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## Will Yemen's Officialdom Achieve a Generational Transition?

# The Overhaul

By: Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf,  
Yemen Times.

The expectations are indeed very high. The mood on the streets of Yemen is simple - the people support President Ali Abdullah Saleh, but they are expecting him to overhaul the system.

The signs are that there will be major changes, although the old guard may not yet be willing to retire. Forceful retirement will lead to complications and new grievances, which the leadership is trying to avoid. At the end, however, two groups of people are believed stand to lose their jobs, as follows:

### a. Overaged Officials:

Some government officials have been at it for as long as any body can remember. Through the years, they have, no doubt, given a lot - and taken a lot. By now, most of them are sick and feeble, not to mention old age. Thus, many old-timers will be hopefully leaving the scene. The most notable among these are Dr. Mohammed Saeed Al-Attar, Dr. Hassan Makki and Engineer Abdullah Al-Kurshumi.

### b. Overzealous Supporters:

Some of the overzealous supporters of the leadership - described locally as more royal than the king - are expected to lose their posts. This is partly because Yemen's leadership today feels comfortable and confident enough and does not need the services. The regime does need efficient and hard-working people. In the final analysis, more than

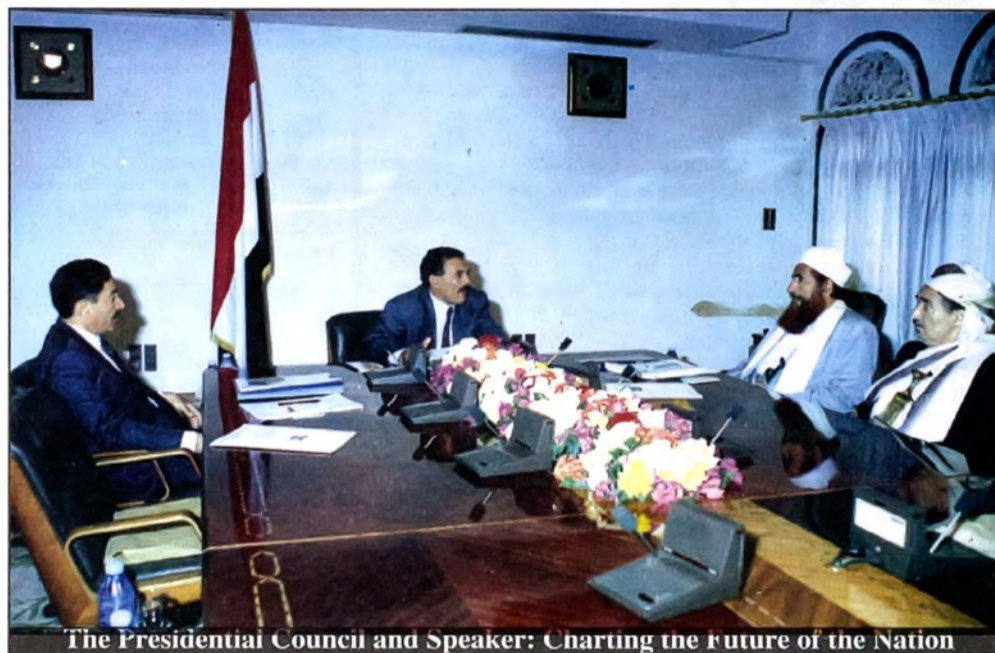
50% of the current government ministers are expected to be replaced according to informed sources. Yet, partisan and geographic considerations will continue to play a role in the distribution of the posts.

### The YSP Must Stay Out:

Most Yemenis concur that it is in the interest of the country as well as that of the YSP for this party to be left out of the next government. Even in spite of YSP insistence, the likelihood is for the PGC to form a minority government, or at most, a PGC-Islah government. This is because these two parties see eye to eye on many issues, thus unifying their orientation and decision-making process. There is the added advantage that the Islah will most probably bring in new blood into the government and system, as it has no hold-overs from the past.

### What to Do with Governors?

One of the most pressing issues is the need to change the governors - especially in the northern governorates. At the moment, several governorates have no governors, because these were YSP members who had left their posts. In other cases, a change is urgently needed to usher in the new spirit and the new order of the day. The regime must move quickly and decisively by appointing individuals who are capable, clean, hard working, and natives to the governorates to which they are appointed. Most governorates require an overhaul of the system in the governor's office.



The Presidential Council and Speaker: Charting the future of the Nation

### Government Corporations:

Another sector which needs major change is the seventy or so government companies and corporations. Some of these, especially in the southern and eastern governorates, are left without top bureaucrats because these have fled with the secessionists or have supported them so openly that they are no longer acceptable.

In other cases, change is needed simply because the persons leading the organizations have been in charge for too long, and they are unable to accept change, any more.

### New Government Imminent

The new government is said to be announced over the coming weekend which co-incides with the anniversary of the birth of

Prophet Mohammed. While there are different speculations on the size of the new government, it is most likely to include 22 ministers. The number could vary depending on the pressure applied by the various players in the political scene. Last minute differences are not expected, as the PGC assumed the role of unchallenged leader in Yemeni politics.

