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A Sign of the German Foreign Minister's Visit Tomorrow

Yemeni-German Relations Will Smoothly Sail Through Kidnapping Ordeal

German Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs and Vice-Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr. Joschka Fischer arrives in Sanaa tomorrow, Tuesday 9th February, on a one-day official visit to Yemen. The visit is intended to further strengthen the strong and unique relations between the two countries.

This visit is expected to ensure that the latest kidnapping and violent incidents will not in any way affect the excellent relations between Yemen and Germany.

The German Foreign Minister will meet top ranking Yemeni officials including the Foreign Minister, Prime Minister, and the President to discuss matters of mutual interest. The Foreign Minister is also expected to discuss continued cooperation with Yemen in regards to the importance of the sustained commitment by the Sanaa authorities for democratization, press freedom, respect for human rights, and political pluralism.

Mr. Fischer, whose country now has the

European presidency, is expected to bring up the present misunderstanding clouding UK-Yemeni relations. However, it is not clear how much deeper he will go into the issue. The minister, who belongs to the Green Party, is also expected during his visit to emphasize on the need for responsible world policies in fighting pollution, refugees and drug-trafficking.

It is known that Germany is one of the top aid partners of the Republic of



Yemen, donating an average annual aid package of over US\$ 30 million. Besides its significant aid to Yemen, Germany is also a strong supporter of the democratic reforms Yemen has gone through in the last few years.

President Saleh in Amman to Attend Funeral of King Hussein Today

On a sad Sunday, King Hussein of Jordan left us for good. On this event, President Ali Abdullah Saleh immediately flew to Amman to attend the Funeral which will also be attended by at least 40 heads of states. King Hussein was among the most beloved Arab leaders in modern time. His influence on peace in the middle east was significant, and his efforts were tremendous. H.M. King Abdullah, the elder son of King Hussein will

succeed his father in ruling the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

As the Yemen Times, with all regret and sorrow we present our condolence to the Royal Hashemite Jordanian Family, to the Jordanian people, to all Arabs, and to the whole world on the death of the beloved King Hussein, who will always stay in our hearts..



Government, Business, Media and NGOs Join Hands:

Multi-Pronged Tourism Offensive

On February 2nd, 1999, in response to a joint effort by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, and the Yemen Times, 62 representatives of the tourist industry in Yemen met to discuss the present predicament of the sector, and what can be done. The group representing the airlines, tour operators, hotels, restaurants, artisans, etc., took decisions to shore up the business. The most important among these is the establishment of a Tourism Promotion Board. The board is chaired by the minister. In its membership are included five repre-



sentatives of government bodies concerned with tourism. Also included are 21 representatives of private businesses. Another important decision has to do with the establishment of a Tourism Promotion Fund. The Fund, which is

produce a touristic film on Yemen.
3. YR 18 million for media campaigns to counter negative reporting.
4. YR 14 million to participate in regional and international tourism conferences and gatherings.

5. YR 11 million to invite tour operators, travel editors and other relevant professionals from Australia, Belgium, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the Netherlands.
6. YR 7 million to issue brochures and other booklets on Yemen in 5 languages.
7. YR 4.2 million to sponsor Yemen Weeks in Britain, France, Germany and Italy.
8. YR 4.2 million to organize seminars and talks on Yemen in the

tourists' home countries.
9. The Board has also initiated a number of actions within Yemen to help improve security, cleanliness, and general public awareness of the benefits of tourism. The sudden alliance between the media, business and NGOs - as a result of the Yemen Times initiative - has brought pressure to bear on the authorities to shape and regain leadership in finding solutions to the deterioration in the tourism industry.

More on pages 8+9

Keith Vaz in Sanaa to Help on Case

Mr. Keith Vaz, Member of the House of Commons, arrives in Yemen today, February 8th, in a damage control bid to limit the fallout which resulted from the recent terrorist activities purported by UK nationals as alleged by the Yemeni authorities. Tension between London and Sanaa is already high. Mr. Vaz is most suitable for the job for many reasons. Firstly, having been born in Aden, he has a certain affinity and feeling for the place. Secondly, he has already visited Yemen several times in an effort to promote Yemeni-UK ties and cooperation. Thirdly, he has a large oriental bloc in his Leicester East constituency which demands that he intervene on behalf of the five Britons. His visit program calls for meetings with senior Yemeni officials and opinion-makers.



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OUR VIEWPOINT DETERMINATION

There is a useful English proverb which says, "Where there is a will, there is a way!" The Americans say it differently: "When the going gets tough, the tough gets going." I would like to call this quality "determination". Determination is an important value that helps bring success. It is especially necessary in times of hardships and difficulties.

Today, the Republic of Yemen lives through hard times. There are tribulations of various kinds, including the following:

1. Economic Hardships:

The country's income from oil has fallen by 50%, because of the fall of oil prices in international markets. The country's income from tourism has fallen by 80% because of the kidnappings and violence. The rate of unemployment now exceeds 40%, and is more problematic among the young and educated. The interest rates have gone up, leading to scarcity of capital that can be borrowed by entrepreneurs. New investments - whether local or foreign - has not been forthcoming.

