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YEMEN TIMES



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Badr Ba-Sunaid on Human Rights Conditions in Aden.
Page 3.

The Freedom Forum: The Idea & How It Works.
Pages 4.

The Aden Free Zone: A Misconception
Pages 7.

The Gene Revolution: The Pros and Cons.
Page 12.

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People Ask President Saleh to Take on Officially Prime Minister's Job

The fight against corruption is not getting anywhere. Part of the reason is that the corrupt people are so strong, it looks as if no one can tackle them and survive, unless it is President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who is doing the tackling. Hence, the conclusion that Ali Abdullah Saleh should take on the job of President and Prime Minister.

There is another reason why Gen. Ali Abdullah Saleh should stand on the front-line. Many people believe he himself protects the bad guys.

If that were true, then no one can make the corrupt people accountable. No one that is, except President Saleh.

This is the final stand regarding the credibility of the president. Irrespective of any issues in the past, this stand will determine whether the president is really fighting corrupt people, or whether he is posturing.

The conclusion among leaders of the community leaders that the president take on the task of leading the government is gaining momentum. Will he respond?

PSO Jails a Yemeni Singer

Askar Ali is in jail, under orders from the Political Security Office (PSO). The reason is simple - Askar, a folk poet and singer, has produced a tape in which he registered six songs. All of them mock the might and grandeur of Yemen's military.

The PSO decided to confiscate the tens of thousands of cassette tapes and penalized the stereo shops that carry them. Then the PSO got the old man and put him in jail. Where? Oh yes, in a jail in Russud, Yaffa. He has been there for three weeks now.

Special Thanks to the Minister of Health

The VACCINES Have ARRIVED

Two shipments of vaccines have been unloaded last week - the first on Sunday March 3rd, and the second three days later. Both shipments were swiftly cleared through airport customs, remained for only a few hours in the storage facility of the Ministry of Health, and were released to the immunization centers.

It was impressively efficient. Yemen Times learnt that Health Minister Nagib Ghanem was personally involved in making sure no time was wasted in getting the vaccines to the kids. According to a German expert on loan to the ministry, "It shows when Yemenis want to get something done, it gets done."

The vaccines were in short supply over the last months leading to an uproar among the public and the media. At another level, Dr. Ghanem received an audience fifteen representatives of the public and interest groups to discuss the immunization program and the health services.

Details on page 8

Is the PGC Playing the YSP Against the Islah?

Parliament Upset with Executive Authority

On Friday, March 8th, Dr. Abdul-Karim Al-Iryani, Foreign Minister and Secretary-General of the People's General Congress (PGC), along with several other PGC leaders, went to chew qat at the home of Jarallah Omar. It was not a private call. It was a high level meeting between the PGC and the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP). The subject - how to coordinate efforts. The victim - most probably the Islah party, the PGC's present partner in power. But the discussion also covered coordination in parliament. The YSP has the third largest bloc.

On Saturday, independent members of parliament and representatives of the small opposition parties in parliament met to discuss issues of common concern. First and foremost among these are the recent laws enacted by presidential decision.

Article (119) of the constitution gives the president of the republic the right to issue decrees as presidential laws, if parliament

were in recess and if there was urgency or extreme importance. Many members of parliament believe that the presidency has been, unfortunately, abusing this right by passing laws which would not have passed.

The constitution actually gives parliament the right to vote on the presidential laws. But parliament has little choice - it can either approve or strike down the laws. "That is not much of a choice. We can either accept what we think is a bad law, or get into a confrontation with the president," said a frustrated Sultan Hizam Al-Atwani, Member of Parliament of the Nas-serite Unionist Party.

This issue is in the forefront of difficulties in the relations between the legislative and executive branches of authority because the president has issued 13 presidential decrees during last month's Ramadhan recess of parliament. There is even before that, a back-log of many such presidential decrees from the past.

Continues on page 7

First-Time Thieves: A Sign of the Times

Abdul-Rahman, 35, was caught red-handed while trying to steal a wheel-barrow, which he had seen on top of the roof of a building he had visited a few days earlier. He made a plan.

At 2:00 am one night, he quietly slipped into the building. He was able to get to the roof of the two-story building unnoticed. Carrying the wheel-barrow on his head, he started coming down. On the way down, he banged against the wall of the staircase a couple of times. That was enough to alert the residents.

Abdul-Rahman soon found himself in jail at Al-Amri Police Station, in the southern sector of Sanaa.

"He needed to get the wheel-barrow to earn a steady income. He is a decent citizen who is unable to find a job," he pleaded. The wheel-barrow was his ticket out of unemployment, or so he thought. There is a steep rise in the number of first-time thieves, like Abdul-Rahman, in the Republic of Yemen.

The incident triggered the interest of Yemen Times in finding out more about first-time thieves. In police stations and offices of prosecutors all over our cities, there are hordes of cases of first-time thieves.

The stories they tell are sad and they are a sign of the times.

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OUR VIEWPOINT

The Public Can Help in Making Officials Accountable

Over the last few weeks, we have seen General Ali Abdullah Saleh, President of the Republic, run around from one ministry to another trying to bring life and responsibility to a paralyzed bureaucracy. It has been a one-man show.

Yet, something interesting has been happening, also over the last few weeks. In my opinion, it is a watershed in Yemen's political transformation process.

It all started with the shortage of vaccines. The public started reacting to the situation. Several medical doctors, notably Dr. Mohammed Abdul-Mageed Al-Qubati and Dr. Salim Ba-Naja, were in the forefront. There were also many public figures like Omar Ba-Shraheel, Abdo Hussain Ahmed, Mahmood Aman, Fouad Abdo Rabbo, Fouad Mohammed Qassim, Dr. Abdulaziz Tarmoom, Abdul-Nasser Mowaddi, Mohammed Al-Saqqaf, Mohammed Ali Haitham, Ali Al-Saqqaf, etc. Among the women, there were Ibtisam Al-Hamdi, Basmah Al-Qubati, and Hana Al-Yusufi.

In addition to Yemen Times, the newspapers that interacted with the issue were Al-Ayyam, Al-Thawri, Al-Wahdawi - the group that one observer called the people's newspapers. The official media never touched the issue until the vaccines arrived. And when they did, they did so to absolve the officials by indicating that the vaccines were available and that there was no problem. Hence they are deservedly called the papers of the rulers, not of the general public.

Anyway, going back to the developments.

The concerned citizens - some of whom are mentioned above - held several meetings among themselves and with the relevant UNICEF and Ministry of Health officials. Finally, fifteen of them held a meeting with the minister on Monday, March 4th. They presented him with a letter and lots of questions.

"It is exactly like what the president is trying to do in his visits to the ministries. Except that here, it is the group representing the public interest that is doing it. And the demands are more focused," said one of the citizens.

If various pressure groups are formed by the public, they can raise important points of general concern regarding the performance of the officials. I believe this is a better approach than the president's.

If president Ali Abdullah Saleh wants some watch-dog service, he can support groups from among the general public which have a stake in the performance of government. In other words, he should enlist the services of NGOs, syndicates, interest groups, pressure groups, etc. He can help by making his officials - they are not ours - more accountable and more responsive to public demand.

Let me give another example. If in each residential quarter or zone a small group is put together to make sure the relevant waste disposal authorities collect the garbage, they can do that. They can do two things. Encourage the families and household to properly pack and dispose of their garbage, and report on the performance of the collection. This is the only sustainable effort that could hold people in public office accountable. The president cannot and should not do this on his own.

One warning. If the president or his men try to control or politicize these groups, then the effort will fail.

The Publisher
عبد العزيز السقاف

Japan Finances Two Small-Scale NGO Projects

On March 7th, 1996, Japanese Ambassador Susumu Akiyama signed two grant agreements to assist grass roots projects in Yemen.

The first was co-signed by Sheikh Mahfoodh Shammakh, Chairman of the Hadhramaut Charity and Social Welfare (HCSA). According to the agreement, Japan will provide the HCSA with \$36,135 to finance the purchase of medical equipments at the Shibam Health Center in Hadhramaut.

The second agreement was co-signed by Abdul-Wahid Amin, Secretary-General of the Local Council of 'Ibb District. According to the agreement, Japan will provide the council with \$38,877 to finance the construction of school rooms, toilets and other facilities at the Al-Noor School located in Hakla village, Ba'adan District, Ibb Governorate.

Japan and other donor countries have been actively looking for small NGO projects to support. This scheme has proved to be very cost-effective.

Art Exhibition at Al-Afif Foundation

Reema Qassim will have her art work exhibited at the new hall of Al-Afif Cultural Foundation. The one-week exhibition is kicked off today, Monday, March 11th at 5:00 pm.

The public is invited to visit between 4:00 - 7:00 pm.

The many programs of the Foundation this year include seminars, lectures, exhibitions, poetry recitals, etc. The Foundation also has a growing library which the public can use. Finally, there is a gymnastics section to work out if you are tired of the mental stuff.

President Saleh Agrees to Attend the Anti-Terrorist Summit

President Ali Abdullah Saleh confirmed that he plans to attend the anti-terrorist summit to be held at the Egyptian town of Sharm El-Sheikh. The President plans to leave here tomorrow, Tuesday to attend the meeting that starts after tomorrow, Wednesday.

Many leaders including US President Bill Clinton, Russia's Boris Yeltsin, Germany's Helmut Kohl, France's Jacques Chirac, and Britain's John Major are attending. From the Middle East region, the rulers of Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Tunisia, Qatar, Turkey, and Israel are also attending.

The purpose is to discuss the rising wave of suicide terrorism in Israel, and to coordinate efforts to fight religious extremism in the Middle East region.

President Decrees

A Presidential decree has been issued appointing Mr. Ahmed Mohammed Soofan as Minister of Industry. Another decree appointed Mr. Abdullah Salim Al-Jafri as Chairman of the Yemen Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and a third one appointed Mr. Ahmed Obeid Al-Fadhli as Chairman of the National Bank of Yemen.

Vocational Workshop Starts Today

A major vocational and technical workshop started in Sanaa today, Monday. Engineer Jamal Al-Khawlani, Chairman of the GAVTT indicated that the workshop will discuss implementation of a major vocational/technical drive in the country.

Three New NGOs Established

Three new Non-Governmental Organizations have been established in Yemen. These are all in new modern fields of activities, as follows:

a) **The Yemeni Center for Strategic Studies (YCSS) - Sanaa.** Executive Director and co-founder Mr. Nassr Taha Mustafa told the Yemen Times that the YCSS is a future-oriented effort to better understand pertinent social, political, cultural and economic issues. He also disclosed that the first event of the YCSS is to organize a major seminar on the administrative reforms of Yemen and to raise public awareness on them.

b) **The Human Rights Information & Training Center (HRTTC) is based in Taiz.** A group of lawyers, journalists, and other intellectuals have come together to establish the HRTTC. "The purpose is to train people on how to address and protect human rights," stated Mr. Izzadeen Saeed Al-Asbahi, Executive Director.

The first event of the HRTTC is a workshop to be organized for all persons involved in human rights. "We want people to understand what human rights are, what are the rights stipulated in Yemeni laws and constitution, and how we can cooperate to protect them," he said.

c) **The Association of Bakeries of Aden (ABA)** was established in response to the continuous shortage of flour and unorganized way it is centrally distributed. "There have been many times when bakeries had to shut down or to do with minimal quantities not enough to meet local demand," said Abdul-Hameed Al-Aghbari, one of the founders and himself a bakery owner.

"The idea is to protect the rights of this business class from the haphazard decisions of Yemeni bureaucrats." Increasingly, there are new NGOs, associations, syndicates, unions, etc. are established in Yemen.

Mishap at Sea: Indian Vessel Sinks Near Socotra

Fifteen Indian nationals were flown back to Mumbai (formerly Bombay) on March 5th. These are the crew members of the Indian vessel, the MSV Safina Al-Ashalm which sank near the Yemeni island of Socotra on February 26th. The crew made it to Socotra, and from there, the Yemeni authorities brought them to Sanaa.



The captain, Mr. Ahmad Saleh Mohamed, told the Yemen Times that the vessel - registered in Bedi (Jamnagar) and owned by Abbas Ibrahim Kinda and Bros. -

was carrying 360 metric tons of wheat flour for Somalia. "It developed engine problem leading to its eventual demise," he explained.

Indian Charge d'Affaires in Sanaa, Mr. P. M. Meena, thanked the Yemeni authorities for their assistance and cooperation. "Yemeni officials have been very forthcoming in assisting. We are grateful."

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Badr Ba-Sunaid:

"Aden deserves better than this."

Aden is a city in crisis. It is in search of a role in a modernizing and unified Yemen. In spite of the dramatic posturing of Aden as a commercial and economic capital, Aden as a free zone, Aden as a winter capital, etc., not much has changed to the better. The mood is increasingly a sad one.

The intellectuals of the city are struggling hard to find a place for themselves and the their city. The situation of human rights, the legal system, the prison conditions, and other similar facilities has deteriorated. There is some sort of a fight going on, at the moment.

One key person in this fight for democracy and human rights is Badr Ba-Sunaid. A courageous lawyer, he stood up to many oppressors, at great risk to himself. He was jailed and beaten up several times. He is regularly harassed.

Badr is the Vice Chairman of the Yemeni Organization for Defence of Rights and Liberties. He regularly comes to the defence of many individuals and groups whose rights have not been upheld.

Yemen Times Bureau Chief in Aden, Mr. Ridhwan Al-Saqqaf, spoke to Mr. Ba-Sunaid and filed the following report.

Q: Could you give us a general assessment of the human rights situation in Aden?

A: I do not want to be the judge of the situation, but it is clear that there is a marked deterioration. You can see the prison conditions, the overactive nature of the Political Security Office (PSO), the overzealous nature of religious and other demagogues, the illegal behavior of the military and police forces, etc.

On several occasions, peaceful protests have been violently handled, on two cases with live ammunition leading to deaths among the civilians. Even verbal complaints are not tolerated.

There is a feeling of lawlessness which dominates our lives. This especially true in the southern and eastern governorates.

What I am saying is that there is a visible deterioration in the human rights and democratic situation. This is true all over the Republic, but more so in Aden.

Q: You mentioned prison conditions. Could you give us details?

A: First of all, we have witnessed the use of ordinary houses and other buildings as private or semi-private prisons. Many senior officials and officers seem to have their own prisons.

Second, the official prisons of Aden are in a bad state. There is no maintenance, no water and electric services, no proper waste disposal, etc.

Third, treatment of prisoners is far below the standards dictated by the law. Various levels of torture are routine.

I visit prisons on a regular basis. To start with government financial allocation for prison upkeep is minimal. But even the small allocations are mis-used.

Several international organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, Medecins sans Frontiers, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, etc., have been visiting prisons in Yemen, including the Aden prisons. They are trying to help, but it is becoming a situation which cannot be helped.

Q: How about the legal structure. Aden was said to have a fairly good legal system?

A: If Aden had a good legal system, it is gone. Today, the whole republic suffers from an inadequate and inefficient legal system. The whole thing needs an overhaul.

Many of the laws have not been enacted by parliament, and when they are, they are rather vague allowing for multiple interpretations. Even the wording is sometimes inappropriate.

Second, the judicial community is overwhelmed with its own needs, especially at the financial level. The courts, prosecution offices, investigation departments, and other support organs are lacking in resources and qualified personnel.

Finally, there is continuous interference in the affairs of the judiciary. It is done so often that people no longer complain. I can give you numerous examples of various forms of interference. Some of it is subtle. But some of it is open and direct. For example, on a couple of occasions, armed soldiers have barged into courts grabbed people they were after and left. On other occasions, soldiers have fired tear-gas in the courtyard of courts.

After the soldiers and officers do their dirty work and humiliate everybody, they turn around and give excuses and apologies. I have yet to hear of any soldier or officer penalized for having invaded a court.

Sometimes, the atrocities are committed by armed militias and thugs. The state turns a blind eye until these have completed their work, then they initiate "investigations".

Q: In Aden, there were female judges and lawyers. What happened to them?