### Editor's Note:

In last week's issue of the Yemen Times, there were black rectangles which covered 3 small parts of the front page. These were not dictated by the government nor do they represent any form of official censorship. They represent voluntary self-censorship on the part of the editor. Thank you.

## Yemen Times Takes the Gov't to Court

By today, Monday August 15th, it has been one full month since the telephone and fax lines of the Yemen Times, the home phone of the editor-in-chief, and the home-phone of his brother in law have been disconnected by the orders of the Political Security Office.

This action is illegal, and does not sit well with what our politicians profess to be doing or hoping to do. This situation shows us:

1. Lack of respect on the part of the authorities for the very laws they enacted.
2. Carelessness about what the people of Yemen and the foreign community in Yemen think.
3. Total disregard for the rights of others.
4. A bullying attitude because the system uses brute force to push people around.
5. Insensitivity towards the

appeals of many leading members of the community, including members of parliament, intellectuals, etc.

What has the regime accomplished? Except for projecting an image of insistence to inflict harm on people who refuse to be pushed around, there is very little else the regime accomplishes from the continuation of this situation. Over the last month, we have constantly appealed to the officials to let go of our telephone/fax lines, but our appeals have fallen on deaf ears. We have made one last appeal to the President and Speaker of Parliament. The letters sent to them are reproduced on the last page.

At the same time, the Yemen Times has authorized the Khateeb and Allaw lawyers firm to file a law-suit with the courts against the Ministry of Telecommunications.

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# OUR VIEWPOINT

## What Price Integrity?

As a society caught in the endless transition from a traditional way of life to one trying to catch up with this modern civilization, we are stuck with a set of values which are often the subject of controversy and confusion, to say the least. One such value is integrity.

It was a big thing in the old days, this integrity business. But today, it has been often compromised, and we see people "selling" their integrity. Think of it. Would you sell yours?

Nonsense. Stout answer. "My integrity (honor) ceez not for sale!" you would hear many clamor. Of course not. Perish the thought.

But think about it again. When did you last give your integrity a brush, a lick of paint, take it out of wherever you keep it and dust it? Actually, the more pertinent question is, "Do you even know where it is? Even if you found it, would you 'die' for it?"

In short, does your integrity have a price? They say every one does, it is just a question of finding it. I have often wondered at what point I would cast my integrity aside and settle for the price tag.

It is said that these days integrity is a bit of a pain as it comes in the way of "deals" and quick gain. Who needs it sticking its face into things and stirring up the old conscience just when you have it under control?

For most people it has become obsolete and has been replaced by a curious mixture of expediency, exploitativeness and contempt for the values of the past.

The reason why I am writing on this 'heavy' subject is that friends in a qat chew last week were talking about some journalists who were lucky enough to get nice gifts for the correct employment of their "pen". Everyone agreed it was a sad thing, or even a quixotic thing to happen. Many spoke of honor and professional integrity. Surprisingly, they all concluded, "What lucky bastards. They have it made!" What a striking conclusion to make - generally light-hearted, but with more than a kernel of truth in the jest.

I realized then and there that these articulate, intelligent and well-educated journalists were very capable of "selling" their honor and integrity if the price were right. Many of them have done it many times in the past.

One question started troubling me. Would I do it? Would the kind of "gift" be the deciding factor in my choice rather than the pressure of my values. Damn it, would I do the honorable thing and refuse the gifts. That is the rub. You never really know how much swash would buckle if the stakes were high enough. Aaaah, but I do know. I had resisted under such situations in the past, even when the temptations and tribulations were high.

There is one more thing I am now sure of. The Yemeni people's priorities - especially among the educated urbanites - have changed. People are more tolerant of deception, subterfuge and compromise, rooting more for the winner than the way he/she won. Not only does winning count most, but the three great crimes have become losing, getting caught, and then allowing oneself to be held accountable for it all. These are the values professed by the leaders of society.

As long as you can get away with it - and people do get away with murder (literally) - the whole morality bag is just a lot of hype. And integrity and honor are integral to that bag, a stuffy outdated concept not really worth giving it so much of our time and thought.

We see people conniving to keep their jobs, they steal openly to make a fast buck, they pass the blame, shrug off responsibility and even plot to put someone else in the hot spot. So often, we explain away all this skulduggery as playing the game according to the rules of the day. After, all, everyone else is doing it!

And that is the worst crime of all.

*The Publisher*  
[Signature]

### Qadhi Al-Arashi Heads Supreme Committee on Administrative Zoning

A Presidential Decree was issued on August 9th, naming Qadhi Abdul-Kareem Al-Arashi as chairman of the Supreme Committee to Review the Administrative Division of the country. The committee is to look into the geographic distribution of the governorates, regions, and districts, and to redesign their borders with the aim of creating new divisions. Among the main criteria in the reconsideration process are tribal affiliation, size of population, viability of local economic activity, topography, social relations, and diluting the old border between the former North and South Yemen. The Committee's establishment is the first step in the efforts towards putting in place a local government system that would delegate more powers to the regions and decentralize the decision-making process. Qadhi Al-Arashi served in many government posts over the last few decades, the last one being as Chairman of the Supreme Elections Committee which supervised and administered the 27th April 1993 elections. Qadhi Al-Arashi, 72, is said to suffer from serious illnesses, which could hamper his work.