2. Security Problems:

The level of violence has been rising. While low-level violence permeates different strata of society, open crimes have become very common. Most companies and even individuals have now employed special security services and body-guards because they have concluded that the formal security system does not provide adequate protection. The implication of this on foreigners, especially tourists, has been disastrous.

3. Political Uncertainty:

The opposition parties continue to call for national reconciliation. This is often understood to mean their participation in the power structure. The ruling People's General Congress, having control over the army, bureaucracy, official media and the public coffers, says it is willing to compete in direct elections, which it is assured to win. The uneven competition means that the PGC will remain in power for a long time.

4. Administrative Failure:

The government administrative capacity has fallen to unprecedented levels. Almost no function of government is free from corruption and inefficiency. Actually, some organs do not function any more. In short, no bureaucratic service is available unless there is a direct payment of bribes. As a result, the poor who cannot afford to bribe bureaucrats get no services.

The situation is distressing, to say the least. But, it is exactly these situations that call for more determination to face the challenge and rise above it. Instead of being frustrated, the people of Yemen need to persevere and conquer the difficulties.

It may be easy to say this. It may be easy to ask people to rise up to the challenge. But, if there are enough community elders and leaders who can mobilize the people of Yemen, it can happen. It has happened before many times. It has to happen again. The alternative to rising up to the challenge is disastrous.

The Publisher
Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf

Judicial Reforms

The British Embassy in Sanaa is financing and implementing a number of projects in the field of human rights in 1999. Two 2-week training sessions for judges and other people involved in the judicial process on human rights, national and International laws and their applications in the courtroom are scheduled for February/March 1999. The aim is to increase awareness of human rights and the roles of those involved in the judicial process.

Immigrants are a Major Support for Development

Under the title "Immigrants are a major support for sustained development," the Consultative Council and the Ministry of Immigrants' Affairs, are planning a conference to be held over the coming few days. The aim of the conference is to highlight the difficulties and problems of immigrants. It will also stress the importance of the role immigrants' role in the development of the country.

HEC's Charity Clinic

The Health Educational Center is hosting Dr. Qais Mohammed Ghanim. He is on a visit to Yemen on an invitation extended to him by the Ministry of Health. Dr. Ghanim is a neurologist residing in Canada. On the occasion of his visit, the charity clinic at the Health Educational Center will organize a free check up, which will be conducted by Dr. Ghanim, during the period 8 - 17 Feb. from 5 PM - 8 PM at the center's clinic.

Second Yemeni-Canadian Medical Conference

A team of 11 doctors from the University of Western Ontario, Canada, is visiting the country for a period of two weeks. This is the third visit. The first visit was in 1986, and the second was last year. The purpose of this visit is to hold the Second Yemeni-Canadian Medical Conference at Al-Thawra Hospital on 13-14 February. The team will provide medical examination to patients. Seven specialists in gynecology, neurology and community health make up the team. They will perform operations at Al-Thawra, Sabeen and Kuwait hospitals.

Climate Change Impacts in Yemen

The Environmental Protection Council and Climate Change Project will hold their Second National Workshop on Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation Assessment in Yemen. During 9-10 February, at the University of Sana'a, at Ali Bin Ziad's Hall, Faculty of Agriculture. Different presentations by Team Coor-

dinators will be the main item on the first day of the program. On the second day, the Workshop will discuss many issues such as water resources, coastal zone management and socio-economic issues.

A Workshop on Small Projects

The Project of Involving Women in Social and Economical Development (PIWSED), in collaboration with UNFPA is organizing a workshop for small projects, during 8 Feb.-1 March 1999. The workshop will be conducted by a Yemeni expert in the field of small projects. Twenty participants representing different organizations (government and NGOs) will get first hand information on how to plan, evaluate, administrate and finance small projects.

8 Projects by France to Improve the Food Production Process in 1999

The Minister of Planning and Development Mr. Ahmed Mohammed Sofan and H. E. Mr. Andre Janier the French Ambassador to Sana'a has signed an agreement to use the returns of the French Government food aid, which was extended to Yemen in 1997. The returns of YR 116,806,900 will be used in financing eight different projects to support and improve the food production process in Yemen. The money will be used for building dams, water tanks, and to finance stage two of the refurbishing of the fish storehouse at Hodieda's fishing port.

Japanese Aid to Juvenile Reformatory

The Embassy of Japan supports the Sanaa Juvenile Reformatory in the improvement of its services for disadvantaged children in the framework of the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects aimed at supporting small-scale community-based projects. An agreement to this effect was signed on January 28, 1999 by the Director General of the Sanaa Juvenile Reformatory and the Japanese ambassador to Yemen. This grant will enable the recipient to purchase a 4WD vehicle for the purpose of enhancing its social/development activities.

