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UN & UNESCO Sponsor Media Meetings in/on Yemen

The United Nations, in collaboration with Columbia University, is sponsoring a conference on the role of the independent and pluralist media in a transforming world. As part of this conference, the experiment of the Republic of Yemen will be presented as an example of change in a small Third World country.

Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqaf, editor of Yemen Times will present the Yemeni experiment at the gathering in New York which will take place at the Arden Conference Center during 20-24 April, 1997. Attending this gathering are the leaders of the Western media, as well as regional and inter-

national organizations concerned with press freedom, human rights, peace and development.

At another level, UNESCO is planning a follow-up meeting of its conference on pluralist and independent media in the Arab World. Mr. Alain Modoux, Director of the Communications Department at UNESCO, told the Yemen Times that the meeting will again take place in Sanaa, and will most probably be in January 1998.

The follow-up meeting, to which key journalists from the Middle East will be invited, will discuss progress in response to the Sanaa Declaration.



Yemen's Unesco Ambassador Dr. Al-Zain, Mr. Modoux, & YT Editor

Calls on Yemenis to Show Flexibility: Lakhdar Brahimi: "There is no open file on Yemen at the UN Security Council."

Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General to Yemen during the 1994 civil war, told the Yemen Times that there was no such thing as an open and pending file on Yemen regarding the 1994 events. He said, "That case was concluded with the Yemeni government's commitments and actions that have already allowed most of the wounds to heal."

Speaking in an exclusive interview with the Yemen Times at his residence in Paris, Lakhdar pleaded with the Yemeni politicians - both in power and in the opposition - to show flexibility in interacting among themselves. "Yemen has seen enough jolts. The country needs peace and stability. It also needs all its children without exception. I call on all of them, and most of them are old friends, to overlook their differences for Yemen's common good," he said.



Full text of interview on page 3

Great Economic Contribution Expected from Aden Free Zone

The applications for projects in the Aden Free Zone up to 31/12/1996 involve giant numbers. The projects mean a radical economic transformation in Aden. Consider the following:

1. We are talking about the creation of almost 20,000 new jobs.
2. We are talking about investing one billion US dollars and almost 20 billion Yemeni Rials.
3. We are talking about construction on a land area in excess of 20 million square meters.
4. We are talking about a new demand of some 3.6 million kilowatt hours of electricity per month.
5. We are talking about a new demand of 18 million gallons

of water per month.

6. We are talking about a new demand of 10,000 telephone lines.

For those who do not know what the Aden Free Zone means, those are the numbers. And they need no further explanation.

"Very soon, we shall start the dredging of the Ma'alla Harbor. The warehousing, industrial and other zones are in place. We are proceeding full speed with the other projects," said Mr. Dirhem Noman, Chairman of the Aden Free Zone.

Many skeptics do not believe the numbers. Or if the numbers are right, they say they are just dreams which will never come true. They point to the long time wasted

so far, and the enormous investments required to make it come true.

In reference to the lack of adequate public support, Mr. Noman appealed to all media organizations - private and government - to help build momentum.

"There are some journalists who have taken a stand against the free zone. This is partly motivated by personal grudges, as cheap as not giving their newspapers advertisements. We cannot convince such self-centered people whatever we do," was the way a senior government official put it.

Meanwhile, the clock of progress in the Aden Free Zone keeps ticking.

More details on page 7


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OUR VIEWPOINT

The Concept of Fair Play

One of the high points of any society is the ability of its members to engage in fair play. This in itself is a safeguard against violence and sabotage. Fair play, I must insist, by all power centers, not just those in power. For, sometimes, fair play is demanded more of the opposition than those in the opposition.

Therefore, for harmony, peace and stability to prevail in society, fair play is an important concept.

But what is fair play?

Fair play involves acceptance of basic rules of the game in the overall open competition in business, politics, sports, and what have you. These rules include:

1. Rule of Law:

The full application of the law is a cornerstone in fair play. One would say, 'But the law could be twisted' in which case it needs to be changed rather than un-enforced. Full and equal application of the law is a basic rule in fair play. On many occasions, people who have a grievance, and have no recourse to justice, end up working against the system. The feeling that people have been unjustly treated is the strongest driving force of hatred more than anything else.

2. Transparency and Accountability:

The operations of any

3. Evolutionary Change:

Another dimension to fair play is the need to take the gradualist evolutionary approach. Strong jolts and shocks, even by well-meaning leaders, can lead to disorientation of the general public. This means trouble. It is necessary that the values and socio-cultural beliefs of society be moulded and changed gradually.

4. Equitable Opportunity for All:

A fourth aspect of fair play is that society must offer an equitable opportunity for all. This is clear in business, but it is just as true in government positions, military recruitment, distribution of scholarships to students, etc. All members of society must be convinced that the opportunities are open to all and in an acceptably equitable way.

5. Tolerance of Differences:

Fair play also means that the powerful elements in society do not impose their wishes and visions of life on all. There must be enough breathing space for those who differ, dissent, and who are simply different. That is especial consideration for the needs of minorities is crucial.

As I started saying, fair play is often demanded of those in power. But more often than not, those in the opposition can also engage in dirty play. We do not have to go far. Here in Yemen we get ample evidence of dirty play from both camps.

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Yemen Joins China in Mourning the Passing Away of Mr. Deng

The Yemeni people, government and political leadership has joined the Republic of China in mourning the death of the great Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping. Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh was at the top list of officials who paid tribute to the Chinese leader. In a cable of condolences, the President described Mr. Deng Xiaoping as a brilliant leader whose wise policies have helped put China on a course of vitality and development.

Yemeni Prime Minister Abdulaziz Abdulghani paid a personal visit to the residence of the Chinese ambassador to pay his respects. In a short memo he wrote on the occasion, he expressed the grief and sorrow of the Republic of Yemen on the death of the leader of a very friendly country.

Other dignitaries who visited include the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Abdo Ali Abdul-Rahman (the Minister of Foreign Affairs is out of the country), Mr. Hussain Al-Maswari, Mayor of Sanaa City and the Honorary Chairman of the Yemeni-Chinese Friendship Association, and several high-ranking officials.

In addition, many intellectuals, businessmen and other public figures have paid their respects on the occasion.

Deng Xiaoping will always be remembered as the man who has engineered the present course of balanced growth and balanced relations internally and externally. "China must absorb all the achievements of human civilization," he said.



With that approach in mind, he has taken China out of its isolation and seclusion and its steered it on a course of open and positive interaction with the world.

One of the great features of the new Chinese economic policies is the reform program. This has enabled the creation of special economic zones, sending Chinese students to study abroad, and opening up the country for

investment and technology transfer. The end result of this policy is a blossoming country which has achieved the highest economic growth rate in the world over the last several years.

Another dimension to the Deng policies has been the gradual, yet firm political evolution. Slowly, the country is internalizing some of the important universal values such as human rights and respect for differences and minorities.

The country has also concluded arrangements according to which the return of Hong Kong to the motherland will be achieved on July 1, 1997.

China has also struck working relations with the Western countries, and its big neighbors - Russia and Japan. History will remember Mr. Deng as a wise leader who did not make a lot of noise, but who achieved a lot for his country.

Haliburton's Man Is Still a Hostage

Two weeks have passed and the Haliburton employee, Mr. Joe Delle-Aria, US citizen, is still in captivity. He was picked up around 2:00 p.m. on February 10th, near the Hunt KBU.

The Murad tribe which has abducted the man has no quarrel with Haliburton or Hunt. It has an axe to grind with the authorities, and is using the 'white man' as a bargaining chip. During 1997, this is the third kidnapping incident.

Another Japanese Small Projects Grant

On February 23rd, Japanese Ambassador in Sanaa Mr. Susumu Akiyama, and Mr. Mohammed Al-Khadim Al-Wajeih, Chairman of the Al-Khair Social Welfare Society, signed a contract according to which the NGO will receive US\$ 56,738.

The money will be used to improve the water supply system of Al-Ahad area in Wisab Al-Safel in Dhamar Governorate.

Sanaa University Hosts Inter-Arab University Meeting

Starting tomorrow, Tuesday, 25th February, 1997, a three-day meeting of the Third Arab Universities Gathering will take place. Some 40 researchers from 30 universities will present papers on various aspects of academia.

YSP Decides this Week

The Yemen Socialist Party will determine its position vis-a-vis the elections this week. A serious soul-searching process is now going on within the party.

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Lakhdar Ibrahimi:

“The dark clouds of the Gulf Crisis negatively affected my efforts to contain the war in Yemen.”

The 1994 Civil War of Yemen is definitely a sad phase in the country's evolution. Yemeni politicians were at each other's throats in a power struggle that has claimed many lives and brought so much destruction, in addition to the psychological scars.

Countries in the region pushed the UN Security Council to get involved, which it did, 'in order to contain the bloodshed'. One key person in the effort to contain the violence was Mr. Lakhdar Ibrahimi, special envoy of the UN Secretary-General to Yemen. Lakhdar, an Algerian national and a well-informed person on Yemeni affairs, paid several visits to the region, including two visits to Yemen during the war.

Last week, Yemen Times Chief Editor Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, paid a visit to him at his residence in Paris. They talked about the war and its aftermath.

Excerpts:

Q: Yemen now goes through a healing process of its wounds inflicted during the political crisis and civil war of 1994. You took part in trying to prevent these wounds. You were the special envoy of the UN Secretary-General to help prevent the worsening of the situation. Could you give us details about your role and exact mandate at that time?

A: First, I would like to send my greetings, through your esteemed newspaper, to my friends and brothers in Yemen.

My mission to Yemen was based on two Security Council resolutions and a special assignment by the UN Secretary-General. Officially, my task was to urge decision-makers in Yemen to lay down their arms, and resort to peaceful dialogue. In addition to that official side, I was motivated by pan-Arab, brotherly and personal feelings. I have friendships in Yemen that go back to 20 or 30 years. Some of my friends were involved in the crisis. We talked a lot about our common problems and concerns. The third aspect of my mandate had a regional dimension to it. In this respect, I also have many friendly ties with officials in countries neighboring Yemen.

I met with officials in the Arab League, Egypt, the Gulf States, Jordan, etc. Through my personal relations with these people, I tried to serve Yemen.

My task was to urgently try to stop the war. Unfortunately, I did not succeed in that. The war ran its full course till the end. However, I was able to make Dr. Abdulkareem Al-Iryani and Mr. Haidar Abubakar Al-Attas meet in my office in New York. A second meeting was also held in Cairo. But these meetings did not stop the war.

One feels sorry when a stone in Yemen is destroyed, let alone the flow of blood. The talks that took place in New York and those I had in the different capitals led to some understanding, not agreement. There was a tacit agreement that Yemen's unity had to be preserved. All parties admitted that mistakes happened, and agreed on the need to rectify them. But there was no agreement as to how to go about it.

Q: Do you think that, two years after the war, there was a particular person, side or country responsible for not ending the war? Were there any local or external forces that fuelled the continuation of the war?

A: I prefer not to delve in such a subject because it is still an area of debate in Yemen. I have no right to discuss specific names or issues. All I can say is that the war should have stopped immediately after it had started.

Q: In hindsight, what are your feelings about the war and the outcome?

A: Look, bloodshed in a sad thing, irrespective of the motives. Yet, history tells us that many nations had achieved their unity through similar shake-ups and sacrifices. The USA, to take an example, went through a bloody civil war for the preservation of its unity.