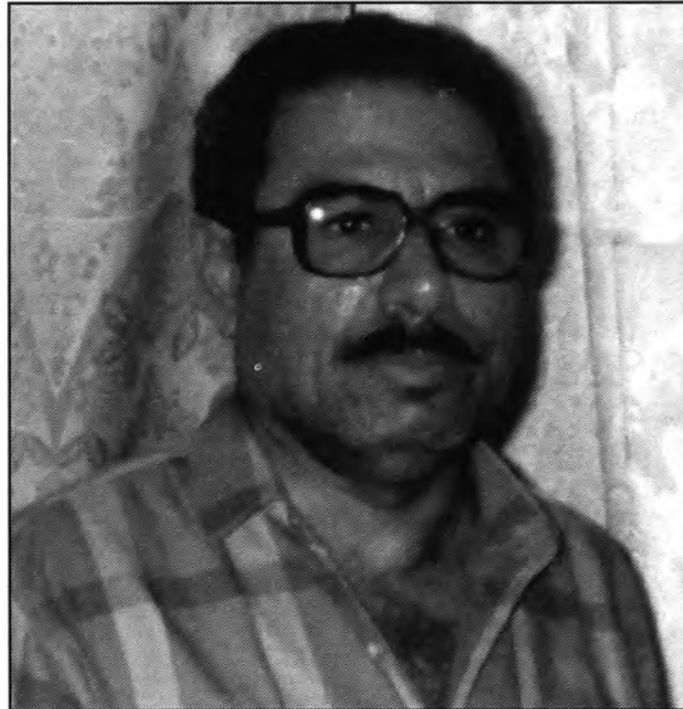
A: The whole atmosphere is not conducive to female lawyers and judges. There is no law or rule that forbids women to perform as lawyers or judges, but their numbers in reality, is dwindling. I would like to stress here that there is nothing in Islam that stops a woman performing those tasks. The rights of men and women are the same.

Q: One sees a rising level of frustration, as you mentioned. What do you think should be done?

A: We don't really have to reinvent the wheel. The solution is simple. Yemen needs a decentralized system in which local communities can manage their own affairs. Communities need to have more control over their lives, and this does not reduce the importance of the central authorities and does place our unity at risk. On the contrary, I think that local government is a guarantee that our unity will persist and remain solid.

Another thing that needs to be done is really remove all these firearms from our cities. Wherever you go - in the market, in the city squares, on the streets, etc. - you see armed persons. This is a dangerous phenomenon.

Finally, the state must penalize strongly any person who dis-



criminate among the citizens of this country. Citizens are equal in their rights and duties. The law should treat Yemenis in the same way. These are some of the things I feel must be done to help us overcome our predicament.

Q: You are an active member of the Lawyers' Syndicate. What is its present status?

A: Let me narrate that the Lawyers' Syndicate was among the first syndicates in the republic to be unified. In February 1990, we held a unified general congress and elected a single board for the whole of Yemen. Unfortunately, like many other institutions, the syndicate was badly politicized.

We are now working hard to revive the syndicate. The term of the current board managing it has lapsed and we are waiting for elections. But there are major differences.

When we unified the syndicate in 1990, the decision was to hold the next congress in Aden. Now the lawyers in Sanaa, and the regime itself, prefer to hold the next congress in Sanaa. Of course, this is contrary to the decision of the 1990 congress. It is all politics.

Q: Yemen is a country of political pluralism. How much active participation do you see among the citizens of Aden?

A: I think that technically it is true that there is pluralism and that all citizens have the right to participate in

public life. But this is not happening. It is very easy to brand someone as a secessionist or what have you.

People are routinely stopped, searched, arrested and jailed with no court order.

I have seen people who travelled abroad come to a lot of trouble. They are taken to jail, interrogated, beaten up, etc. So people are wary about getting involved in politics.

Besides, economic conditions are so hard, people would rather focus their attention on securing a decent livelihood.

Q: Are you suggesting that economic conditions have become an obstacle to political activity?

A: Yes, I am, and it is logical. The economic conditions are so bad that people are overwhelmed with their daily basic needs such as foodstuffs, clothes, transportation, medical expenses, educational costs, etc. This is a real priority.

Q: What do you think of the various efforts by pro-democracy individuals and groups?

A: I think many individuals and groups are doing a fantastic job under conditions of extreme hardship and at great risk to themselves. We follow closely the "accidents" that have been befalling the various human rights and political activists. Those who do these things are generally inferior people with a complex who are unable to grow. And they think the world does not know what they are doing.

Q: Any last comments?

A: I want to tell the leadership of Yemen that Aden deserves better than this. Aden deserves their attention and their real support. Other than that, I want to say that the Yemen Times is doing an important and marvelous job. In the country's drive towards democracy, the Yemen Times has become a focal point that is appreciated by all of us.

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FREEDOM FORUM: The Idea and How It Will Function

Ahmed Al-Soufy,
Secretary-General, YIDD.

Some fifty intellectuals have been meeting to discuss how best to coordinate their efforts. They felt that democracy in Yemen would be well served if the various individuals, NGOs, and other civil society organizations were to join hands. "All the persons, groups and organizations working for democracy and pluralism in Yemen, all those working for freedom of the press and human rights, and all those striving to make Yemen a good world citizen ... they are like islands. We need to bring them together and to enable them mobilize society in order to remain on the path of democracy." Those are the resounding words of Professor Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, one of the founders. For this reason, I have decided to present some kind of a concrete proposal on the idea.

FREEDOM FORUM

A proposal for peaceful competition for power ... and for civilized cooperation for the sake of democracy

Why the Forum?

The political and cultural movement of Yemen has never been in a position to opt for democratic solidarity for the purpose of building a civil society, with deep beliefs in human rights. The deterioration in the social, economic and political conditions of the country has been visible. This is clear in the falling living conditions of the people and the erosion of democratic life. That is why a freedom forum is needed in today's Yemen.

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- The inability to face up to the requirements of building a democratic state and society
- The faltering process of modernization and the improper exploitation of available resources, climates and circumstances.
- The failure to introduce the minimum changes needed for a quality life after the realization of unity ... which proved to the Yemenis the disappointing absence of any movement towards civil society organizations.

A Bitter Experience Worth Thinking About

The changing circumstances after the Civil War have been characterized by military domination of the Eastern and Southern Governorates that is akin to occupation. The economic measures (World Bank prescribed reforms) have come only to reinforce the interests of the victorious factions in Sana'a and to change the political map in accordance with the transformations brought on by the war. This threatens to ignite another power struggle between the People General Congress and the Islah Party. This struggle shifts the solution towards democracy. The democratic banner increasingly attracted intellectuals, leftists, liberals, Islamists, nationalists, etc. Society is in need of a democratic culture.

Democracy First ... Democracy Always

Political life after the war is characterized by obstacles to civil society. There is a preponderant and strong influence on the functioning of all government and political circles. This situation can only backfire. The absence of democratic interaction and a culture of tolerance among political institutions can only lead to trouble.

What is the Forum?

This is an institution which aims to achieve many strategic objectives which are in the end linked with the reinforcing of democratic beliefs and development of a civil society. The Forum is an advisory board for forces out of power to coordinate their efforts to hold the forces in power accountable to the law and constitution and to work for an open political atmosphere. The tasks of the Forum:

- To assist Non Governmental Organizations
- To coordinate activities which seek to deepen democratic philosophy
- To defend Human Rights
- To safeguard Freedom of Expression
- To increase the participation of the public in political organizations, social-events and cultural activities.

Those are the main ideas of the forum. Individuals and organizations can become members - sort of like membership in a cultural club, and participate in its activities to re-enforce each other.

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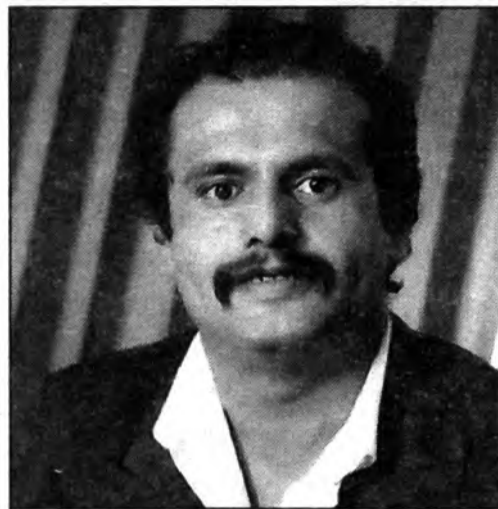
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Another Human Rights Activist Is VICTIMIZED

Another human rights activist is being victimized. This time it is a lawyer - Abdul-Ilah Al-Marwani, who has been championing such landmarks violations as the case of Mansoor Rajih and others. On Wednesday, March 6th, Abdul-Ilah was deposited in the prison cell of the Sanaa Primary Court, Eastern District, under orders from prosecutor Mohammed Al-Kibsi. The pretext used was that the lawyer scolded the prosecutor asking him to respect the law. Al-Kibsi simply ordered his men to grab the lawyer, manhandle him, and throw him in jail, where he remained until the afternoon of the next day. A number of lawyers, such as Dr. Mohammed Al-Khateeb, Yassin Abdul-Razzaq, Mohammed Al-Soufi, Abdul-Aziz Al-Samawi, Mohammed Naji Allaw, etc. visited their colleague and secured his release. Judge Hamood Al-Hitar, Chairman of the Sanaa Court of Appeal and Chairman of the Yemeni Human Rights Organization, also visited the lawyer in prison. Al-Hitar

asked the General-Prosecutor to initiate an investigation in the matter. But that is not the first time that Abdul-Ilah was victimized. The law had been put to a hard test in Ibb, during the holy month of Ramadhan. At the aftermath of an attack on the district administrative center in November 1995, by residents of Al-Rida'y in the Al-Shiri area of Ibb Gov. local political shots were trying to take the law into their own hands. The problem started when a drug store clerk, Jameel al-Banna, was asked by a policeman to surrender to him and answer a summons from the District Deputy Administrator, Sheikh Naji al-Raimy. The citizen - upon seeing the summons - told the policeman that he had the wrong person. He tried in vain to explain he was not the person in the summons, and that if agreed to go with the policeman it would be a few days before they would discover the mistake and let go of him. Many persons in the vicinity tried to convince the policeman

that the man he addressed was not the one he wanted. It was a case of mistaken identity, but the policeman refused to believe. At last, the policeman left, only to return with two other policemen, the deputy administrator, Sheikh Al-Raimy, and his son. After some arguing, shots were fired from both sides. Sheikh Al-Raimy was killed along with a citizen standing by. The sheikh's son, a guard and Jameel Al-Banna were wounded. The Al-Banna family sought the help of lawyer Abdul-Ilah Al-Marwani, who obliged. He went to Ibb. While in Ibb on 10-2-96, Abdul-Ilah Al-Marwani and two members of Al-Banna family were assaulted by gunmen of the Raimy family. In addition, witnesses who testified in the above case have been threatened by armed gunmen to withdraw their testimony.



In addition, visible political interference was reported in the case as investigators who had taken charge of the case were suddenly relocated or were told to stop investigating the case. The orders were coming from the Governorate's Chief Prosecutor's Office. This prompted Mr. Al-Marwani to request the General Prosecutor to intervene to make sure due process of law was respected and that investigators and witnesses were not harassed. "There is politics, everywhere," he said.

By: Anwar Al-Sayyadi, Yemen Times.

Fighting an Image Erosion Problem: Tunisia Celebrates National Day

Tunisia's Ambassador in Sanaa has thrown a party on the occasion of his country's national day, which fell on ... Tunisia is one of the Arab countries which is doing much soul-searching regarding an appropriate mix of policies that satisfies its internal needs and meets world standards. It is charting its course under difficult internal and regional conditions. That is why there have been many complaints of mistakes and even blunders, especially in the domain of human rights. Amnesty International, Middle East Watch, Article 19, FIEJ and the UNESCO are among many international organizations which filed protests. But the interesting thing is that Tunisia accepts that there have been violations and excesses. A circular by the official Tunisian External Communication Agency frankly states: "Tunisia admits there have been human rights violations. In spite of strenuous efforts, excesses continue. But it is unrealistic to expect to root out these old practices in a very short time...." "Such excesses exist even in advanced countries like Britain, USA, France, Italy, Belgium, etc." The brochure further indicates that Tunisia's excesses are often limited to isolated cases regarding the period of police arrest without proper judicial authorization. "The excesses and complaints are not regarding torture or similar atrocities." Tunisia further boasts that in spite of serious breaches of the law by criminals and saboteurs, the country has not resorted to emergency laws, as some countries have done. In terms of political evolution, the country has sanctioned pluralism in politics, and vehemently opposes religion-based parties. Yemen and Tunisia enjoy excellent relations and they share common views concerning most international and regional issues. Trade and economic exchange, however, remains minimal. Prospects for better economic ties do not look promising, either.

Yemeni-British Friendship Society Gets a New Jump Start

Thursday noon - March 7th - witnessed a gathering of some 100 distinguished men and women in Sanaa. They included senior government officials, big names in business, diplomats, first-class medical doctors, and, of course, journalists. The occasion was the inauguration of the new premises of the Yemeni-British Friendship Society (YBFS). Dr. Abdul-Karim Al-Iryani, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, came to do the honors. Dr. Abdullah Abdul-Wali, Chairman of the YBFS, gave a short statement in which he highlighted the past performance and the future plans of the society. Last year, we were involved in many cultural, social and business events. "We assisted in the Yemeni-Welsh Food and Music Festival. We sponsored the visit to Yemen of the London-based British-Yemeni Friendship Society. There was also a visit by a university group," he indicated. In terms of the future, the plans are plenty. "Tomorrow, March 8th, a British trade delegation is arriving. Another similar delegation is scheduled to arrive later in the year. We are working to open up contact between Yemeni and British universities, especially covering medical colleges," he added. He then thanked all the Yemeni and British officials and citizens who made the opening of such a premise possible. "I would like to single out Mr. Ameen Ahmed Qassim - the landlord - for his generosity and kindness, he said. He finally extended a warm welcome to all. Also speaking on the occasion was Mr. Douglas Scrafton, UK Ambassador in Sanaa. "When people speak of historic ties between their countries and Yemen, they search for examples. I don't believe I need

to do that. Our ties date back to more than a century and a half," he said. Such a long relationship has gone through many phases and cycles. The ambassador was upbeat about the current phase of relations and the prospects for a mutually-beneficial cooperation.



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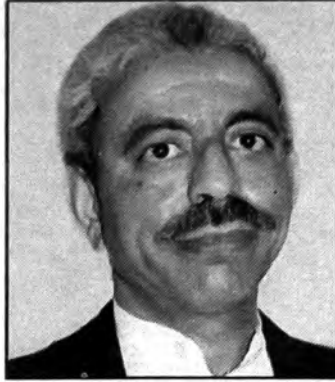
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Common Sense

By: Hassan Al-Haifi

On a Yemeni Freedom Forum



When the unity of Yemen was agreed upon on the 30th of November 1989, it was coupled with the establishment of democracy and a pluralist political system. At the time, there was a widespread feeling among many people that Yemen has turned a new page in its tumultuous history. The end of totalitarianism was going to bring Yemen into the fold of nations in which citizens enjoy liberty and freedom and where the rights of all citizens are guaranteed by a constitution, and where the government will always be on the people's side. That would be a dream come true. At last, some felt, we have arrived, after generations of instability and senseless bloodshed inspired by an endless power struggle. But where are we now, as Yemenis, as our dream is being shattered? Why could we not make such a beautiful dream come true?

In looking at Yemen today, it is hard to distinguish it from the totalitarianism of pre-unification days when Yemen was ruled by 2 totalitarian systems that imposed their will and vision on the Yemeni people. While one would admit that the totalitarianism of one (North Yemen) was less dogmatic than the other system (South Yemen), both were equally oppressive and void of respect for basic human rights.