Wind and Solar Energy to Generate Electricity in Yemen

The Ministry of Electricity and Water has signed a memorandum of understanding with the delegation of the Ministry of Economics of Hesse state (Germany), visiting the country. According to the memorandum, the German side will help its Yemeni counterparts use wind and solar energy to produce electrical power, by forming a special body, and pro-

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Our Canadian Representative **Mr. John A. Garuffi** will be in Sana'a on 18 & 20 and in Aden on 19 Feb. 1999. Candidates wishing to apply for immigration to Canada as business investment, Professional category (Accountant, Engineers, Executives, Pharmacist, Technician etc...) and have the requirements:

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All existing clients are welcome to meet Mr. John A. Garuffi and Mr. Glen Dexter. To make an appointment please contact at the above addresses.

YGFA Farewell Gathering

Last Saturday 6th Feb. at the residence of Mr. Amin Derham Vice-chairman of the Yemeni - German Friendship Association (YGFA). The YGFA organized a gathering, in honor of the German Ambassador H. E. Dr. Helga Strachwitz, on the occasion of the termination of her mission as the German Ambassador to the Republic of Yemen. Many government officials and prominent members of Yemeni society were invited. Delightful Yemeni music, and songs were sung by the famous Yemeni singer Ihab Turkey, which were appreciated and by everyone.



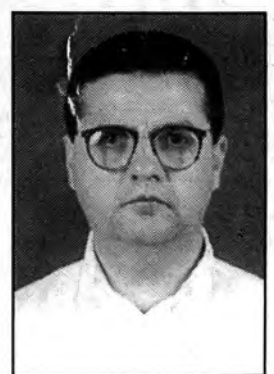
viding German experts to work with the Yemeni specialists. A workshop will be held during the first quarter of 1999. The location of the power station has not yet been decided. A proposal to locate the power station in Al-Mukha district will be studied by the German delegation. Al-Mukha is seen as a suitable location for building the power station. The Germans will also train Yemeni cadres.

Yemen to Export Gas to Eritrea

The Yemeni Oil minister Mr. Mohammed Khadim Al-Wajeh and the visiting Eritrean delegation headed by Mr. Saleh Kikea, minister of Communication and Transport had discussed the possibility of exporting Yemeni gas to Eritrea. Mr. Kikea expressed his country's willingness to import Yemeni gas. "This would be one more step to enrich our relationship," said Mr. Saleh. A delegation from the Aden Refinery is visiting Eritrea, finalizing preparation of the proposal.

Welcome Aboard, Paul

A new addition to the Sheraton Sana'a Hotel management arrived last week. Mr. Paul Z. Diab was appointed as Food and Beverages Director. Prior to joining Sheraton Sana'a Hotel, he was the Food and Beverage Manager at Gulf Hotel in Abu Dhabi, UAE.



Paul completed his BA degree in Hotel and Restaurant Management at Michigan State University, USA in 1986. Started at Torrance Marriott Hotel, California, USA and other international chain hotels in the Middle East, his thirteen years in the hotel industry have given him a rich experience. "Every new posting offers an opportunity and a challenge. It is especially so, if you work in one of the leading hotels in the world," he said.

Yemen Times Weekly Opinion Poll

Yemen Times Weekly Poll question is placed at:
<http://yementimes.com/#poll>

Last Week's Question
What is your opinion of the Government's decision in forbidding all press agencies, locally and internationally to report anything about the current trial held in Aden of the Britons accused of terrorism?

Result
A wise decision, because any reporting could affect the fairness of the trial! **20%**

A way to disable the public from assessing the fairness of the trial or knowing about the validity of torture claims **58%**

Perhaps there is another reason that no one -except the Government- knows **23%**

YEMEN TIMES

An Independent Economic & Political Weekly



Yemen Times Contact Address:
Telephone: + 967 (1) 268-661
Facsimile: + 967 (1) 268-276
Post Office Box: 2579,
Sanaa, Republic of Yemen

Editor-in-Chief & Publisher:
Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf

General Manager: Walid A. Al-Saqqaf
Managing Editor: Dr. Salah Haddash

Aden Bureau Chief: Ridhwan Alawi Al-Saqqaf,
Aden Bureau Editor: Yusuf Sharif
Phone: + 967 (2) 347-057; Fax: + 967 (2) 347-056
Taiz Bureau Chief: Imad Ahmed Al-Saqqaf,
Taiz Bureau Editor: Mohammed Hatem Al-Qadhi
Telephone/fax: + 967 (4) 227-717 P. O. Box: 5086

Websites: <http://www.yementimes.com/>
Email: yementimes@y.net.ye
yementimes@yementimes.com

Nassir Abdo Arman:

“The majority party’s bloc thwarts parliamentary efforts to hold the executive branch accountable.”

Parliament is one of the most important organs of a democratic state. Its role in representing the people’s will, and in the checks and balances of power distribution is vital.

