that registration formalities pursuant to regulations in force be completed without objection.

Article (55):

Paid-in capital of joint stock companies that put their shares up for public subscription shall be no less than YRls 10 million, or the equivalent thereof in freely convertible foreign exchange.

Article (56):

Capital of an investment company may be paid wholly in foreign exchange or in local currency or in both together, as may be agreed upon by the investors. The company's statutes, articles of incorporation, books and records shall show each investor's subscription to company capital in the currency invested. A company may also issue shares, stock and loan bonds in either or both foreign exchange and local currency.

Article (57):

- a. A joint stock company's shares shall be nominal or to bearer, but shall remain nominal until the full value is paid in. A nominal share holder upon full payment of the value may request that the shares be converted to bearer bonds unless otherwise provided for in company statutes.
- b. No share's nominal value may exceed YRls 50,000 or the equivalent thereof in freely convertible foreign exchange.

Article (58):

With the approval of the Authority, stocks and shares may be issued against a premium subject to such fact being recorded in the company's establishment instruments.

Article (59):

A joint stock company shall be managed by a Board of Directors, company statutes determining the number of members which shall be no less than three members. A shareholder may appoint someone other than himself as his representative in the membership of the Board regardless of the subscription in the company or nationality of such proxy. Furthermore there shall be nothing to prevent a person being a member of the Board of more than one public joint stock company.

Article (60):

Representation of shareholders on a company's Board of Directors shall be proportional to the number of shares held, regardless of any provision otherwise in other laws and regulations.

Article (61):

A joint stock company's statutes may provide for the following:

1. Authorized capital upon foundation may amount to three multiples the issued capital.
2. Issued capital may be increased by issuing new shares, pursuant to a resolution by the company's Board of Directors, to the extent of the authorized capital subject to all previous issues being subscribed to.
3. Various denominations of shares and bonds bearing various rights and preferences may be issued subject to the rights and obligations of each denomination being clearly provided for in the company's statutes.

Article (62):

Without prejudice to the provisions of Articles 3 and 51 of this Law, Yemeni and non-Yemeni subscriptions shall not be governed by any specific proportion in investment companies regardless of any provisions providing otherwise in any other law.

Article (63):

Investment company shares and founders' shares may not be circulated during the first two years of a company's duration save with the approval of the Authority's Board of Directors.

Article (64):

Projects that take the form of joint stock investment companies may invest a part of their capital in subsidiary projects outside the scope of this Law, as may be decided by the Authority's Board of directors. Guarantees, benefits and exemptions provided for in this law shall not apply to such subsidiary projects or invested funds, without prejudice to the rights of such project to benefit from any guarantees, benefits or exemptions provided for under other laws.

Article (65):

All investment companies shall indicate the following information in all their documents, correspondence and any literature they distribute to the public:

Continues Next Week!

SELECTED ARTICLES FROM THE LOCAL PRESS

By: Bashar Ghazi Askar

AMRAN: Inadequate Services and still Looking Optimistic

There are talks that Amran which is 60 kms. north of Sana'a is on its way to becoming the Republic's eighteenth governorate. Today, Amran is a region with Sana'a governorate. Yet, Amran is very lacking in infrastructure and services. It has only two secondary schools, several primary and intermediate schools and one teachers' training institute.

Its health sector is in even worse shape. It has one medical center which is literally swarmed by patients. The city of Amran lacks sanitation services. Water supply is erratic, electricity is unreliable, and municipal services are lacking.

There seems to be a deliberate attitude to neglect the needs of this region. In spite of the recurrent visits to the region by senior dignitaries including the president, vice president, the prime minister, and many ministers, there is very little proof of any development effort by the government.

There is another dimension to the backwardness of this region. The people are in endless conflicts over land ownership. But these must be somehow resolved either through personal intervention or according to the rules/laws.

Electric supply is still limited to the main towns, whereas many villages are by-passed by the network. The drinking water supply is another problem which creates daily complications for the citizens of the main towns as well as for the smaller villages.

Aden, Aden,
4/8/1992.

THIS DANGEROUS ESCALATION

When parliament resume its sessions, many campaigns are expected to be unleashed in favor of and against the enactment of the law on education. In favor of the legislation are the intellectuals, educationists, journalists, the middle class, and most urban dwellers. Against the enactment are the right-wing groups, certain religious circles, some segments of the rural/lower class people.

The re-unification of the educational system is a basic component of the reform and modernization efforts of this country. The bill which is being discussed by the representatives of the people is critical for the country to surmount the defects and shortcomings in education.

The bill before parliament is not a private affair which concerns the YSP as some people claim, but it concerns the whole nation and it represents the climax of a long struggle and victory for all the modernizing forces in society.

A quick glance at the bill, without any doubt, will confirm the underlying concepts and philosophy stem from the doctrine of Islam, Yemeni culture and the Arabs experience in the educational field.

Then, what is it that is behind all this noise that make the political Islamic groups take this hardline against the legislation of this law.

It is clear now and after weeks of discussions and dialogues in open and in private meetings, in parliament and outside, that the motives behind the campaign have nothing to do with religion or defending education.

In brief, the case substantially, represents private, narrow, fanatic party objectives which motivate these groups to exercise the utmost pressure on parliament with very mean and crude methods, including the use of threats against its representatives.

In fact, the discussions proceeding in parliament on education are a test to whether these groups have faith in democracy, debate and pluralism, because their recent behavior proves many sad beliefs and concepts on their part, none of which are compatible with democracy and tolerance of opposing view points.

Al-Thawri, Sanaa,
6/8/1992.

AL-JAWF: A MUSEUM OF YEMEN

Al-Jawf is considered Yemen's museum as it holds the country's largest collection of remains and ruins. It was the seat of many a Yemeni civilization. The governorate gets its name from Wadi Al-Jawf, a giant wadi (valley)

originating in the mountains north east of Sa'ada and extending in a south-east direction all the way into the point where Al-Baidha and Shabwah governorates meet.

The archeological sites in the region like Baraqish, Al-Baidha, Al-Sawda, Banat Aad are all very impressive with their remaining few houses built in the Islamic architectural style.

Some sources of history refer to Al-Jawf as the site of a first Yemeni state (called Maeen) and there is a consensus that it was the center of various states and cultures throughout Yemeni history.

The city of Baraqish which is situated near by the capital of the governorate Hazm Al-Jawf, is a magnificent embodiment of the past. Its ruins contain outstanding features of ancient and Islamic architecture. It seems that this governorate, which is utterly neglected by the government in terms of allocations of development projects.

Raay, Sanaa,
3/8/1992.

AL-MAQATIRA : A REGION WHICH HUMILIATED THE OTTOMANS, RESISTED IMAMIC AND BRITISH RULE

He who visits Al-Maqatira, meets the people, and observes their distressful conditions and sufferings will realize the hell of a life which they are living.

It is agonizing to witness people still living in a primitive way at the end of the 20th century - their working condition, medical services and means of transportation.

Most of them lack the simplest amenities of modern life. They lack water supply, electricity, medical care, education and transportations. Draught and famine have inflicted heavy damage on every living thing in the region. It is almost as if they don't belong to this modern world. It is sad to see such a fate falling on such a region in light of its political heritage. It was a strong-hold for national resistance against the Ottomans, it was a refuge for reformers and revolutionaries against the despotism of the Imam (Refer in history

books to the Uprising of Al-Maqatira), and it was a launching ground for the resistance against British colonialism in 1963. They fought hard and succeeded in preventing the British from occupying the vital castle of Al-Maqatira. In addition to these patriotic sacrifices, the people of the region defended the September/October revolutions and played a prominent role in the Seventy-Day Siege of Sanaa.

Al-Maqatira remains today a region of poverty. As a border zone, it had suffered from the many political waves of the two previous regimes (North and South Yemen). The destabilization of the area resulted from its sensitive border nature which was neglected as noman's land. Thus it was deprived of any real efforts at development and growth. It was denied many essential projects such as water wells, schools, medical centers, roads, etc.

It is evident that this region remained backward as compared with the other Yemeni regions. We can consider it a forgotten region. It is clear that government projects are allocated to districts with senior officials in power or with tribal considerations. Thus the people of this region feel neglected by the authorities. Today, they cry out for a fair share in the government budget. This is especially disturbing when they compare their primitive conditions

to the luxuries that abound in our cities. The question is related to the justice and equality that should command the decisions of our officials in allocating services and investment projects.