The important thing is that people should learn from the lessons and crises. They should use them as foundations for future strength. I hope that the people of Yemen will - having passed through such ordeals - come out stronger and wiser.

Q: Could you tell us about the regional and international circumstances that helped or impeded your job?

A: There is no doubt that the aftermath of the Gulf War was casting very dark shadows on the whole region. We are still suffering from the repercussions of that disaster. Feelings in the region at that time were still aflame, and the dark clouds were still very intense. Those conditions were, of course, not helpful. Things are slightly better now. One hopes that people would question themselves and learn from their harsh experiences and the exorbitant price they paid. Our contacts with Yemen's neighbors were very important. It was quite beneficial that we conveyed the regional perceptions and feelings of the neighbors to the Yemenis.

Q: Did you conclude at any stage of the negotiation that any party - in Yemen or outside - lied to you?

A: In such a crisis, one must understand the words and stances adopted by the people involved. I greatly benefited from my knowledge of the people and the region with which I had to deal. I believe that all the persons I dealt with had realized that I had no personal motive aside from helping Yemen.

Q: Now, the war is over. The then acting Prime Minister, Dr. Mohammed Saeed Al-Attar, sent his well known letter to the Security Council at the end. It contained specific commitments. Was it on that basis that the Security Council reacted to the letter and commitments?

A: The letter which I do not remember in sufficient detail now, contained many positive points. The side that won the war indicated in that letter the foundations on which future inter-Yemeni relations could be built on. This was the prevalent feeling among the Security Council members.



Q: Did the case end there?

A: There were continuous interest shown by the international community which you must have felt in Yemen. Contacts were made with Yemeni officials to urge them to heal the war wounds.

But, in answer to your question, yes, the case ended there. The subject will not be reopened out of nothing.

As far as the Security Council is concerned, the file is closed. Actually, it is incorrect to think of a closed or open file. In a sense, all countries in the world have open files or closed files. Unless there is some new crisis, the UN Security Council is not thinking of Yemen now.

Q: What dictates the involvement of the Security Council in the affairs of small countries worldwide?

A: The international atmosphere after the cold war is witnessing the beginning of the formation of a new international order. It does not exist yet. In this new emerging order, there is only one awesome superpower. People everywhere in the world are trying to find ways to deal and coexist with that power. This giant has its positive and negative points.

The second issue that could involve the UN Security Council is popular participation. People everywhere are demanding larger roles in managing their affairs

and deciding their future. Participation of the people has become a big demand, both nationally and internationally. People have rights and dignity. They are not herds to be led according to someone's whims and fancies.

In the world today, there is a new concept, which enables the world community to intervene in other countries' internal affairs for humanitarian reasons. Such a concept did not exist in the old order. Sovereignty was absolute, then.

Intervention is now also possible when the country concerned asks for help or a large proportion of its citizens demand it. Rwanda is a good case in example.

Intervention is also possible when an internal collapse takes place as is the case in few African countries. That is to say when the regime loses control of the affairs of the nation.

Finally, intervention can take place when the regime becomes deeply alienated from the people. Haiti is a good example of that.

Such factors can lead to opening the files of a particular country.

Q: You mean that the files remain closed until new developments dictate the reopening?

A: Yes, of course. But we must realize now that opening or closing of a file has no meaning anymore. Zaire participated last July in a regional conference to impose punitive measures on neighboring Burundi. Six months later, the Zaire file was opened by others. The world community can no longer remain aloof toward major crises.

Q: Yemeni opposition abroad threatens the regime in Sanaa by inviting foreign intervention. One excuse it wants to use is the disruption of the upcoming

elections. Have you been following these developments?

A: I do not know exactly who remained inside Yemen and who went abroad. All I can say to the President and all brothers that Yemen is big enough for all of its sons. All Yemenis need to participate in solving the country's problems.

Q: During the Cold War, the UN was almost paralyzed. Will it, in the new world order, be more representative of the conscience of humanity? Or will it be a tool in the hand of that very powerful superpower?

A: This is a very big question. At the end of the cold war and the fall of the Berlin Wall, there was great optimism that matters will ease a bit. This has happened to a certain extent.

The UN was paralyzed during the cold war, because of the East-West conflict. Now, the UN started to have an increasing role in world affairs. Upon his appointment as Secretary-General of the UN, Boutros Ghali was asked to submit a report about the organization's new role. His "Agenda for Peace" report came in response. There was great optimism about structural reforms in the UN to enable it to carry out its tasks.

Five years later, people discovered that the cold war did actually have some benefits.

Q: Can you name some?

A: Yugoslavia is a case in point. No one during the cold war could have anticipated the current situation in that country. Angola is another example. When the Cubans and South Africans left, that country fell into a bloody civil war. Some of the current crises could never have happened during the cold-war era. It was a mechanism to control tension.

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Judith Kipper: “The three priorities of US interests in the Middle East include oil, peace, and issues related to democracy, press freedom and human rights.”

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam, Yemen Times.

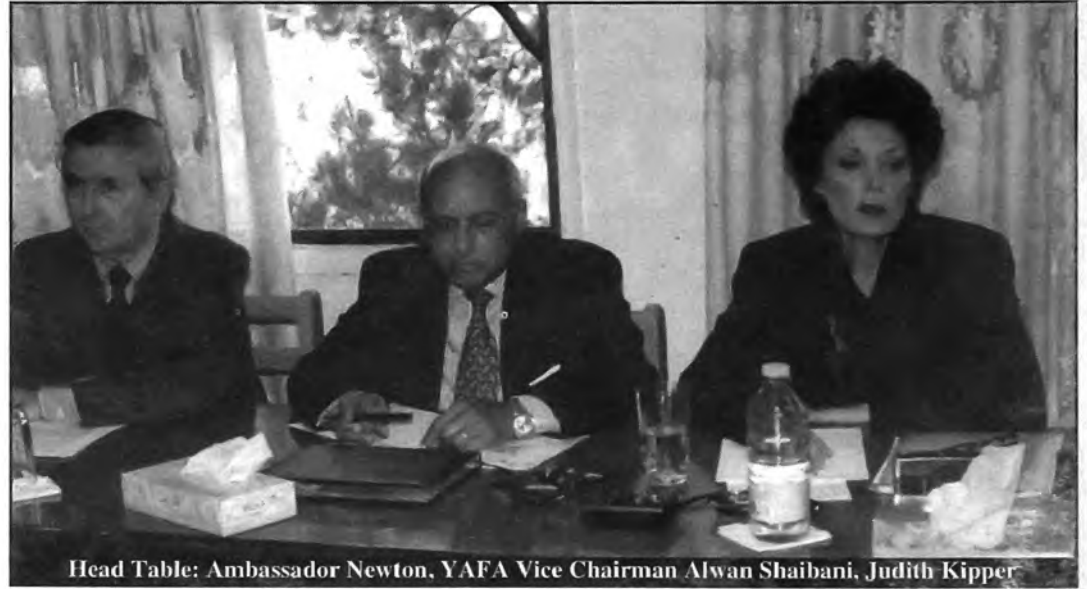
On Saturday morning, February 22nd, the Yemen American Friendship Association hosted a lecture on “US Foreign Policy Towards the Middle East”. The speaker was Ms. Judith Kipper, the well-known specialist on Middle East affairs and co-director of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, based in Washington. Attending the lecture were three other visitors from the USA, each of them a leading intellectual and

professional. These are Anne McGovern Schneider - a well-published author of children's books, with more than 50 books to her credit - Ms. Carole Hyatt - a well-accomplished business-woman and author - and Ms. Bobby Van Greenberg - a reputed artist and business-woman.

Also attending the lecture were Mr. David Newton, Ambassador of the USA in Yemen, Ms. Margorie Scobey, Deputy Chief of Mission at the US Embassy, and Mr. Rodney Thomas, Deputy Director of the USIS, in addition

to Mr. Mohammed Al-Yadumi, Secretary-General of the Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah), Mr. Abdul-Malik Al-Mikhlafi, Secretary-General of the Nasserite Unionist Party, Mr. Abdul-Malik Mansoor, Assistant Secretary-General of the People's General Congress and other politicians. From the government's side, attending the lecture were specialists from the presidential office, the foreign ministry, and others.

Finally, the lecture was attended by a select group of journalists and academicians.



Head Table: Ambassador Newton, YAFA Vice Chairman Alwan Shaibani, Judith Kipper



If we look at the whole Middle East, our policy is divided between two blocs - the Gulf region, which includes Iran, Iraq, the GCC and Yemen, and the Arab-Israeli peace process.

In the Gulf, American priorities are very clear right now beyond the free and uninterrupted flow of oil. Those priorities include economic reform, some sort of citizen participation, and economic integration among the countries of the Middle East.

In the Arab-Israeli peace process, the US plays the role of a mediator and tries to bring the parties together. The process is theoretically co-sponsored by Russia also. But it is in fact the US that is the mediator.

The region of the Middle East, with the exclusion of Israel, is the slowest growing area in the world, economically. As an example, during the age of petrodollars (1974 to 1985), the per capita income of Saudi Arabia was about \$ 19,000 annually. Today, Saudi Arabia's per-capita income is \$ 6,500. The estimates of the World Bank and the IMF indicate that Saudi Arabia, like all other countries in the region, can only hope to maintain the \$ 6,500 over the next 10 years.

With the demographics, the government deficits, the poor management of resources, the lack of

The Arab World is growing demographically far too fast for the minimal economic reform to keep up with. In Egypt, they have one million new Egyptians every 8 months. They need to create every single year 500,000 new job in Egypt.

That does not include university, those who are partially employed, unemployed, living at home and so on. The issue of demography of the rapidly growing population - and economic well-being, prosperity, ability to survive and directly linked to making reforms. The experience in the world with developing countries as well as with developed countries is that more political openness leads to, generally speaking, better economy. The one exception perhaps is China, which has a different culture.

Let us look from an American perspective as to what are the true threats to stability in the region. During the Cold War, it was the communists were coming and that there would be a US-Soviet confrontation in this area. In 1973, there almost was. The US went on the second stage of nuclear alert, and the Soviets threatened to bring forces into the region. That threat is now gone.

Today, the real threats from the

all, there is poor management of existing water resources. Secondly, because most countries do not get along with their neighbors, there is no cooperation between countries to share and better manage water resources.

The US government has to deal with other governments. It does not deal with groups or people in the street or intellectuals or opposition. In doing business, governments deal with governments. One of the problems in this part of the world is that many governments do not fully represent the people. So we see a protest movement which we have come to recognize. Often, it takes the appearance of Islamic fundamentalism. We are concerned about Islamic fundamentalism only in as far as it leads to violence. We have nothing, in the US, against Islam. We do not see Islam as an enemy. We understand the most fundamentalist country - Saudi Arabia is a moderate influence. About 99% of the people in Muslim countries are moderates. We have a problem with people who commit crimes or do violence in the name of religion.

In Lebanon, Christians have done it. In Israel, there have been some Israelis who have done it. And in the Arab World, we know that



economic reform; we see that even the wealthy countries are going to suffer.

According to the World Bank, there only 3 countries that have begun to do economic reform for survival, not for productivity or for even improving the economy. Those countries - Tunisia, Morocco and Jordan have perhaps done the best job in terms of economic reform, opening the system, privatization, democratization and to allow people to be entrepreneurs.