In the experiences of many newly democratic nations, the period leading to the third election is crucial. Either the transformation develops roots and proceeds smoothly - as is the case of many East European countries such as Poland, the Czech Republic, South Africa, etc.; or there is a reversal and chaos as is the case in Albania and several African countries.

The Republic of Yemen has had two parliaments directly elected by the people - in 1993 and 1997. The third one is scheduled for 2001. We are today about halfway through the term of the second parliament.

Yemen Times chose this occasion to talk to one of the respectable members of our parliament, Mr. Nassir Abdo Arman.

Nassir, a businessman turned parliamentarian, has represented constituency 131 in Al-Baidha since 1988. He is independent and is widely respected by his colleagues and constituency. He is a man of integrity. Above all, he is one of the few members of parliament who comes to the sessions prepared. He reads the files, and prepares his statements and interventions beforehand.

Ismail Al-Ghabry of Yemen Times discussed with Mr. Arman a number of issues and filed the following interview.

Q: Let us start with a general question. How do you view Yemen’s democratic transformation?

A: Democratization is a long-term process. It is actually a never-ending process, meaning that you keep working on improving the system.

In light of this, I believe that any society’s success in its democratic evolution depends on many factors. Two important ones are the level of education (meaning general public awareness of the rights and duties of citizens in a democratic system), and the level of commitment on the part of decision-makers and opinion-makers in the democratization process.

Here in Yemen, we are still in the very early stages of our political evolution. We still have a long way to go.

Q: How do you assess the performance of the present parliament, now that we are almost halfway through its term?

A: This parliament played an important role in building a new state. Remember that we inherited two sets of laws which needed to be unified in one system. So we issued many new laws for the new state.

We also approved many bilateral and multi-lateral political, economic, cultural and other agreements which had been concluded between our country and other nations and organizations.

I do feel, however, more could have been done in the field of monitoring and supervising the work of the executive branch of authority. We are weak in our interaction with the executive branch.

Q: Why is parliament weak in such interaction?

A: There are many reasons for this unbalanced relationship. Let me enumerate:

1. Many members of parliament do not realize the enormous role and many rights they are given by the constitution and laws. Parliament needs qualified assistants and staffers to help the members realize exactly what they can do and how they should interact.

2. Many members of parliament owe their success in the parliamentary elections to the executive branch of authority. They continue to need the executives for perks and services.

3. The overwhelming majority of the People’s General Congress also weakened the parliament.

Q: You have just started a new round of sessions. There are important issues to be discussed including constitutional amendments, laws on local government, demonstrations, etc. What are the details and how prepared are the members of parliament?

A: I have heard of these important issues. But let me tell you honestly, I have no specific information on these issues. This is done on purpose so that people do not have enough time to think about these matters and thus those who push the amendments and laws do so with the least objections and debate.

I do not know exactly what the majority party wants to introduce as amendments. We will have to wait and see.

Q: But the local authority bill was presented to parliament by the government?

A: Yes, it was presented to the full house, which simply voted to let the Local Administration Committee of the parliament go through it and then present its views and comments to the house. This is expected to take place in the near future.

Q: Whatever happened to the bloc of ‘Independents’ in parliament?

A: As you know, many of the people who competed as independents were not really independent. They belonged to either the People’s General Party or the Yemeni Congregation for Reform Party (Islah). They joined their parties after the elections. Those stood as independents in the elections for political expediency with the voters.

Today, a very small group of parliamentarians - maybe as few as 8 members - are independents. But



even these do not coordinate adequately among themselves.

Q: Today we witness a visible erosion in the role and prestige of the state. You are a public figure who has been involved in politics for a long time. How do you explain this deterioration?

A: Let me start with a basic premise - the economy. As you know, it is the quality or standard of living that determines people’s attitude towards their political system. The media has often written the now famous quote - “It is the economy, stupid.”

So the people’s frustration with the organs of the state and the politicians, whether in the present time or in the future, will be determined by the economic situation.

Second, the dramatic fall in law and order is an ominous sign of the shrinking role of the state. There are many incidents in which the state is shut out. People have to resolve their problems by themselves. Thus, it is the weak who lose in such a free-for-all environment. In addition, the various organs of the state do not function adequately any more.

Finally, the level of corruption in our country has reached unprecedented levels. Corruption erodes the legitimacy of a system as it eats away on the credibility and respect of the leaders of society and state. Politicians rule because the people tacitly agree to obey them. This requires the politicians to behave in a certain morally-superior way.

Q: The media often writes specific allegations of corruption. In some cases, even proofs of wrong-doing are printed. Why doesn’t parliament act on these reports?

A: Yes, I have seen many reports of instances in which we could

followed-up those allegations, because it has a duty to the general public to control and monitor the performance of the executive branch. But such steps are thwarted by the People’s General Congress’s majority bloc in parliament.