What is more painful is that no official of any rank or responsibility has paid a visit to this region, not even the Governor of Taiz who is administratively responsible for the region.

By: Taha Ghalib,
Sawt Al-Ummal, Aden,
6/8/1992.

INFO MINISTER THREATENS TO CLOSE DOWN THREE NEWSPAPERS

The Information Minister, Dr. Mohammed Garhoom, threatened to close down three Al-Mustaqbal, 22 May, and Sawt Al-Ummal newspapers for not abiding by the formal policy of the re-unified state.

The minister broke out the news in a meeting with the administrators and political programmers in the official media, held at the broadcasting station of Sana'a. The meeting was attended by Yahya Al-Mutwakil of the PGC and Gara Allah Umer of the YSP.

It's worth mentioning that the minister of information headed the informational committee responsible for laying down "guide-lines" for the official media.

None of the three newspapers belong to the state.

22 MAY, Aden,
5/8/1992.

CONGRATULATIONS

The Yemen Times staff send hearty congratulations to one of their own, Yahia Yusuf Hodeidi, and his bride, Fawziya, on their wedding.

We wish you a happy married life.

تهنئة

أسرة «يمن تايمز» تتقدم بأحر التهاني والتبريكات للزميل يحيى يوسف حديدي وزوجته بمناسبة زفافهما الميمون.
الف مبروك وبالرفاء والبنين

letters to the editor, letters to the editor, letters to the**AN OPEN LETTER
TO THE DIRECTOR
OF THE SANA'A
TRAFFIC OFFICE**

It is my pleasure to record my appreciation concerning the few improvements which your administration recently introduced, as compared to previous years. In spite of these improvements, your approach to some problems seems to be inadequate.

I want to mention one of the problems that affected me and still affects me severely. One day I discovered that the front license plate of my car was lost. I did the necessary procedure and was able to have a temporary permission form valid for three months. At the same time, they informed me, that within this period a new licence plate, carrying the old numbers of the car, would be imported from abroad. When the given time expired, I went there to get the new plate. They said that it did not yet arrive, and the solution was to extend the permission's validity for another two months. After two months I went again and they gave me the same answer, but this time they renewed it only for one month. Since then, I have been renewing that document every single month. I asked many officers about the arriving date of the licence plate. Their answer was always a dry expression of, "It will come". None of them gave me any real explanation about the issue.

When I routinely drive, I have to stop at many points to show the permission and explain the situation. I have been doing this for more than eight months, and it is becoming very hard for me to continue in this way. During the last three months I was really suffering, and am still suffering, because of the heightened inspection campaign against cars in the city's intersections. You can't imagine how much time and effort your men and I are wasting every day. I hope you will find a good solution to this problem, and soon!

By:
Abdullah Al-Duraiby
Sanaa University Graduate

Editor's Note:
To all readers, hold fast to your licence plate numbers.

**THE QUESTION
REMAINED
UNANSWERED!**

In issue No. (31) dated 29th July 1992, Yemen Times ran excerpts of an interview with Colonel Ali Uthrub. I do not understand many of his answers. Does the colonel, for example, imply that the exceptionally centralized and restrictive system is now normalized and decentralized? If that is the case, then this is very heart-warming news. However, the question regarding whether those people without IDs (e.g., children of former immigrants) may take part in the elections, remained unanswered.

By:
Al Maqtari Shekib Mensur
Ministry Public Health
Sana'a.

Editor's Note:

With IDs or without IDs, all Yemenis above the age limit specified in the law, have the right to vote and run in the coming elections. I hope you will not let anyone, whatever their position, discourage you from exercising your rights.

**SOMALI REFUGEES
ARE INNOCENT**

Before this civil war began in Somalia, there were several governments which ran the country since 1960. Those governments had given rights to everybody in Somalia, whether native, halfcast, or foreign. There had not been any discrimination, as all residents had the right to have assets and so many other things. When civil war broke out, everything collapsed. Thugs and gangsters from the desert hinterland undermined the system by vandalizing everything. The citizens were victims.

These sad events caused the majority of city-dwellers and a large segment of the population to flee the country and become refugees in the neighboring countries. The death toll is astounding.

I would like to thank the neighboring countries, especially Yemen and Kenya, for helping the Somalirefugees. I also thank Yemen Times for constantly bringing our plight to the attention of the world community.

By:
Hassan Janale,
Sana'a.

I DON'T AGREE

I refer to the article entitled "Raids on Mogadishu Mosques" in the Yemen Times issue no. 27, dated 1st of July, 1992, written by Sheikh Nur Qassim. History tells us that the people of Somalia were converted to Islam during the days of our prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him). Over the last fourteen centuries, Somalis respected and internalized the values of Islam and respected its laws.

Somalis are a 100% Muslims and there is no way they can, or will go against Islam. Most of them are respectful of the laws, rules, regulations and worshipping places of Islam. So whatever happens because of a few groups today, we cannot generalize and blame the whole Somali population. Sheikh Nur Qassim mentions many serious offences (like sexual assaults inside mosques). This is against all human and divine rules and no one condons it.

The witness he quotes, Ms. Amina Ahmad, who is a doctor who works in Yarim, denies her knowledge of his allegations. Therefore, I would like to advise Sheikh Nur not to write such baseless rumors and add to our people's frustrations and feelings of helplessness.

By:
Mohamed Husain Hasan,
Sana'a.

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OIL & MINERAL EFFORTS IN FULL GEAR

The oil exploration efforts in Yemen continue to make headlines. The last of these is the TOTAL well of Hilaiwah 2, which tested 5400 bpd. This is the fourth oil well in the Jannah concession.

"You can say all the four wells are discoveries," explained Mr. Ahmed Kaid Barakat, the Vice Minister of Oil and Mineral Resources, in a special statement to the Yemen Times. "Each well is capable of producing something valuable - condensate, gas, or oil. None of them are dry," he added. TOTAL is now gathering all pertinent information to be presented to the five partners in the concession. It will be another year before the exploration phase is completed.

"Once the production phase is in, the partners will sit down and discuss arrangements for exploitation, including who will serve as operator," the Vice Minister indicated.

"We are expecting more concrete information and steps on the gas exploitation in the Marib/Al-Jawf concession with YHOC," the Vice Minister said. "In my opinion, Yemen's gas find is the second largest in the Arabian Peninsula (second to Qatar), and we are planning to use it very soon." The Vice Minister indicated that Yemen has sent trainees to Iraq, Egypt, Syria and Jordan. The expertise of these countries in gas production and utilization is very important to Yemen. "For example, one of the clear messages that comes across is that we use gas to replace oil consumption as much as possible, Mr. Barakat pointed out. He also indicated that the government is about to complete arrangements for the gas filling and distribution centers which will allow the country to be self-dependent in gas. "In collaboration with Yemen Hunt Oil Company, the country will meet its gas needs, and thus save some US\$30 million of LPG gas imports every year."

There are quite a few details that have to be worked out regarding gas exploitation, according to the Vice Minister. "But we have decided on meeting



household demand, as well as the needs for electric generation and large industrial plants," he added. Speaking about the NIMR concession in Shabwah (Block 4), the Minister expressed his hope that production will start in less than six weeks, as promised by the company. "The starting date has been rolled over a couple of times in the past, and I hope it doesn't happen again," he said.

With respect to the Can-Oxy Maseela Block, Vice Minister Barakat was upbeat about the possibilities. "We were talking about 90,000 bpd output, until three months back. Now the company has revised its estimates upwards to 120,000 bpd," he pointed out.

Work continues to proceed according to the time-table we have discussed and agreed upon. The target date for the first shipment out of Maseela is September 1993.

"Occidental has finished drilling its fourth well in its Al-Uqla concession, and we have good news from that quarter as well," Vice Minister Barakat said.

"We are waiting for more details and confirmation on the capacity of the wells. Chevron has pushed back the date for its wildcat to early 1993, pending more details from its seismic studies. Many other companies are also active in the on-shore and off-shore blocks," he added.

"The whole land mass that stretches from Marib/Al-Jawf through Shabwah and into Hadhramaut is very promising. We hope that the discoveries will live up to our expectations."

At another level, Vice Minister Barakat indicated that the mineral sector also holds great potential for the future. He explained that several companies have already been awarded exploration concessions regarding different minerals in various regions of the country (Please refer to table).