If we add to this rather gloomy picture of the region, we have to say that 70% of the people in the Middle East, excluding Israel, are under the age of 20. In Iran and in Egypt - both countries are of approximately 60 million - 40 million are under the age of 20. In Saudi Arabia, 20% of the population is under the age of 5.

American point of view is the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction meaning primarily chemical and biological weapons, water, lack of economic reform, demographic explosion, and lack of people's participation in the management of public affairs. The nuclear question is still there. Iran is trying to build nuclear weapon, is a very important concern for the US. But more important than nuclear weapons are biological and chemical weapons. Most of the countries of the Middle East are already in possession of chemical weapons. They are easy to launch and use, and are difficult to find.

Another threat to instability in the region is water. It is a technical issue, but the water question throughout the region is one of real desperation. First of

there some groups committing political crimes in the name of Islam. It is unacceptable. It needs to stop. It has a very important negative influence on the American view of who are the Arabs and what the Arab countries are all about.

Today we have between 3 and 4 million Muslims in the US. Probably, within ten years, American Muslims will be the second largest religious group in the US. Islam is the fastest growing religion.

So, people's participation in public affairs is an important issue.

In conclusion, let me say that this area of the world will remain of extreme importance to American interest. Today, the US has very good relations with all Middle Eastern countries, except Iran, Iraq, Libya and Sudan.



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David P. Yerzy B. A. L. L. B Barrister and Solicitor

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Tel No. 272-372 Room No. 629
Dar Al-Hikma General Services
Tel No. 273-926 or 278-493

Notice

Embassy of India, Sana'a (Yemen), has received a notice of intended marriage between Mr. Govindarasu Varadarajan, son of Late G. Govindarajan, whose permanent dwelling place is No. 6, Lawspet, Pondicherry-8, and Miss Lyn Ibea Flores, daughter of Mr. Andres S. Flores, Nanabangan Buguey, 3511 Cagayan, Philippines, under the Foreign marriages Act, 1969. Both the parties are presently residing in Sana'a, Yemen. If any person has any objection of the solemnization of the intended marriage, the same may please be sent in writing, duly signed and stating the grounds of objection, to Mr. E. Martin, First Secretary, Embassy of India, P. B. No. 1154, Sana'a, Republic of Yemen, within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice.

Below is a summary of the lecture:

US foreign policy has changed dramatically since the collapse of the Soviet Union. We no longer have a bi-polar world in which the Soviet Union and the USA compete ideologically between democracy and communism.

Today, at the beginning of the second Clinton term, we were to ask the President or Vice-President or Secretary of State what are the most important issues internationally for the US, the following would probably be what they would say:

- Expansion of NATO.
- Stability of Russia.
- A stable future in Europe with specific reference to the conflict in Bosnia.
- The situation in the Far East, especially Korea, Japan and China.
- The Middle East, notably the Gulf (for oil purposes), and the Middle East peace process.

There are two places in the world where the US always has contingency plans to use military force if necessary. These are the Gulf and the Korean Peninsula. It is a nightmare for American military planners to think about fighting a simultaneous war in those two areas.

Let me now focus on the Middle East.

First priority is the free and uninterrupted flow of oil from the Gulf. For the foreseeable future, the world will become more dependent on oil from the Gulf. At this moment, 60% of the oil from the Gulf goes to the OECD countries

The second priority is the Arab-Israeli conflict. Since 1945, before Israel was created as a state, the US developed a special relationship with Saudi Arabia centered around oil. Our other special relationship in the Middle East is with Israel. These are probably the only countries for which we are prepared to use force.

Common Sense

By: Hassan Al-Haifi

Time to Say 'Farewell to Arms'?

Like most freedom loving people, the Yemenis consider the carrying of arms an inherent human right which cannot be compromised. In fact, the carrying of personal firearms is one of the most widespread obsessions, since firearms came to replace the sword and bow and arrow as the chief tool of man to man combat.

For many traditional societies like the Arabs, Kurds, Turkomen and other peoples where tribal structures are the rule of the day, the carrying of arms is a symbolic expression of manhood and a necessity for the ego. But then, it is not just traditional societies that insist on putting the gun among the prized possession of individuals. The reasons differ from one place in the world to the next, but the possession of hand guns and small firearms has troubled law enforcement authorities throughout the world, with no apparent let-up in sight. Even in modern advanced societies, firearm possession is an important 'right', which no legislators can dare tamper with, no matter how many cold blooded murders are tallied each year, due to the availability of arms to anyone ready to pay for them.

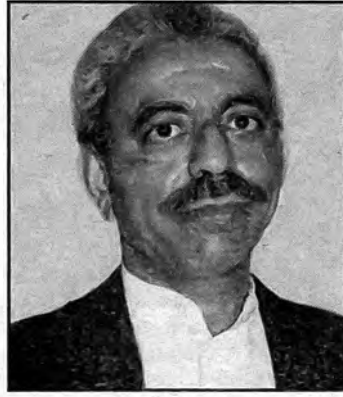
In the United States of America, there are more people owning guns of all makes, models and purposes than in any other modern society. While they are not as apparent as they were in the 19th century, when gun-toting cowboys roamed the plains of the 'wild west' to stake their claim to manhood, the fact remains that, on a per capita basis, Americans possess more firearms in their homes, than any other Western society.

This writer had the opportunity of visiting many American

homes, belonging to families from all the strata of society, and it was only on rare occasions that there were no firearms to be found in the house, with revolvers and pistols holding the lead in the cities and longer range rifles being preferred on an increasing basis as one goes further out in the rural countryside.

One visit, to the home of a highly respectable gentleman, vividly comes to mind. This classy gentleman has gone far in making himself a prominent member of his community, being engaged in several institutions, as a co-sponsor, or a member of the board of trustees. Needless to say, he has also set himself well in place in the corporate establishment, as a member of a number of boards of directors. He has just crossed the top of the mid-age line, but remains jubilant enough to create a far younger impression, but without deleting any of the wisdom of his true age. The man gave this writer and another friend from South-east Asia, who hails from a wealthy family himself, a tour of his lavish but cozy home. My Asian friend had an idea on how Yemenis valued arms and had suggested that our host show us his collection.

He lead us into a walk-in closet. There were no Oleg Cassini suits, Pierre Cardin blazers or Christian Dior ties to be seen hanging in the closet. On the wall, around the closet, from the left edge of the door to the right edge were lined up, standing, every conceivable type of rifle that one has ever heard of and quite a few of those not heard of, including the rapid fire Winchesters one has seen in cowboy films. There were single barrel and double barrel



rifles. There were single fire and automatic rifles, including the M-16, which was relatively new at the time. It would probably not be an exaggeration to state that our friend probably had a sample of every rifle that was ever manufactured in the United States over the last hundred years (1870 - 1970).

Just above this lineup of rifles, and in between those with long barrels, were hung all kinds of revolvers and pistols to a height of five feet from the ground. Above that were five shelves, each shelf being 1 foot apart from the shelf above and below, where ammunition boxes were neatly stacked.

Our friend could probably hold off an attacking army for a good couple of weeks. Yes, there were also hand grenades available, stored in 2 metal boxes, in the center of the closet. While not doubting the right of American citizens to bear arms, since one of the amendments in the Bill of Rights clearly gives this right, one wonders if our friend had gone beyond what the first group of American lawmakers had in mind.

Our friend justified the need for this right as a guarantee for all the liberties and freedoms provided by the Constitution, since only the people can be guardians of their own freedom. I wondered if he had intended to safeguard those liberties all by himself, considering the amount of weaponry he stored.

Whatever the case may be, this was just to illustrate that the level of development does not affect the extent to which men give importance to the possession of firearms.

In the Republic of Yemen,

learning how to shoot almost comes right after learning how to walk, if not at the same time. Every conceivable type of fire-welding equipment is readily available for purchase by anyone who desires to assure himself adequate self-protection. It would not be surprising to find some Yemeni tribes possessing more battle gear than some sovereign members of the United Nations. Even long range artillery is stocked by some of the more larger tribes.

There is no data to help us get an idea of the quantity of arms held by the Yemeni public, but for sure it would not be an over-statement to say that Yemenis are among the most heavily armed people in the world. One is also inclined to believe that such widespread possession of arms might be an important factor in maintaining whatever liberties the people have preserved, and surely have helped to keep the government well below the harsh autocratic character that military regimes seem to take on elsewhere.

Nevertheless, as time went on, and with the inability of the central government to assert itself as the guardian of law and order, the abundant firearm availability with the public at large, has created a chronic abuse of firearms to achieve certain objectives by their owners that are not at all of any noble standing. The Yemen Times has briefly touched on this abuse in previous articles, but the increasing number of incidents of blood revenge and accidents warrants that the issue of firearms possession be debated again by the public.

On the eve of Eid Al-Fitr, six members of the Al-Awadhi family of sheikhs (from Al-Baidha) were brutally murdered almost simultaneously, 2 of them in the heart of Sana'a for the alleged revenge of the killings carried out by members of the Al-Awadhi family, some years back. Chances are that none of those killed recently had anything to do with the killings that are being avenged, but then blood feuds were never based on real justice, in the proper sense of the word. As long as the blood that is spilled is 'related', then honor has been restored to the avenger and his clan.

It is the pre-Islamic period of ignorance at work again. The point to be made here is that blood feuds have become an increasing menace to our society, taking the lives of innocent people, when they least expect it. It has become a frightening social illness that urgently needs strong action to end the terror that has become apparent on such a widespread basis.

The head of the Al-Awadhi clan in question was out of the country at the time, but the killers had made sure to include at least one of his sons on their list of

victims. The incident only highlights a serious social predicament that threatens to ignite a full tribal civil war, unless the government and society at large take immediate remedial action to bring an end to such madness. To illustrate this madness further, an old gentleman from one of the nearby tribes around Sana'a was telling this writer of a blood feud that has been raging for about two years now.

The feud started when a young couple wanted to get married, but were not permitted to do so, due to the inability of the would be groom to come up with the exorbitant dowry demanded by the would be bride's father. The bride ran off with the groom and presumably married elsewhere. The bride's family would not have none of this 'breach of family honor' and eventually caught up with the couple to kill both! The groom's relative saw no shame in the marriage and felt obligated to avenge the death of their kin. Since the killing of the couple, there have been over forty hits of revenge and counter revenge by both clans.

The remaining clan members are constantly on the run or on the chase, depending on which clan made the last hit, making sure that they sleep with their guns ready for any attack, they might have to face, or for any opportunity that might arise for revenge. This makes the mafia wars depicted by the film, 'The Godfather' seem like child play. Thus, we have two important issues which need serious attention by the government as well as by social figures, tribal chiefs and other prominent public dignitaries -- and the sooner the better: blood feuds and the unregulated and uncontrolled possession of firearms.

The recent Al-Awadhi killings underline the seriousness of the two issues that surely spoiled the holidays for those concerned and those who witnessed or heard of the incidents. Regrettably, the official press did not see enough seriousness in the incident to inform the public of this latest case of civil unrest, especially as one of the victims was the son of a prominent national figure, Sheikh Ali Al-Awadhi, brother of the famous revolutionary hero, Ahmed Abdurabbo Al-Awadhi. Sheikh Ali has in the last few years taken a very pious path and has constantly sought ways to win the Lord's favor by acts of charity and goodwill that attest to the man's genuine fealty. This is in addition to the fact that the gentleman has a well known reputation of serving the people of his area by having important development works carried out in Al-Baidha province.