I believe it is important to establish a unit in parliament to collect all kinds of data and evidence regarding the performance of the executive branch’s malpractice and hold it accountable.

Q: The tourism industry is suffering today because of the fallout from the frequent kidnappings. What is to be done?

A: Clearly, responsibility falls on the security organs of the state in

particular, and on the executive branch of authority in general. These incidents are proof that there is a problem.

In my opinion, unless law and order is restored, we will see disastrous consequences.

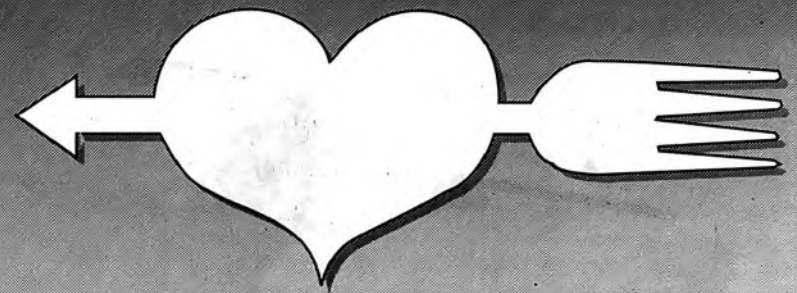
Q: Any last comments?

A: I have to applaud the Yemen Times for printing daring articles on corruption and abuse of power. I also follow the pressure it has been withstanding because of its watch-dog role.

We in parliament are willing to work closely with the media. Our sessions are open. I feel that the media has an important role in the checks and balances of a modern system.

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Political Parties Series: # 3

Hizbul-Haq (Truth Party)

Starting with the issue on January 25th, 1999, the Yemen Times continues to run profile of the political parties of Yemen.

We print the information as received from the parties. The aim is to inform the public - local and international.

Al Haq party was established in 1990, led by a group of scholars who pledged to endeavor for the sake of supporting right and crystallizing Islamic doctrines on all levels whether political, cultural, social or economical.

Ever since its creation, the party paid great attention to Islamic legislation and understanding of modern issues such as democracy, political pluralism, elections and women's political rights. It also shared effectively in political life via the doctrine of team work and consultations and was among the important parties that called for unity and supported it.

The party voiced its stands in face of different issues and crises that erupted in the past period. For example, its stance regarding Yemen's reunification was loud and clear through the famous Moslem scholars' statement. The party further approved the constitution at a time when numerous national forces were hesitant over that question along with the re-unification. The party's leadership called on the people to take part in voting for the constitution. It remained a distinctive voice within the opposition calling for reform and criticizing mistakes in addition to supporting any positive signs in the state. The party leadership exerted its utmost efforts to solve differences that coincided with the transitory period and worked for bridging gaps between the two different parties which had an effective role until the summer 1994 war.

Al Haq party resorts to Islamic legislation toward many controversial questions. It managed to precede other Islamic trends in finding Islamic justifications for democracy, political pluralism, freedom of expression and other modern issues that are still controversial among other Islamic groups.

Amidst honorable competition, the party managed to win two seats in the 1993 general elections. It was one of the founders of the national opposition bloc which reflected opinion of the Yemeni opposition parties joining it and which later became the higher coordination council for the opposition parties. Al Haq party is one of the active members of that council, through which it held several political meetings with other parties in the opposition and in power.

The party also took part in the 1997 parliamentary elections, presenting an integrated political program that handles various problems faced by the country despite mistakes by the ruling authorities by then. The party is still pursuing its enlightenment march under its scholarly leadership and exerts efforts in building the individual.

Al Haq Party's Basic Doctrines

The party's political program reflects the party goals declared since its establishment and was keen on 'shoura' and scholarly advice. It further represented freedom and justice values and was open to heritage and human experiments to benefit from them.

A great goal of Al Haq Party is handling the responsibility of building the modern state based on political pluralism, peaceful circulation of power, shoura, justice and freedom through civilian institutions.

The program seeks to lay down the strong and correct basis for such a goal and will struggle for its achievement with all available means.

The party works for stabilizing the republican regime and the constitution in addition to build the modern Yemeni state in accordance with the shoura principle in Islam and doctrines of the Yemeni revolution. Toward that end, the party stressed on political pluralism as the appropriate method for the peaceful circulation of power. The party further affirms the importance of separating the three powers of the state namely the legislative, executive and judicial ones. It further calls for the people's participation in power through the direct election of governors, mayors and senior officials and expanding jurisdictions of the administrative rule. It also calls for questioning political executives on their financial resources and for revising the electoral law to achieve a more positive one, a law that really reflects the nation's will.

The party presents a comprehensive view of educa-

tion, services, health, Awqaf (endowments) and women's role in the society in addition to tabling solutions to several social and cultural problems confronting the citizens and a number of state bodies.

Economic Doctrines

Al Haq calls for building a strong national economy that benefits from oil revenues in the agricultural sector and encourages industrial depending on available raw materials in addition to prohibiting monopoly and banks' interest rates. It advocates market competition, removal of financial and administrative corruption and an end to unnecessary extravagance.