Thus when unification was tied with democracy, there was a feeling shared by many that the new Republic will broaden and expand the scope of freedom. Many prominent Yemenis felt there was a strong possibility the dream would come true. These Yemenis, who before unity were silent or had gone underground, took advantage of the new atmosphere - freedom of the press, a pluralist political system, elected parliament, growth of NGOs and other voluntary organizations, etc. The balance of power between the General People's Congress and the Yemeni Socialist Party during the three years following unification provided a breathing space for freedom and encouraged many Yemenis to exercise their rights. These are people who had really seen the unity arrangement as a great opportunity to put Yemen on a sound footing

again after so many years of slumber. However, these important Yemenis, on the scene or off the scene politicians tried to make their marks or points upwards and primarily dealt with the issues while keeping their efforts at trying to influence change directly and mainly with the rulers, not paying any attention to the fact that the rulers' behavior was based on the calculation of interests.

There may not be any doubt to their sincere and honest intentions at serving public and national interest, but when considering the awesome instruments of power, the PGC (with their allies the Islah) and the YSC still maintained, as well as the long totalitarian background they derived from, it seemed inconceivable that this new force of prominent forward looking Yemenis could influence the course of events in the country without having any power base to exert pressure on the rulers to readjust their mentality along the course they were actually and legally committed to by the unity agreement: Yemen was to be united as a pluralistic, democratic and free political society.

The four year transitional period provided an ample opportunity for all forward looking Yemenis to bring their ideas to the people through the several channels available. It is not worth it to have democracy, pluralism, rights and freedom in a country if a significant segment of the mass population is not behind the prominent elements of the population that champion these important political causes.

With the absence of a power base, it seemed that the inevitable thing to do by these elements promoting positive political changes is to take their case direct to the people.

Initially, the need for popular and widespread political awareness should have been fulfilled to make as many people as possible understand what citizenship means, what democracy entails for them as citizens, what needs to be done by citizens to safeguard their rights and/or freedoms, and more importantly, how to use these rights/freedoms to advance their interest and priorities to best serve the national interest.

There was no concrete effort towards this very important task, which could have been instrumental in giving the independent and opposition party blocs the political weight that could have made their sincere efforts more effective and acceptable. Such efforts could have been instrumental in achieving national reconciliation as outlined by the Agreement for Pledge and Accord signed in Amman in 1993.

This kind of political work is not easy and is not without risks, but there was a favorable environment for nurturing it during those four years. I believe that if the independent and opposition blocs worked towards encouraging public assemblies on a continuous basis just in the main towns, the results would have been incalculable as to enriching the masses towards political involvement which would have filtered down to the secondary towns and even to the villages. Thus, the elections of 1993 would have been more meaningful in assuring that the first elected parliament will truly represent the people's choice of the appropriate legislative authority that will have second thoughts before submitting to the dictates of the rulers or even to partisan sentiments.

The constant involvement with a "crisis" situation created by the rulers that was so characteristic of the transitional period, the period since elections, and even the period since the Civil War, only helped to increase the self-confidence of the ruling factions that they still had full control of the political process. The crisis environment, overwhelmed all sides, and put a ceiling on how much to push for among the independent and opposition forces. It turned the effort into dead weight as can be seen by the quick shelving of the Document for Pledge and Accord and inevitably the flare-up of the Civil War in May 1994.

Despite these hard political lessons and with the elements of power concentrated in the hands of the victors of the civil war, as the influences of the independent and opposition blocs dwindled, and as the checks and balances of power were destroyed, there was no way to create a meaningful political system in which society witnessed a healthy competition among the protagonists.

To add insult to injury, the regime today tends to regard (and present to the general public through the official media) any person or group who call for real democratic values such as freedom of the process, due process of law, respect for human rights, fair and open competition of political parties as sympathizers with the secessionists in the Civil War, and as sympathizers with the YSP in the power struggle of the transitional period (1990-1994). Thus the regime veils these individuals and groups as enemies and works to reduce their role and significance in public life.

The political forces outside the ruling coalition (the PGC and the Islah) have been under severe pressure because of the absence of a military power base.

This is the only thing that counts in Yemeni politics today. Even with the YSP in the opposition side, the bloc with all its parties and independents is far too much in the defensive trying to hold the rulers at bay. They have neither the money nor any other resources to maneuver. For many, the battle has been mainly one of survival rather than anything else.

In reality, the shift of effective influence has moved from the traditional political parties to a small number of individuals and NGOs. It is these individuals, who are viable economically and socially on their own right - who have been able to stand up and interact with public life. The regime, in spite

of repeated efforts to intimidate and/or break them, has failed. Hence, for Yemenis as well as for the political transformation of the country, it is these few individuals and NGOs who hold the promise of pushing forward peacefully and gradually towards democracy.

There has been a constant struggle as the ruling coalition imposes its own interpretations of democracy and civil and human rights, and as these few individuals and NGOs try to impose standard world interpretations of these values. The observer cannot help but see many of the regime's interpretations not in conformity with the prevailing

understanding of democratic societies of the world, nor with the spirit and context of the unity agreement of 30th November 1989. The more distressing matter is that the few democratic individuals and NGOs do not seem to be in any way capable of counteracting the regime's pressure that is brought to bear daily on those who aspire to maintain what ever semblance of democracy is still left.

One way to hold the regime at bay has been to make its schemes known to the world. Hence, the effort of the democratic individuals and groups to expose the excesses and violations. Clearly, the objective has been to invite the gentle pressure and influence of Yemen's friends abroad. All kinds of organizations concerned with democracy and human rights are kept informed on the evolution of Yemeni politics, with the explicit intention of asking for their help as need arises.

Supporters of democracy in Yemen have tried to establish institutions that defend democracy and human rights. Many centers, institutes, charities, associations, societies, and other NGOs have been formed. But these organizations have yet to make a real mark or go beyond issuing condemnations against violations of civil rights or even get off the ground as viable functioning entities for the purposes they were set up for. Notwithstanding the difficulties put up by the rulers against such groupings, the people behind these groups tend not to absorb fully the lessons of the past. It is time to put democracy to the people and quickly, before all the channels are closed for any organized effort to secure the continuation of political pluralism and democracy, and before the upcoming parliamentary elections of April 1997.

It has been observed that one of the reasons for the lack of effectiveness among these pro-democracy groups is that they work in isolation of each other. Whatever little effectiveness they have, it often marginalized because they are not mobilized together. Hence the idea of a Freedom Forum, that will bring their efforts together. "The purpose is to bridge the gap between these isolated islands and connect them," as Professor Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf explained in his letter calling for this forum.

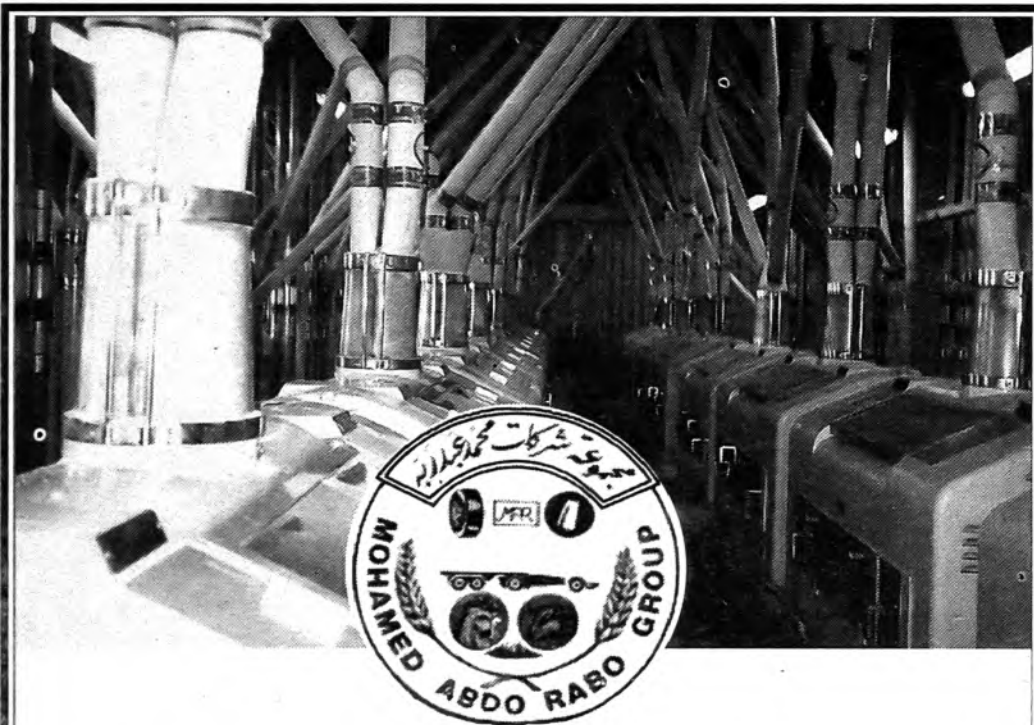
This writer, however, believes that suggestions to set up a freedom forum along the lines of the Yemeni Institute for the Development of Democracy or the Yemeni Organization for the Defense of Rights and Liberties, etc. will not be fruitful. The dividing line, between success and failure, is not realligning bridging the gap among the various pro-democracy individuals and groups, but bridging the gap with the general public.

A bold new approach is needed to have the work of the forum reach the maximum number of Yemeni people, preferably new entrants to the political scene. To set up an institution that seems to only capture the interests of the same lot that has also been supportive of the existing organizations - all of whom are already well entrenched or "opposition" will not go beyond where the other organizations have arrived to - a dead end!

For a freedom forum to be successful it is imperative that a totally new approach is adopted to make the forum successful. The direction of the forum should be to enhance political awareness among the people and to indoctrinate the masses on democracy and proper citizenship.

It should try to solicit as much of the ruling parties' members' support, for this possible, by showing them that the forum will not play any role beyond the spreading of awareness on how to work and coexist in a democratic society. The forum's activities should extend to the school system to teach future generations of Yemen what the existing generation was unable to learn, for one reason or another.

Democracy must infiltrate from the bottom up and not the reverse. This lesson for the Republic of Yemen was learned the hard way. Serious and forward looking Yemenis are to be found in all the active political organizations in Yemen and many do encourage such a forum, even those who are in the ruling coalition. This forum holds yet another hope for the future of the coming generations. Widespread, sincere, serious and dedicated involvement is the key to success of any efforts towards a free and democratic Yemen.



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تهنئة

يتقدم الأصدقاء والأهل والزملاء بأحر التهاني والتبريكات للأستاذ

الدكتور محمد أحمد علي المخلافي

بمناسبة إرتزاقه مولودة جديدة أسماها «سلمى»

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أسرة تحرير صحيفة «يمن تايمز»

Continued from page 1:

Parliament ...

One of the 13 newly-issued presidential decrees, there is one especially contentious law. On February 17th, President Ali Abdullah Saleh signed law number 14 of 1996 which amended law number 70 of 1991. This is the tax law. According to the new law, there will be a flat tax on consumption/production of a long list of goods. "There are two implications to this law," explained Mohammed Abdo Saeed, a PGC member of parliament and businessman.

"First, it raises the overall cost of living. That means goods will necessarily be more expensive, thus adding more burden on the consumers.

"Second, this law makes more profitable to import ready-made goods than to produce them locally. In other words, all industrialization efforts will be less viable which means less investments in industry.

"I do not know how this kind of law serves Yemen," he said. A number of businessmen and parliamentarians met over the last few days to discuss this law. Here is a summary of their views:

Quote:

Over the holidays the government issued new legislation amending the Production and Consumption Tax Law No. (70) for 1991, by decree. These amendments pose a serious threat to any reform program which the government envisages to carry out because:

1) The law includes goods which the original law had exempted. These new items are sensitive because they are rapidly consumable items such as oils, dairy products and other daily consumables. This would put heavy pressure on an already overburdened consuming public as the rise in prices would represent a far more serious strain on the public than the benefit in expected revenues this would give the government.

2) If the original law had protected local industry to a certain degree against imports, the amendments have actually done the reverse by encouraging imports. Imported goods, according to the amendment would have a levy based on a customs exchange rate of YR 100, but the tax to be levied on locally produced goods would be based on the sales price of the goods from the factory, which would impose on the locally produced goods a higher tax than an imported similar product.

This means that the raw materials are charged an additional 40% since they are based on the market exchange rate. It can well be seen how this will effect the additional placed levy on locally manufactured or processed goods. For example an imported carton of cooking oil costing US \$ 14 would have a customs tariff of YR 70, whereas a carton of locally produced oil would bear a production/consumption tax levy of YR 120.

3) Imposing the tax on the packaging material (carton packaging) at 10% also seems insensible since any tax levy should be sufficient for the whole product, including the packaging, thus it seems illogical that the same product should carry a production/consumption tax of 10%.

4) Another illogical levy is the 15% tax placed on biscuits, as if biscuits were a luxury item, and not an item consumed by children and infants to supplement their diets. This is another heavy burden placed upon the consumer, especially when considering that gold only carries a levy of 5%!

5) Although the law had set the rate based on the selling price at the factory, it seems puzzling why some goods, like cigarettes, carbonated beverages and mineral water should have a levy based on the selling price to the consumer! The situation approaches absurdity when considering that the collection of the levy is done through the manufacturer and not the seller, who may or may not sell the product at the price set by the tax collector.

6) The customs tariff on imported cigarettes was reduced from 150% to 70%, whereas the consumption tax was changed from 130% to 80%. The reason given was to increase government revenues. The effect would actually be the reverse, as the reduced rate for imported cigarettes would cause a decreased amount of revenue from locally manufactured cigarettes. Needless to point out that

imported cigarettes would be cheaper to buy and thus the revenue would be less.

The following table shows how the additional taxes imposed by the think-tank of the Ministry of Finance through the amendments to the original tax law, which will have an immediate effect on production and consumption:

Product	Additional Burden By the Consumer (YR)
1 carton oil	120
1 carton detergent	56
1 carton powdered milk (children's)	375
1 carton Biscuits	300
1 carton milk (liquid)	150
Sewerage Pipes	880

In terms of the loss of revenue to the state treasury due to the cigarette exclusion clause, it would mean that the state could lose YR 25,000 per carton, if we assume that a pack is sold to the consumer # YR 100.

The effect of these amendments on the economy cannot be easily estimated or comprehended by the responsible tax authorities as they have a bearing on many sectors. The following illustrate some of these effects:

1) Local manufacturers and processors of consumer goods will be forced to compete with imported substitutes (of far lower cost) in view of the injustice that the new tax rates have forced these national enterprises to bear.

2) These new rates will be reflected in far higher prices to be borne by the consumers.

3) As for the impact on investments this tax amendment could have in the future, there is no doubt that no right minded-investor, whether Yemeni or foreign, would even think of investing in any manufacturing or processing operation in our country, in view of the hardships these amendments have and the removal of whatever incentives were available to encourage such investments. This, of course, means no additional jobs created and no additional processing of locally available raw materials. This means continued high unemployment rates. In addition, we should remember that there at the present time 3 million Yemeni school children waiting to join the labor market over the next few years. The social implications of these amendments are staggering to say the least, as more jobless people roam the streets.

4) As for the Balance of Payments implications, one only has to consider that at the present time 70% of the raw materials are imported, whereas the new amendments would mean that 100% would be imported since only imported goods will be purchased.

It would seem that, as elections for the House of Representatives are approaching on the 27th of April 1997, the political implications of these new amendments are surely not getting the right considerations from our politicians. Maybe that seems to be the ingenious motive behind such haphazard financial wizardry.

Whatever the case maybe, the difficulty of administering such new levies cannot be over-estimated and the door to corruption will only be opened wider. But again that may also be the motive behind the new amendments. This is especially more obvious as none of the sectors affected by the new tax rulings will ever be able to see the benefits derived from them, not even the government.

The solution: A simple unified tax levy for imported and locally manufactured products.

Unquote

Whether the public, and more importantly, the members of parliament agree with the views of the businessmen, it is crucial that they be taken into consideration. Enforcing the new tax law could mean ruining many businesses and industries established over the years. Is this what the government wants?

By: Al-Izzy As-Selwi, Yemen Times.

"Aden Free Zone: A Misconception?"