One who has known the Sheikh is inclined to believe that whoever carried out the murders would have been better off seeking the Sheikh's assistance in

seeking justice and bringing an end to the blood war, since the man is a pious and honorable man, who would have been more than happy to add such a service to his list of many services meted out for the constituents of Al-Baidha. One who knows the Sheikh is also inclined to believe that he would have had nothing to do with the killing that instigated this madness from Al-Baidha. It is for certain that the law enforcement agencies will take note of this tragic incident and will take all the necessary steps to resolve this and all the pending blood feuds that threaten the stability of the entire country, not just Al-Baidha Governorate.

This brings us back to the issue of armaments. Legislation is urgently needed to regulate the possession of firearms which the public is allowed to buy and carry, when they may be carried and where they should be kept. Moreover as Lt.-Colonel Yahia Al-Mutawakkil said, when he was Minister of the Interior, it is inconceivable to ask citizens to put down their guns when big politicians, sheikhs and dignitaries insist on moving about with convoys of heavily armed escorts as guards. Possible suggestions along this line could include:

1) No one is allowed to carry any rifles into any city, even if one has a permit to carry such weapons.

2) Anyone believing that he must have guards should only be allowed to have two guards at the most, and then only carrying pistols that are duly registered.

3) All weapons beyond personal arms should be turned over to the government with just compensation given as an incentive. On a similar note, anyone using heavy weapons for any reason should be severely punished, and such weapons should be confiscated without any compensation.

4) No armaments are to be borne on main national roads, except licensed revolvers, which should be only allowed to those who can prove that they are seriously in danger of being attacked, or carrying large amounts of money.

More important the official media should pay more attention to these issues and should start public awareness campaigns to show the ugliness of blood wars and the tragedies that come with careless attitudes of arms possession and handling.

The time has come when Yemenis must say farewell to arms, before our streets become smeared with the blood stains of mostly innocent people who seek nothing more than peaceful lives, which the government has, for the most part, failed to guarantee. The right to stable and peaceful lives takes precedence to any other right and surely the right to bear arms, for the sake of the ego.



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Hadhramaut Hotel in Mukalla Honors Outstanding Employees

In an effort to create incentives for excellence, Hadhramaut Hotel in Mukalla honored several of its outstanding employees. Last month's honor list includes Mr. Ahmed Al-Herdi, Executive Assistant Manager, Saeed Salem Al-Kelali, Public Relations, and Nabil Saeed Jaber, Assistant Chef.

On this occasion, Mr. Fareed Perera, General Manager, told the Yemen Times that the hotel management's will continue to implement policies that encourage employees to provide the best of services to our guests.



Progress at the Aden Free Zone!

The Aden Free Zone is one of the promises on which Yemen pins a lot of hope. Now it is up to Mr. Dirham Noman, Chairman of the Aden Free Zone, to help make the dream become a reality.

Ridhwan Al-Saqqaf, Yemen Times Aden Bureau Chief, interviewed Mr. Noman and filed the following report.

Q: Let us start with a direct question. What do you expect to achieve from establishing a free zone in Aden?

A: Establishing any new installation or economic enterprise must have some vital objectives behind it. This is more true of the Free Zone in Aden. I can summarize the aims in two dimensions - national and international.

On the national level, it is hoped that the Free Zone will help Aden regain its former grandeur in the navigation business and in industrial activity. This will hopefully lead to improving the living standards of the people of Aden, in particular, and of Yemen in general. As the adjacent table shows, it will help create more new jobs and increase business - all of which will reflect itself positively on the standard of living. There will be a tremendous linkage effect and spin-off business which will invigorate the economy.

In addition to all of that, the Free Zone will help train an increasing pool of workforce and develop the local management ability. At the international level, the Free Zone will lead to integrating Aden within the wider world economic system. This will eventually lead to Aden regaining its position as a world trade center.

Q: Could you provide us with more information about the ongoing dredging of the Ma'alla Harbor? And what about the container terminal and the many other projects intended for near future?

A: The dredger is here in accordance with the deal signed with Yeminvest. This deal includes deepening the present port as well as the new platforms for the docking port. This port is specified in the deal as a container port with 6 platforms. An industrial storage area within the "J" zone is also included in the deal which will, along with the new port, be established according to international technical standards and specifications.



Q: Can we regard 1997 as the year for launching the Free Zone enterprise? What are the projects intended for this year?

A: This year will represent - as you rightly said - the launching year of the Aden Free Zone. We will witness, God willing, the execution of at least the two projects I mentioned earlier. Preliminary and design studies will be conducted for ascertaining the feasibility of other projects. The most crucial issue here is to establish good administration based on modern ways and methods. This will only happen with the help of international expertise. The World Bank and other donors will help finance this effort.

Q: What are the major applications you have received so far?

A: We have received many offers that cover the whole range of activities in the Free Zone. You can refer to the table provided below for more information.

Q: It seems that there is a lot of UK interest in Aden. Do you see any possibility of attracting companies?

A: We welcome UK companies and those of other nationalities. We are trying our best to provide all necessary incentives.

Q: What difficulties do you face in conducting your work?

A: The pressing problem is lack of financing for infrastructure.

Total Applications for Investing in the Aden Free Zone up to 31/12/1996

SECTOR OF INVESTMENT	NUMBER OF PROJECT APPLICATIONS	Required/Investible Capital		Required Area in Square Meters			Required Personnel		Required Utilities/Communications			
		in 1000 Rials	in US Dollars	Land-area	Warehouses	Offices	Local	Foreign	Electricity kw/month	Water gal/month	Tel/Fax Lines	Telex Lines
Industry	107	3,865,785	376,684,991	10,244,284	723,120	187,400	8,589	1,656	1,588,422	9,172,652	933	111
Trade	166	3,943,222	213,273,333	2,144,286	175,180	32,280	2,271	250	1,323,000	438,590	2,021	458
Storage	69	1,884,120	59,212,360	778,720	329,800	21,320	1,149	137	497,370	92,320	568	140
Tourism	33	4,789,400	246,813,500	2,633,290	1,200	300	2,209	392	85,850	1,313,140	604	59
Residential Services	17	3,405,500	33,511,141	2,016,460	---	2,000	1,051	260	21,270	1,437,050	4,734	25
Services, Vocations and Professions	60	1,097,800	67,680,000	595,550	2,600	3,480	1,714	197	142,725	400,430	800	140
TOTAL	482	19,011,127	997,242,295	18,413,090	1,234,900	246,780	16,983	2,892	3,568,637	17,854,152	9,466	925

Source: General Department of Investment Projects, Aden Free Zone

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Guidelines for Drug Control Worldwide

Drug traffic has become one of the nightmares of societies and law enforcement agencies worldwide. The battle against drug traffic has become a daily news item on television bulletins and reports in newspapers.

The advanced Western countries are now locked in endless battles with drug lords who invade unsuspecting societies. The intensely secretive networks of drug groups in Afghanistan, Burma or the Andes Mountains in South America have become prime topics for movies.

Yet, it is not just illegal drug trafficking that has been the problem. Abuse of legally-sanctioned medicines has also become a major headache. What happened in Sanaa two weeks is a case in point, when more than a dozen Ukrainians died from drinking medicine with high alcohol and poisonous content. The World Health Organization (WHO) has now started the dis-

tribution of model guidelines to its member countries in order to facilitate international donations of essential medicines containing narcotic or psychotropic substances that are needed to treat victims of natural and man-made disasters.

International movements of such drugs are strictly controlled by national authorities and international bodies. Narcotics such as morphine and pethidine are among the strongest painkillers available to emergency victims, but are severely addictive and hence closely regulated by international conventions.

Psychotropic drugs like sedatives and tranquilizers, although less addictive than narcotics, are increasingly being regulated in a similar fashion by national authorities. Other emergency drugs which are not under international control but which are subject to restrictions in some countries include ketamine, an

injectable anaesthetic used in field surgery, and ergometrine, an agent that reduces haemorrhaging in women after giving birth.

The guidelines will assist national authorities in simplifying their regulatory procedures for such donations, which at present make the quick international transport of controlled drugs to sites of emergency virtually impossible. The lack of these medicines results in additional human suffering, by depriving those in need of adequate supplies of pain relief and sedation.

The procedures set forth in the guidelines allow selected suppliers of these controlled medicines -- acting at the request of recognized humanitarian relief agencies -- to make international shipments in emergency situations without prior export/import authorizations, following procedures acceptable to control authorities and the International

Narcotics Control Board (INCB).

Currently, international shipments of humanitarian supplies, which contain these drugs are regarded by control authorities as "exportation", and as such require prior import documents from the recipient country.

This procedure often takes too long to meet the urgent needs of relief work, especially when control authorities in the recipient country are rendered inactive by an emergency situation, or are unable to issue import documents for inhabitants in the disaster-stricken area of the country. As a consequence, all humanitarian aid agencies, including WHO, have abandoned the provision of

narcotic drugs in their emergency medical supplies.

WHO brought this issue to the attention of the INCB in an effort to find a solution. In its 1995 report, the INCB recommended that in emergency situations, the control for these drugs be limited to the exporting countries. The principle was subsequently endorsed by the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, and in May 1996 the World Health Assembly - WHO's highest governing body composed of representatives of all the 190 member states - adopted a resolution requesting WHO to prepare model guidelines to assist national authorities in simplifying their regulatory procedures.

The new guidelines were drafted at a consultation convened by WHO in September 1996 in Geneva. They were discussed and approved at an international consultation of national drug regulatory authorities (8th ICDRA) held in Bahrain in November 1996, which recommended their trial implementation.

The first trial implementation will happen during 1997, when several humanitarian emergency efforts will use the guidelines. Case in point is the Rwanda-Burundi assistance.

But the world is still a long way from controlling the illegal drug traffic, originating in the Mountains of South America and Central Asia. Still the new guidelines are an important milestone.

BE CAREFUL OF INFECTIVE ENDOCARDITIS

By: Dr. Wang Ancai
Chinese Medical Team
Al-Qatan Hospital

Approximately 3000 to 4000 cases occur annually in Yemen and the number may be increasing. An increasing number of patients (about 50%) are over 50 years of age.

Infective endocarditis usually refers to bacterial infection of the heart valves. Infections, chlamydiae or rickettsiae also occur although less frequently. Terms such as acute and sub-acute bacterial endocarditis are now less because they ignore non-bacterial agents and are redundant.

The clinical manifestations of ineffective endocarditis are protean and nonspecific, and relate to infection and cardiac dysfunction. Fever is common and may be associated with chills or musculoskeletal symptoms. Other features such as anorexia, weight loss, cough and dyspnea, hemoptysis and chest or abdominal pain may occur. A range of peripheral stigmata are described which may be relatively specific, e.g. Osler's nodes, Janeway lesions, or nonspecific, e.g. Clubbing, petechiae, leucocytoclastic vasculitis or splinter hemorrhage.

Risk Factors

Any patient with damage to the endocardium is at increased risk of infective endocarditis. The coincidence of tissue damage from turbulent blood flow or a foreign body, and lesions or procedures that introduce pathogens are therefore common risk factors.

- Rheumatic heart diseases, especially mitral valve, are responsible for 75% of adult cases in developing countries, but for only 25% of cases in the developed countries

- Cogenital heart diseases, especially bicuspid aortic valve in the elderly, account for up to 25% of cases.

- Mitral valve prolapse increases the risk of infective endocarditis eight-fold, and is an important cardiac condition associated with chronic infective endocarditis in adults.