The party's economic policy is based on the concept that comprehensive development can be only achieved through justice, in the absence of which no security would be guaranteed and consequently development and economic welfare would not be attained. In an Islamic society committed to Allah's demands, economic practices are committed to ethics and market competition becomes free, active and honorable. Yemen's economic problems are not the result of poor resources and potentials only but the consequence of absence of comprehensive development plans, mismanagement and the control of corrupt financial and administrative elements on all state bodies.

The party considers the establishment of a strong Yemeni economy is of utmost importance and necessitates the following:

- 1-Removing corruption and its influential centers as a basic and primary goal.
- 2-Studying the economic situation by specialists to lay down the correct foundation of a national economy in addition to drawing developmental plans and programs in the economic, agricultural and industrial fields.
- 3-Spreading spirit of team work and cooperative endeavor along with urging the society into non-consumer economy.
- 4-Controlling the state's general resources and curbing expenditure.
- 5-Canceling absent articles from the general budget and determining expenditures of the presidency.
- 6-Banning monopoly and providing the opportunity for honorable competition. Prohibiting commercial activity on all state officials whether directly or indirectly along with employees of direct links to commerce, industry or agriculture.
- 7-Combating smuggling, confiscating smuggled articles and benefiting from their prices in fighting smuggling.
- 8-Organization administrations properly and correctly to cope with the modern time.
- 9-Encouraging investments in the industrial sector that depends on local raw materials in addition to domestic handicrafts.
- 10-Paying more importance to agriculture through reviving cooperative work and providing necessary potentials for its success. Encouraging investments in that sector in addition to providing modern irrigation methods and building dams. Organizing the marketing of agricultural products, terminating importing of agricultural products and supplying training and guidance programs.
- 11-Checking and organizing underground water uses.
- 12-Backing more oil, gas and minerals exploration and making use of their revenues in developmental programs.
- 13-Limiting humiliating foreign loans.
- 14-Protecting private property.
- 15-Protecting public property and controlling state property for the sake of public interest.
- 16-Establishing non-interest banks, making use of suitable experiences in that sphere in the Islamic World.
- 17-Limiting foreign expenditure and decreasing number of employees in the diplomatic missions.
- 18-Lowering state spending and extravagant privileges to its various authorities.
- 19-Relieving illusionary numbers in the armed forces, security and state bodies and benefiting from the army in agriculture, construction and industry.
- 20-Facilitating investments and work in fields of agriculture, fishing, industry, handicrafts and facilitating necessary loans.
- 21-Creating an attorney for public funds.
- 22-Erecting tourism projects in historic and beautiful areas.
- 23-Just distribution of wealth in accordance with Islamic Sharia.
- 24-Advocating a common Islamic economic market.

Fatchett to Britain's Muslim Community:

"We have done everything to protect the rights of UK nationals held by the Yemeni authorities."

As the trial of the 5 Britons accused of terrorism continues to strain Yemeni-British relations, another rift has grown between the UK government and the Muslim community in Britain. The Muslims of Britain accuse the Blair government of not doing enough to intervene with the Yemeni government on behalf of the 5 Britons.

To pacify the community, the Rt. Honorable Derek Fatchett, MP, British Minister of State with responsibility for the Middle East, wrote the following article, which is jointly published by Q-News, a British Muslim magazine published twice monthly in London, and the Yemen Times.

Proud of British Muslims:

Recent events in Yemen have sent a shock wave through parts of the Muslim communities in Britain. Some have even raised doubts about whether the Foreign Office represents all British nationals abroad equally. There is a legitimate concern that British press and public equate every British Muslim with the extremists who advocate terrorism in the name of Islam. And underneath, there is one fundamental question that goes to the heart of the identity and confidence of every Muslim community in Britain - can a Muslim really be British as well?

I believe passionately that the answer to the last question is yes. There is no contradiction between being a true Muslim and hundred per cent British.

This basic belief is at the heart of multicultural Britain. It means that we value all our citizens regardless of ethnic background, colour or religion. It means that we welcome everything that Britain's Muslim communities have to offer, rather than expecting them to assimilate themselves into oblivion before we will accept their Britishness. It means that we value the diversity of Britons.

People - a small number on both sides of the cultural divide - have said that a Muslim can never be fully British, as their loyalty must be to Islam. The truth is that everyone has many loyalties - religious, national, and political. Being loyal to Islam does not preclude being loyal to Britain. More than that, in the increasingly inter-connected world in which we now live, the British Muslim communities are a priceless asset. They give us a unique link to the Islamic world. They understand Islam, and maintain their links with other Muslim communities, countries and governments. Rather than isolate the Muslim communities and make them feel like strangers in a foreign land, it is all the more important that the British Government convinces them that they are an integral part of the modern Britain, that their concerns are as important as anyone else's, and that they have a valued place in the government and the life of the nation. That is why I have made it my business to bring the leaders of Britain's Muslim communities into the Foreign Office to discuss events of issues of mutual concern. That is why the Foreign Office is reaching out to young British Muslims to encourage them to consider the Diplomatic Service as a career. I look forward to the day when we send our first Muslim Ambassador overseas.