Mineral Concessions Up to End of July 1992

Name of Company	Company's Country	Region of Exploration	Mineral Explored
Cluff	UK	Saadah	gold
Cluff	UK	Tabag/Shabwah	Lead/Silver/Zinc
Billiton	Netherlands	Al-Jabali	Lead/Silver/Zinc
Metaleurope	Germany/France	Al-Baidha	gold
Metaleurope	Germany/France	Shiharah	gold
Meridian International	Ireland	Wadi Medden	gold
Anglo-American	South Africa	North Maabar	gold
Anglo-American	South Africa	East Dhamar	gold

Source: Confidential Report to Prime Minister.



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All applicants must have a valid Yemeni I.D., valid Yemeni driver's licence, military service certificate, release from previous employer and must pass the company's pre-employment physical.

Interested and qualified applicants may please send C.V. to:

The Personnel Manager,
c/o Yemen Hunt Oil Company,
P.O. Box 481,
Sana'a, Republic of Yemen

SPORTS BRIEFS

** The 7th Pan Arab Games (the Arab Olympic Games) will be held in Damascus, Syria, next September. Morocco hosted the last Games in July 1985.

The Egyptian Football Federation announced it would not send the Egyptian National soccer team to Damascus, to take part in the soccer tournament in the Pan Arab Games. A spokesman of (EFF) suggested several reasons, some of them were technical, as the reasons behind the decision.

** Khalid Sakhah, of Morocco, snatched a gold medal after winning the 10,000m event in the Barcelona Olympics. His time was 27, 47, 20. Sakhah, the superstar runner, gave the Arab world its first gold medal in the Olympics. Sakhah has repeated the success of his country man Ibrahim Bu Taib, who won the gold medal in the same event in the Seoul Olympics in 1988.

** Three cities announced their candidacy to host the Olympic Games in the year 2,000. These are Peking (China), Sydney (Australia) and Manchester (England). Which one will be the lucky "Olympic city?" Wait, and keep reading the Yemen Times!

** Spain beat Poland 3-2 in the final match of the soccer tournament. Spain waited 72 years to get to the finals. However, the Spanish players waited only one minute to win the precious gold medal. Let us recall one dramatic episode of final match. At the 89th minute of the game, the score was tied at 2-2. At that moment, Spain snatched the "golden" goal to win 3-2.

WORLD OLYMPIANS
WAVE GOODBYE
BARCELONA

The greatest sports show on earth is over - the Barcelona Olympic games approached its finishing line this week. Starting from July 25, the eyes of the whole world were fixed on the games in Barcelona. The Games of the XXV Olympiad were the biggest and richest. 10,000 athletes from 172 nations came together to play. The competitions were fierce but the prizes were worth it.

In the olympic games, thanks to a U.N. escort, even a team of brave Bosnians managed to make it to Spain.

As the World's olympians waved "Goodbye Barcelona," they went home carrying with them medals and records. Above all the whole world has a collection of fond memories, stories, and affectionate moments. The next round, the XXVI Olympiad, will be in 1996 in Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A.

Many countries had applied to host the games, including Morocco, but Atlanta got it. An Arab or an African country has yet to host the games. It is the International Olympic Committee that decides on these matters.

LOCAL SPORTS:

1. AHLI SCORES 7-1 VICTORY
OVER TADHAMUN

The Ahli club confirmed its leadership in the Yemeni soccer championship, by beating Tadhmun 7-1 in a colorful match held Saturday, August 8, at Al-Thawra stadium in Sana'a.

The Ahli displayed an excellent performance which was a decided proof of the physical fitness and skills of its players.

From the very beginning of the game, it took the lead in the one-sided match. As the scoreline suggests, the game completely belonged to Sana'a-based Ahli. Their fans came out gratified.

The scoring tactics of Abdulla Al Sana'ani and his team-mate Isam Draiban were fruitful.

Al Sana'ani scored 3 goals in the match, and moved on as the leading bomber.

Ahli players finished the first half in their favor 2-0. They added 5 goals to their score in the second half of the match. Midfielder Mukhtar Al Haimi was very active and effective in his performance. His team-mate Anwar Haimi, a promising young player, put his name twice on the scoreboard.

The win put an end to a losing streak by Al-Ahli. It lost twice by 0-1 to the Police team and to Al-Wihda (Sana'a). Moreover, the team is now 6 points ahead of next contender, the titleholder, Al-Tilal club of Aden.

The effect on Tadhmun players was devastating. It was certainly a very disappointing day.

2. Best Bombers

The stiker of Ahli club Abdulla Al Sana'ani, still stands on top of the list of bombers in Yemeni soccer league with 21 goals. The following bomber with 19 goals, is Sharaf Mahgoob of Al Tilal (Aden). Mohamed Hassan (Shu'la) scored 17 goals. The 4th ranking bomber is Isam Draiban of Ahli with 16 goals.

3. YEMENI SOCCER LEAGUE
(1st division)

Team	W	L	T	GF	GA	Pts
Ahli (S)	16	4	5	46	16	37
Tilal (A)	13	6	4	41	24	30
Yarmook	10	6	9	29	23	29
Hassan	10	6	9	26	21	29
Shamsan	11	6	7	39	27	28
Shu'la	10	7	7	38	27	27
Wihda (A)	10	8	7	31	25	27
Shaab (S)	8	7	10	40	23	26
Wihda (S)	7	7	10	26	23	24
Shaab (Ibb)	6	6	10	25	28	22
Police	8	10	6	30	37	22
Mina'a	9	13	3	33	38	21
Zahra	7	10	6	24	30	20
Mukalla	6	9	8	16	25	20
Samoon	4	11	8	18	44	16
Tadhmun	1	18	6	13	45	8

W = Win, L = Loss, T = Tie, GF = Goals in Favor, GA = Goals Against, Pts = Points, (S= Sanaa, A=Aden).

Continued from page 3:

Kuwait's Charge d'Affair ...

Second, one is asked to display flexibility towards a party that shows genuine signs of regret and remorse, not one that continues to defy the whole world.

Q: Relations with Yemen are strained. Let us start with your assessment of the Yemeni position on the Gulf Crisis.

A: I have lived in Yemen since October 1990, so I have heard all that is to be heard from the Yemeni side. Let me summarize and say that it was not a position favorable to the return of Kuwait's rights.

By focussing on the objection to the participation of international forces, Yemen has downplayed the root cause for the coming of those forces, Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. It was an unfortunate position; and by the way, no one in Kuwait expected Yemen to take this position.

Q: Let us look at the future. Do you see rapid progress towards better relations as a likely possibility?

A: The ball is with Yemen. It can do a lot to activate the bilateral relations. Yemen can take initiatives towards Kuwait. We are not waiting for expressions of regret, we expect bold steps.

For example, why can't Yemen issue a statement urging Iraq to release our prisoners of war?

For example, why can't Yemen take the initiative towards the demarkation of the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border according to international law and the decision of the UN team, and according to the agreements signed by Kuwait and Iraq in 1932 and 1963?

For example, why can't Yemen denounce the new Iraqi threats against the integrity and sovereignty of Kuwait?

It is Yemen's turn to act!

Q: But Yemen has tried to activate its relations with Kuwait. For example, it asked to re-open its embassy by sending someone there, but it got no answer from your foreign ministry.

A: That is not the kind of initiative I was talking about. It is true Kuwait did not respond to Yemen's message in this case.

Q: There is another thing. The 26th September newspaper of this week accuses Kuwait of meddling in Yemeni affairs. In fact it accuses it of trying to break-up the unity, disturb the stability and security of Yemen, and work towards the post-

ponement of the parliamentary elections.

A: I think this is irresponsible journalism to be printed in an official government (military) newspaper. Kuwait is too busy with itself to get involved in such things. These are lies, and I do not know what the newspaper wants to accomplish from them.

Actually, Yemen today occupies a low priority in the Kuwaiti agenda - whether in a positive or negative sense. This partly explains the lack of response to your foreign ministry.

I can assure you we are not interested in meddling in Yemeni affairs, and it is not Kuwaiti policy to intervene in other countries' affairs. We are a small country, and it is in our interest to establish rules and values that block the intervention of one country in the affairs of another.

Q: What do you see as Yemen's place among its Gulf neighbors, in the future?

A: I remember many groups and intellectuals, especially in Kuwait, were promoting the concept of the Arabian Peninsula, including Yemen, as a regional block. Yemen's position on the Gulf Crisis has more or less killed this concept.