- Degenerative cardiac lesions, e.g. postinfarction mural thrombus, calcified mitral valve annulus, arteriosclerotic nodules account for most of the remaining pre-disposing cardiac lesions.

- Pre-existing, dental cavities is a prominent risk factor.

- Intravenous drug abusers have become new risk groups.

- Prosthetic cardiac valves are an increasingly important risk factor. Up to 4% of the valves are infected in the first year, about 33% of these within 60 days, and 1% yearly thereafter. Mitral or aortic mechanical or porcine prosthetic valves are probably equally at risk. Vascular shunts and fistulas, intracardiac pacemakers or catheters, and intravenous lines may become infected.

High-risk patients should maintain good dental hygiene and carry an antibiotic card to alert medical and dental practitioners, and receive antibiotics before undergoing a procedure associated with bacteremia because infective endocarditis occurs when pathogens are introduced into the circulation, exposing a susceptible intracardiac or intravascular lesion to attachment and colonization.

HEALTH & SOCIETY

by: Aneesa Ghanim

While I was roaming about the corridors of Al-Thawra Hospital in Sana'a to get a medical report from one of the specialized doctors in the heart surgery department for a relative who needed medical treatment abroad, I was shocked with what I saw. I was surprised to learn that many cases are treated abroad.

Curiosity led me to chat with Dr. Abdul Wahab Al-Olufi, Deputy General Manager of the hospital and a specialist of heart diseases. He stated that it is of great importance to reduce sending patients abroad for such cases which cost a lot of hard currency. In the past, some heart surgery was done in Al-Thawra hospital but now such operations have been stopped. We need specialized clinic centers for heart, cancer and kidney diseases.

The question which is put for discussion is "Why don't we have such specialized centers in our country? Why don't we have full hospital services provided with all the modern equipment to perform such surgical operations?"

The slogan of the Ministry of Health is "Health for all" but this requires transforming the talk into action. The concerned persons in the ministry of health should take steps towards purchasing modern equipment and apparatuses to cope with the civilized world.

Regarding the use of herbs as medicines, Dr. Olufi pointed out that herbs play a vital role in the treatment of a number of diseases. For this reason, the ministry of health should take its role in specifying certain clinics and specialists to practice under its supervision. The complication does not lie in non-availability of doctors who are qualified, but in the non-availability of equipment and facilities to treat the patients.

The other complication lies in the quality of health services which are provided to the citizens. There is also a pressure load on the hospitals. In other words, demand is far greater than supply. The number emergency patients reach 400-500 cases daily in Sanaa alone. This sort of load impedes the improvement in quality of service.

Private clinics and hospitals do offer some relief, and they might provide better services to patients. But they don't have a full-fledged treatment and they do not perform difficult surgical operations. There should be measures and regulations to push the private medical industry to upgrade and modernize the service.

Up to date, there are no measures for the apprenticed doctors and newly-graduated assistance to spend a minimum training period under the supervision of experienced doctors. This is the responsibility of the ministry of health, Colleges of Medicine and the medical syndicate.

There should also be certain requirements for opening private clinics. A supervision/sponsoring authority should specify the wages, qualifications, and support facilities.

The citizen is the victim of these conditions. We don't want to blame anybody off the cuff. We call for important measures in order to enable this profession protect its humanitarian dimension.

تهنئة من الأعماق

أجمل التهاني وأطيب التبريكات للأخ
صبري محمد أحمد المستني
بمناسبة عقد قرانه الميمون

المهنؤون:

عماد أحمد عبدالله السقاف،
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SHERATON SANA'A HOSTS TRAINING SEMINAR FOR MANAGERS: Emphasis on Localization



Q: How many participants will take part in the seminar? What about the duration?

A: 20 training managers and 2 trainers. The duration is 3 full days of training, where the participants will be in groups. On the fourth day all the participants get together for the cultural aspect of the training seminar. The essence of the last phase is to familiarize the senior training staff of Sheraton hotels in the area with the cultural surroundings of the host hotel: to learn about the culture in and around Sana'a.

Q: Does ITT-Sheraton have a centralized training program, especially for its hotel supervisory or management staff?

A: Because Sheraton hotels are global, we have found that having each hotel conduct training at the premises to be more effective. We also have continuous training in the form of seminars such as this one, HUB training programs, usually conducted by a training manager of one of the hotels in a number of hotels in a specific area to instill new ideas for the respective management and supervisory personnel in the respective hotels, on

this has six parts. It is a comprehensive training package which includes the tools that enable the potential supervisors the ability to change things: flow charts, 'Situation leadership', 'Progress through people', 'Force-field Analysis', etc.

Q: What exactly is 'Force-field Analysis'?

A: It is something which everybody calls common sense. As you know people resist change. What we tell the trainees is that to overcome the difficulties of bringing in change, they have to prepare for them. It embodies foretelling what will occur by bringing in change: the obstacles or resistant forces and how they can be overcome.

Q: How do you assess the performance of Sheraton Sana'a considering the novelty of hospitality service a la Sheraton class?

A: Actually the situation is the same for the entire area, but you should remember that hospitality is well entrenched in the culture. This is so, especially in Yemen, where people are, generally, generous, polite and very hospitable. As far as hospitality is concerned, this part of the world is far ahead of the West, form a cultural standpoint. We have no problems in communicating to the trainees and in getting successful performance from our local staff.

Q: Do you find staff turnover a problem?

A: We do not really worry about it. We have a high turnover situation, mainly at the front office. As for the staff that move on to other hotels, we take pride in having people trained by us get the jobs that fulfill their aspirations and upgrade the trade in the country.

Q: What are Sheraton's views and policies towards localization of staff?

A: Whenever it is possible, Sheraton finds it more advantageous to fill position spots from the local market. We start by looking at the local laws and statutes that regulate staffing as the minimal guidelines, from which we move to go beyond those requirements. Part of our training managers' job is to select potential staff who can take on greater responsibilities and accordingly train those staff to take on the positions they are best qualified for, once the spot is available. Thus if an expatriate has completed his assignment in a particular hotel, the local staff member is already available who can take his place. For Sheraton, localization means more effective and more efficient management performance, less costs and better bottom line results. I have been informed that, recently, a Yemeni has been promoted to the important position of Assistant Sales Director at Sheraton Sana'a.

Q: How much is spent by Sheraton on training?

A: Again, the amount will vary from situation to situation, but a corporate guideline of 2% of Gross Operating Profit is regarded as appropriate.

Q: How many visits have you made to Yemen? What are your impressions?

A: This is already my fourth visit to Yemen in four years. Yemen is fascinating. I look forward to the opportunity of making a private visit in order to be able to see the entire country with all its beautiful and historic sites, which I intend to do, In sha Allah.

Training Managers in the hospitality trade have one of the hardest jobs in the business. These people have to make sure that the recruitment personnel were not wrong in hiring the people that will operate and manage the hotel. For a global chain like the ITT-Sheraton, the trainers are responsible for making sure that the staff can maintain the standards the chain has set for itself and to maintain the competitive edge that makes the hotel chain one of the largest chains in the world. Sheraton Sana'a is a member of the Europe, Middle East and Africa



division and has become one of the most favorite for sponsoring regional corporate events, conferences and seminars. This week the hotel is hosting the annual Pan Arabian Training Managers get-together. Miss Annette Mosher, the divisions' training director was also in attendance. She was kind enough to allow the YT following interview:

Q: Can you briefly tell us what brings to Sana'a?

A: I am here to bring training managers of the region together to get them to share their experiences, problems and successes with each other. This is an annual meeting for the exchange of good ideas.

It also represents an opportunity to roll out any new programs and to get the training managers in the Middle East to catch up on with the latest corporate developments, such as the strategies that came out of the recent meeting of the Sheraton big brass in New York.

In addition, the participants will be trained in a new quality initiative for the Middle East and Africa region called 'Progress Through People'.

a hotel by hotel basis.

Q: How many Sheraton hotels fall under your management as far as training is concerned?

A: 34 in Africa and the Middle East and 76 in Europe.

Q: Can you give us an idea of the training programs that exist for the incoming potential supervisory staff or lower grade staff?

A: We first start with orientation. Then the trainee goes through a program we call SGSS: Sheraton Guest Satisfaction System. This entails the basics of interacting with the guests and with the fellow staff with a view towards achieving customer satisfaction. Then we move to SGSS 2000 which is really a more sophisticated form of interaction; again between the guest and the staff and the staff with each other. We also introduce the staff to basic marketing and other skills they will need to do their jobs properly. For those staff with supervisory potential, there is what we call 'Leadership at Sheraton' which works towards developing supervisory capabilities for front-line supervisors.

Asma Al-Basha: Honored for Effort on Women's Issues

By Ahlam Al-Mutawakil,
Yemen Times.

Ms. Asma Al-Basha, the Director-General of the Legal Affairs Department at the Ministry of Planning and Development, was selected by the American Biographical Institute - a publisher of biographical work since 1967 - as one of a few men and women of this decade. Her name has been recommended for inclusion in the 7th edition of the International Directory of Distinguished Leadership by the institutes editorial board. According to a letter from the institute to Ms. Al-Basha, the selection is based entirely upon merit and the fine example she is setting for her peers and society. A handsome commemorative award is made available to her specifically recognizing her outstanding achievements.

Ms. Al-Basha is a member of the Permanent Committee of the People's General Congress.

"I am very happy to have been selected for this award," she said. She did not actually submit her CV to the American Biographical Institute. Actually, she was not aware of the process, and was surprised to have been chosen. She had won many other awards previously. This award has a lot to do with the volunteer and charitable activities of Ms. Al-Basha. Her efforts were appreciated and rewarded by such diverse bodies as the Ministry of Social Insurance, the Ministry of Planning and the Central Statistics Organization.

Working with the blind, handicapped, poor and the Human Rights Organizations represent a major field of activity for Mrs. Al-Basha.

"I consider this work as a humanitarian and national duty," she indicated.

She also writes frequently on women's affairs in relation to law and development. She is especially concerned with the promotion of the social status and economic opportunities open to women in the Yemeni society.

"I ask all Yemenis to do more in order to mobilize the 50% represented by women in our society.

The satisfaction one gets out of doing this kind of voluntary social work is more important to me than any awards I am given," Ms. Al-Basha proudly declared.

Even then, she thanked the international organization which gave her the award as "it will be an encouragement for all people to take part in humanitarian deeds."

Ms. Al-Basha plans to run for parliament in the coming elections on the PGC slot, and it is believed she will smoothly make it.



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PPP Agrees to Sit in New Parliament

Former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) participated in the new parliament which opened its maiden session last week.

The MPs-elect of the PPP had decided to participate, in a reversal of earlier suggestions that they might not take up seats because of claims that the elections were manipulated. The PPP participation was motivated by the need to influence the election of the speaker and deputy speaker of the National Assembly.

Independent international monitors endorsed the polls. Bhutto, who was ousted by President Leghari in November on charges of corruption and misrule, has also indicated she does not plan to contest the elections, and offered to cooperate with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in the interests of the country.

At another level, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif rejected a proposal to impose additional taxes in the forthcoming budget. The proposal of imposing up to 12.5 billion Rupees in taxes came from the officials of the Finance Ministry and the Central Board of Revenue.

The prime minister told the officials concerned that his government will neither raise the rate of existing taxes nor will it impose any new tax.