### YSP Politbureau Removes Al-Beedh as Party Boss

A thirteen-man meeting of the 24-strong Political Bureau of the Yemeni Socialist Party was held in Damascus last week. The meeting was chaired by Assistant Secretary-General Salim Saleh Mohammed. A communique issued following the three-day meeting called for a non-conditional reconciliation, an implementation of the Pledge and Accord Document, and the full rehabilitation of the eastern and southern governorates. The Politbureau acted implicitly to replace Mr. Ali Salim Al-Beedh as the Secretary-General. Al-Beedh had earlier retired from political life after the blunder he committed in trying to secede from the Republic of Yemen. The natural succession is for Salim Saleh Mohammed to take over. However, he too, is not in good standing among the rank and file of the party, the people of Yemen and the regional and international circles. In fact, observers even doubt whether Mr. Mohammed will be able to keep his current job. That is why a fierce competition is likely to ensue to fill the top posts of the party. This will allow the changes that the YSP will need to make to remain an active player in Yemeni politics.

### Seminar on Law and Democracy

H.E. Qadhi Hamood Al-Hitar, Chairman of the Yemeni Human Rights Organization, disclosed that his organization is sponsoring tomorrow, Tuesday, a seminar on "Law and Democracy in Yemen". This will be at the Officers' Club in Sanaa, and it is open for the public.

### Al-Jafri: No Big Deal in Cairo

Yemeni travellers were shocked to see Mr. Abdul-Rahman Al-Jafri, a top leader of the Secessionists, stand in line to have his passport stamped upon arrival at Cairo Airport, last week. "There were no special arrangements for his arrival," said one Yemeni businessman travelling via Cairo. "He was terribly humbled," he added.

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**Saeed Al-Hakeemi:**

# "We are on the verge of a new, modern and prosperous Yemen."

Mr. Saeed Al-Hakeemi of Hugarriah, 59, is a well-known political personality in Yemen. He started his political life at the age of twenty (in 1955) by joining the petroleum syndicate (union) in Aden. By 1959, he and another famous revolutionary, Saeed Hassan Fara', moved to Taiz where they joined others in the underground movement against the Imam. By as conditions deteriorated, they fled back to Aden.

On October 1st, 1962, the sixth day of the September Revolution, he and other colleagues in the National Movement such as Dr. Mohammed Saeed Al-Attar, Mohsen Al-Sirry, Mohammed Saad Al-Qubati, Ali Al-Ahmadi, flew to Taiz and then to Sanaa. Saeed Al-Hakeemi was assigned the task of mobilizing recruits in the eastern region - Rada'a and Al-Baidha - in order to bolster the Revolution. He continued to rise in the ranks, until, in 1970, he was appointed Minister of Supply.

Since then he served as minister in many governments, and Yemen's ambassador in Addis Ababa, and Kuwait, and Governor of Taiz, and Ibb.

His highest job was Deputy Speaker of the Al-Shoura Council, and later Member of the Presidium of the House of Representatives.

Today, he is a member of the Supreme Elections Committee and Chairman of its Foreign and Media Relations Subcommittee.

Al-Izzy Asselwi and Ameen Nouisser interviewed Mr. Al-Hakeemi and filed the following report.



**Q:** Let us start with a few details about the work of the Supreme Elections Committee. According to the establishment law of the Committee, you are supposed to determine the eligible voters, and give them voting identity cards. What has been done in this regard?

**A:** We have completed a sample of the card, which is yet subject to approval. At the same time, we have the list of the voters in the last elections. We are now working to updating and expanding it by adding the people who have reached voting age, who had been outside the country, and who may not have voted in the previous elections.

According to the law, this effort is to be carried in the beginning of every year. We hope that the beginning of next year comes and we have completed approval and printing of the voting card, which will be distributed to the eligible persons.

**Q:** Recently, the Supreme Committee to Review the Zonal Distribution of the country has been established. Your committee is responsible for defining electoral constituencies. Is there any coordination between the two committees especially since there are a lot of reservations about the way the old constituencies were drawn up?

**A:** Of course, there will be coordination between the two committees. We are, indeed reviewing the boundaries of the old constituencies, especially the ones around which there were problems.

**Q:** There were problems associated with the illiteracy of voters, and there were complaints that the voters wishes were not strictly following. Are you going to follow the system of symbols in the next elections?

**A:** Actually the system of symbols itself has many drawbacks. Some people are more able to make their symbols overwhelm all others, and thus have them more ingrained in the mind. We are looking into various alternatives on this matter.

**Q:** Recently, some constituencies have become without representatives in the House. What are you doing about this?

**A:** It is up to the House of Representative to determine which constituencies are without representation. For example, last Thursday, we received a letter of the House informing us to run elections in constituencies #78 (in Radfan, Dhala region, Lahej Governorate), and # 241 (in Sa'afan, Haraz region, Sanaa Governorate).