Q: At the Arab level, where do you go from here?

A: I think we as Arabs need to be realistic about our inter-relations as well as our relations with the rest of the world. We need to create a new kind of understanding among ourselves that goes beyond the traditional rhetoric. This should lead to a complete trust among ourselves on realistic and practical terms. For example, the smaller countries should feel secure that their larger neighbors will not simply over-run them.

Q: How does that tally with Kuwait's decision to get into defence agreements with foreign countries. Wouldn't that pose a threat to its neighbors?

A: Kuwait got into that kind of arrangement because the new level of understanding among Arabs is not yet in place.

Q: You were here during the height of the crisis. Were you subjected to any kind of abuse at any level?

A: No, none of that happened. Actually, to the contrary, the people and government of Yemen treated me, and addressed Kuwait in a very cordial and loving way, even at the height of the crisis.

LE TEMPS DU YEMEN DU

Après des manifestations contre le démantèlement des écoles coraniques et l'unification des systèmes d'éducation

La loi sur l'Education est amendée sous la pression des Islamistes

Depuis le début du mois de juillet, le Parlement est divisé sur le projet de loi sur l'Education qui lui est soumis. Dans la rue, les Yéménites eux aussi participent à la querelle, les manifestations et contre-manifestations se succédant depuis une semaine.

Car l'enjeu de cette loi dépasse largement le strict cadre de l'Education nationale pour toucher à la religion et aux rapports entre la République et les Ulémas. En effet, le projet prévoit le démantèlement pur et simple des écoles coraniques et des "Instituts Scientifiques", fer le lance d'un système d'éducation parallèle tenu par les Islamistes.

Ces derniers voient dans ce "complot politique" la main des "laïcs communistes" du Parti Socialiste Yéménite mais aussi, cela est plus étrange, celle des "Imamites" partisans du retour à l'ancien régime d'avant 1962.

La loi a été finalement votée mardi 11 août mais après certaines concessions des pouvoirs publics aux représentants islamistes: le système de l'Education sera unifié, les écoles coraniques intégrées au système mais la loi prévoit désormais la création d'instituts et de facultés des sciences de la religion et celle d'une université islamique, perpétuant une certaine influence des Islamistes mais avec une tutelle de l'Etat jusqu'alors impossible.

Lundi 3 août, le Rassemblement Yéménite pour la Réforme (ou *Al Islah*) avait organisé une grande manifestation à Sanaa, prolongée les jours suivants par d'autres dans les grandes villes du Yémen, contre l'éventuelle promulgation de la nouvelle loi sur l'Education. De nombreux représentants des différentes tribus du pays se sont déplacés pour l'événement. Quelques jours après, le Parti Socialiste Yéménite (PSY), qui partage le pouvoir dans la période transitoire avec le Congrès Populaire Général (CPG), a appelé à une contre-manifestation pour défendre ce projet de loi qu'il a largement contribué à élaborer et l'unification du système de l'Education, prévu par les accords d'unification du 22 mai 1990.

Dans le cadre de cette unification, le projet de loi prévoit, selon les Islamistes, la suppression pure et simple des Ecoles coraniques et des fameux "Instituts Scientifiques", instituts secondaires dans lesquels on entre après l'équivalent yéménite du baccalauréat, réputés tenus par les Islamistes et dont la spécialité est l'enseignement religieux et de l'arabe. En réalité, même si la loi, soutenue par les socialistes et divers partis de gauche mais aussi par le CPG, vise effectivement à priv-

er l'Israh de son contrôle d'une partie non négligeable du système de l'Education nationale, il prévoit seulement une intégration de ces instituts au système national avec un programme commun, et donc une suppression de leur spécificité.

Jusqu'à aujourd'hui, le pays dispose de trois systèmes d'éducation: celui de l'ancien sud, étatique et entièrement laïcisé, le système national de l'ancien nord et le secteur dépendant des Islamistes.

La querelle a débuté par un article anodin de *Al-Sahwa*, l'organe officiel de l'Israh, le 2 juillet dernier. On y dénonçait le caractère anticonstitutionnel et antidémocratique du projet car ceux qui l'ont élaboré n'ont pas consulté les spécialistes de l'Education nationale, sous-entendu les représentants de l'opposition islamiste fortement présents dans le système par l'intermédiaire du Syndicat des Enseignants Yéménites dont l'un des bastions est la faculté de Droit de l'Université de Sanaa, en dehors des "Instituts Scientifiques". Un éditorial de *Al-Sahwa* du 16 juillet dénonce, lui, la tentative de laïcisation de l'Education, et donc de la société yéménite, non seulement par les "Marxistes" pour lesquels l'islam est le premier ennemi, mais aussi par les "Imamites", partisan de l'ancien régime d'avant

la révolution de 1962, accusés d'extrémisme idéologique: pour l'Israh, qui se prévaut des acquis de la Révolution du 26 septembre 1962 à cette occasion et affirme défendre la République, les représentants du principal parti imamite, le Haqq, veulent supprimer les écoles coraniques et les "Instituts Scientifiques" qu'ils considèrent comme un danger en ce qu'ils défendent la tradition du Coran et de la Sunna dans sa pureté, loin de toute interprétation extrémiste. Ainsi, l'Israh, anti-imamite, accuse ses ennemis de vouloir rétablir un enseignement doctrinal extrémiste du Coran alors que les partisans du Haqq traitent ceux de l'Israh de pro-saoudiens et pro-wahabbites.

Pour défendre son système parallèle d'éducation, le mouvement islamiste s'est donc uni pour l'occasion et lors de la manifestation organisée le 3 août dernier par l'Israh, le Syndicat des Enseignants Yéménites, l'Union Générale des Etudiants Yéménites (tenue aussi par les Islamistes) et les Ulémas, on a remarqué la présence de Sheikh Abdallah Ben Hussein Al-Ahmar, grand sheikh de la Confédération des tribus Hached et président de l'Israh et de Sheikh Abd Al Majid Al-Zendani, leader de la branche yé-

ménite des Frères Musulmans, deux personnalités qui ne s'apprécient guère en d'autres occasions. Le premier a appelé le président Saleh et les dirigeants politiques "à revenir à la réalité et abandonner ce projet ou le réformer en tenant compte de l'avis des spécialistes et des Ulémas", tandis que le second a dénoncé le "complot politique contre l'identité islamique du peuple yéménite".

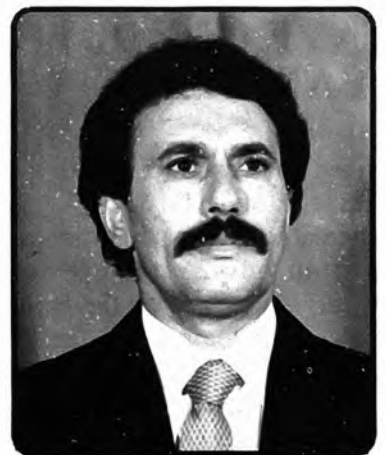
Toutes ces démonstrations de force ont porté leurs fruits puisque le texte de la loi voté hier a été modifié en tenant compte des revendications des Islamistes même si l'intégration au système unifié des "Instituts Scientifiques" et des écoles coraniques est acquies: la création d'instituts et de facultés des sciences religieuses ainsi que d'une université islamique permettra aux Ulémas de continuer d'exercer leur influence dans le système de l'Education nationale, d'autant plus que le gouvernement a également concédé la formation d'un comité composé, entre autres, d'Ulémas et d'enseignants spécialisés pour participer à l'élaboration des programmes d'études. Mais rien ne sera comme avant: l'Etat n'avait aucun droit de regard sur les "Instituts Scientifiques"; il pourra désormais exercer une certaine tutelle sur les nouvelles institutions...

Emmanuel GIROUD

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HISTOIRE

Sheikh Said, la colonie fantôme

par Christian Couturaud

Troisième partie

Nous publions aujourd'hui le troisième volet de l'histoire de ce comptoir commercial français établi dès 1868 sur la Mer Rouge, à Sheikh Said, dont on ne savait pas à quoi il était vraiment destiné alors. Base militaire pour contrer l'influence britannique sur la péninsule et s'assurer la mainmise sur cette voie vers l'Extrême-Orient qu'est la Mer Rouge, après l'ouverture du Canal de Suez en 1869, ou simple comptoir commercial comme on le prétendait alors ? Christian Couturaud s'efforce, dans cette fresque en trois parties, de démêler cette énigme. Attaché linguistique de l'Ambassade de France et responsable du département de français à l'Université de Sanaa, Christian Couturaud est docteur en Histoire sur les grands voyages scientifiques autour du monde aux XVIIIème et XIXème siècles et sur l'architecture navale et l'armement des navires scientifiques (XVIII-XIXèmes siècles). Il est également l'auteur d'une maîtrise sur les Corsaires dans l'Océan Indien.