There is a common misconception that the the Aden Free Zone is something that is going to happen, as though by magic, and that it will cure all the economic ills of the city. The reality is that the Free Zone is a myth *unless and until* the Port of Aden has been developed and it is essential to understand the reasons for this. There have been many articles written about the proposed Free Zone and others about the development of Aden Port but there have been little or nothing that has stated the basic fact that without the development of the port, the Free Zone *cannot and will not* materialize.

This misconception is not just a view held by uninformed laymen. Local businessmen, would be foreign investors as well as some foreign advisors, all, to some extent, labor under the misapprehension that the Free Zone is some sort of panacea. Even the *The Financial Times* of London, in its articles about Aden and the Yemen economy, has omitted to drive the point home that the Free Zone *cannot* happen without the port.

The economics behind the Port of Aden's development proposals are not dependent on the rest of the Free Zone at all. This could be a stand alone development as a 'Hub Trans-shipment Port'. The studies that have been done by the Port's Marketing Department have shown the need for a new international trans-shipment port in the region. Latest predictions show that by the year 2020, Aden could be handling, a conservative estimate of 3 million containers a year, only a tiny fraction of which would be destined for Yemen. *Only* when this facility is working, can the rest of the Free Zone be looked at with any degree of reality.

Why is this? The answer is simple. Any Free Zone development is entirely dependent on there being cheap and efficient shipping. Without this, it simply cannot work at all. The very concept of a Free Zone is that manufacturers and trade can benefit from tax and other local concessions to give them an edge in a very competitive *international* market. A Free Zone does not feed off a home market or economy. If the shipping is expensive and inefficient a Free Zone cannot attract any industry.

If you compare Aden with its nearest Free Zone rival, Jabal Ali, Aden has nothing to offer but its location. To bring a 20-foot container from Europe to Aden costs about \$2,600 and takes at least 36 days.

To get the same container from Europe to Jabal Ali costs, at present, about \$1,200 and takes 14 days. If you now take the situation of a manufacturer who has a big export market in the Middle East and East Africa, potentially, Aden is the perfect location for the distribution of his finished products as well as the import of raw materials, far better than Jabal Ali.

However if the shipping costs are more than twice as high, it could add 15% or more to the cost of the finished product. The extra shipping time adds to the insurance costs which further increases the price of the finished product. This will make his operation uneconomic and he will locate his production facilities elsewhere.

This situation must be understood and fully appreciated by anyone who is directly or indirectly concerned with Aden's deviltment. The development of the port is the *absolute* priority and everything should be concentrated on this. As an advisor to the Department of Urban Planning in Aden, I have worked to stress this. The development of the port is not something which might happen *in* Aden, it is something that *must* happen. *Everything* else should be developed around this concept.

At the present time, the negotiations between the consortium Yemenco and the Government are still in progress. Every one who is concerned for the future of Aden hopes that there will be a successful outcome to these, and that serious work on the design of the project can start. It is to be hoped that both sides in the negotiations appreciate the importance of the prior expansion of the port services *before* the longer term schemes for the Free Zone. If this were the case, both sides should put all other considerations aside and resolve the outstanding problems facing the development of the port as a separate issue.

James Leonard - Williams, Aden.

President Saleh Enlists Service of Public Figures in Construction of Dams in Land Reclamation Drive

General Ali Abdullah Saleh, President of the Republic, is pushing forward with a land reclamation drive. Towards that end, he is pursuing many policies. One such policy is to build more dams all over the country.

To succeed in this effort, he is by-passing the government machinery, which has proven its inefficiency, and has asked public figures and locally influential individuals to take charge.

One such instance involves the construction of the Zallaq Dam in the southern periphery of Hugarriah in Taiz Governorate.

The individual assigned to oversee the implementation of this project is Sheikh Abdul-Rahman Noman, Member of Parliament. Sheikh Noman comes from an illustrious and well-known family which commands the respect of the people in the region.

"We are not really thinking of dams in the sense of large modern structures. We are looking into medium-size projects which use local material," explained Sheikh Noman.

Other dam projects following the same format include two dams in Ibb, and two more in Lahej.



الجمهورية اليمنية
الرئيسية

الحزم

الأخ/رئيس مجلس الوزراء

يخلف الأخ/عبد الرحمن احمد نعمان عضو مجلس النواب بمتابعة تنفيذ مشروع إنشاء سد (باب اللانق) بمنطقة بني عمر - الشمايتين (م/تم) مع مشروع مياه مدينة تم بحيد يتم التنسيق مع الجهات ذات العلاقة.

علي عبدالله صالح
رئيس الجمهورية

Land reclamation is seen as a solution to the rising food gap in the country, as well as a source of productive employment for the jobless hordes of people. President Saleh has given specific instructions to the Ministry of Agriculture on this matter.

In the same way, dam construction is seen as providing an answer to more than one problem. While they will help reclaim new land, dams are also expected to help in resolving the increasingly acute problem of water supply in the country.

تعزية

يتقدم الأهل والأصدقاء بالتعزية والمواساة إلى

حسن عبدالله بارحيم ومحمد عمر بارحيم

ب وفاة والدة الأسرة

أهم الله أهلها الصبر والسلوان وأسكنها فسيح جناته وإنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون

الأسيفون :

الحاج محفوظ شماخ الدكتور عبدالعزيز السقاف

وجميع أعضاء جمعية حضرموت الإجتماعية الخيرية

The Minister of Health Responds to a Public Pressure Group

By: Imad Al-Saqqaf,
Yemen Times.

At 10:00 o'clock on Monday morning, March 4th, the Minister of Health, Dr. Nagib Ghanem, received fifteen persons representing various segments of society - women's groups, NGOs, pediatricians, university professors, the media, and intellectuals. The meeting came in response to an appeal by the preparatory committee of the Children's Rights - Yemen (CRY), a voluntary association which aims to promote the interests and rights of children in Yemen.

Dr. Mohammed Abdul-Mageed Al-Qubati, President of the Committee, presented a letter of protest to the minister - signed by many parents - indicating that there was a serious shortage of vaccines against the six killer diseases (diphtheria, measles, polio, tetanus, tuberculosis, and

whooping cough). The minister was ready with charts and numbers. "Our responsibility keeps increasing for a steadily rising population, while the resources with which we work, keep falling, at least in real terms, if not in absolute numbers," he said. He also indicated that the total number of infants is actually rising, although the percentage may be the same or falling.

The Minister also highlighted the tremendous progress that has been achieved in the many other aspects of health service. "Of course, the immunization program is crucial, but we also have many other responsibilities, and where much progress has taken place."

The main pitch of the minister, however, was with the money. "If you want to help us, you should persuade the Ministry of Finance to give us a better fighting chance by releasing



funds allocated to us," he said. It is true, the ministry of finance interacts with the various government ministries on the basis of a "holier than thou" attitude. To add insult to injury, the finance ministry releases funds mostly in response to pressure. If the

ministry demanding funds has leverage, it gets the money. "Funds are not released on the basis of society's needs or efficient use of resources."

The Minister of Health had some good news directly relevant to the issue at hand. "Since the

media campaign spearheaded by the Yemen Times started a few weeks ago, we gave the matter our top priority. I am happy to announce that early this morning, the first of several shipments, has arrived. Before the day is out, the vaccine will be made available to

the public through the immunization centers," the minister said. Meanwhile, the CRY is taking legal and final shape. Dr. Mohammed Al-Qubati and Dr. Salim Ba-Naja are expected to call to a meeting to announce the organization's birth.



RABIES: Watch Out for Stray Dogs !

Rabies is considered one of the most dangerous, yet common illnesses between man and animals. It is widespread in many Third

case for human beings as well. For example, for dogs it is 3 days to six weeks. The symptoms during this period are minor. As

Be ware of an isolated low-lying dog.

2- The Stage of Fury:

This stage is accompanied by nervousness. The cruelty to which the sick animal is subjected makes it lose the ability to differentiate. It starts to attack and bite anything it faces or comes in its way. Among the most significant symptoms of this stage is the afflicted animals' fear of water, or hydrophilia, or air and its refusal to take in any food.

In the end of this stage, the animal takes to biting its own body leaving it with serious wounds. The animal becomes afflicted with a stroke. The period lasts form 5-7 days.

3- Death Sets In:

The final stage is really an extension of the previous stage, in which the afflicted animal withers away. Lean and suffering from muscle tension or spasms, it falls down to die. This happens inevitably near a garbage dump or an isolated site. This stage is short, not exceeding 48 hours.

countries to the disease, a vaccine has been developed for human beings and animals. Results have shown the effectiveness and high immunity level of the vaccine. This means the use of a number of small doses, which reduce the side effects. The vaccine is, however, very expensive.

It is regretful that the disease of Rabies is found in Yemen and widely spread in many areas, especially in the capital Sana'a, and the number of cases is steadily on the rise.

The adjacent table shows the number of samples that were brought to the Central Veterinary Center in Sana'a, which is under the General Directorate of Animal Resources at the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources. It is the only laboratory, which can test for Rabies, in Yemen and was set up

YEAR	Total Samples	Positive Results	Percentage
1991	834	437	51.8%
1992	549	379	69.0%
1993	640	433	67.7%
1994	1059	448	42.3%
1995	700	292	41.7%

Sources: Sanaa Central Veterinary Laboratory

in the late seventies. Statistics reveal that approximately 95% of the samples taken by the lab are for Rabies test. Positive antigens of tests over the last five years show positive results which range from 41.7% to 69%. The majority come from Sana'a-Dhamar area. Rabies does not just threaten

animal life, it also threatens human life as well, which is more alarming. It is disappointing that not enough attention is given to this illness. One can see sick dogs roaming around in many neighborhoods, which is a dangerous sign.

I call on all responsible officials and all citizens to take quick action to fight this dangerous disease

I suggest:

- 1) The establishment of a special department or project to counter the disease with the tasks of:
 - a) Supporting the CVT.
 - b) Carry out a campaign to eliminate stray dogs and dangerous wild animals.
 - c) Provide Rabies vaccines for humans and animals.
 - d) Carry out public awareness programs on the danger of the disease, the methods of protection against it.
- 2) Dog owners should vaccinate their pets and examine them on a regular basis.
- 3) Trainers should not place their hands in non-vaccinated dogs

I hope everybody will cooperate because Rabies is everyone's problem.

By: Dr. Omar Al-Kaf,
Veterinarian, Sanaa.



World countries, including Yemen.

This dangerous disease afflicts all hot blooded animals, especially dogs and cats, and is transferred by foxes, coyotes, monkeys and bats.

To protect human life and maintain safety, many countries are fighting this illness. One way to do that is to be free of stray and wild dogs.

The disease or the illness is caused by a special virus. It is transmitted when a sick animal bites another. The virus or infection is contained in the saliva of the afflicted animal.

The cultivation period differs from animal to animal, as is the

for other animals the period can range from 9 to 90 days. In human beings, the cultivation period is ten days to six months.

The symptoms of the sickness in dogs is almost the same as in other animals. These are characterized by three stages:

1- Quiet Rabies Stage:

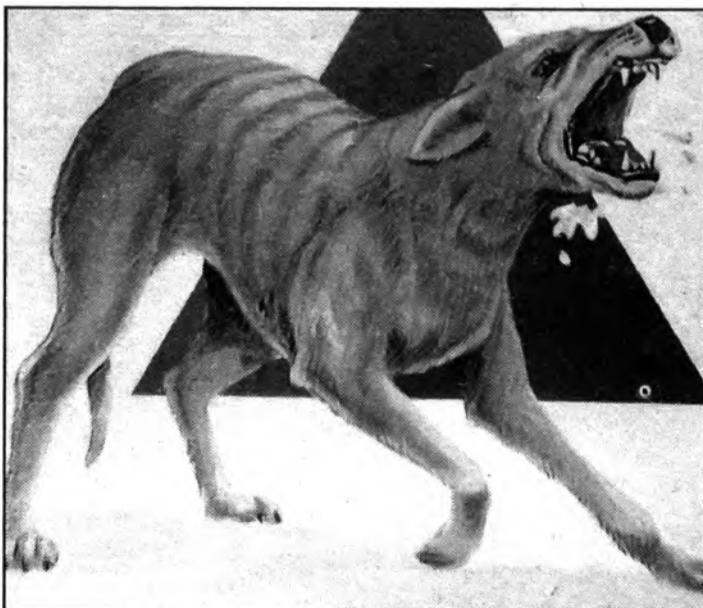
In this stage, the afflicted animal stays towards quiet places. Movement, functioning and alertness become reduced. The period lasts from 24-48 hours, which is why the period could pass unnoticed (by the carrier).

For this reason, caution is necessary. It is the easiest stage in which human beings are afflicted.

As for human beings, the symptoms start with a feeling or a craving to chew, accompanied by headache, fever and general weakness and an itch at the area of the bite. This is followed by muscle spasms at the throat when he/she attempts to drink and he/she becomes frightened of air and water - even at the mention of water. This is then followed by hallucinations and annoyance at the muscles, finally coming to death. All this happens within a period of 2-16 days.

It is considered an impossibility to treat an afflicted victim of Rabies after its symptoms appear.

In view of the attention of many



COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Eleventh session

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION: Case of Yemen

The following is the exact text of the Geneva-based Committee of the Rights of the Child which received country reports from all member states, analyzed them, and took decisions and issued report on them.

Yemen Times runs the text in its entirety.

Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Republic of Yemen.

1. The Committee considered the initial report of the Republic of Yemen (CRC/C/8/Add.20) at its 261st, 262nd and 263rd meetings (CRC/C/SR.261-263), held on 9 and 10 January 1996 and adopted the following concluding observations:

A. Introduction

2. The Committee notes with appreciation the submission of the initial report of Yemen and its self-critical approach identifying a number of areas of concern. It regrets however that the report has not followed the guidelines for the preparation of States parties initial reports and that some areas covered by the Convention have not been addressed therein.

B. Positive Aspects

3. The Committee welcomes the comments made by the State party's delegation on the importance it attaches to the guidance offered by the Committee as to steps to be taken to effectively implement the Convention, including with a view to bringing domestic law into line with the Convention.

C. Factors and Difficulties Impeding the Implementation of the Convention

4. The Committee takes note that Yemen had to face, during the last few years, serious political, economic and social challenges, including those arising from the unification process, the return of a high number of Yemeni expatriates after the Gulf war, the war of 1994 and the substantial influx of refugees from the Africa Horn. Those factors have adversely affected the situation of children.

5. The committee also notes the persistence of certain traditions and customs which are contrary to the principles and provisions of the Convention.

D. Principal Subjects of Concern

6. The Committee is concerned about the unclear status of the Convention in the domestic legal framework and about the insufficient steps taken to bring existing legislation into full conformity with the Convention, including in the light of the general principles of the Convention, in particular the principles of non-discrimination (article 2), the best interests of the child (article 3) and respect for the views of the child (article 12).

7. The Committee is also concerned at the lack of conformity of legislative provisions with the legal definition to the child, as in the case of the minimum age for marriage and the age of criminal responsibility, which is set at too low an age level.

8. The Committee expresses its deep concern at the persistence of discriminatory attitudes towards girls, hampering the enjoyment of their basic rights including in situations of early marriage. The lower marriageable age for girls compared with the boys raises serious questions as to its compatibility with the Convention, in particular article 2.

9. The committee is also concerned at the insufficient measures and programs for the protection of the rights of the most vulnerable children, in particular girls, children living in rural areas, children victims of abuse, children affected by armed conflicts, disabled children, "akhdam" children and children who are forced to live and/or work in the streets, including child beggars.

10. The committee expresses its deep concern about the insufficient measures taken to ensure the full implementation of the provisions and principles of the Convention in the area of the administration of juvenile justice including article 37, 39 and 40.

11. The Committee regrets the insufficient steps taken to create awareness on the Convention, and to disseminate information on the rights of the child to children and adults alike, as well as the lack of training activities for professional groups working with and for children, including teachers,

social workers, health personnel, judges and law enforcement officials.