He insisted, however, that his government would ensure better collection of the existing taxes and duties during the current fiscal year to increase the country's financial resources.

Various important decisions were taken to enhance the role of the private sector in the economy.

Senior officials of the Finance Ministry also discussed in length with the financial wizard, senator Sartaj Aziz, the prevailing financial situation in the country. Discussions were also held on various decisions of the government with regard to the country's economy and some important financial matters.

Key officials of the Nawaz Sharif Government are planning to take many decisions while reviewing the present fiscal and monetary structures, but only after receiving the report of the Taxation Commission - presently being prepared by the Finance Ministry. The report is likely to be submitted to the government later this year.

Meanwhile, the competition for the post of leader of the opposition in parliament continues unabated. Former caretaker Prime Minister Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi is struggling hard to clinch the prestigious position - which is also called prime minister-in-waiting in a parliamentary democracy - by mobilizing the independents and members of the small parliamentary parties to put up a group bigger than the Pakistan People Party led by Benazir Bhutto.

The PPP has only 18 members, all from Sindh. If Jatoi succeeds in bringing together the independents and members of smaller parties, he can easily form a larger parliamentary group than that of the PPP.

Jatoi's move is obviously meant to prevent Bhutto from becoming leader of the opposition. If he succeeds, her position in the National Assembly will be affected, but she may not be much damaged in the public eye. If Bhutto is deprived of this opportunity, the opposition under Jatoi may be less effective in a house which is predominately occupied by the Pakistan Muslim League party of Nawaz Sharif.

Mahdi Calls for Interim Govt, to be Followed by Plebiscite Plan for Sudan

The Sudanese opposition factions have agreed among themselves to set up a four-year transitional government after the fall of the present regime then immediately hold a referendum on whether to keep the country united, a senior opposition leader disclosed. Sadeq Al-Mahdi, a former prime minister, said last week that he believed his ally, rebel leader John Garang, wanted a united Sudan in which his people would have full rights.

"After four years of working together, we will conduct a referendum to determine the future of Sudan. The transitional period will be a sort of a test to consolidate confidence among the Sudanese people and end injustice against southerners."

"There is a possibility they (the southerners) will vote for a separate state. But I am optimistic that the decision will be a renewal of confidence in Sudan's unity," he said. He added that Garang, leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Army, strongly advocated unity provided he got assurances from the new government.

"Garang has no reservations at all against the fact that the majority of the Sudanese are Muslims. But all that he says is that he does not want any ambitions to harm their rights," Mahdi said.

Sudanese armed opposition forces led by Garang have kept up pressure on the government of President Omar Hassan Al-Bashir since they launched one of their biggest offensives in east and south Sudan. Khartoum has accused Ethiopian and Eritrea of backing the opposition but both countries have denied any involvement.

Mahdi and other opposition leaders are touring Arab states, most of which have told them the conflict in Sudan is an internal affair. Mahdi denied there was a peace initiative by President Sheikh Zayed ibn Sultan Al-Nahayan of the United Arab Emirates, whom he met last week. He said Sheikh Zayed had only offered what he called an advice to the warring factions.

Sudanese rebel forces have captured a large swathe of land on Sudan's eastern border since launching an offensive early last month. Meanwhile, Bashir has toured Sudanese towns and inspected forward army positions in southern and eastern Sudan. The idea is to boost military morale and increase confidence of the army.

Both sides - the army and the rebel forces are dug-in in long trenches along the Eritrean and Ethiopian borders, inside the Sudan. So far, the Khartoum government has failed to eject the opposition forces, in spite of warnings and threats of massive launches and attacks.

Meanwhile, overtures from both sides are expected to lead to serious negotiations over the next few weeks. "A stalemate on the ground is proof that neither side can dislodge the other," said an official of the Arab League. "Therefore, talks are the only venue open to them, unless they want to commit suicide."

The opposition's blueprint of a transitional government to replace the current Khartoum system, and its acceptance of a possible session of the South are two aspects of the plan which the Omar Al-Bashir regime has rejected off the cuff. "But that is simply a starting position for the opposition in its negotiations."

Arabs Agree to Set Up Free Trade Zone

Arab economy Ministers agreed in talks last week on the creation of a much-delayed free trade zone. The project will be launched on January 1, 1998, the UAE Minister of Economy Saeed Ghobash said. "We announce the creation of a greater Arab free trade zone over the next 10 years, starting on January 1, 1998," Ghobash told reporters at the Cairo headquarters of the Arab League.

Custom duties on inter-Arab trade flows will be reduced by 10% each year over the next decade, he said, calling on all Arab countries, financial organizations and other specialized groups to take the necessary legal, procedural and other steps in this regard.

A ministerial committee chaired by Jordan and comprising of Egypt, Syrian, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and the UAE will follow up on the decision. A call for the creation of an Arab free trade zone was first launched 50 years ago.

Inter-Arab trade represents only 7% of trade relations between the Arab countries and other nations, the Secretary General of the Arab League's Council for Arab Economic Unity, Hassan Ibrahim, said. "Arab countries actually do not trade with each other." The picture with respect of inter-Arab joint ventures and project investments is even more dismal.

The plan calls for a series of measures to implement a 1981 convention to develop trade relations between Arab countries. To date, only 16 of the Arab League's 22 member countries have adopted this convention.

"The creation of a free-trade zone has become an absolute necessity because of the globalization of the world economy," Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdel Meguid said, in an address to the Economy Ministers gathered in Cairo last week. "The Arab states are determined to work hand-in-hand in order to be able to deal with the world's economic blocs, particularly after the creation of the WTO," Abdel Meguid continued. "All the conditions are right to set up the free trade zone. Even if it will only see the light of day in 10 years time, the important thing is that the engine has been set in motion," he added, cautioning against haste.

Saeed Ghobash earlier underscored the need to "develop the capabilities of the Arab world so that it could join foreign partnerships on an equal footing." Ghobash deplored "the lack of coordination between the Arab countries at the first WTO meeting "which was held in November, 1996, in Singapore, saying that this had undermined their ability to defend their common interests. "The WTO allowed regional groups to launch collective negotiations for economic cooperation and this means we must re-organize inter-Arab trade," Ghobash said.

Unfortunately, there are many Arab decisions on economic cooperation. Yet, none of them have been fully implemented. Even countries so close to each other as the Gulf Cooperation Council states have failed to forge ahead close economic ties, and their economies continue to be sucked in to the major world giants like the USA, Japan and Europe.

It is in this light that most experts and observers do not pin much hope on the new decision. As one Yemeni official put it, "Seeing is believing."

Government Stock Farm Plan Opposed

A team of environmental scientists has asked the government to move its planned stock farm to a place other than General Tinio in Nueva Ecija to avoid disrupting the ecology and communities there.

The team from the University of the Philippines in Los Banos said the P\$ 50 million (\$1.9 million) project would result in "severe" ecological damage and decline in agricultural production in the town.

It will also dislocate residents of Barangay Palale and negatively affects the water supply of four other communities, it said in a position paper made available to the press last week.

The Department of Agriculture plans to put up the stock farm to breed imported cattle for distribution to farmers. The scientists advised the department not to disturb the residents.

"They are not bothering anybody. They are utilizing the natural resources in the most environment-friendly way possible. Now they are about to be evicted from their farms. This is the most unwise if not harmful to their farms," the paper said.

Led by Dr. Rodolfo Cuevas of the UPLB Institute of Environmental Science and Management, the team conducted last December an appraisal of the area in response to the request of a non-governmental group helping the General Tinio villagers.

The Government is now re-assessing its modernization plan in the region. A response in the form of an official decision is not expected until mid-year.

Qatar to Mediate between the US and Iran

The state of Qatar, which maintains close ties to both the United States and Iran, has launched an initiative to mediate between Washington and its arch-foe. A senior Gulf diplomat in Doha said last week. "Qatar has undertaken mediation efforts between the United States and Iran to smooth relations."

He said Qatar's Emir Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani sent letters to Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and US President Bill Clinton urging an easing of tensions between Tehran and Washington.

Todd Schwartz, deputy chief of mission at the United States embassy in Doha, said, "We have the Swiss (interest section) in Tehran and they (the Iranians) have (an interest section) in Washington. We meet them in the Hague. We don't need intermediaries to open a dialogue. But if somebody makes an effort we appreciate it."

"The problem lies in Tehran. If they want to open a dialogue to normalize relations we would welcome it. But so far as we are concerned, we are not aware of any move at the government level to open such a dialogue."

Iranian diplomats were not immediately available for comment.

Washington has launched a political and economic campaign to isolate Iran, accusing it of supporting terrorism and seeking to obtain nuclear weapons. Iran denies the charges and accuses the United States of aiming to destroy its Islamic government.

Rafsanjani said on Wednesday that he could not foresee any easing in strained relations with the United States.

More Killings in Algeria

An Algerian Army offensive using helicopters and ground troops in the rugged northeastern region of Tamesguida killed more than 60 extremists last week. Army helicopters fired at extremists holed up in a hilly forest 65 kilometers southwest of Algiers and troops moved in at the weekend to kill more than 60 of them in their hideouts.

Tamesguida is a stronghold of extremists in Media province. The extremists stormed an army barracks in Tamesguida in 1993 killing at least 22 soldiers by cutting their throats. They also slaughtered 12 Croatian workers there the same year.

News reports said the operation was part of an offensive to wipe out extremists the authorities blame for killing more than 300 people in Algiers and neighboring towns and villages in the past month.

Security forces killed seven extremists of Friday when they stormed a rebel hideout in Cherarba, 40 km south of Algiers, the newspaper said. More than 170 extremists have been killed, according to Algerian newspaper reports, since President Liamine Zeroual on Jan. 24 vowed to wipe out the extremists.

The extremist terrorists on their side killed more than 600 persons during the 'holy' month of Ramadhan in various offensives against military/security personnel and civilians. The terror has now become so pervasive that civilians now carry different weapons in order to protect themselves.

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Copies of the specification and drawings, if any, of the aforesaid invention maybe obtained upon application to the above-mentioned owners.

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OUR WORLD REVOLVES AROUND YOU

A Glance at the Commonwealth

By: Mohammed H. Qassim

Speculation regarding Yemen's application to join the Commonwealth of Nations has been growing since the early 1996. This was partly prompted by an unprecedented British interest in the country. This was in the form of visits by British prominent officials as well as businessmen and others to this country. The rumors have prompted me to write a short article to shed a little bit of light on this unique multi-racial bloc.

THE NATURE OF THE COMMONWEALTH:

As most of us know, the Commonwealth of Nations is simply an association of independent self-governing nations which has evolved from the liquidation of the former British Empire. The rapid decolonization during the three decades which followed the Second World War, increased the membership from 7 members in 1947, to 18 in 1964 and to 53 members at the moment.

Supposedly, the members enjoy equal status regardless of their size, natural resources and economics and social progress. In fact, the group is so widely that is hard to see what brings these countries together.

Consider, for example, what Canada and Ghana have in common. What does Australia have in common with Jamaica? What does India have in common with Trinidad & Tobago?

CRITICS OF THE COMMONWEALTH:

Radical critics inside and outside the Commonwealth countries, consider it as a tricky arrangement for a new form of imperialism. But this radical view can easily be challenged on the following grounds:

1. Prior to independence, the former colonies were entirely free as to whether or not to be

members of the Commonwealth. Some ex-colonies preferred not to be. For example, Burma in 1947, Sudan in 1956 and the Southern part of Yemen in 1967. A major country which is a former British colony which has decided not to join the Commonwealth is the USA.