Nous avons vu, dans la première partie, qu'après l'installation d'étranges commerçants français à Sheikh Said, les Britanniques, qui occupent l'île de Périn, étaient très inquiets de cette présence et soupçonnaient fortement l'existence d'une base militaire. Ayant poussé le gouvernement turc du Yémen à envoyer la troupe à Sheikh Said, ils ne tarderont pas à voir leurs hypothèses confirmées...

Puis nous l'avons vu dans la deuxième partie, dans les années 1870-1880, les Français se désintéressent de ce "comptoir" qui se déserte peu à peu. Il faut dire qu'à cette époque, malgré plusieurs initiatives privées pour perpétuer une présence française, les impératifs diplomatiques liés à l'élaboration de l'Entente Cordiale ne prêtent guère à contrarier les "amis" britanniques. Mais au début du vingtième siècle, les activités françaises privées dans cette région ne peuvent empêcher les Britanniques de voir des agissements douteux en sous-main...

Dans les premières années du siècle, une compagnie française obtient l'adjudication des travaux préparatoires à la construction d'un chemin de fer entre la Tihama et les hauts plateaux. Comme par hasard, elle choisit d'en établir les premiers tronçons entre Mokha et Taiz. Agacés par les activités périphériques des techniciens français, les autorités turques en font changer le tracé, au profit d'une ligne, techniquement irréalisable, entre Hodeidah et Sanaa. Le bombardement de Hodeidah par la Marine italienne mit heureusement fin, avec la destruction du dépôt français de Ra's Katib, à cette situation ubuesque.

Immédiatement après, en juillet 1913, le XXXIème Congrès des Sociétés Françaises de Géographie "appelle l'attention des pouvoirs publics sur la sauvegarde des droits historiques de la France sur le territoire de Sheikh Said". Face à l'inertie du gouvernement, c'est le Conseil de la Société des études coloniales et maritimes, présidé par l'amiral Besson qui, en janvier 1915, prend le relais, en le priant "... de notifier au gouvernement britannique le ca-

ractère français du territoire de Sheikh Said, occupé temporairement par les troupes anglo-indiennes pour les besoins de l'action militaire contre la Turquie". Précisons toutefois que, même si elles en eurent parfois l'intention, les troupes britanniques ne sont jamais allées jusqu'à débarquer sur le continent.

En janvier 1915, une autre mission d'espionnage, photographique celle-là, commanditée par le gouverneur de Djibouti, M. Deltel, est confiée à un petit trafiquant d'armes qui se fera, plus tard, un nom en littérature: Henri de Monfreid. Ce qu'il voit est sinistre: "Il reste, des fondations de l'ancien établissement français, un poste télégraphique en ruine et sa ligne abandonnée dont le fil de fer lutte contre la rouille en s'accrochant comme il peut aux quelques poteaux branlants qui restent. Sur la hauteur, une caserne turque en ruine. Un peu plus loin, dominant Périn, un fortin turc où il y aurait 120 hommes. D'ailleurs, les indigènes ne voient jamais de soldats turcs et personne ne les inquiète pour recevoir des armes de Djibouti".

Il semble pourtant que Monfreid ait un peu sous-estimé les Turcs puisque, de passage à Mokha un mois plus tard, il sera arrêté et gardé quatre jours à vue pour avoir débarqué et pris des photos là où c'était interdit.

L'affaire est relancée par l'Imâm Yahya

En 1916 est publié le texte des accords Sikes-Picot, réglant le partage de l'influence franco-britannique sur le Proche-Orient. Il est amusant de voir, à la lecture des commentaires qui en sont faits des deux côtés de la Manche, à quel point leur interprétation en est différente. Concernant Sheikh Said, l'article précisant "...la possibilité de modifier la frontière entre les deux Yémen en cas d'agression turque" est vue par la France comme une éventualité qui s'offre à elle de réoccuper la "colonie". Les Anglais, eux, le verraient plutôt comme une possibilité d'abandonner Périn pour s'installer sur le continent. D'un côté comme de l'autre, ces élucubrations resteront, bien entendu, sans suite.

Au Yémen, la situation a changé. En 1922, deux Français font réapparaître le sept de mer et obtiennent la concession d'un chemin de fer Mokha-Taiz-Sanaa. De nouveaux rapports concernant Sheikh Said arrivent dans les ministères parisiens. Une délégation yéménite va même se rendre à Djibouti afin d'étudier le Chemin de Fer Franco-Ethiopien. Puis, comme par le passé, tout re-

tombe dans l'oubli. La crise aidant et les problèmes politiques intérieurs français n'incitant pas aux visées expansionnistes, Sheikh Said retourne à l'oubli, pour une quinzaine d'années.

Les Italiens, empêtrés dans l'annexion de l'Ethiopie, tenteront bien, en octobre 1935, d'obtenir l'autorisation d'y évacuer leurs blessés. Mais l'Imâm redoute trop leur soif d'expansion dans la région pour leur donner une occasion de prendre pied sur la rive orientale de la Mer Rouge.

Curieusement, et maladroitement sans doute, c'est l'Imâm Yahya lui-même qui relance l'affaire. Alors qu'une délégation officielle française se trouve au Yémen pour négocier les termes du Traité d'amitié Franco-Yéménite, il vient l'informer personnellement, et alors que personne n'avait évoqué le sujet, qu'il n'était pas question pour lui, d'admettre les revendications françaises concernant Sheikh Said. L'un des négociateurs français avouera n'avoir même pas compris de quoi il retournait.

Il n'en faut pas plus pour que cette maladresse relance l'affaire au sein de l'influent milieu nationaliste français de l'époque. Et ce, d'autant plus que les autorités françaises l'interprètent comme le signe de la préparation d'un traité italo-yéménite qui pourrait déboucher sur la cession de Sheikh Said aux fascistes. Leur réponse est très diplomatique mais marque bien le sentiment national et sa détermination en cas de dérapage. La France s'abstiendra de toute revendication aussi longtemps que seules les troupes de l'Imâm occuperont le territoire acheté en 1868. Cette condition sera d'ailleurs renouvelée lors du passage à Paris de l'héritier yéménite, le futur Imâm Ahmad.

L'extrême droite nationaliste française ne manque pas de s'emparer aussitôt de l'affaire en pressant le gouvernement de réoccuper Sheikh Said afin de prévenir l'expansion germano-italienne dans la région.

C'est ce moment que choisit, fort maladroitement, le ministre des Colonies, pour diffuser le film publicitaire déjà évoqué, où Sheikh Said figure au nombre des colonies françaises.

Cette publicité malheureuse a pour conséquence de raviver les soupçons de certains sur les ambitions expansionnistes du gouvernement français. Plusieurs journaux italiens en prennent prétexte pour mener une ardente campagne anti-française. L'Imâm, quant à lui, juge tout de même plus prudent de renforcer sa garnison à Sheikh Said.

Mais, comme celle du Désert des Tartares, elle aura beau scruter l'horizon durant plus de 50 ans...

Qui se souvient encore, aujourd'hui, de Sheikh Said ?...