We do not determine which seat is empty. The House does that, under whatever jus-

tifications, and we carry out the elections anew.

**Q:** What happens to the YSP representatives who supported the secession?

**A:** As I said, it is not our job to determine that. The House plus the constitution and laws as upheld by the courts determine that. You will remember there is a general amnesty in force. Of course, the law may not apply to some of the leaders of the secession.

**Q:** With what are you occupied these days?

**A:** We have just completed revising the files and records of the last elections. We are also busy these days establishing branch offices and local bodies representing the Supreme Elections Committee in the various governorates.

Finally, we are considering starting training programs for our people and the general public regarding the rights and procedures involved in elections.

I think we will soon need the cooperation of the media since we envisage a nationwide educational campaign.

**Q:** What is your gut assessment of the last elections?

**A:** First, let us all remember there were many foreign and impartial observers who have assessed the last elections. Their overall assessment is positive.

Whatever the shortcomings, it is my sincere feeling that they were part of the genuine transformation process and it is nothing to be ashamed of. The elections were an important step forward in our democratic evolution. I am not saying this as a politician, but as a Yemeni. Do you remember the long lines of men and women who stood on endless hours under the sun in order to exercise their rights. That is the basis for our democracy.

**Q:** Will there really be next elections, and are you hopeful about them?

**A:** I am sure there will be next elections and many more. I am extremely hopeful, but that is not enough. We should add our efforts and goodwill to our hopes in order to make our democracy work.

We on our part, promise to do everything to make the elections clean and a success.

**Q:** For a society like ours, is the composition of the parliament better if at least some of the members are appointed from among the intelligentsia or is it better if they are all elected by a not-so-knowledgeable public?

**A:** There is an eternal controversy over whether the public should have a free hand in electing its representatives. I think it should. If there are good people among the intelligentsia who want to run, they should present themselves in a convincing way.

If we look at the results of the last elections, we will see that many leading intellectuals, university lecturers, businessmen, etc. So there is no basis to say that intellectuals will not be elected.

Of course, there is in this parliament a larger percentage of traditional leaders than in the previous one, but this is only

a stage in our evolution. It will change with time.

**Q:** What do you think of airing on television the sessions of parliament?

**A:** I think it is a good idea. It helps enlighten the public as to what parliament does, and it helps increase their interest and level of participation in national issues.

At the same time, it places a high responsibility on the representatives. I remember I used to get a lot of feedback from the general public about what I say in the House, and was being said by other members.

**Q:** What do you make of the recent political developments?

**A:** I think that the unity of the country is now firmly entrenched. Whatever the difficulties, we are bound to come out stronger.

I have one piece of advice to give. We as Yemenis should complain less and start to work more. We have to take balanced decisions aimed at basic reforms and long-term re-structuring.

It is critical that every Yemeni feels part of the system and that he/she has a say and a stake in it. This is already happening because of the amnesty and reconciliation process. We are at the verge of a new, modern and prosperous Yemen.

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## Thanks to the ICRC for a Job Well Done in Yemen

By: Yahya Yusuf Al-Hodeidi,  
Yemen Times.

Gian-Battista Bacchetta left Sanaa last week after serving as Yemen's Head of Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), for about one month. During that time, the ICRC adopted a \$6 million budget, supervised the distribution of some 35 tons of medical supplies, and coordinated the work of a medical team to attend to the war-wounded, an engineering team working on the water and sewer networks of Aden and other cities, and a legal team visiting the prisoners of war and the persons held in detention. Given such enormous responsibilities, the ICRC established a full-fledged office in Sanaa which coordinates the work of its people in Aden and Taiz, as well as, of course, in Sanaa.

"The ICRC mandate is from the international community within the legal framework of the humanitarian effort. Thus, the ICRC gets involved to help those persons - military or civilian - affected by wars or other armed conflicts," Bacchetta explained. That means, helping injured/wounded persons, detained individuals and displaced people.

To do its work, the ICRC is committed to complete impartiality in the conflicts. It cannot take sides. This means that their teams act with total independence from whomsoever, in their effort. As a logical extension to the impartiality and independence, the Red Cross sometimes plays the role of a neutral intermediary between the conflicting sides. This role allows it from time to time to call for ceasefire in order to ship in badly needed supplies to persons and groups trapped in war zones.

A third aspect of the ICRC efforts involves reuniting families. That is Mr. Bacchetta urged all those who lost contact with a family member due to the recent war in Yemen to call the ICRC office at 01-213-747/8 or call their local partner, the Yemen Red Crescent Society (01-283-131/2/3) to report any missing person.

"We always work closely with a local partner, which is often the national Red Cross or Red Crescent association. This arrangement provides us with the basic infrastructure needed to make an immediate impact on the situation, enables us to impart with technical know-how and financial facilities, and at the end ensures the work will continue long after we are gone. Here in Yemen, we have successfully worked with the national Red Crescent society in Sanaa, Aden and Taiz," he pointed out.