2. Any member is entitled to leave the Commonwealth if so desired for whatever reason, as was the case with the Irish Republic in 1949, South Africa in 1961, and Pakistan in 1972.

3. No member country is obliged to follow blindly the British Government's foreign policy or support its action against another country, if such action appears to be wrong or harmful to the national interests of the member concerned. We may recall that Canada whose Head of State is still the British Monarch, and all the Afro-Asian members of the Commonwealth were strongly and openly opposed to Anthony Eden's crazy decision in the Suez Canal adventure in 1956.

In fact, the British Government has nothing to do with the running of the Commonwealth other than the fact that it is headquartered in London, and its rights as a member country.

In short, the Commonwealth is consultative forum in which members exchange views as to how to support each other. There has not been one instance in which British government policies were directly replicated in the organization.

MUTUAL BENEFITS:

The Yemeni Government's apparent inclination to join the Commonwealth indicates that we are beginning to understand how to promote and protect our interests in the so-called new World Order. Economically, Yemen is expected to benefit from the modest financial and technical assistance allocated for the less



developed members of the Commonwealth. As well as from the British investments in various areas, including Aden Free Zone, for the mutual benefit of both countries. Socially, the large number of Yemeni immigrants in Britain will enjoy the numerous privileges granted for the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Politically, Britain is well-known for its wide experience and deep knowledge of Middle Eastern affairs, including border disputes. Such experience and knowledge could be employed to protect Yemen's interests.

FINAL WORDS:

It goes without saying that membership in the Commonwealth will not be a panacea for our problems. The degree to which we may benefit from such a membership and the prestige which we may have within the group, will entirely depend on what we do here at home. In other words, we must put our house, which has been damaged for decades by corrupt officials throughout the Republic, in order.

Therefore, we urgently need COURAGEOUS decisions, IRREVOCABLE measures and SWIFT action today, and right now. We need to eliminate the widespread corruption, nepotism and favoritism, and to protect the public interest. One clear way to do that is to speed up the democratic process, increase transparency and accountability and mobilize internal and external resources for development.

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AL-SHOURA: Sana'a (Weekly), 16-2-97.
(The Federation of Popular Forces Party)

Main Headlines:

- 1) Opposition Coordination Council Dismisses Likelihood of Dialogue with Coalition.
- 2) A Presidential Initiative to Coordinate with Socialist Party in Elections.
- 3) A Gang Forging University Degrees is Arrested.

Article Summary:

The Ruling Party or the Ruler's Party?
by Abdullah Saad.

The elections of 1993 were accepted by the political organizations and trade unions as a move from the democracy of coexistence to the democracy of dispute solving. After the war, the ruling partners have not taken a single step toward democracy enhancement and state building. The elections of 1997 will be governed by the democracy of slogans and unilateral rule. The balance that preserved democratic procedures in 1993 has fallen. And the two coalition partners have provided neither the alternative nor an actual commitment to uphold the democratic approach.

The upcoming elections seem to have already lost all balance that can keep them free and fair. Even the Opposition Coordination Council has become subservient to the ruling authority. All parties whether in authority or in opposition seem totally unconcerned with the real and vital issues that are directly related to the citizens' lives.

AL-TAJAMMU'U: Aden (Weekly), 17-2-97
(Yemeni Unitary Congregation Party)

Main Headlines:

- 1) Secretary-General of Yemeni Unitary congregation: "Cessation of dialogue and normalization will lead to worse catastrophes than the civil war of '94."
- 2) Port of Aden Platforms are Leased by the Multinational Yemeninvest Company.
- 3) US \$1 Million to be Disbursed by Yemeni Government to Yemeni Students in Iraq.
- 4) Engineers at Sana'a and Aden Airports Demand Rise in Salaries on Equal Footing with Pilots

Article Summary:

The Yemeni "Withouts."

They are Yemenis whose ancestors had to flee to Somalia in order to escape the oppression of the Imam. They complain bitterly of the bad treatment



Yemeni Press in a Week

by: Adel J. Moqbil

received at the hand of the Personal Status Administration officials in Taiz.

Despite the fact they have submitted irrefutable tribal proofs of their lineage and large sums of money, the still cannot obtain Yemeni IDs. One of the aforementioned officials was able to build a large apartment block appropriately named "Somalia House" out of bribe money. It seems that those people who are without IDs will have to escape again, from the corrupt and bribed this time.

AL-RAI AL-AAM: Sana'a (Weekly), 18-2-97
(Independent)

Main Headlines:

- 1) American Engineer Kidnapped in Marib
- 2) Yemeni Human Rights Organization Conducted Charitable Work During Ramadhan.
- 3) Lapse in Security in Utuma, Dhamar Threatens with Complete Chaos.

Article Summary:

Equality in Citizenship Must be Achieved.

It is not fair that most of Yemen's resources should serve two or three governorates while the remaining 15 governorates suffer from neglect. About 6 years ago, many kinds of developmental and public utility projects were stopped in the northern and some eastern and southern governorates. Most of the funds are now being channeled toward similar projects in Aden, Hadhramaut and perhaps Lahaj or Shabwa.

The usual excuse given is that these governorates were deprived of growth and development for more than 22 years - from independence in 1967 up to unification in 1990. Development funds allocated for northern governorates are usually withdrawn in favor of Aden and Hadhramaut. Even the capital Sana'a has come to a sad state. The education, health, water, electricity, postal and transportation sectors in Sana'a and many other governorates also suffered badly.

AL-WAHDAH: Sana'a (Weekly), 19-2-97
(Official)

Main Headlines:

- 1) The President Directs Supreme Elections Committee to Involve Opposition Parties in Supervising Elections.
- 2) Supreme Economic Council Reviews Amended Gas and Petroleum Deals.
- 3) Minister for Legal Affairs: "Eleven parties can participate in elections."
- 4) Field Work to Demarcate Yemen-Saudi Border will be Resumed Next April.

Article Summary:

Awareness of National Responsibility
editorial.

The commitment, on principle, to democracy entails the acceptance of its outcome whatever the sacrifices made. The move toward a truly politically pluralistic system requires a lot of patience. The President continuously calls on all political parties and organizations to abandon all machinations, and take larger roles in more important national issues. Election opportunities are widely available for all parties.

The political leadership is strongly committed to holding free and fair elections. The President also stressed that the leadership intends to help some opposition parties and independent candidates to win in the elections. Such undertakings can only emanate from people who are fully aware of the supreme national interests. The leaderships of some opposition parties must consider these commitments with high awareness and comprehension. The President's initiative will help end the state of isolation which some parties have imposed on themselves.

AL-WAHDAWI: Sana'a (Weekly), 18-2-97
(Nasserite Unionist Party)

Main Headlines:

- 1) Opposition Parties Refuse to Participate in Elections Administration Committees.
- 2) Attempts to Release Kidnapped American Fail.
- 3) Opposition Coordination Council Demands the Release of Mauritanian Opposition Leaders Recently Imprisoned in Yemen.

Article Summary:

Western Intelligence Elements Infiltrate Arab Governments.

A German researcher in the field of intelligence and espionage has disclosed a close cooperation among the American, German and Israeli intelligence organs to spy on Arab countries. One of the fruits of this cooperation is the installing of tiny transmission devices in American computers exported to Arab countries.

In an article in Al-Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper, the researcher indicated that the German intelligence organization has allowed its Israeli counterpart to listen to communications between Arab embassies and their governments. Economic and industrial espionage represent the major fields of such activities. Many economic deals and agreements were made or foiled by espionage and counter-espionage operations. The Western intelligence elements rely in their work on corrupt Arab officials.

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ATTARIQ: Aden (Fortnightly), 18-2-97
(Independent)

Main Headlines:

- 1) Addressing Parliament, the President: "The opposition can cooperate with the authority with no external pressure."
- 2) Some Socialist Party Leaders Reject the Elections and Their Results.
- 3) Secondary School Certificates Must No Longer be Issued in Aden.
- 4) Electricity is Cut Off from General Association of Trade Unions in Muala

Article Summary:

Gold in Hadhramaut.

Preliminary studies conducted by a number of foreign companies have indicated the existence of commercial quantities of gold in Hadhramaut. The main areas of this discovery are Wadi Medan and Ghabar. One of the companies working in the area indicated that, according to preliminary exploration activities, the gold reserves in Wadi Medan are estimated at 280,000 ounces (8.6 tons).

Surveys in the Ghabar area have shown that there are about 35 sites of possible gold veins. Two Canadian companies had previously announced that gold exploration activities will be extensively conducted in Yemen during the first half of 1997.

AL-THAWRY: Sana'a (Weekly) 20-2-97.
(The Yemeni Socialist Party)

Main Headlines:

- 1) YSP Politburo Prepares for 34th Central Committee Term.
- 2) American State Department Discloses Human Rights Violations in Yemen During Last Year.

Article Summary:

The Time Has Come for the Decisive Word
by Ali Mohammed Al-Sarari

The "historical" moment to decide to boycott or participate in the elections has arrived. Taking a decision now is far better than staying in a no-stance condition. Those who decided to boycott prematurely suffer from political short sightedness. They have practically decided to escape from the battle for democracy. The majority of the opposition parties remained steadfastly struggling to achieve their goals and objectives in consolidating democracy.

Participating in the elections means surrendering to an undemocratic authority. Boycotting the elections, on the other hand, means succumbing to the whims of a worthless group of opportunistic people. Within this context, the Opposition Coordination Council has submitted a proposal for guaranteeing free and fair elections one month before registration. But the authority went ahead with the registration phase regardless of any constitutional, legal, or democratic principles.

In an attempt at imposing their own will and conditions, the ruling coalition partners have invited all opposition parties to participate in the elections. In order for the elections not to legitimize the return of dictatorship, the opposition must decide now to boycott them so that dictatorship will be naked for all to see and overthrow.

AL-SAHWA: Sana'a (Weekly), 20-2-97.

[The Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah)]

Main Headlines:

- 1) The President: "Parliament has performed its role courageously."
- 2) Ruling Coalition and National Opposition Council will Discuss Rectifying Violations in Registration for Elections.
- 3) The Minister for Religious Endowments Inaugurates a Number of Projects in Aden Worth YR. 400 Million.
- 4) Islah and Nasserite Unionist Party Met to Discuss Preparations for Upcoming Elections.

Article Summary:

National Unity by Nasr Taha Mustafa.

The Islamic reform movement in Yemen has adhered to conserving national unity for the last 30 years. Despite all the destructive attempts made by the contemporary inheritors of the Imamite thinking and the imperialists especially after the declaration of unity, Islah remained the bulwark against which all such attempts crash. Religious sectarianism and political schisms are strongly confronted by Islah which acts as a safety valve for national unity. National unity comes on top of Islah's priorities. It represents security and stability for the future of Yemen.

ألف مبروك

خالص التهاني وأطيب التبريكات نزفها للأخ
الدكتور/ عبدالله عبد الله الحسني
بمناسبة ارتزاقه مولوده الثاني والذي أسماه

نداء

المهتزون: أنور عبد الكريم السادة، فهد حسين الحسني

Announcement

The General Authority for Pensions and Social Security (GAPSC) wishes to invite potential business partners to consider the possibilities to make use of its buildings under construction in Sana'a, Ibb and Mukalla.