Juillet 1992

FIN



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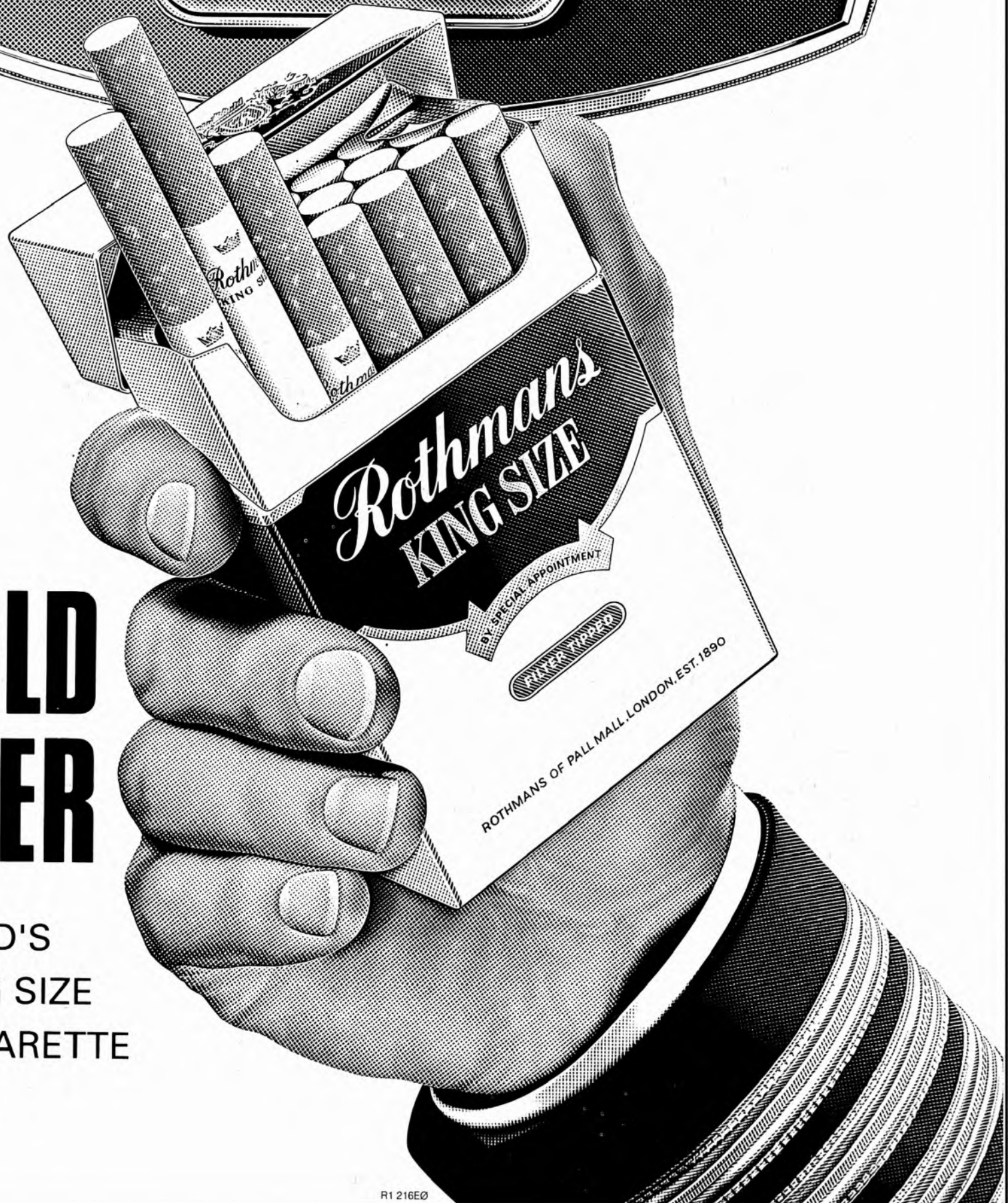


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THE INVESTMENT PROGRAM FOR 1992**

The PEC, Aden Branch, hereby announces the issue of the following Tenders for the supply of Electrical Network Equipment for the Projects in the investment program for 1992, financed by the government:

1. Tender No. Invest 1/92 Transformers
2. Tender No. Invest 2/92 Switchgear
3. Tender No. Invest 3/92 Cables and Conductors
4. Tender No. Invest 4/92 Cables Joints & CH Fittings
5. Tender No. Invest 5/92 House Services Installations
6. Tender No. Invest 6/92 Wooden Poles
7. Tender No. Invest 7/92 OH Line Equipments

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B) Crown Agents Financial Services Ltd.,
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* Documents may be obtained starting from 18th July, 1992, against a non-refundable fee of US\$100 (or YR.2000 for local Tenderers) for each copy of the above mentioned Tender.

* All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Bond in the form of a bank guarantee or a payable check for 2% (Two Percent) of the Total Bid Amount in the name of the Public Electricity Corporation - Aden Branch and should remain valid for 90 days from the closing date.

* Local Tenderers in the Republic of Yemen who are willing to participate in any of the above Tenders are required to submit with their Tenders, in addition to the above mentioned Bid Bond, the necessary documents proving their compliance with the local laws and regulations.

* Bids for any of the above Tenders are to be submitted in sealed envelopes to the address of PEC mentioned above not later than 12:00 noon local time of August 31st, 1992.

* Tenders received after closing time and date will not be considered.

Weekly English lessons:

By: Li sa Ciardulli and Jeanna Stroble

Lesson # 6

Possessive Adjectives and Pronouns

PRETEST

Tell whether or not the following sentences are correct.

1. He does his work at home.
2. We like ours books.
3. They wash the hands.
4. The cat eats it's food.
5. Send this letter to your brother.
6. My is better.

LESSON Possessive phrases are often replaced by possessive adjectives and pronouns so as to not repeat words unnecessarily. The forms are simple, but are close enough to being the same that errors are often made. This lesson will present the forms and their usage.

FORM

Subject Pronoun	Possessive Adjective	Possessive Pronoun
I	my	mine
you	your	yours
he	his	his
she	her	hers
it	its	its
we	our	ours
they	their	theirs

USAGE

The possessive adjectives act as adjectives, which means they can only replace the noun possessor. A possessive adjective must be followed by a noun, the thing possessed.

Examples: Ali's wife...*his* wife Mahmoud and Ahmed's car...*their* car

The possessive pronouns replace all of the possessive phrase and are not followed by another noun.

Examples: Ali's wife...*his* Mahmoud and Ahmed's car...*theirs*

Note 1. The forms of the possessive adjectives and pronouns are determined by the possessor being replaced, not by the noun that is possessed.

2. Always use the possessive adjectives with body parts rather than *the* or *a*.

3. Notice that the possessive pronouns do not have apostrophes.

Practice A

Change the sentences using a possessive adjective.

example: Ahmed has a car. It is **his** car.

1. Ali and Fatima have a son. He is...
2. We have work. It is...
3. I have a book. It is...
4. You have a watch. It is...
5. The dog has a tail. It is...
6. Ali has problems. They are...

Practice B

Replace the underlined possessive phrase with the correct possessive pronoun.

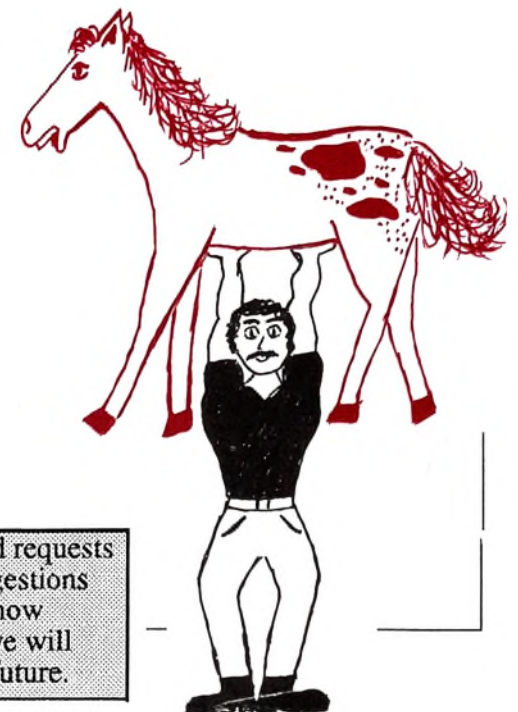
example: This is my book. Your book is on the table. **Yours** is on the table.

1. That is a nice watch. I lost my watch.
2. His house is on Zubeiry Street. Our house is also on Zubeiry.
3. She writes to her mother, and I write to my mother.
4. My father works in a school. Her father does, too.
5. His car is white. Their car is black.

POSTTEST Go back to the Pretest and correct the sentences which are not correct.

WEEKLY IDIOM "Hold your horses!"

This expression is used to say "wait" or "slow down" or to ask someone to not rush you. Example: You and a friend are about to leave for dinner. He's very hungry and keeps asking you to hurry. You have just one thing to finish before you can go. You can say, "Hold your horses! I'll be ready in a minute!"



Dear Readers: Thank you for the comments and requests that you have sent to us. We welcome your suggestions and hope others will write or phone in. Let us know what you would like to see in this column, and we will do our best to act upon those suggestions in the future.