Commenting on the level of cooperation with the authorities, the ICRC official expressed complete satisfaction. "Our teams have had access to all the camps in which military and civilian persons are detained, and we talked to them. Our teams visited all the camps in the Sanaa, Taiz and Aden areas and we think we have covered all ground. The main thing now is to continue with the follow-up," he added.

Asked about why the ICRC could not achieve a limited ceasefire to reduce the sufferings of the civilian population in Aden due to shortages of

water, medical supplies, and basic food, Gian-Battista stated, "It (the ceasefire) didn't happen, but it nearly happened. Both sides had agreed to commit to a ceasefire for a certain time to enable the ICRC bring in supplies. We almost tied the last knots. It didn't happen not because of the bad disposition of the warring sides, but because of many little logistic considerations," he said.

The International Committee of the Red Cross flew into Yemen an eight-person specialized medical team - presently stationed in Taiz - to help care for the wounded.

A four-man engineering team was also stationed in Aden/Al-Howtah to help expedite the repairs of the water pumps and distribution of the drinking water network.

Speaking about the financial allocations, Bacchetta pointed out that the ICRC budget for last year was about a billion US dollars, although the operations worldwide costed only \$ 800 million. "The way we work is really based on meeting the need, and then putting together the budget and trying to find resources for the budget. There is always an emergency fund lying there. We start with it, and then start a fund-raising campaign."

Here in Yemen, they started in the same way. The funding came from the ICRC budget, to start with, and then donors chipped in. The first and most gratifying response came from Europe. Then came the USA, Canada, Japan, and other donors. At the end, the budget for the Yemeni operations is now estimated at \$ 6 million, and the effort to secure this whole amount is still underway.

At another level, Yves Daccord, who had been in charge of the Aden operations, has taken over as head of the ICRC delegation in Yemen. Mr. Daccord feels comfortable as he has worked extensively in the region - in occupied Palestine, Kenya, Sudan and finally in Yemen.

Since his arrival in Aden in June, Yves was first confronted with the drastic water shortage in the city. "We had to truck water to various quarters, we established plastic tanks and reservoirs. Our priority was to provide water at least for drinking purposes, and not other needs," he said. The ICRC provided huge generators immediately as soon as hostilities stopped, and they started work on Bir Nasser and Bir Ali, and even in the Lahej water wells. "The main task was to repair the pumping systems and distribution network."

Another critical aspect of the ICRC work in Aden has been the cholera scare. "Today, we still receive cases of cholera, but these are within the endemic level, and not an epidemic level," he said. The ICRC team was subjected to the shelling, just like the rest of the population. Unlike other organizations which fled, the ICRC team took the heat and stayed on.

The situation was further complicated because of the "loss of assets." For example, there was a garbage collection problem because the vehicles are no longer there," he explained. The same is true of hospitals which cannot do their work because there are no ambulances.

The ICRC role was probably the most critical in avoiding a catastrophe, especially in Aden. "Thanks to the ICRC for a job well-done!"



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### Yemen Times Needs Representatives in the UK & USA

The Yemen Times plans to print a UK and a USA edition of the newspaper. This plan will be consummated before the end of the current year. Yemen Times needs representatives in London, Birmingham, and Cardiff - in the UK, and in New York, Detroit and Fresno - in the USA. Applicants, who must be residents of those cities/countries, are encouraged to write to us.

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وكلاء الخطوط الجوية اليمنية

صنعاء شارع القصر الجمهوري  
هاتف ٧٩١٢٥٣/٥٤/٥٥ - فاكس ٢٤٨٧ - ص.ب. (٨٦٦٥)

## Mother and Child Special: Advice on First Foods for Baby

Here is a 12-point advice-list to new mothers. We do not know the qualification of the source of advice, but they look good. The writer is a teacher, and he sounds to be well-versed on the matter.

1. First tasters of solid food are normally given when the baby is four to five months old. The bigger the baby, the earlier he/she may need to start. They will normally tell you when they are ready by waking up hungry at night.
2. Start with baby rice - which is easily mixed with breast or bottle milk, vegetable or fruit puree. Stick to one taste at a time. The food should be the consistency of cream, at first, so it is easy to swallow for the little fellow.
3. Give only small quantities at first. Half a teaspoon is fine for a first-timer. Don't force the baby to eat (finish) everything. They know when they have had enough.
4. Avoid eggs and cow's milk until the baby is six months old.
5. It is possible to cook for more than

- one serving. Freeze the extra in ice cube trays once the baby has had enough. For the next serving, defrost and heat through before feeding the baby.
6. As the child starts making chewing movements, you know he/she is ready for solids. Add toast, slices of fruit, rusks, cucumber and celery to the diet.
7. Never leave babies' alone while they are eating. Always make sure there is an adult with them.
8. Babies are not born with a sweet tooth. It is acquired by habit. So do not add sugar to their meals. Don't worry about having savoury foods first, and sweet foods afterwards. Mix the food together so that the dessert does not become a treat.
9. Steam vegetables to preserve the vitamins and try not to overcook them.
10. At a later stage, meat comes into the picture. Grill the meat rather than fry to keep the fat intake to a minimum. Remove the fat off the meat, and buy lean mince meat, if possible.
11. As the baby grows, give him/her their own spoon to hold even while you

are feeding them. Soon, you will find the little fellow is digging in. That is okay, let them have a go at it.