That is why I and the rest of the Foreign Office were so upset by the accusation that the Foreign Office was giving second class treatment to the five British nationals arrested in Yemen.

Our rule is simple. Every British national is entitled to the protection of British Embassies abroad - whatever their religion or ethnic background. I made this clear to representatives of the Muslim communities when I met them earlier this week. Baroness Symons gave the families of the detained men the same message when she met them the week before, and so did Robin Cook when he met their MPs.

As soon as our Embassy in Sana'a heard that British

Dr. Nasher, Chairman of the YBFS indicated that Yemen was learning how to handle issues within a democratic framework. "If we mishandle a situation, it is not due to bad intentions, but because we are new at this," explained Dr. Nasher.

Ambassador Henderson explained that as events unfolded, there was a problem of information flow. There were also procedural confusion. But by now the situation has stabilized.

"In fact, I think there are positive developments. A letter from (British) Prime Minister Tony Blair is on its way. I am given to understand that this letter has a positive content," he said.

Abdul-Wahab Thabet, a leading supporter and patron of the YBFS, stressed the need for flexibility on both sides. "We should together fight the terrorists and criminals, instead of fighting each other," he said referring to the British and Yemeni Govern-



nationals had been detained we demanded consular access to them. As soon as we had confirmation of their names we contacted the families in the UK. And after our Consul-General visited them we told the families any news. Our officials have spoken regularly with the both the five families and their lawyers.

It took time for the Yemeni authorities to give our Consul access to all five detainees. So we, the whole Government machine, went into action. Robin Cook spoke three times to the Yemeni Prime Minister about the case. We have insisted that the five British nationals receive their rights - a trial under due process of law; proper legal representation; full consular access. What we cannot do is demand that they be given special treatment or sent home because they are British. I fully understand the anguish of their families. For them the accusations against their sons and husbands can make no sense. But we cannot interfere in the judicial process of another country - for these British nationals, or for any others. A further difficulty is the perception in the mainstream British public and press of the Muslim communities in Britain. The newspapers have revealed in detail the websites and survival camps run by extremists. The extremists in the Muslim communities have been happy to play along, giving the press endless quotes about Jihad and the legitimacy of terrorism. For the vast majority of you, this extremism is repugnant. I know you watch with weary resignation as it strengthens the stereotypes and polarizes their communities from the rest of British society. We have to fight this. Winning the argument will not be easy. It is more sensational to report extremism than moderation. The biggest obstacle to truth is a lazy journalist. But if we are going to create a genuinely multicultural society in a socially integrated Britain, then we must start to knock down the stereotypes and falsehoods that have taken root. This will need a sustained effort - from the leaders of your communities, from the theologians, the teachers, the journalists and the writers. We must reach out to the people of Britain and tell the truth - about Islam and what it really stands for, about you and all you contribute to Britain. We must show them that the extremists are no more representative of Islam than the British National Party is representative of mainstream Christian opinion.

If I was to draw one lesson from everything that has happened recently, it is that we still have a long way to go before you feel properly valued. That we still have a lot of work to do before the British press and public get an accurate picture of Islam and of British Muslims. And that no task is more important than putting this right.

People's Diplomacy at Work:

YBFS Holds 'Bridge' Meeting

The Yemeni-British Friendship Society assigned its last periodic meeting to discuss the deterioration in the Yemeni-British relations. Held at the residence of Dr. Abdullah Abdul-Wali Nasher, the meeting was held on Friday, February 5th.

16 senior members of the YBFS, including two ministers, high-ranking government and political officials, university professors, medical doctors, businessmen, bankers, and others attended. From

the British side, Ambassador Victor Henderson and DCM David Pearce were at the head of a large delegation of businessmen, government officials, and others.

The topic of discussion was totally focussed on the recent events and their fallout on the bilateral relations. The tone of the discussion was quite open, as the two sides tried to play a moderating influence on their respective camps.

ments. What has been hurting Yemen is the barrage of media attacks. The British side explained that they cannot control the media. "But it would be worthwhile for the Yemeni authorities to assign a spokesperson to brief the local and international media on trial developments. It would also be useful for the Yemeni embassy in London to furnish information on a regular basis to the media and the general public," it was suggested.

Meanwhile, the fourth sitting of the court on the case of 5 Britons and 1 Frenchman was on Saturday, February 6th. The group is charged with possession of firearms with the intention of sabotage and destabilizing law and order. Media announcements by various extremist elements in the UK have alleged that the group was part of an international network of zealots.

This is an *OPINION* page.
Every week, a different intellectual writes a *FOCUS* on a pertinent issue!