ANSWERS: Pretest: 1. correct 2. not correct 3. not correct 4. not correct 5. correct 6. his problems Practice A: 1. their son 2. our work 3. my book 4. your watch 5. its tail 6. not correct Practice B: 1. mine 2. Ours 3. mine 4. Hers 5. Theirs Posttest: 2. We like our books. 3. They wash their hands. 4. The cat eats its food. 6. Mine is better.

SPECIAL

14TH AUGUST: 45TH INDEPENDENCE DAY OF PAKISTAN

On Pakistan's Independence Day, 14th August, Ambassador F.R. M. Arif issued the following statement to the Yemen Times

Pakistan is poised to enter the 21st century as a modern and industrially developed country and as an upholder of peace and amity in the comity of nations.

Under the dynamic and enlightened leadership of Prime Minister Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, Pakistan has been rapidly marching towards the attainment of the ultimate objectives of the Pakistan Movement. Having been elected to office with a massive popular vote, within a short span of 20 months, the present Government's internal and external achievements, in number and their import, have been unprecedented as a means of refurbishing the national image and of fostering national cohesion and solidarity.

We refer briefly to these historic achievements.

Enforcement of Sharia:

The raison d'être of Pakistan was the establishment of an Islamic society where the Muslims could lead their lives in accordance with their cherished ideals and values. However, it was after a lapse of 44 years that Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif had the privilege to promulgate the Shariat Bill in May 1991 under which the "Sharia" became the supreme law of the land.

Economic Reforms:

On the economic front, the revolutionary reforms introduced by Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif have started paying off in the shape of increasing foreign investment in different sectors. The full impact of these reforms will be realized only after some time, but the current trend augurs well for the future.

The reforms comprise a comprehensive package with main emphasis on privatization, deregulation and decontrol of the economy - including elimination of foreign exchange restrictions, liberal facilities for repatriation of foreign capital, cutting to the minimum of bureaucratic hindrances, tax holidays, greater availability of raw materials for

local industries, changes in the tariff structure and a balanced trade policy.

Privatization:

So far, 115 industrial units have been identified for privatization, out of which, 50 have already been handed over, while action for the privatization of the rest is imminent. Two commercial banks have been privatized, while ten new banks have been opened. Similarly construction of roads, communications, production and supply of electricity, air service and shipping are all being undertaken in the private sector.

Increase in Exports:

As a result of these historic reforms and untiring efforts of the Government, exports have multiplied twelve-fold while the foreign exchange reserves have increased more than four-fold in a year - from US\$218 m. in 1991 to US\$1000 m today.

Foreign Investment:

The above mentioned revolutionary reforms, while opening the doors of prosperity for the people of Pakistan, are also in harmony with the spirit of the age and accord with the new International Economic World Order.

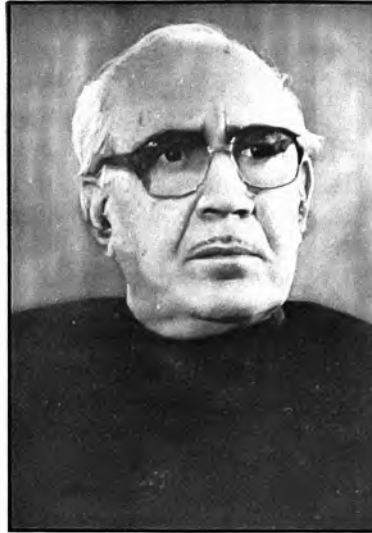
Consequently, Pakistan is attracting foreign investments at an unprecedented large scale.

At present 200 multi-national companies and 18 foreign banks with 68 branches are operating in Pakistan. Pakistan has agreements on avoidance of double taxation with 34 and bilateral investment treaties with 8 countries. It need not be emphasized that foreign and private investment in Pakistan enjoys full legal protection.

National Consensus on Important Issues:

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government has succeeded in evolving consensus on two most important national issues.

a) Through his able and sincere leadership, he succeeded in winning the confidence and trust of the federating units in order to arrive at a mutually accept-



able distribution of national waters on 21st of March, 1991, a problem that had lingered on for decades. This will bring five million acres of new land under cultivation and will create ten million new jobs. This will also add 19 billion rupees to the national Exchequer.

b) After an elapse of 25 years, In April 1991, the Prime Minister announced the National Finance Commission Award providing for the distribution of national resources among the federating units. Both these achievements constitute historic contribution to strengthening of the federation and national cohesion and solid. y.

Foreign Policy:

The present government's foreign policy aims at international peace and amity with special emphasis

on the peaceful resolution of regional disputes, upholding of human rights, democratic principles, freedom, justice, supremacy of the UN Charter and uniform enforcement of its resolutions. Regional approach to the issue of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons as a first step towards the global abolition of the weapons of mass destruction is another cardinal principle of the Government's foreign policy. These principles are clearly visible from the way the government has handled some of the regional and international issues, notably the following:

a) Afghanistan: The liberation of Afghanistan after 14 years of occupation, as an example, has been a great achievement. Prime Minister

Mohammed Nawaz Sharif has played a crucial role in promoting consultations between various groups of Afghan Mujahideen and the UN Representative leading to the transfer of government in Afghanistan. He was the first Head of Government to visit Kabul immediately thereafter as a show of solidarity with Afghan brethren. Pakistan offered immediate assistance of US\$10 m. and sent-in substantial quantities of food and other essential commodities.

b) Kashmir:

Pakistan seeks a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir problem. It will be noted that even the mightiest super powers have failed to keep people under subjugation - the most recent example being the disintegration of the USSR.

The human rights of the Kashmiri people are abused and violated by Indian authorities on a daily basis. Reports of the incidents include gang rapes, inhuman tortures and mass killings. Yet, the 'intifada' in Kashmir, a totally indigenous process, continues in a valiant way. The prevailing situation in Kashmir has reached such dimensions that it poses a serious threat to peace and security in the region.

Kashmir is the core problem between Pakistan and India. Its resolution will lead to good neighborly relations and to the mutual benefit of the two countries. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in his meetings with his counterpart at Male, New Delhi, Harare, Colombo, Davos, and Rio de Janeiro, stressed the need to resolve the issue amicably through negotiations in accordance with the UN Resolutions and the spirit of Simla Agreement. We remain steadfast in our resolve to find a peaceful settlement.

c) Bosnia Herzegovina: Pakistan stongly condemns the aggression and acts of violence being committed against the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina by the Belgrade authorities and their Serbian proteges, and calls for compliance forthwith of the several resolutions of the UN Security Council and of the OIC, failing which further sanctions should be imposed on Belgrade authorities.

Bilateral Ties:

The historic ties and deep religio-cultural affinities between Pakistan and Yemen bind the two fraternal countries and peoples closely together. In the recent past the political, economic and commercial relations between the two countries have greatly expanded. The Pakistan government and people acknowledge with deep gratitude the support of the Government of the Republic of Yemen in various international fora. The bilateral trade turn-over increased from around US\$8 m. in 1989-90 to US\$57 m. in 1990-91.

There is a vast potential for further expansion of cooperative relationship and strengthening of ties between the two brotherly and Muslim countries.

The Pakistani community in Yemen is not very large but is very happy to be in their second home. They are most sincerely engaged in serving the fraternal Republic of Yemen. I would urge them to give their best for the progress and prosperity of Yemen. The unification of Yemen and the evolution of democratic institutions are being appreciated in Pakistan.

The people and leadership of Pakistan pray for the progress and prosperity of the brotherly people of Yemen and for stronger bilateral relations.



MOLDOVA CRISIS PERSISTS

The situation in the conflict zone in eastern Moldova "is not yet under control" despite the deployment of the tripartite peace-keeping forces last Wednesday, in the self-proclaimed Dnestr republic, according to Moldovan President Mircea Snegur. Control by the Moldovan, Russian and Dnestr peacekeepers is a necessary first step for peace, in Snegur's view.

The president has put his position at risk, facing the ire of Moldovan nationalists, by agreeing to the deployment of the peacekeepers. "History will prove me right," Snegur told reporters. His future depends on the rapid stabilization of the conflict between Moldovan forces and the Russian-speaking separatists in the region, who refuse any rapprochement with Romania. The president's program of moderate nationalism won him 80% of the vote last December, but the population is uneasy about the presence of the Russian peacekeepers, deployed as part of the peace accord signed with Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

Snegur believes the accord was the only solution, saying that other means were not appropriate for Moldova. He rejected that Moldovan defeats mid-June around Bendery, the only Russian-speaking town in western Dnestr, had forced him to accept a "Russian" solution.