12. Watch out for the "E". Check the food you buy for unnecessary additives like colorings, sugar, and salt. Keep the baby's diet as natural and healthy as possible.

By: Osman Aweis Ma'allin,  
Somali Teacher in Sanaa.

### أفراج آل الزكري

نتقدم بأحر التهاني والتبريكات للأخوين ناصر ومنصور سعيد محمد الزكري بمناسبة خطوبتهما وقرب الزفاف وأدام الله السرور المهنون:  
طه علي علي غانم الزكري، عبدود طه الزكري  
عزالدين طه الزكري، سعيد علي بن علي الزكري  
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## Back to Witchcraft?

By: Al-Izzy Asselwi,  
Yemen Times.

Traditional medicine was uprooted by modern medical services. Some people would go so far as to describe traditional medicine as witchcraft. But one Mohammed Al-Maqaleh is going against the tide. He is promoting traditional medicine as a viable alternative to modern witchcraft.

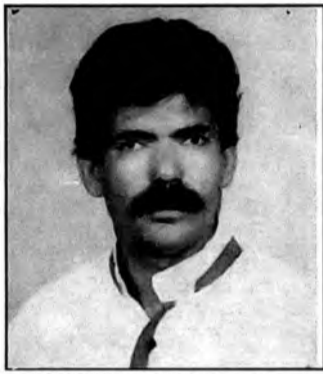
"I learned most of what I know from a Chinese doctor. I was sick, and he cured me using needles, shrubs, and basic massage. I stayed on with him even after I was cured. Today I have improved on many of his techniques and methods," Al-Maqaleh explains.

The thrust of his logic is that the body is a self-contained unit. "Do not put into it any alien substance. If there is a problem, the body will take care of itself."

Yes, you can help. But that help is in the form of activating the muscles and nerves. Application of proper pressure - call it massage - to various parts of the body will help overcome many ailments, from ordinary pain to paralysis.

"I can give you examples of many patients I helped cure. Their ailments were back-pain due to a change in the shape of the spinal column, muscle aches, joint problems, etc. I do not want to give names of my patients, but there are many who could not be cured by the modern medicine, and I was able to help them," he said.

"Part of the curative process is the degree of trust you have in the doctor helping you. So if a patient has enough confidence, then the psychological preparedness enable to body to react positively," he explained. But that is one of his major drawbacks. When prospective patients see Mr. Al-Maqaleh, a young farm-boy from one of the hinterlands of Yemen, and with no proper training or education in the field, his marks fall immediately. The efforts to regain confidence are big.



Mohammed Al-Maqaleh

When asked about the major problems he faces in treating his patients, he said, "When I ask for symptoms of the illness, the patients often do not give enough details. They leave out many important things, which they judge as unimportant. So when I press for more details, the patients - mostly women - get uneasy and start recoiling into their little shells," he said. "But that is not a big problem."

## The People Want Real Change

By: Ismail Al-Ghabri,  
Yemen Times.

Now that the situation is quickly returning to normalcy in the country, Yemenis are waiting for many things of from the government. They are expecting the government will proceed in the coming months to bring the nation closer to its aspirations.

The people have suffered a lot for sometime now. They have suffered from a prolonged crisis which turned into a war. Their livelihood and the daily activities were adversely affected due to the harsh economic conditions. They suffer from galloping inflation, staggering unemployment, the agony of insecurity and many other shortcomings. The end result is instability, unrest and chaos everywhere in the country.

Now that the war is over, the people expect a new deal to usher in a new era. We expect the new government to be more representative, more responsible, and more effective in tackling the problems facing us. In the many qat gatherings, people speak endlessly of what the new government ought to do. They speak of a new era in which the government offices are freed from undue haggling and bureaucracy. They speak of a system freed from pressure by interest groups based on family or tribal or political affiliation.

They say the government should now be able to control inflation, create new jobs, and in general bring in a new spirit of hope and optimism. The relative rise in the value of the Yemeni currency

vis-a-vis the US dollar in the last few days is already a good start. That is why the talk about new economic opportunities is gaining ground. The hope is of improved services and better performance in the government. People also speak of new faces to join the government. Ordinary citizens complain they have had enough of the old faces who have been in charge of the various government ministries, corporations and companies. The new faces will bring fresh energy and ideas to the system. And the kind of new faces the leadership brings in will signal how serious it is in introducing the change it professes to seek. Yemenis insist on a more fair and just social system in which every person feels part of the state, and feels he/she has an equal chance of participation and achievement. Now is this too much to ask for? I feel it can be achieved with a little effort and goodwill. A new government can accomplish the people's wishes. The first step is to stamp out corruption. If the government can control corruption, many things will fall in place and the system would be more efficient. The second step in this corrective process is to bring qualified young people to replace the old guard. New technocrats who are more able to do the job should be brought in to replace the highly inefficient officials. In short, what the people want is real change. The president of the republic has given signals on this. He spoke of local rule, of genuine change, etc. We are waiting for action.