12. The lack of a comprehensive policy on children and of a systematic and carefully planned coordination of mechanisms and programs to monitor the situation of children is a matter of concern. The Committee also notes the insufficient measures taken to gather reliable quantitative and qualitative data, to evaluate the progress achieved and to assess the impact of policies adopted on children.

13. As regards the implementation of article 4, the Committee is concerned about the insufficient measures taken to ensure the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights to the maximum extent of available resources, in particular in relation to the most vulnerable groups.

Suggestions and Recommendations

14. The Committee recommends that the State party pursue its efforts with a view to ensuring a full compatibility of its national law with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, taking due regard of the general principles of the Convention, including those relating to the prohibition of discrimination, the best interests of the child and respect for the views of the child. In this regard, special measures should be taken to raise the minimum age for marriage while ensuring that an equal age for marriage for boys and girls is established. Similarly, the age of criminal responsibility should not be established at too low an age level and should ensure that below such an age, children are presumed not to have the capacity to infringe the penal law, in the light of article 40 paragraph 3 a, of the Convention.

15. The Committee encourages the Government of Yemen to pursue its efforts for promoting advocacy and creating a wider awareness and understanding of the principles and provisions of the Convention, in the light of article 42 of the Convention. The Government should pursue such efforts in close cooperation with community and religious leaders as well as with non-governmental organizations, with a view to promoting change in persisting negative attitudes towards children, particularly those belonging to the most vulnerable groups.

16. The Committee encourages the State party to pay special attention to enhancing the role of the family in the promotion of children's rights, and in this regard stresses the importance of the status of women in family and social life. In this regard, the Committee recognizes the importance of developing family counseling services, both in urban and rural area.

17. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure specific training activities on the Convention to professional groups working with and for children, including teachers, social workers, health personnel, judges and law enforcement officials. Attention should be given to incorporating the Convention in school curricula as recommended by the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, and the World Conference on Human Rights.

18. The Committee also recommends that the State party establishes a permanent and multi-disciplinary mechanism for the coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the Convention on the rights of the child, both at the national and local levels, in urban as well as rural areas and to allow for the definition of a comprehensive policy on children. Closer cooperation with non-governmental organizations should also be promoted.

19. The Committee the Government to improve the system of collecting statistical and other data in all areas covered by the convention, with a view to evaluating progress in the realization of children's rights. Appropriate disaggregated including the most vulnerable ones, such as girls, children living in rural areas, children victims of abuse, children affected by armed conflicts, disabled children, "akhdam" children and children who are forced to live and/or work in the streets. Research activities should also be undertaken in these areas in cooperation with academic institutions and non-governmental organizations.

20. The Committee recommends that the State party, in the light of article 4 of the Convention and of the principles of non-discrimination and the best interests of the child, undertake all appropriate



measures to the maximum extent of the available resources to ensure that budgetary allocation is provided to services for children, particularly in the areas of education and health, and that priority attention is paid to the protection of the rights of children belonging to the most disadvantaged groups, including girls, children living in rural areas, children affected by armed conflicts, disabled children, "akhdam" children and children who are forced to live and/or work in the streets.

21. The Committee recommends that special protection measures be adopted and implemented in relation to refugee children, children, children involved with the juvenile justice system, namely when deprived of liberty, working children and children forced to live and/or work in the streets, including child beggars. In this regard, the Committee encourages the State party to take in due

consideration the recommendations it has formulated at its thematic discussions, including on the economic exploitation of the child and the administration of juvenile justice.

22. The committee recommends that a progress report be prepared in accordance with the Committee's guidelines for initial reports and taking into account the concerns expressed during the dialogue held with the Government and submitted to it by January 1997.

23. The Committee recommends that in the light of article 44, paragraph 6 of the Convention, the report submitted by the Government, the relevant summary records of the debate with the Committee and its concluding observations be made widely available to the public.



VACANCY



Female/ Male Market Research Officers

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Can you study and advise which ones are good?
You will be expected to go to the market and study at least 3/4 hours every day. You must have a driving license. We will give you a car... and an excellent salary of course.

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Which Comes First, Encouraging Tourism or Protecting Antiquities



By: Hassan Al-Haifi,
Yemen Times

There is a lot of commotion these days in the tourism industry, especially in the private sector, which has put up a lot of investment to make up for the almost zero input from the government in this vital sector of the Yemeni economy. The first to scream were obviously the tourists themselves on their departure. The airport authorities "responsible" for checking out tourists as they leave the country for the possibility of carrying "antiquities" amongst the Yemeni handicraft souvenirs they purchased in the old souk or market of Sana'a started randomly confiscating several souvenirs on the pretext that they are "valuable Yemeni antiques" which should not be allowed out of the country. Tourists who sent off some of their friends who were subjected to this unusual procedure came back to Sana'a and raised a lot of noise at the Yemeni Tourism Authority, who apparently were just as surprised by the reports. In many cases of confiscation, no receipts or even apologies were given.

As a clear indication of the potential threat to the tourism industry, which has just begun to pick up steam again after a 2 year moratorium, the private sector again took up the initiative on Thursday 7-3-96 to seek a solution to this latest unstudied move by, as of yet, unidentified authorities to "safeguard" the national treasures. Aden Travel and Tourism, an active firm in the trade, brought together around 100 people from the various authorities of the government, that have a role in the tourism industry, academicians from Sana'a University and security officers. The list of attendees included Mr. Yahya Al-Arashi, the Minister of Culture (which includes Antiquities, Culture, Libraries and Historical Documents), Mr. Mohammed Al-Surmy, Vice Chairman of the Political Security Organization, Mr. Mohammed Al-Sudumy, Deputy Minister or Under Secretary and Chairman of the general Authority for Antiquities, Mr. Mohammed Mohammed Mutaahhar, Chairman of the General Tourism Authority. There were also representatives from owners of handicraft outlets and manufacturers. From the family owners of Aden Travel and Tourism Mr. Hamoud Baider, a well known Yemeni

national political celebrity and revolutionary hero and Tariq Baider, the Managing Director of Aden Travel and Tourism.

The gathering was treated to a traditional Sana'ani lunch in the Taj Talha Hotel, a modified Sana'ani "skyscraper" turned into a hotel. Later many of the invitees attended an informal qat chew which was to be an open forum to that would lead to a solution to the problem.

No one was willing to take direct blame for the new "ruling" which prompted the latest source of annoyance to the tourists.

The Minister of Culture did not attend the session, as he was busy accompanying a visiting delegation from abroad. Mr. Mutaahhar, of the GTA started with a lengthy discussion pointing out the major topics of concern to the authority: Promoting Yemeni handicrafts as an attraction to tourists, Organizational and Institutional Upgrading of the GTA and Privatization of many of the state owned tourist facilities. He also discussed the need for coordination in order to deal with the problem of protecting antiquities. Mr. Al-Sudumy discussed some of the difficulties of GAA and hinted at the Ministry of Finances tight hand. A spokesman for the Handicraft Industry made it clear that someone is out to cut them out of their livelihood means as now tourists are reluctant to buy anything from them: "Our business is back in the depression again after just beginning to pick up gear." Others from the Private Sector echoed the same comment.

Mr. Hamoud Baider echoed a YT correspondent's comment that tourists are not likely to take such unprecedented actions lightly and would significantly damage the promotion of tourism in Yemen. On the other hand before any spontaneous actions are taken, it would be wiser to check how countries of more experience deal with the problem of protecting antiquities. The Yemen Times pointed out that an assessment needs to be made as to which is more significant encouraging tourism or "protecting" the flight of antiquities out of Yemen at the expense of the tourism industry, which has a positive filtering effect on many sectors of the economy.

Mr. Baider also agreed with this and suggested that spot checks should be

made on stores and other outlets of handicrafts by specialized people in detecting antiquities. The effort will not be of any significance by the full search and random seizure procedure by unqualified airport security/customs/ security personnel.

Security's statement was given by Mr. Al-Surmy, who stated that the GAA must establish a classification list of antiquities that are banned from leaving the country. He also stated that "the PSO is not in favor of any measure that does damage to any vital sector of the national economy, nor does it wish to give annoyance to any of Yemen's visitors, especially tourists who are important element in the national economy."

He pointed out that on many occasions the PSO, or other security staff, are forced to perform the duties of other authorities whose representatives are not present to do their jobs. Mr. Hamoud Baider and others suggested that if the airport authorities must continue the tiring procedure in the airport, the tourists should present a purchase invoice which will show where the "antiques" were purchased, and if it is proven that the souvenirs and gifts bought by the tourists are indeed antiques, then a receipt should be given and payment of the price should be made immediately to the tourist, if the items are confiscated.

While the many issues discussed were interesting, it was disappointing to see that the informal situation did not resolve the issues as far as the tourists were concerned. The only conclusion reached was a further meeting to be conducted by "two or three" representatives from the responsible government authorities and the private sector to protect the handicraft industry and antiquities.

As far as tourists are concerned, the present situation apparently still stands as is. Apparently those concerned in the government are not very interested in understanding the predicament of the tourists, i.e. haphazard decisions by government officials with no clear assessment of the impact these decisions could have on the welfare and interest of the nation and on those directly involved which has been the predicament of the Yemeni people for a long time. Now the foreign tourists and the Yemeni people have common grounds.

1996 Cricket Tournament on the Road

The 1996 Cricket Tournament is on. The Yemen Cricket Association's board met on March 6th, and decided that the tournament will start on April 5th. Two new teams are expected to be added to the five teams carried over from 1995.

"The game is catching on in Yemen," stated Don Sheridan, President of the YCA. It is not just the Yemenis, but the expatriates who are gripped with cricket fever given the on-going games in the Indian sub-continent. Special video reruns of the games have attracted crowds of spectators.

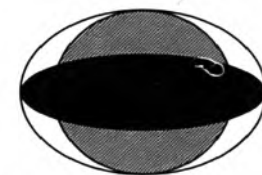
The five teams which competed last year are the Lion and Jambia Cricket Club (L&JCC), the Yemeni Cricket Club (YCC), the PCC (Pakistani Cricket Club), the Indian Embassy Cricket Club (IECC) and the Arabian Cricket Club (ACC). The two new clubs are a splinter Pakistani club, for which a name is yet to be coined, and finally there is the UCC (Unified Cricket Club).

The March 6th meeting also resulted in a new board of directors to manage the tournament. These are:

- * Don Sheridan - President,
- * Zaki Ahmed - Chairman,
- * Sheikh Tariq Abdullah - Vice Chairman
- * Sikandar Mahmood - Chairman, Sponsorship Committee,
- * Masroor Siddiqui - Secretary/Information
- * Tahir Alam - Member,
- * Jeff D'Souza - Member,
- * Khusdil S. Khan - Member.

The Ministry of Youth and Sports has been encouraging this sport. The minister, Dr. Abdul-Wahab Rawah, has shown a keen personal interest.

At another level, Rothmans of Pall Mall International has decided to be the lead sponsor of the 1996 tournament. Other sponsors include UNIVERSAL Travel & Tourism, Taj Sheba Hotel, Sheraton Hotel and others.



Shumaila Group

مجموعة شميلة

VACANCY

Shumaila Group looks for a **female secretary** to work in the company's headquarter office in Sana'a.

Candidates should have the following qualifications:

- 1- Good typing skills in both Arabic and English
- 2- Ability to use computer software including (DOS, Windows, Word, Excel)
- 3- Ability to translate from/to Arabic & to/from English
- 4- Experience in related field of not less than 5 years

The salary will be determined following the personal interview and based on qualifications.

Qualified candidates may come to the company located on Taiz Road, Souk Shumaila, in front of the OPEL cars exhibition.

Phone 610200/1 for inquiry.

Extremists of Different Feathers, Do Flock Together !

What do Palestinian and Jewish extremists have in common? A lot. But first and foremost, they are working together to wreck the peace process.

What the Jewish extremists want is clear. They don't want to give up land to the Palestinians, even in exchange for peace. Binyamin Netanyahu, leader of the Likud, has made it painfully clear. No West bank, No South Lebanon, No Golan. He will return nothing if he were to take over. He also announced he will not meet with Yasser Arafat, President of the Palestinian Authority. Thus, he opposes any process which leads to relinquishing land to the Palestinians or other Arabs.

But what the hell do Palestinian extremists want? That is not clear. They do want to retrieve Palestinian land. Thus they could not oppose a process which does exactly that. But the Hamas, Jihad and other leaders are also politicians. They want power. The way things are going, Arafat and his people have left them in the cold.

In the 'presidential' elections, Yasser Arafat got some 88% of the votes. His lieutenants and sup-

porters filled up the parliament. In other words, the Hamas/Jihad and other leaders have their backs against the wall, with less than 10% of the Palestinians favoring them.

Hence, the plot to destroy the peace process. The short cut to that is making Israelis nervous about it. In several suicidal bombs, the Palestinian extremists were able to rehabilitate Netanyahu in the polls. A public poll taken on February 26th, showed the lead of Israeli Shimon Peres over Netanyahu fall from 19% to 2% in one day.

The kind of mad terrorism and indiscriminate killing organized by Hamas/Jihad does not help the Palestinian people. It doesn't help anybody, including their own politicians. In the final analysis, the world would band together - including the majority of the Palestinians and Jews - against them in a concerted action!

This is already clear from the Summit on Terrorism that is going to be held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, in two days. Leaders from some 32 countries are expected to discuss how to combat terrorism.

Gold Mining in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is gearing up to welcome more and more joint venture investments that bring together foreign capital and know-how with local entrepreneurs. A newly-passed investment law has made the country attractive for European, American and Far Eastern investors.

One major joint venture was signed last month between the Ethiopian Government, Ezana Mining Development and Ashanti Goldfields. According to the agreement, a 2000 square kilometer concession is awarded to the company for gold exploration and mining operations.

Following the signing ceremony, Mr. Ato Tewdros Birara, General manager of Ezana, a private company, indicated that the initial survey results of the 2000 square

kilometers of concession in the western part of Tigray Province - north of Ethiopia - gave very promising results. "The agreement aims to effectively locate and identify the volume of gold to be exploited over the next three years in the Tigray Regional State," he said.

He also indicated that the liberalization of economic policy has enabled the company to recently import equipment, machinery and other accessories worth about 10 million birr. "Mining operations should start soon."

Speaking on the same occasion, Dr. J. A. Clarke, Executive Director of Ashanti Goldfields Company, pointed out that his company had a long experience in the field. "Our company is noted for its efficient and cost-effective

gold exploration methodologies base on highly sophisticated computerized data processing and modelling," he said.

Ethiopia had exploited gold deposits in the Tigray area several decades ago. The effort was, however, interrupted because of instability and violence associated with the political upheavals of the region. The resumption of gold excavations is already increasing the level of optimism and future economic possibilities of the country.

"There is a new atmosphere that is serious and well-disposed towards local and international investors," Clarke said.

By: Ms. Afrah Mohamed,
Yemen Times, Addis Ababa

Emirates Introduces Military Training in Schools ?

The Ministry of Education of the United Arab Emirates announced that following a three-year experimental effort, it is now considering introducing military training as a permanent component of secondary school curricula. Mr. Sultan Jassem Al-Ula, Social Services Supervisor and Researcher in Abu Dhabi announced that the trial period has given positive results.

The conclusions of a study entitled "The Implementation of Military Training in the UAE's Secondary Schools" recommend that the training by continued and that it should cover all secondary schools. "The study showed that all students who participated in the training felt a heightened sense of 'belonging' to their country and that 94% had higher morale."

The training includes learning to handle firearms (shooting), horse-riding, karate, swimming skills as well as theoretical information on weaponry and strategy. Mr. Al-Ula indicated that the Ministry of Education will coordinate with the Ministry of Defence in benefiting from the experience in order to draw up the training course.

One of the difficult aspects of the implementation is the attitude of the parents who are wary of the whole thing. That is why the course also calls for orientation programs for the parents in order to explain the various training programs.

The UAE, though not the first country to introduce demanding physical training program, it is the first in the region to include a program with a military dimension to it.