Vasily Roman, commander of the volunteer force in Cocieri, is skeptical of the accord. "We do not believe in the peacekeeping forces, it is a complete farce. How can the Russian army be neutral when Russians have taken part in the previous conflict? If there is trouble, fighting between neutral Russian forces and Moldovans cannot be ruled out," he said.

The powerful Popular Front has severely criticized Snegur's concession of self-determination for Dnestr's Russian-speakers in the event of Moldova joining Romania. Petre Mountero, a Popular Front member, outlined his party's fervent nationalist opposition to all concessions on the Dnestr question. Of the accord, he said: "Reunification with Romania will happen sooner or later and will include the Dnestr region as it falls within the jurisdiction of the republic of Moldova."

ANGOLA STRIVES FOR PEACE

Merely meters from the camera's eye's, a soldier of Jonas Savimbi's Unita movement in Angola breaks away from the thumping rhythm of the drums to enact a victorious march. "From Menongue to Luanda," sings his choral group, as he grinds his feet into the mid-morning dust. Behind him, hundreds of assembled soldiers awaiting demobilization stand to attention, motionless.

Assembly point guide Fernando Chihunde exhibits rows of neatly stacked, rusty AK-47 automatic rifles at the Unita canvas tent armory.

In one of the last major offensives of the civil war, Unita heavily bombarded the Moxico capital Luena with heavy 101mm mortars in a 45-day siege.

None of this heavy weaponry is on display at Cazombo.

Some observers fear that neither armed faction, Unita nor the Angola government of the ruling MPLA in Luanda, have surrendered all their weapons, "just in case war breaks out again."

The allegation is refuted by MPLA Colonel Manuel Ximenes as he inspects similar rows of stacked weapons at the government bunker armory outside the provincial capital, Malanje. In contrast, rifles handed in by government troops are maintained and piled on a regular basis, for use by the new national army.

Provisions of the peace agreement signed by President Jose Eduardo dos Santos and Savimbi on 31st May, 1991 involve demobilization, the collection and disposal of weapons and formation of a 50,000-strong unified defence force.

"Not an easy task, when you have to marry two totally different and previously warring factions - a guerrilla and conventional army," says an aid worker, concerned that soldiers not taken into the national force might turn to banditry to survive on the meager 110,000 Kwanza demobilization payout.

Despite this, most government soldiers look forward to life outside the army. Dressed in a mixture of military camouflage, jeans and Eiffel Tower, Paris T-shirts, they file haphazardly, some more attentive to their portable radios than to the Colonel's presence. Ximenes wishes he could

wave a magic wand and convert assembled tanks to tractors. "So much land to cultivate," he says, adding that in colonial days Malanje province was the breadbasket of Angola.

Now, in most Angolan provinces, hunger is rife. Food, like everything else, is imported, and when available, it is expensive.

Access to fertile farmland is limited by the battered infrastructure and hundreds of thousands of landmines. Erratic rainfall compounds the problems. In the north, heavy rainfalls destroyed entire crops, while the south faces severe drought. "We have no food, no fields, no hoes, no seeds, no medicine, no doctors, no clothing," says displaced Pedro Sukisse, explaining the plight of the deslocados awaiting transport to their homelands.

Temporarily housed in tents and makeshift straw and mud huts, deslocados in Matete, in Malanje province, blame Unita for their uprooting.

DPP CHIEF VOWS TO QUIT

The chairman of Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), the main government opposition party, vowed this week to step down if the party lost public support in parliamentary elections scheduled for December, 1992.

"I definitely will resign if our party fails to garner less than 30% of the votes in the elections," Opposition leader Hsu Hsin-liang told supporters at the DPP's fifth congress attended by 315 party members.

Hsu said the DPP shouldered great responsibility as the main opposition party in Taiwan, and added that Taiwan could return to a one-party rule if his party fails to win support in the upcoming parliamentary polls.

The island nation is presently ruled by the Kuomintang (KMT) party, which won 71.16% of the votes and 78% of National

Assembly seats in elections in December 1991. The DPP only managed to grab 23.9%; it had hoped to win a larger share.

In earlier elections, the DPP had taken an average of 30% of votes on a platform calling for complete independence from China. The nationalist KMT government, driven off the Chinese mainland in 1949 by the communist forces led by Chairman Mao Tse tung after a civil war, still considers itself the only legal representative of all China.

DPP leaders said they would no longer stand on the independence platform, but focus more on social and economic issues. Hsu added that the DPP stood a good chance in the December polls as the US\$303 b. national development plan, launched by the KMT, had led to negative effects on the country's economy.

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POLITICAL EVOLUTION AND THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE

By:
Dr. Mohammed Abdul-
Malik Al-Mutawakkil,
Political Editor,
The Yemen Times.



Political conferences and gatherings are not new to Yemen. To the contrary, the Yemeni people have consistently used such mechanisms to address conditions of danger and national crisis. In the past, it was the tribal institution that employed this mechanism. Even when elements of civil society participated in such conferences in the past, it was the tribal institution that called the shots. If one reviews the national conferences that were held over the last few decades, e.g., the Amran Conference, the Al-Janad Conference, the Khamer Conference, etc., we will see that they all came as a result of a crisis in the system of government. Such a crisis can be attributed directly to the desire of the rulers to exercise hegemony and oppression, and their refusal to allow the participation of others in politics. Hence, the national conferences which were a mechanism to bring popular pressure to bear on the rulers, and which also signalled the possibilities of catastrophic results if the politicians in power, did not change their ways.

The national conference being arranged today also emanates from the same problem - a crisis in the system of government, because the present authority incessantly seeks to remain in power and exclude any form of power-sharing or participation in decision-making. And since the structure of power in Yemen today is multifaceted, the implications for the country are dangerous. They could destroy all hopes of consolidation of our unity, freedom, progress and stability. Let me summarize what I see as the sources of our current crisis:

1) The drive of those in power, in all their colors, to continue to exercise hegemony on the country and to marginalize the role of the others.
2) The drive of core elements within the power structure of those ruling the country to exercise maximum authority and marginalize others within the same group or party.

Therefore, it is clear that the people in power do not believe in real democracy - but as Third World rulers, they believe in a system of democracy which keeps them in power; a system that allows them to marginalize all others, and in which they become generous benefactors and patrons; a system which is not accountable to any body.

The excesses of dictatorships do not, as usual, remain within this limit. Once a dictatorship gets hold of power, it tends to perpetuate itself. Not only that, but it tends to steadily narrow the base of real power as the core force monopolizes everything in its hands.

This dual struggle for power has one objective - to marginalize the role of others. But the constant struggle for authority also forces the players to remain in touch with everybody else in the game for the sole purpose of controlling the formation of other cores which may create new competition. In the Yemeni context today, the parties outside the power game have been hesitant to interact fully. Those outside the ring know that they can only get left-overs, as they do not have access to the real thing. Thus, their approach has been opportunistic; trying to get the most while avoiding commitment to any of the groups in the power struggle.

In the meanwhile, the dialogue and bargaining process continues between those in power and those outside. The partners in power try to use those outside to strengthen their positions vis-a-vis each other. The political parties outside the game try to get in, by aligning themselves once with this partner, and

another time with the other. This opportunism has another sad twist. The opposition parties are not promoting their parties, but they seek the promotion of certain individuals.

In such an aura of selfish opportunism, the resources of the country are being dissipated. At the same time, the stage is set for a political chess game in which foreign forces move the pieces.

Simultaneously, there is a rising popular discontent. People and individuals who are not professional politicians try to put a limit to the abuse of the "professional politicians".

Hence the many popular conferences - the National Cohesion Conference (Mutamar Attalahum Al-Watani), the Solidarity Conference (Mutamar Attadamun), and the forthcoming National Conference (Al-Mutamar Al-Watani).

But, there are several aspects that make the coming National Conference different and unique:

First, it is the first attempt by Yemen's rising and growing civil society to address political crisis.

Second, it brings together the largest gathering of groups and individuals.

Third, it has taken more than half a year of preparations.

Fourth, it will address the core of the political issues facing the country today: political conduct of parties and the management of free elections.

These factors explain the continued worry of the authorities regarding this conference, and their interest to "effectively participate" in it so that they "guide" it from within.

Next Week: Implications of the National Conference.

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