## What's Wrong with the World?

Foolish, this boy. He assumes that by being hard-working, good and law-abiding, he can get ahead in life. Instead life got ahead of him. By playing his role within the law, by being polite, and by putting extra effort into his work he thought that he can hold on to his jobs and look after his family well.

Pah! Stupid 28-year Abdul! Still unaware of the facts of life after all these years, and lending his hand to all and sundry. Everything he touched for others turned into gold. Stupid, all he could have done was to hold on to that glitter.

Stupid kid, always 'yessing' and standing on top of his head for all and sundry. He started as a junior office clerk, through the years, he has grown to become a mid-level bureaucrat.

Abdul's wisdom worked on the belief that everything would work right if he just happened to be a goody-goody. Nobody ever told him that goodies never came to the goody-goodies. Nobody told him that goody-goodies never shone in life. He should have known better.

The problem was he did not even know that he was in fact a 'goody-goody'. He dripped good, when he should have been dripping oil and dusting his back of all niceness.

Look what happened to him. He loved his work. More so he wanted to lean further. He believed he could work his way up the ladder. Poor sap. Twenty years later, he has reached the ceiling of the maximum of what he is allowed to be.

He also had this craving to know more. So wherever he beamed, he tried to learn more of what was happening around him. So he enrolled at Sanaa University, and got his B.A. He then took evening classes in English.

Foolishly, he was asking questions when he should have kept mum. He looked good too and smiled a lot. When you are too good, people take you for granted. To get your rights in Yemen, you have puff up your face and look sour. They might fear you, and even respect you. Smiley-you is taken for granted, and rode over. That is the way the cookie crumbles.

You see, in the office where Abdul worked, he frequented a particular department where there were foreign experts with the view to better his knowledge. But little did he know that his rubbing shoulders with foreigners was taken as an unhealthy sign. As the word spread, it rubbed his career the wrong way.

Some of his envious colleagues made sure the top echelons got to know what Abdul's "game" was, peppered with the right malicious flavor so that whoever heard it could only boil. And act accordingly.

Moreover, he has no tribal affiliation or mutual-interest based contacts. So, today, he is shuttled deep into the midst of nowhere.

From the measly amount he earns, he has to earmark for food, house-rent, electricity, transportation, etc. Saw him the other day, and he still did not get over his bad habits. He still 'yesses' and says "Sir" and "Madame". I saw him thanking everybody in sight, and tried to tell him, "Kid you are never going to get anywhere by being so nice." But he didn't get it. He never listens. Maybe he has a point. Where did the rest of us get all this malice?

Heck, what's wrong with this world anyway?

Another Abdul,  
Sanaa.

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## Four Major Economic Policy Developments

### 1. "The Impossible Has Happened."

Many Yemeni citizens are pleasantly surprised as they exclaim, "The impossible has happened." They are talking about the downward pressure in price levels. The prices of many consumer goods have recently fallen by 5-20% over the last week. Television and press announcement steadily give the new (lower) prices of various commodities such as soft drinks, detergents, milk, juices, cooking oil, flour, and other products. Basically, the fall in prices is attributed to the fall of the US dollar vis-avis the Riyal over the last few weeks. The dollar had reached a peak of some YR 130 per dollar, but now it is hovering around YR 70 per dollar. The government is trying to break old psychological barriers by putting pressure on the local producers and importers to effectively reduce retail prices. This has allowed the creation of a new mood as citizens gain more confidence in the system and the government.

### 2. Economies of Scale:

Another new development is that

the government is pushing for economies of scale. The small units are being forced into merger so that they may benefit from large scale production. It is a basic economic rule that the average cost of production falls as the number of units produced rises. That is primarily because fixed costs (such as overheads) are distributed among a larger volume of product).

One prime example of this is the forthcoming merger between Yemenia (Yemen Airlines) and Alyemda (Yemen Airways). According to Mr. Ahmed Barakat, Chairman of Yemenia, "If we are to compete (with much larger foreign airlines), then we should pool our resources together in one airline."

Another target for merger is the many small fishing units that are owned by the government, mainly in the former South.

Other companies - especially those which serve the same clientele and which were established in a parallel fashion in the former Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) and People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) - are all expected to be forcefully merged. Next on line in this

regard are the government marketing companies.

### 3. Privatization:

A third development in streamlining the Yemeni economy is the privatization of several government entities. The first company to be privatized is the National Bank of Yemen - presently owned a 100% by the state - which is to be converted into a share-holding company. According to a directive of the Presidential Council last week, shares will be sold to the public. Although the directive did not say whether the government will retain any part of the bank ownership, it is believed the state will remain a minority share-holder. Another project which is up for grabs by the private sector is the cement plants - all three of them. Although the initial offer by the government involves only the plant at Al-Barh in Taiz, it is understood the government will ultimately relinquish ownership of all three plants. The government is also expected to offer on sale the huge land holdings and plantations that were part of the former socialist system in the former PDRY.