Yilmaz Forms Turkey's New Government

At last, the personality-based bickering of Turkish politicians has given way to something more meaningful. Mesut Yilmaz is Turkey's new prime minister.

Based on an agreement after long and difficult negotiations, the True Path Party of Tansu Ciller and the Motherland Party of Yilmaz have finally ironed out a deal that has effectively slammed the door on the strongest bid yet by Islamicists for power in Turkey. According to the agreement, there will be a rotating premiership for the 4-year term. The Motherland Party will name the prime minister of the coalition for the first year, then the True

Path Party will take over the premiership for two years, before the Motherland Party retrieves it for the final year.

"It all looks cumbersome and unworkable," stated an observer. But the threat of the Islamic party which won the largest bloc of seats in the inconclusive parliamentary elections of December 1995, makes the two liberal/conservative parties stick to each other.

But the results of the elections present a real dilemma to Turkish politicians. Since Ataturk transformed the Ottoman Caliphate into a secular Turkish state, the threat of a return to Islam has

never been greater. The Refah Party, led by Erbakan, has even held talks with Yilmaz regarding a possible coalition. That bid failed. "It is mainly the fault of bad politicians who give the public no choice but to revert to Islamicists," complained a university professor in Ankara.

The grand coalition was cemented this week as Mr. Yilmaz presented his cabinet to Turkish President Suleman Dimerel.

Personal rivalry among the secular parties may yet bring down the Yilmaz government and continues to menace their cooperation.

India Draws Agenda for Tariff Concessions to Saarc Countries

India has drawn up an ambitious agenda of offering tariff concessions on more than 1,000 items this year to SAARC member countries - India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives - so as to accelerate the pace of establishing the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA).

India will offer this proposal formally at the forthcoming meeting of the inter-governmental group (IGG) of seven-member SAARC countries to be held at Colombo later this month.

India will take two steps forward to step up efforts towards setting up of SAFTA if other SAARC member countries take one step, it was reported. Under the SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) which came into operation from December 7th last year, SAARC member countries have already agreed to offer tariff concessions on as many as 226 items.

India feels that in view of total of 5,000 tariff lines in the international harmonized code of commodity classification up to the six digit level, SAARC member countries will have to cover at least one quarter of 5,000 items per year over the next four years in order to achieve the target of establishing SAFTA by 2000 AD, under which there will be no tariff or non-tariff barriers for trade among the South Asian countries. Indian Commerce ministry officials say at the IGG meeting, India will also make offer for further substantial dismantling of

import licensing restrictions. India is even willing to offer special trade concessions to the least developing countries among SAARC members, officials said. However, they said, outcome of the IGG meet will depend largely upon the reciprocal offer made by the other SAARC member countries.

As far as Sri Lanka is already seeking substantial lowering of tariff and non-tariff barriers. The island nation has already expressed it is in favor of tariff cuts on nearly 3,000 items. Similarly, Nepal already follows a policy of uniform and across-the-board tariff concession of 10% applicable to all products from SAARC member countries. Officials say Nepal is in favor of further cuts in tariffs.

Pakistan, the second largest economy in the SAARC region, has not given clear indications what negotiating posture it would adopt at the IGG meet. However, Pakistan, in principle, is in favor of lowering trade barriers under the SAPTA framework and it is willing to take the process of establishing SAFTA forward. Officials as well as trade experts are of the view that the IGG meet at Colombo can make a major breakthrough in pushing the process of SAFTA forward if Pakistan accords the most favored nation (MFN) status to India before the meeting commences.


It may be noted that though India had accorded MFN status Pakistan years back, Islamabad has not yet accorded the same to New Delhi.

As per the rule-based trading system evolved under the World Trade Organization (WTO), which has replaced GATT with effect from January 1st last year, Pakistan is obliged to accord the MFN status to India.

Pakistan has already indicated that it had agreed in principle to grant MFN status to India. Pakistan's Trade Minister, Ahmed Mukhtar, while attending the SAARC commerce ministers' meeting at New Delhi recently was on record saying, "Pakistan will soon accord MFN status to India." As a result, India has decided not to take the matter to the WTO.

Indian commerce ministry officials say India understands Pakistan's concern for ensuring the so called 'level playing field' so as to protect its domestic industry before granting MFN status to India. The Indian officials say they have come to a conclusion that Pakistan has to accord MFN status to India sooner or later. Almost all sectors of Pakistani industry except engineering goods sector are strongly in favor of Pakistan granting MFN status to India. This step will tremendously augment trade between the two neighboring countries.

However, it is apprehended that at the IGG Colombo meeting both Pakistan and Bangladesh would emphasize on "level playing field" implying that their trade reforms are significantly ahead of liberalization undertaken by other SAARC member countries.



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THE GENE REVOLUTION

Genes have never been complete masters of human destiny. Nor have they been humanity's servants. Until now.

Close on the heels of the commercial success of the slow-ripening Flavr Savr tomato and the rBST hormone which enhances milk yield in cows, is a whole new flock of genetically engineered products which include a recombinant growth hormone for pigs which has been shown to reduce pork-fat by 30%; potatoes that absorb less fat while frying; a virus-resistant squash; a cow whose milk contains human proteins; and alligators genetically altered to 'manufacture' blood containing human hemoglobin so as to deliver capacity required during surgery.

These new-fangled, transgenic life forms that are all set to dominate the farming and animal husbandry industry of tomorrow are simply plants and animals modified by introducing from other organisms certain DNA sequences - or genetic 'magic bullets' - which would change particular characteristics of the organism in useful ways.

In a phrase, transgenic creatures contain non-parental DNA. This is a potent phrase conjuring up pictures of biologists arrogating God's creative power, and a new US government ruling allowing for them to be patented as 'new life forms' just about confirms this.

Already, genetically manipulated micro-organisms are being used extensively in industry. Pharmaceuticals for human and veterinary use include human insulin (marketed in '84), alpha interferon ('85), human growth hormone ('86), tissue plasminogen activator ('88), erythropoietin ('89), the human blood clotting factor IX (2) - a protein obtained from transgenic sheep that reduces the risk of severe bleeding in hemophiliacs - human alpha-antitrypsin synthesized from the milk of mice for the use of those suffering from emphysema, and a variety of other antibiotics, food additives and antibodies.

New research includes attempts as diverse as eliminating the watery puddles that form in the middle of partially consumed containers of yogurt by a genetically engineering milk protein, to efforts at reducing levels of saturated and unsaturated fats in cooking oils like canola and soybean. Work is also being done to develop potatoes resistant to the plant disease that causes the dark streaks in some potato chips.

But for the most part, biotechnology today is focused on attempts to multiply existing yields of crops by altering their genetic structure. With conventional breeding and Green Revolution techniques having reached their saturation points as far as increasing crop yields go, much has to be gained from bringing about a Gene Revolution in the 21st century.

Currently the molecular genetic improvement of plants is not limited by a lack of DNA

transfer techniques but by the low number of agronomically useful genes that have been identified.

Japanese and American researchers are currently working in mapping the rice and wheat genome respectively, but for now most of the work has been done on genes that confer resistance to insect pests, viruses and broad spectrum herbicides. But the introduction of such low-cost technologies on a wide scale could immediately increase the amount of available food by ensuring that very little of it is destroyed.

New Scientist reports that the development of a gene taken from a fungus and engineered into plants combined with another already being developed as a pesticide, should create an excellent barrier against insects. Inserting the enzyme cholesterol oxidase into plants has been lethal to insects that eat it because it disrupts the functioning of the bug's gut wall.

Another plant-defense technique involves using the genes of some citrus plants which contain a large number of enzymatic proteins related to chitin which increases the plant's natural defense. Researchers hope to put the genes for these enzymes into other plants that don't have them, thus providing them with a 'natural' protection against pathogens, harmful nematodes and insects.

In an attempt to increase the desperate yields of North-Atlantic fishing, researchers at the University of Maryland have created carp and catfish with the gene for trout growth hormone, and found that they grow larger twice as fast as unaltered fish. Genetic engineers have armed Atlantic salmon with the gene for winter antifreeze protein and have extended their range into colder waters. The same antifreeze gene has been successfully introduced in tomatoes, and the resulting fruit can be refrigerated for long periods without any loss of flavor.

A spokesman for Calgene, the firm which holds the patent for the slow-ripening transgenic tomato, announced that this characteristic could easily be replicated in other crops and that this could be of enormous benefit to farmers and consumers in the developing world, where refrigeration is unreliable and expensive and the transportation network is rudimentary and prone to breakdown.

Although such forecasts for the viability of genetic research would seem encouraging, many questions regarding the safety of genetically-altered organisms still persist. The US-based *Consumer Quarterly* recently raised a host of questions regarding the wisdom of introducing generic products without first trying them out in a controlled environment over a lengthy period of time. "Could these plants, engineered to be toxic to certain bugs, also harm soil bacteria, beneficial insects, birds or other organisms? Could pollen from herbicide-resistant

crops transfer the resistance to related wild plants, creating superinvasive weeds?"

A major seed company which added a Brazil nut gene to a soybean plant, in the hope of creating a high-protein soybean for animal feed, recently withdrew its product on finding that the new soybean causes a fatal reaction in individuals allergic to Brazil nut. This was all the more serious given that soybean and their by-products are used in so many aspects of food manufacture that it would be difficult to control its end use.

Similarly, studies have shown an increased incidence of mastitis, an infection of the udder, in cows which have been treated with the synthetic hormone rBST. This infection is treated with antibiotics and there is evidence that these turn up in the milk. Prolonged exposure to such low levels of antibiotics can make individuals resistant to them. Critics argue that consumption of milk from treated cows could present risks of breast cancer in adult women and that fetuses and infants exposed to the insulin-like growth factor-1 (IGF-1) might be more susceptible to developing breast cancer as adults.

although the safety aspect of genetically altered products cannot be ignored, at the same time it is important to note that every new technology brings with it a set of promises and threats. The curses of genetic engineering - the possibilities for its abuse, and its threatened violation of taboos, of meddling with life itself - should in no way undermine its blessings: its power to transform living organisms for the greater benefit of mankind, and the greater need to conserve the world's plant and animal genetic resources.

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Through women's eyes

11-28 March 1996

Exhibition The British Council Library

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Most countries in the world have undertaken economic reform programmes as part of their development progress. Economic reform affects people as well as the economy - and it does not affect all people in the same way. The exhibition takes a look at economic reform through women's eyes.

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For more information contact:

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Resuscitating Education

A university president's hypothetical letter addresses the continuing crisis plaguing public education

"Some of my constituents seems to feel that it is our public elementary and secondary schools that are letting us down. Others tell me that colleges and universities can no longer guarantee their graduates a decent job. What's the truth about education today?"

"What I am hearing from all sides is that we need to see more emphasis on morals, ethics, responsibility, and the duties of citizenship."

"I'm having some special problems with the connection between what our kids are learning and how our economy is doing. There is urgent need to tie in education with market demand. There is additional need for education to raise productivity."

"If I hear the words 'political correctness' one more time, I just might find this lunch coming back up the escalator. What's this 'p.c.' stuff all about? And when is it finally going to go away?"

Those are some of the ideas thrown at me over a recent business lunch. Well, there's nothing like a lunch conversation that pointed to keep my thoughts organized for a couple of weeks. I can't guarantee that I will be answering all of those questions, but I'll certainly be touching on some of them.

The Cultural Crisis:

I'd like to start with a rather broad observation. What everyone seems to agree on these days is that we are in the middle of some kind of cultural crisis, one that is reflected especially sharply in higher education. At the same time, none of us seems to be able to agree on what, precisely, this crisis consists of.

I would like to suggest that the sense of crisis and the trouble we have in defining it result from the fact that two parts of our national character have come into a complex collision. On the one hand, here is the traditional sense of the "Islamic values" which we cherish so much, although we cannot come to real grips with it. On the other hand, there is this pressure to change and adapt to new ways.

I am told that parents are often displeased with the freedom given to children in the new family homes. Old folks are nostalgic for the days when the young would lie low and let the old folks take the stage. Today, some of the kids would even speak up when they hadn't been spoken to - almost as if they were thinking human beings, alias adults!

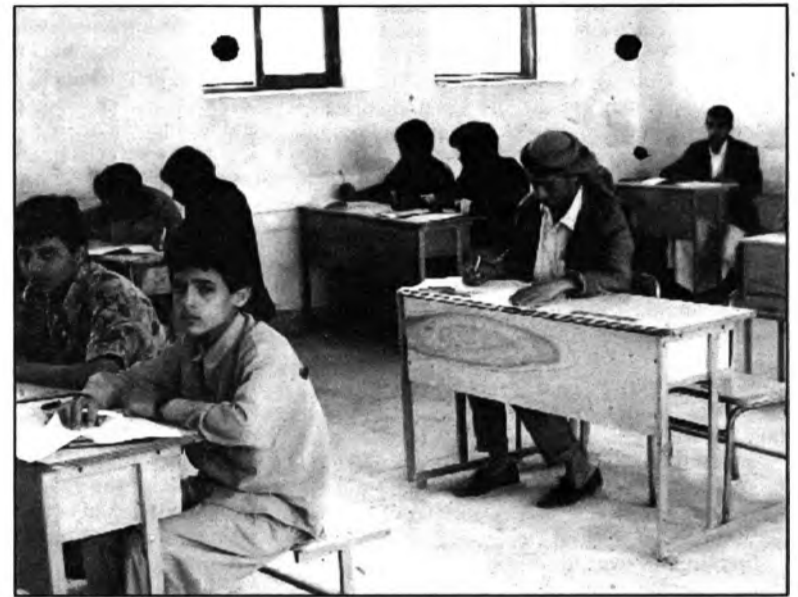
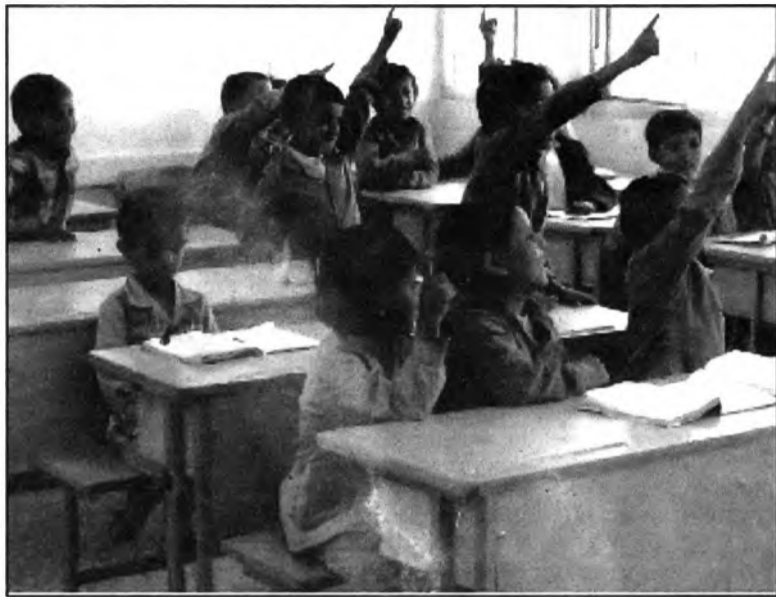
And of course, there is one that class or generation of Yemenis which is in eternal search of infinite opportunities seeking to make a "fresh start" of some kind. Finally, there is the market-dictated need for re-training. Even a forty-year-old can begin a training program that, from an "Old World" point of view, ought to be available, on a use-it-or-lose-it basis, to someone aged ten or sixteen or twenty.

Education, in light of the enormous volume of knowledge beyond churned out every day, or even every hour, requires a continuous learning process. Our educational system has to be flexible in order to allow for this. No sooner does one learn one kind of work, than he/she finds out that he/she needs to retrain for some altogether new and more promising line of activity.

I ought to emphasize that word *try*. Some of these efforts turn out to be demonstrable failures. That keep making them, however, testifies to "where our hearts are at". We hate dead ends. We long to believe that tomorrow is another day, there is always a new start, and that by returning to an earlier stage of our lives - the stage of childhood or adolescence when we were still capable of mastering something altogether new - we can prepare our inner selves to become "the fully competent adult of tomorrow."