The GAPSC is willing to consider any proposal to make the best regarding use of these buildings. Should any foreign firm find interest in dealing with us in mutual investment or to hire any of our building please contact Mr. Lotfi Hojayra, Dir. Gen. of the Investment Department in GAPSC, tel. 250901, or fax 250900 Att: Lotfi Hojayra.

February 24th, 1997

By Jamal Al-Awadhi

20th Week of Rothmans Football Tournament:**Who Will Be the Champion ?**

The Excellent Football Tournament Championship is back in full swing after the Ramadhan/Eid interval. An intense race to snatch the top place is blazing the football fields.

Despite the fact that Al-Tilal of Aden precedes Al-Wahda of Sana'a by one point, they have now equal opportunities to win the tournament.

Al-Tilal still has two tricky and uncertain matches to play, away from its homeground. The Sana'ani team, Al-Wahda, has gained its superior position by defeating Al-Wahda of Aden 3-1. Thus, it has proven to be a powerful contender for the top slot.

Al-Ahli of Sana'a was able to shed off its bad luck by beating Al-Shu'la of Aden 2-1 in a really "heavy weight" match. However, this victory does not mean that Al-Ahli is back in form, as much as it means that Al-Shu'la is regressing.

The power-charged and exciting struggle among the top teams is accompanied by a real suffering on part of the lower-grade teams.

Those teams are really struggling hard to keep themselves from falling off to a lower rank. Al-Sha'ab of Mukalla, for instance, was able to threaten Al-Shaab of Sana'a by defeating it with a lone penalty goal.

Al-Ahli of Hodeida, playing on its homeground, beat Al-Zuhra of Sana'a 2-1 in a high class game. Early in the match, Al-Zuhra was advancing with one goal, but Al-Ahli counter attacked by scoring an equalizer and, later on, the winning goal.

Al-Ahli's player Omar Abdul-Hafeedh has now entered the fray to win the title of the "Tournament's Top Scorer." He has now 14 goals to his name, only 2 goals less than the current top scorer, Jameel Al-Maktari of Shamsan.

At the end of the 20th week of the tournament, Hassan team of Abyan defeated Al-Itihad of Ibb with two clean goals to nil.

The next weeks will witness hotter and more exciting matches that may bring big surprises for some teams and bad omens for others.

Women's National Committee Has Its Work Cut Out for It

By: Ahlam Al-Mutawakil,
Social Editor,
Yemen Times.

Under the theme "How to Enable Women Participate in Planning National Policies", Sana'a will host the meetings of a national conference under the patronage of President Ali Abdullah Saleh on the first of March, 1997. The meetings will last up to the 3rd of March.

The papers to be presented at the conference will focus on basic topics related to women, such as combating poverty, consolidating the health and education of women and discussing the right of women in the politics.

Preparation for this conference has been on-going since the Fourth International Conference for Women which was held in Beijing in 1995. The broadlines focus on the topic of women participation in the development and political processes.

More than 600 persons are expected to participate in these meetings. "There will also be a special meeting with the donors who finance projects related to women development," indicated Ms. Amatal Aleem Al-Susuwa, Assistant Deputy Minister of Information and Chair of the National Women's Committee.

Besides the national organizations, regional and international will also be present.

This conference, the first of its kind since the establishment of the Yemen Republic, will have a good effect on the efforts to mobilize female capabilities in the economic, social, cultural and political spheres.

Speaking on this occasion to the Yemen Times, Ms. Al-Susuwa said that the overall objectives of the National Women's Committee are in line with those stipulated in the Prime Minister's resolution No. 99, of 1996.

These include:

- To contribute to the preparation of strategies to efforts related to women and the evolution of their role in society specifying the priorities of the development projects as follows.

- To coordinate with committees, agencies, organizations, etc. supporting projects related to women.

- To follow-up and evaluate implementation of plans related to the family and women.

- To participate in discussions of the laws, rules and regulations as related to women affairs and suggest how to develop them.

- To send representatives to parliament and ministries to discuss steps and legislations concerning family and women.

- To spread awareness among

women regarding their rights and legal stand on the issues.

- To suggest projects in different spheres.

- To document and study topics related to women in coordination and cooperation with specialized institutions.



conference deal with legislation related to women, human rights, education, social and health conditions of women.

"We expect the conference to lead to important resolutions in the development of women in this country," she concluded.

- To promote activities leading to better female education. In the same way, to promote the establishment of nurseries, kindergartens and day-care programs.

- To urge priority to health projects particularly to the ones related to motherhood and childhood.

- To hold seminars and meetings which bring women together and mobilize their persuading chances in interacting with government and the various political and social forces, with the explicit objective of protecting women against any exploitation or discrimination.

Amatal-Aleem then indicated that the coming conference will be another milestone in the efforts of our society to enhance and elevate the status and role of women. "Even before the official inauguration of the National Women's Committee, we have been active in this field," she said. We have mobilized support and participated in a number of regional meetings in Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Tunisia, and other places.

"We have also held numerous meetings in the various regions of the country, such as Aden, Ibb, Abyan, Hodeidah, Mahweet, Taiz, Lahej and Hadhramaut, to raise awareness and expand the popular base of our work," she added.

The papers to be presented in the

Special Ceremony in the Ministry of Youths & Sports: Fund Starts Flowing:

A special ceremony was held at the Ministry of Youth and Sports on Saturday 22 February to disburse financial allocations to various sports clubs and associations in Yemen. The Fund for Supporting Youth and Sports was established by the government to improve the creative abilities of Yemeni youth.

"This fund is not a substitute to the state support for youth and sport," announced Dr. Abdulwahab Rawah, the Minister. In his speech on the occasion, the minister also added that "the budget allocated for this sector has topped YR. 4 million for this year."

It is a pleasant dream, which has come true, that ample funds are provided for youth and sports. But will the mere provision of money help? Money is only a tool!

The next correct step is to ensure this money will be spent in the right places at the right time. Many sports clubs and associations are in dire need of proper and objective planning.

Lack of qualified training cadres, inadequate proper training facilities and preponderant attention to football represent the major maladies plaguing Yemeni sports.

Long-term planning, continuous follow up and better living standards for sportsmen, and more attention on female athletes can do a lot to raise the general status of sports in Yemen, and the performance of athletes.

PRESS RELEASE

Dr. Ray Thomas, OBE, British Council Director of the middle East and North Africa, made an official visit to Yemen to discuss future plans for the expansion of the British Council in Yemen. These plans would include opening up branches in Aden and Hodeidah this year. During his visit he and the British Council Director in Yemen, Brendan McSharry, met with HE the British Ambassador and HE the Prime Minister of Yemen, as well as senior Yemeni figures in both the public and private sector.

In town also are Professor Arthur Finch, a renowned chemist of the University of London, and Professor Sally McGregor of the Institute of Child Health in London: both on advisory tours of Yemen under the auspices of The British Council in collaboration with the state universities of Sana'a, Aden, and the Hadhramout, and the Ministry of Public Health. In between various field trips these visiting academics will give public lectures. In particular Professor Finch will speak on:

Profile of a good teaching & research centre in Chemistry

at the British Council Library on Tuesday 25 February at 19:30 and Professor Sally McGregor will give a talk on:

Childhood malnutrition and mental development

At the Yemen-British Friendship Association on Wednesday 25 February at 19.30.

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Targeting mid-March for a Breakthrough

YEMEN & SAUDI ARABIA: The Confusion continues

Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf,
Chief Editor, Yemen Times.

The Republic of Yemen and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are two neighbors that have one of those love-hate relationships. What is at stake for the two countries is very vital. Yet, they are unable to steady a level of understanding that will enable them avoid any crisis.

What is at stake for Saudi Arabia?

The answer to this question would require a lot of space. But, one can basically summarize as follows:

1. Longest Border:

Saudi Arabia shares with Yemen its longest border, much of which is undefined. This could be a source of headache to it, unless an agreement is reached.

2. Insurgency:

Saudi Arabia already has an internal fundamentalist insurgency. Unless it reaches an understanding with Yemen, this problem could be exacerbated by a political crisis with Yemen.

3. Change:

The Republic of Yemen has embarked on change towards political pluralism, democracy, press freedom, etc. The spill-over effect could have destabilizing consequences, unless some accord is struck with Yemen.

4. Stability in Yemen:

Saudi Arabia has much to gain from a stable Yemen. This will

mean that things are predictable and under control, thus avoiding any unpleasant surprises.

5. Business:

Saudi Arabia, whose economy is more advanced than that of Yemen, can benefit from an economic integration with Yemen. Its capital will find more investment options, and its products and services will find a large market.

And what is at stake for Yemen?

The answer could again fill up a lot of space. But a short summary includes:

1. Government Control:

An understanding with Saudi Arabia will enable the central government better control of its regions. At the moment, Saudi subsidies have strengthened the hands of some sheikhs and local lords.

2. Economic Support:

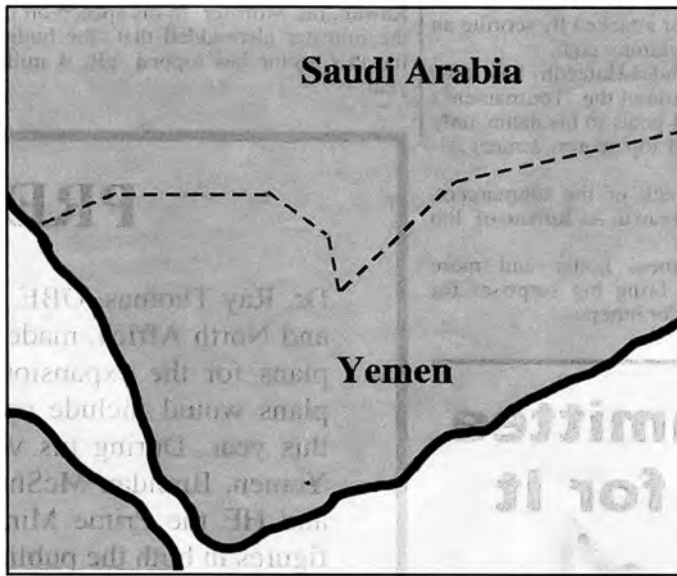
An agreement with Saudi Arabia will definitely bring economic dividends to Yemen. It could be in the form of official development assistance, private investment, and employment opportunities for the huge Yemeni labor pool.

3. Regional Peace:

Yemen needs to be relieved of any pressure on its Saudi backdoor in order to sort out some of its other regional problems. For example, differences with Eritrea could be better managed if the Saudi angle is resolved.

4. Synergy Effect:

If Yemen and Saudi Arabia



come together, their combined efforts will give each of them a better leverage in their regional and international relations with others.

Those are some of the stakes. Let me jot down two strong reasons why the two countries need to address the issues immediately. These are King Fahd and President Saleh.

1. King Fahd:

His Majesty King Fahd of Saudi Arabia has resolved his border problems with all neighbors except Yemen. The King is ailing, and there may not be much time left. He should complete his work of resolving all the border issues of the Kingdom.

2. President Saleh:

To Yemen, the issue of the Saudi border is a tricky one. It is so sensitive that no Yemeni ruler can embark on it unless he is in full control and fully aware of the details. President Ali Abdullah Saleh can do it. If for any reason there is a change of leadership in Yemen, the new ruler will not be able to address this issue, except after some time. So there is no need to waste time.

During the recent visit of President Saleh to Saudi Arabia, they agreed to achieve a breakthrough within one month. That means by the second week of March. Will it happen?

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