### 4. Removal of Subsidies:

The Ministry of Supplies and Trade is pushing for a total removal of all government subsidies, even to the basic foodstuffs. "Already, the subsidy for sugar has been removed. We now want to remove the subsidies allocated for flour and wheat. This is costing the government some \$400 million every year, and it is not even doing what it is supposed to do," Minister Abdul-Rahman Ba-Fadhle said. The minister, while sounding very pro-market, came heavy on the merchants and importers whom he called "devils".

The government is studying ways to remove the subsidies within a three-year framework.

The above steps come within the continued efforts of the state to streamline the economy by correcting the distortions that have permeated the system. It will take a lot of will power, energy and dedication to achieve tangible results. But such results are attainable, and the country needs them in order to transform Yemen and lead it into the 21st century.

## Sheraton Sanaa Hotel: Back in Business

The people of Sheraton Sanaa Hotel are trying to reverse the hotel's fortunes. At hand to see to that is Mr. Karlheinz Aumann, Area General Manager for Djibouti, Oman, Pakistan, and Yemen.

"I am here to study what is required to regain full momentum. I have lined up meetings with the tour operators, travel agencies, and the airlines in order to work together to bring back the tourists," said the Sheraton official.

He also disclosed that the hotel is going to get a new general manager, and a news sales director. "It is all part of our new image and improved quality of service," said Aumann.

The pool-side Indian Tandoor restaurant has been re-opened starting on Monday, August 15th, and the hotel has resumed the special nights dinners - such as the Arabian Nights.

"The refurbishings and upholstery of the rooms and other facilities are ready for shipping in the US and Egypt, and they will be here soon," he said.

Mr. Aumann also disclosed that most of the expatriate staff have returned as the hotel is getting in full gear. "I would like to register my appreciation for the local staff who have managed the hotel well during the absence of their expatriate colleagues. Now the full team is working together to better serve the customers."



## Yemeni-Libyan Cooperation in the Upswing

"The Republic of Yemen and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah are working closely to consolidate bilateral cooperation and relations," stated Mr. Basheer Al-Shareef, Acting Charge d'Affair in the Libyan Embassy in Sanaa. Mr. Al-Shareef, who joined the Libyan embassy on 1/12/1993, speaks of infusing new force in

the bilateral relations. "There is a lot of room for enhancing the level of cooperation, and we shall push for stronger and closer ties," he said.

We see that there a lot of goodwill and positive disposition on both sides, all we need is to create the mechanism to translate them into substance," he added.

One of those mechanisms has been the exchange of visits by senior officials on both sides. "Next week, Mr. Mustafa Al-Kharroubi, Member of the ruling Revolutionary Command Council, will arrive in Sanaa carrying a written message from Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Al-Qaddafi to Yemeni President

Ali Abdullah Saleh, concerning bilateral cooperation.

"This visit is an indicator of the continued effort on both sides to achieve closer and more meaningful ties and cooperation," Mr. Basheer Al-Shareef stated. Libya is involved in financing several development projects in the Republic of Yemen.

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## Reproduction of Letters of Appeal to the President of the Republic and Speaker of Parliament on the Telephones of Yemen Times



**YEMEN TIMES**

١١٤/٨٤

فضامة الفريق علي عبدالله صالح رئيس مجلس الرئاسة المحترم

تحية طيبة وبعد :

تهديكم صحيفة «يمن تايمز» تحياتها ، وتعرب لكم عن تهنيتها بالنصر الذي تحقق لشعبنا بقيادتكم وتحت شعار الوحدة والشرعية الدستورية . ان هذا النصر الذي حفظ لبلادنا وحدتها وتحت هذا الشعار العظيم ، يفرض علينا جميعاً أن نكون على مستواه ، وذلك بالشكر لله والعدل بين أبناء شعبنا .

ان ما يحدث من ممارسات مست شخصي كصاحب هذه الصحيفة وكأستاذ بجامعة صنعاء - ومنها إستمرار قطع خطوط التلفزيون والفاكس عن مكتب الصحيفة ومن منزلي ومنزل نسيبي الاخ حافظ الأهدل ، وما نتج عن أضرار كبيرة -لأمر يستحق إهتمامكم بصفتكم الحامي الأول للشرعية الدستورية والنظام العام في هذا الوطن .

ولما كان هذا التصرف - قطع تلفزيونات الصحيفة - يخالف دستور الجمهورية اليمنية في مادته الثانية والثلاثين والقوانين وكذا روح التوجه العام للدولة ، فانني أتوجه إليكم بهذه الشكوى راجياً أن تتال عنايتكم ، خاصة وأن التلفزيونات موقوفة لأكثر من شهر وقد عطلت أعمال الصحيفة .

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د/عبدالعزیز المسقاف  
الناشر/رئيس التحرير  
استاذ الإقتصاد بجامعة صنعاء



**YEMEN TIMES**

١١٤/٨٤

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- Heavy and light industrial plants.
- Power and desalination plants.
- Water treatment plants, reservoirs and distribution systems.
- Sewage treatment plants and collection networks.
- Oil fields ancillary installations.
- Pipelines construction and maintenance.
- Air purification for industry.
- Fuel and water storage tanks.
- Offshore structures and underwater works.
- Marine docks, harbours, deep sea berths and refinery terminals.
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