Once you focus on our special concern, as a nation, with "child qualities," it is easier to understand why we need to be so adept at everything we associate with. But one thing is missing here.

Our cultural crisis has become a source of confusion. Merit has been lost in the dutiful process of rewarding. Today in Yemen, rewarding is not based of merit or achievement - neither of those two words mean much any more. Our culture dictates today that we pay adequate consideration to power centers - whether military, tribal, financial, etc. We have seen many an occasion when a



scholarship due to a good student goes to a bad one just because of this consideration. We have seen many a time when a bad student is admitted to a prestigious college because of connections. We have even seen evidence of bad students graduating with good grades - again thanks to considerations and connections.

Attending to Children:

The best time to make a mark on a person is at his/her early childhood. That is why most countries allocate their best to kindergarten and primary schools. It is here where it needs to be made. Later, it no longer can be done.

Yet, the genius of our officialdom relegates to the small children the worst of its teachers, the least of its resources, and the lowest possible opportunities and time. Our educators feel, the kids can't complain and "they don't know anyway."

In the rest of the world, there is a special passion for childhood, and the ways in which that passion even serves the society and economy - and helps to explain later-day achievements. This is common knowledge throughout the world. It has not yet arrived at our Ministry of Education.

Most primary public schools boast as many as 120 pupils per class. The teacher is often a secondary graduate who is barely literate. Teaching aids are non-existent.

The Professional Mix-up:

One disappointing part of our character is the lack of challenge, at least from an attitudinal point of view. Many people blame our placid nature on qat. In reality, it all goes back to the issue of character and personality, and education has much to do with it, especially at an early age.

The childlike innocence tends to downgrade the importance of schooling, the part that is devoted to open-ended and universal competition sees education as a very important matter.

Start from childhood or rather the family, and a lot of the cultural conflicts in life today begin to look more comprehensible. When television indulges its Sodom-and-Gomorrah side, it offends the ideal of innocence as defended, often, by our vast religious hierarchy. Our clergy keep warning us against cultural erosion or even domination. We shiver when we think of our children being exposed to that. At the same time, TV, when it publicizes a variety of intimate and marital behaviors and misbehaviors, is giving viewers the feeling of worldliness and sophistication.

Our clergy put us through big cycles. They push us between pride - at the fact that Muslims had once pioneered in restructuring the world's - and alarm over the (potential) dominance and hegemony of the materialistic West.

Our low-paid teachers, meanwhile - products of a degraded system of teacher training - assume that the function of the classroom is to raise students' feelings of self-esteem rather than to teach them actual subject matter.

Back in the 1960s, it seemed obvious that childlike openness and innocence were what adults ought to be recapturing. "Creativity" was to be found in native ability rather than school-taught skills of any kind. In the 1960s, it seems equally clear that

values of self-control and personal responsibility are incompatible with glorification of mere "release." The notion of "liberating" childhood from adult over-control seems like the direct ancestor, now, of, among other bad things, the idea that virtually every child has been abused by its parents and/or other adults, and that the "repressed memories" that result form this abuse can be summoned up by skilled psychotherapists who help put those adults in jail. In the process, justice is allegedly done and the de-repressed personality of the victim restored to the freshness and clarity all of us deserve.

In the 1960s, when schools of higher education served as the settings for anti-academic performances and disruptions in the world, especially in the USA. Students who were officially enrolled in order to learn academic subject matter and to earn degrees spent a growing amount of time criticizing the administration of their colleges and universities - including promotion and tenure decisions where faculty members were concerned at alleged racism in admissions.

The medium, so to speak, became the message. The student's true function was now, it appeared, to scrutinize the very processes of life and learning at his or her college, and if necessary to radically change them.

Here in the Arab World, the revolt was in the form of a revolutionary fervor. Students - especially in secondary schools and colleges marched in demonstration after another.

What to learn?

There is considerable debate as to "What Should Our Children Learn?" The fight over curricula of course, has its own political connotations. Some of the wise politicians want to mould the whole society into their vision. They want to clone the youngsters into a person based on what is in their minds. This is especially true of the communist and religious politicians. In short, politicians with a dogma.

To get back to a "rigorous academic core," we need to root our public-education systems in local communities that are also devoted to empty intellectual rigor. In other words, the push should not simply be to modernize, but the struggle must be to civilize, to curb the bestial side of human nature. In this way, we can link up with the prevailing levels of ethics and morality.

Let me rephrase the dilemma here. It is much more important for an educational system to produce better human beings, than to produce better religious beings. Of course, theoretically, religion should make better human beings. But history time and again shows that cannot be taken for granted.

Beholden to a Myth:

As so often in human history, martyrdom proved to be the seed of political power - and martyrdom, as the deaths of both John F. Kennedy and Yitzhak Rabin have served to demonstrate, is the very hardest occurrence to predict in advance.

What we are undergoing right now, it seems to me, is the collapse of the very idea of shared unity from scratch. Such an ideology must also be compatible with multiplicity and must not require

scapegoated "enemies" in order to thrive.

The fact is that when our schools are functioning well, they teach the kind of analytic skills that make for the very opposite of unanimity. Having undermined ideas of sacred right and of tradition-bound authority, the people of Europe found themselves aching for a "sense of the sacred." The career of Napoleon as emperor of the French then proved compatible with the very principles of revolution that had served to annihilate the divine right of kings or any other merely "sacred" principle.

In Tolstoy's War and Peace, the resulting paradox-of "sacred" liberation from "sacred" principles - is repeatedly and gleefully explored. A French soldier in Tolstoy's novel refers to the very name of Napoleon as "sacred" - and therefore not to be taken in vain.

There is a sense that any truth sufficiently broad and dramatic can provide the moral cement that our society presently lacks; can be transmitted through our public elementary and secondary school systems; and can serve to counter our fear of a pervasive cultural fragmentation. The evidence of history seems to me to run in a different direction. When human beings are desperate for a unifying myth, even the most unlikely materials can provide it. Thus going back fifteen centuries is not hard to do. Only after hundreds or thousands of years do the teachings of Islam, for example, seem like the obvious answer to a human need. First, millions of human beings agree that they have served each individual's need. Then it becomes obvious that they are "needed" - and should even be taught in schools.

Between a Rock and a Hard Place:

Where does all of this leave us? Not, I admit, in a very clear space. We are caught, right now, between the classic rock and the classic hard place: between our fear of rampant secularization on the one hand, which includes our fear of the doors thus flung open to chaos, immoral behavior, and mutual distrust, and, on the other hand, our growing nervousness with regard to religious orthodoxies that purport to give us "roots" and stability but also seems adept at sponsoring terrorism and immorality, even if the latter are "only" directed at those classified as heretical enemies. One inevitable result of living in such a time is that we become very conscious of how ideologies and "religion" first make their entry in to the human psyche - which is through schooling of some kind, whether that takes place at home and/or in an academy.

Like the inhabitants of the Greco-Roman pantheon, the founding fathers were specialized along nearly allegorical lines. If Poseidon could be positioned opposite Apollo - the turbulence of the ocean against the illumination of the sun. And the Zeus who oversaw the entire complex process could give way to the stand-in represented, easily enough, by the farsighted stabilizer.

What we are doing right now is the sniff after "the wave of the future," the deep and eventually irresistible power that will sweep us all of our ideological feet and into its train.

By: a Yemeni university professor, USA.



14 OCTOBER: Aden (Daily) 4-3-96

(Official)

Main Headlines:

- 1) German Urban Planning Mission Visits Lahij Governorate
- 2) Police Arrest a Gang of House Burglars
- 3) The Crazy Electricity Tariff

Article Summary:

Yemeni-Dutch Memo of Understanding

A memo of understanding was signed between the Republic of Yemen and the Kingdom of the Netherlands on Sunday 3-3-96 at the Ministry of Planning and Development. The memo stipulated that the Dutch government will grant the Republic of Yemen government DFI 12,423,103 which will be used to purchase medicine over the next 4 years. DFI 4,423,103 would be used for technical assistance. Signing on behalf of Yemen was Abdulkader Bajammal, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Planning and Development, and on behalf of the Dutch government was Mr. I. Pijpers, Ambassador of the Netherlands in Sana'a.

AL-WAHDAMI: Sana'a (Weekly) 5-3-96

(Nasserite Unionist Party)

Main Headlines:

- 1) Coordination Between the Peoples General Congress and the Yemeni Socialist Party
- 2) A Meeting Between the President and Perez
- 3) Following the Second Dosage: Taxes on Production and Consumption

Article Summary:

The Gang of Four

Mohammed Saleh Al-Hadhiry, a regular columnist with the paper hit hard at four senior government officials: Dr. Mohammed Saeed al-Attar, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Industry and Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, Mohyeddeen Al-Dhabby, Vice Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, Abdulaziz Abdulghani, Prime Minister and Hussein Al-Maswary, Mayor of Sana'a (in that order).

Mr. Al-Dhabby regards the removal of these four officials as essential to the fight against corruption as the four men are regarded as being at the top of the corruption network in Yemen. He accuses Al-Attar and Al-Dhabby of masterminding the questionable petroleum production contracts such as the Total deal which will net Yemen \$600,000,000 a year, whereas the ENRON deal would have netted over US \$1.1 Billion. Al-Dhabby is linked with powerful big whigs like Hussein Al-Maswary who is a part of a group of powerful influential officials

Yemeni Press in a Week

by: Hassan Al-Haifi

in the corrupt network inside the government. The group "was set up to counter the other group which was lead by Abdulaziz Abdulghani, the PM, which includes tens of leading top government officials and businessmen".

The writer states that terminating the services of the four officials will be a big blow to corruption in the government as they have been strong factors in spreading corruption in government for the last twenty years in one capacity or another.

Mr. Al-Maswary's wealth is evidenced by his ownership of a significant share of Yemen Kuwait Bank for Trade and Investment and the many investments he holds in many countries outside Yemen, which the author feels would give him very little time to look after the city of Sana'a, of which he is Mayor.

Al-Dhabiry maintains that the President is really burdened by the four men's positions in government and it would be far to his advantage to get rid of them.

AL-TAJJAMMU'U: Aden (Weekly) 4-3-96

(Yemeni Unionist Congregation)

Main Headlines:

- 1) Hunaish is Back On the Spotlight
- 2) Wheat and Flour in the Third Dose (of Gov't Reforms)
- 3) The Government Does the Killing and We Pay Blood Money
- 4) YR 15,000 to Be Able to Travel (Embezzlement at Aden Airport)

Article summary:

Fighting Corruption: A Personal Issue for the President Or An Issue of the Regime?

Taking note of the attack on the Opposition papers by the official press, the article starts off by explaining that the press is criticized when it speaks against the government for violating the democratic principles. The article assures that there will be no response to the criticism. However, it states that the opposition is only trying to help the President and the government with objectives that do not go beyond the ones that have been announced by the President, time and again.

The article asks:

1) Is corruption the result of a corrupt regime or is the corrupt regime the result of corruption?

2) Is fighting corruption a personal issue of the President which the President has decided to tackle, or is it really a matter of life and death for the regime?

If it can be assumed that the President and the Prime Minister are sincere in their claims to combat corruption, then it can be said that:

- Corruption is the result of backward totalitarian regimes... of dictatorial regimes... of regimes and of oppression and persecution. Systems which give no weight to the Constitution and the rule of law regarding human rights and freedoms. In short, of non democratic regimes.

"In non-democratic climates, the environment allows corruption, in all its forms and methods, to develop. All the branches of authority: executive, legislative, judicial and even the fourth authority, the media (journalism) become corrupt and encourage corruption in other areas. It becomes difficult to talk about corruption, as isolated cases here and there or of reforms here and there. Corruption is all inclusive phenomenon. Therefore, correction must be total and all inclusive."

"Then, what are the principles of facing up to corruption and what are the instruments to fight it?"

We shall repeat what we have said: True democracy is the basic foundation for building a modern state and it is the protective armor for all the ills and maladies that afflict a society. Democracy is the safeguard for a state of law and order - the state of modern institutions. True Democracy is what will make us transform from subjects to citizens, who defend their rights, liberty, honor and purity of ourselves without any fear from an autocrat or a dictator.

The article notes that picking small fries as scapegoats, here and there can only lead to more corruption and make room more big corrupt officials.

Finally we shall not say, start by giving freedom of assembly for unions or the right to strike or lift your hands off the press or... because a democratic system is all inclusive and its instruments

are well-known to anyone who really wants to institute reforms seriously.

AL-HAQ: Sana'a (Weekly) 3-3-96

(Rabitat Abna Al-Yaman)

Main Headlines:

- 1) The Palestinian Nationalist Authority Arranged the Israeli Delegation's Visit to Yemen.
- 2) Shooting Between A Puritanical Group and Members of the Islah Party
- 3) The President: Any Official Who Fails Should Give a Chance for Someone Else to Try.

Article Summary:

The Heads of Corruption . . . First

The editorial of the paper comments on the widespread corruption of the government in all its organs, where all the corrupt officials exercise their crimes in view of the absence of the authority of the law. Corrupt officials are confident that the "sword of justice" will not touch them and that the law as far as they are concerned, is on a long vacation. Corruption is covered up by the rulers . . . because they are the ones who prevent any accountability of corrupt officials.

AL-AYYAM: Aden (Weekly) 6-3-96

(Independent)

- 1) Yemeni Contractors Request the Libyan Ambassador to Pay their Due Payments (for the Construction of the Unity Residential Complexes in Aden and Sana'a.
- 2) Deputy Assistant of the Secretary of State of the USA in Yemen to Discuss the Regional Hot Issues
- 3) German Attention for the Museums and Antiquities of Aden
- 4) Robbery in Aden Airport

Article Summary:

Internet Service in Yemen Before Year End.

The article points out that Yemen will join the rank of advanced countries in the area of information and communications systems. Arrangements are underway to introduce the Internet service in the Republic of Yemen. An agreement is expected to be signed soon between Tele-Yemen on one side and Pipex International Corp. of the USA, Saudi Research and Marketing (the owners of Arab Net Tech) based in London, on the other side. The agreement provides for an external link in Yemen to base calls of subscribers in Saudi Arabia to the international computer network, through the Yemeni Communications Station.

Letters to the Editor Letters to the Editor Letters to the Editor Letters to the Editor

They Must Go !

The Organization of African Unity, the Arab League, the Islamic Conference and the Organization of Non-aligned Nations are all in a bad state. Their efforts to defend their member states and people are inadequate. They have totally forgotten their charters and responsibilities.

They must go.

These Third World organization have failed to withstand pressure from the so-called "New World Order" which is controlled by the advanced nations.

If we look back at the last 15 years ago, Iran proclaimed an Islamic state based on the "Qur'an" and the Sunnah of the Prophet Mohammed (May peace be upon him) in order to regulate their internal affairs without interference from outside. Unfortunately, the super powers saw the revolution poses a risk to their interest in the region. Thus, they began to destabilize the state by imposing restrictions on it. Iran, however, was able to resist foreign pressures.

The target then shifted to Iraq which was encouraged to violate the sovereignty of Kuwait.

It is today being victimized for having biological and chemical weapons which is dangerous to the neighborhood.

True, the superpowers came into the Middle East to liberate Kuwait and give a lesson to

Saddam. Kuwait was liberated and Saddam was punished. But Iraq continues to suffer under the pretext of not fulfilling the UN Security Council's resolutions.

Let's also look at the case of Libya. The government refused to deliver two of its citizens suspected of terrorism. So, the New World Order decided that all Libyans must suffer by imposing restrictions. I don't understand the security council's punishment; is it toward the regime or the poor Libyans.

Then, there is the new target - Sudan. Because the Sudanese proclaimed that their country will be managed according to Islamic law, they are suffering.

I think the West is worried that the Sudan will succeed in spreading Islam east and west, as well as in other parts of Africa. Let's not have misconceptions as to why the Sudan is at risk.

It is accused of harboring and training terrorists. It is asked to give up the terrorists who had tried to kill President Mubarak of Egypt. If they don't, they will be subject to a UN Security Council sanction. I don't know what kind of sanction it will be.

It is because of these situation that I believe our regional associations are some sort of tiger paper. We should not waste resources to keep them open. They must go!

By: Ali Abdulle Hassan Hodeidah

A Symposium on Qat?

I want to protest against Qat. In so doing, I am sure that I am voicing the feelings of the majority of the public.

It is natural for people to have a hobby in their spare time. It is a way of getting away from stresses and tensions.

Most people in the world prefer reading, listening to music, watching TV, playing games, visiting friends, etc. However, few would take drugs like opium and cocaine or chew qat.

Qat as it comes under this agenda is a shrub whose leaves are chewed as a stimulant all over East Africa and Yemen. It is also available nowadays in certain groceries in Britain, flown in daily.

People cram into their mouth as much qat as possible and chew it for hours. It is just like what the animals do when they bring back their cud. They do that until they reach a level of ecstasy or fantasy.

Qat is grown in many parts of Yemen, but it originally came from Ethiopia. Farmers prefer it to other crops because it is commercially superior. So the qat-growing area expanded at the expense of other crops like coffee, grains, etc.

People's health is also negatively affected by chewing this poisonous plant. The problems caused by qat include sexual failure, lack of appetites, intestinal complications, losing

weight as well as mental problems - not the least of which is sleeplessness. Therefore, why don't Yemenis hold a symposium about the effects of qat on human health and the economy?

I remember, in Mogadishu, Somalia, it was in early 1983 when a symposium was held about the effects of qat. A good number of qualified persons from foreign countries and international organizations participated in the conference sponsored by WHO. The outcome made the nation take a quick action to stop this man-made problem.

I remember that the government issued a circular bringign an end to importation of qat from Kenya and Ethiopia. It also burned down the local farms.

The impact of qat on the Yemeni economy is different from that on Somalia as qat is a local product and the money is from a Yemeni pocket to another.

Even then, Yemen must find an alternative to qat. It is the responsibility of the leaders and intellectuals to take action in this regard.

If that is done, I am the Gross National Product (GNP) of Yemen will grow fast. Some of the unhealthy aspects of qat will disappear quickly. It is a plus on both sides.

By: Abdullah Elmi Ali Taiz.

Life Has Become Hell

I want to shed light on our miserable life. Most Yemenis complain. They lament their fate and feel nostalgic to the years before unification. The so-called package of reform aggravates situation further by adding to the load of sorrow and grief. In fact, the present government insists on its ignorance and wants to use the people as sacrifice. The government's failure to provide the public with basic needs has never been as striking.

The whole nation is going through an economic disaster. Thus, the continuous shortage and inadequacy of foodstuff is leading to a slow death of citizens, let alone their ambitions and hopes. The government's decision to remove subsidies on the essential and basic foodstuffs leads to more agony, at a time when incomes are falling and inflation is rising.

Prices of everything are getting higher. In some remote villages, a sack of wheat costs more than two thousand Riyals. At the same time, the prices of utilities and public services are rising dreadfully without any logic. Let me give some examples to support my point.

Medical treatment is not available in government hospitals because of the carelessness and lawlessness. Electric, water, mail and telephone bills have at least doubled, and in some cases tripled. Rent of houses became

unbearable, particularly for the miserable employees.

The disappearance of some commodities such as wheat, flour, sugar, etc. exacerbates the situation. Sometimes, you could have the money, but the product is not there.

In the true sense of the word, the problems have compromised our values and morals. You can see prostitution, theft, extortion, etc. very rampant. Bribery, corruption, cheating and many social ills have become pervasive.

Moreover, dreadful poverty and starvation have become normal sights. I am not exaggerating if I say that some poor families lack the essential food to eat and feed their kids.

Many epidemical diseases and plagues are spread. If you want to know the reality, go visit the hospitals. Also, one can notice the growth in the number of beggars.

The frenzied government propaganda, used to disguise our reality and deceive our people is not the solution to our problems. Therefore, we must wake up.

Urgently, our government must contemplate this fact and realize the need to analyze itself and its performance. Sincere patriots must take charge of the government before it is too late. May be they can do something.

Ahmed Mohamed Al-Garady Taiz Secondary School, Taiz.

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الأسيفون:
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عبدالوهاب ثابت
محمد قائد الزعيتري

NOTE:

The numbers below are as up to-date as our records show. If your number has changed, please call us at (268-661/2) for a correction. This is a courtesy service to our readers.



Emergency Police	199
Accident (Traffic)	194
Fire Brigade	191
Water Problems	171
Electricity Problems	177
Telephone Enquiries	118
Aljumphury Hospital	202192/3
Athawra Hospital	246970/9
Kuwait Hospital	203282/4
Red Crescent	203131/3
Banks:	
Yemeni Banks:	
Central Bank	274371/3
Commercial Bank Sanaa	213662-6
Hodeidah	217040-3
Int'l Bank of Yemen	272920/3
National Bank	275373
YBRD	271623/4
Branches of Foreign Banks:	
Arab Bank Ltd.	240921-29
Bank Indosuez	272801/3
United Bank Ltd	272424
Government Offices:	
Foreign Affairs	202544/7
Interior Affairs	252701/7
Immigration	250761/3
Tourism	271970/2
Inter-City Bus Co.	262111/3
TV Station	332001-3
Radio Station	200060/61
Insurance Companies:	
Y.I. & ReInsurance/Aden	273311
Marib Insurance Sanaa	206112/4
Aden:	255668
Taiz:	222162/3/4
Hodeidah:	217370/1
Yemen General Sanaa:	265191
Aden:	243909
Taiz:	221561
Hodeidah:	239184
United Insurance	01-272890-2
Taiz:	215012
Hodeidah:	217292
Aman Insurance Sanaa:	214093
Hodeidah:	03-240354



SANAA :	
1. Embassies:	
Algeria	209689/206350
Bulgaria	208469
China	275337/340
Cuba	217304/5
Czech Republic	247946
Djibouti	245792/265469
Egypt	275948/9
Eritrea	209422
Ethiopia	208833
France	268888
Germany	413184/77/80
Hungary	248147
India	241980/1/2
Indonesia	414385
Iran	243439/40/43
Iraq	216682
Korea (Dem)	232340
Korea (Rep)	245959/60
Kuwait	268876/9
Lebanon	203959/733
Libya	267636/4
Mauritania	216770
Morocco	247964
Netherlands	215626/7/8
Oman	208933/4
Pakistan	248813/14
Pakistan	215404/5
Poland	248362
Poland	217488/296
Qatar	215579
Romania	278719
Russia (FR)	240429/30
Saudi Arabia	208864
Somalia	247885
Sudan	413153/414891
Syria	240458/9
Tunisia	241395
Turkey	241395

U.A.E	248777/78
U.K.	215630/33
U.S.A	238842/52
Vietnam	215985
2. Honorary Consultates:	
Austria	266725
Belgium	205925
Canada	208814
Denmark (Taiz)	04-215171/2
Finland	207018/20/21
Greece	272218
Spain	209360/207054
Sweden	207595/470
Switzerland	203534
3. International Organizations	
Care	414079
FAO	207331/607
UNDP	215505
UNHCR	204963
UNIC	274000
UNICEF	231256/7/8
WHO	252213/204
ADEN Consulates :	
China	233115
Egypt	231610
Ethiopia	231335
France	255896
Germany	232162/233607
India	233131
Iran	231893/361
Italy	232586/88
Japan	232219/233282
Libya	233611
Oman	233433/460
Palestine	232340/232717
Russian (FR)	232792/232625
Saudi Arabia	232760/32526
Slovak	233630/232101
Somalia	241421/101
U.K.	232711/12/13

AIR LINES	
Air France	272895/6
Air India	272544
Air Tanzania Sana'a	275029
Aden	241534
American Airlines	272894/838
Alitalia	273655
Al-Nasim Travel	270750
Alyemen (HO, Aden)	231339
Alyemen (Sana'a)	203637
Austrian Airlines	272432
Bazara Travel	78093/270879
British Airways Sanaa	248151/2
Aden	241534
Cathay Pacific	271803
Egypt Air	275061
Ethiopian Airlines	272437
Gulf Air	265274/75, 265374
Ilias I. T. T.	273338/275554
Iraqi Airlines	219431/224/5/6
Japan Airlines	219431/224/5/6
KLM	278747
Korean Airlines	272548
Kuwait Airlines	272503/4
Lufthansa	272731
Pakistan Int'l	219431/224/5/6
Philippines Airlines	272808 / 937
Rover Airlines Intl., Inc.	205779
Royal Jordanian Sana'a	275314/355
Aden	243532
Russian Airlines	271242
Sabena	285865/925
Sudan Airways	272503-5
Swiss Air	272547
Syrian Airways	272543
Thai Airways	275028
Universal Travel H.O.	275028/9/30
Universal -Zubeiri	267929/ 273924
Universal - Albionia	272861/2/3
Universal - Aden	221146, 243475
Universal - Taiz	225383/4
Universal Hodeidah	226980/958
Universal - Mukalla	05354842/3/5
Yemenia Branches:	
Abdul-Mughni	274803/4
Haddah	204538/550
COURIERS	
Aramex / Sana'a	243-925
Aramex / Aden	255-683
Aramex / Taiz	213-489
Aramex / Hodeidah	218-168
DHL / Sana'a	248017-249878
DHL / Aden	242128
DHL / Taiz	225383
DHL / Hodeidah	217490
DHL / Mukalla	05354844
Life Express	205696
Skypack	77310
TNT Express Aden	253097, 253049, 255600
Mukalla	7921888(mobile)
American Express	272435/6

HOTELS	
Sana'a (01)	
Sheraton	237500/1/2
Taj Sheba	272372/3
Plaza Suites	209074/209903/205483
Hadda Hotel	215212/4/5
Aden (02)	
Movenpick	232911
Gold Mohur	221158
Hodeidah (03)	
Bristol	239197
Ambassador	231247/50
Al Burj	75852
Taiz (04)	
The Plaza Hotel	220224/26
Yazan	217997
Royal	
Marib (0630)	
Bilquis Marib	2372
Sadah (051)	
Al Mamoon	2203/2459
Mukalla (05)	
Hadhramaut	2060
Al-Jetamad	552493

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معهد الفاروق للغات والكمبيوتر

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Contest No. 63 مسابقة رقم ٦٣

Prepared by:
Al-Farouk Institute of Languages & Computer

إعداد:
معهد الفاروق للغات والكمبيوتر

P.O.Box 3637, Al-Raqqaq St., Near the Iranian Medical Center, Sanaa; Telephone (967-1) 209721, Fax 218 231
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Please fill in the space and hand over your answers to the registrar of the Al-Farouq Institute by
Thursday morning. The winner will be announced in next week's issue of Yemen Times.
يرجى قطع المسابقة وتعبئة البيانات المطلوبة ثم تسليمها إلى المسجل بمعهد الفاروق في موعد أقصاه يوم الخميس.
سيعلن اسم الفائز في العدد القادم من «يمن تايمز».

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30

Across

- Law officers.
- Royal house of Henry VIII.
- Prickly desert plants.
- Second day of the working week.
- Washing.
- Fit like machinery teeth.
- Female pig.
- Garden party.
- Dad's--- TV series.
- Long-running pop music newspaper.
- Faldo: golfer.
- Largest planet in the Solar System.
- Stretchy.
- Country where you find the Taj Mahal.
- Our planet.
- Each floor (of house).

Down

- Preserve in vinegar.
- Instructive talk.
- Young people.
- Long journey.
- Avoid.
- Musical bat.
- remains.
- make-up for a cross Red Indian?
- Bull-fighter (anagram of ROTA MAD).
- Nose explosion.
- Leave plane—fast!
- Boring.
- Sitting place.
- It needs scratching!

Correct answers for contest No. (62)

B	O	P	E	E	P	A	C	T	I	S	G
I	V	H	C	R	E						
S	P	I	N	O	C	H	I	O	N		
F	U	R	L	B	U	O	B	O	E		
O	E	S	I	S	S	Y	J	V			
P	E	S	E	T	A	E	U	R	I	K	A
K	I	D	N	A	P	S	C	O	T	C	H
E	E	M	A	F	I	A	I	A			
T	I	N	T	I	E	S	O	U	P		
L	T	R	U	N	C	H	E	O	N		
L	T	R	U	E	O	F	E				
E	X	T	E	N	D	N	A	T	I	O	N

WINNER OF CONTEST NO 62:
Antar A-Harazi

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Playing the Numbers Game: The 1996 Budget

Parliament is presently discussing the government budget proposal for 1996. This exercise is six months late, but what the heck!

The Islah Bloc in parliament is not happy with a lot of things, and it plans to take it out on the budget. They have already told their partner, the PGC, that they are going to scrutinize the numbers and they can already tell they are not happy. They have reason not to be! As a cushion, the PGC is flirting with the YSP Bloc. Marginalized over time, the YSP Bloc looks eager to oblige, irrespective of the issues.

The 1996 budget proposal, like all government proposals over the last decade, look better than they really are. Let us use examples to support this.

1) The main problem had been that expenditures have always managed to be higher than the budgeted numbers, and revenues have almost always managed to turn out less than promised or anticipated.

2) There are too many lump sums set aside without proper classification as to where the money is going. One especially notorious one stands out - the "Central Allocations" - which is sort of a reserve fund in which

the officials dip in as they need. It runs into several billion Riyals every year.

3) The Government should present to parliament the foreign currency component of its budget proposal, say in US dollars. It is not enough to convert, say oil dollar proceeds into riyals and list them in the budget. Somebody is profiting from the exchange rate.

This will stop any mishandling because the clearing system which the government uses is a camouflage which hides a lot of things. Total dollar revenues to the government - from whatever sources - and total dollar expen-

ditures required of the government - for whatever purpose - should be presented to parliament in those same foreign currency. The conversion to and from Yemeni Riyals can take place at a later stage.

4) The revenue side should show the exact revenue from sale of government assets. The privatization program must be generating some income. It should be listed by name, so that people will know for how much a certain asset has been sold.

The Government is visibly trying hard to bring sense into its finances. It should be supported in this endeavor, especially with

an eye to making its economic and administrative reform effort succeed.

5) The total payroll amount shown in the budget proposal runs to YR 74.5 billion. In my opinion, the correct number is more than YR 90 billion or almost 50% of the total budget. Some in-kind payments - like housing, air travel, etc. - for government employees have not been included as remunerations, when they actually are. It is part of payment for a service rendered.

Finally, one must really chastise this government for having spoken so much about its drive

towards the decentralization of its finances. Not only has it failed to delegate any real financial authority, but even the ministers and agencies in Sanaa are unable to relate to the Ministry of Finance. The Minister of Finance is super minister who knows what is good for the country. Thus, he releases or blocks funds as he sees fit. This situation did not develop with the current minister. It is an old story, which many had hoped would be corrected. If funds are allocated to a certain ministry or agency, it should be the prerogative of the person in charge of that ministry/agency to release them.

Government Finances of the Last 5 Years in Current Billion Riyals

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
EXPENDITURES:					
1. Payroll, Salaries, Etc.	47.1	40.3	47.9	67.3	74.5
2. Defence	16.8	19.6	30.3	31.3	37.2
3. Education	10.7	13.5	16.7	22.0	35.1
4. Health	2.3	3.1	3.0	5.6	7.6
5. New Public Investment	5.3	5.6	8.0	20.1	24.2
6. Debt Service	5.9	7.2	10.9	7.7	22.8
TOTAL	57.0	69.0	87.1	124.1	181.4
REVENUES:					
1. Taxes, Customs	18.6	22.0	25.4	41.9	57.2
2. User Charge/Fees	0.7	0.8	0.8	1.1	1.9
3. Gov't Oil Share	8.2	10.1	11.2	31.3	73.0
4. Foreign Loans/Grants	1.3	1.4	1.5	4.1	7.6
TOTAL	34.2	38.1	42.9	88.0	155.9



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