"We should work together to stop the deteriorating conditions in Yemen."



Shaker Al-Ashwal,
Vice President of the Yemeni American League

lost time. The latest announcement by the Central Bank of Yemen indicating that Yemen was able to pay all of its scheduled debts this year was promising, but the general picture of the country is still very troubling. The decline in oil prices has made things more difficult, and will undoubtedly result in increasing Yemen's deficit and economic troubles.

Where Is Yemen Going?

In the not so distant past, news headlines on Yemen were full of optimism and promise. Yemen's unification brought to life a sense of optimism. That is now dying because of poverty, instability and lack of vision. The optimists are losing ground, and are being called dreamers in face of what is happening in Yemen.

What is happening in Yemen?

The economy of Yemen is in trouble. Yemen on paper has claimed to encourage foreign investment, but in reality has not taken important steps to restructure government bureaucracy, and eliminate corruption. Foreign investors and even Yemeni immigrants who go to Yemen to invest

are often discouraged by the wheeling and dealing that is prevalent in the corridors and offices of the government offices involved.

The economic reforms, whose burden fell primarily on the heads of the common people of Yemen, have failed to improve the conditions of the country. Widespread waste in government continues.

Health & Education System

The health and education systems are in continuous decline, and are constantly deteriorating. The situation has been very troubling, and recent health statistics were alarming. Many Yemenis are suffering and dying due to lack of access to proper health care. Government hospitals lack resources and we do not need to present evidence of that here. Private hospitals have emerged around the country without proper supervision further endangering the lives of helpless Yemenis.

The quality of public school education has declined, forcing many parents to send their kids to private schools. Like private hospitals, these private schools and institutes often lack proper super-

vision and accreditation.

Yemenis have grown to embrace candles, and have planned their lives around the hours of daylight, thanks to the rising costs of electricity and the resultant electric bills.

The items I have listed above represent some of the major issues that reflect a very troubling trend. They indicate that things have not improved, but have in many cases worsened.

We all understand that our country faces many challenges, and I personally do not envy those in power. Their responsibility is overwhelming. However, government officials should not sit by and accept the degradation of our conditions, especially when people are suffering under harsh economic conditions.

The government has implemented difficult reforms, but where is the light at the end of the tunnel? What happens next? Is the sacrifice of our people paying off, or is it fruitless because widespread government corruption stands in the way of benefits to the people? Why are the skinny Yemenis forced to go on an IMF diet, while the fat belly-officials go on unquestioned?

My questions will go unanswered like the many others which our people ask. Our people have lived with hunger in the past because they had hope. But today, hope is on its deathbed.

What will keep them going? What is the incentive for more sacrifices? What kind of country are we creating? What are the priorities of the government? Our democracy has been weakened, and our freedoms have been compromised. Yemen, which had a chance to become one of the most democratic countries in the region, is now moving backwards and fast. It has to return to previous conditions.

Yemenis are proud people, and our freedom has been invaluable. We have been losing freedoms instead of gaining them. Newspapers have been forced to toe the line or risk being silenced. That is why they are no longer outspoken about issues. Those which continue to raise issues of concern to the people are often threatened or labeled as a way of defaming them.

Parliament...What Parliament?

Not only are Yemenis losing their most valuable right - freedom of expression, but are also losing an important element in our "democracy"; namely, the separation of powers.

The role of parliament has been compromised. Parliament lost its independence, and is steadily being weakened and is converted into an organ that simply follows orders.

The judicial branch of government is yet to be reformed. The latest trial, which is monitored by the world, reflects some of the deficiencies and failures of the system to even implement and follow constitutional orders.

I personally believe in gradual change, and so I do not expect government officials to perform miracles. The conditions of our country will not change overnight. No one with his or her right mind will expect that to happen. Many of us know the proverbial expression, "They did not build Sanaa in a day." That is well understood, but what is most disturbing and troubling is the fact that we are not going forward. People do not mind a slow pace, but they do mind going backwards.

Today, we see strong indications of negative changes. The deterioration of conditions in many areas suggests that we are regressing, instead of going forward. The promise of positive change has not materialized.

There is little, if any, evidence to show long term planning in our government's actions and decisions. As a matter of fact, that phrase seems to be absent from the dictionaries of the Yemeni officials.

I seize this opportunity to appeal to the leadership of the country, and to the president in particular. They should all hasten to implement changes and reforms that are badly needed by a country that has suffered for so long. The last several weeks should have told everyone that Yemen needs to work harder to improve its internal structure, and to become a country where the rule of law dominates.

As a Yemeni living abroad, it has been distressing to learn that Yemen is now seen as a lawless land. Damaging our international image will only lead to isolation as no visitors or investors will go to Yemen. We have to fight to make Yemen a good world citizen.

MAKING IT WORK:

Parameters of Innovation in The EFL Curriculum in Yemen

There is an intimate interface between the socio-academic needs and aspirations of a community and the broad framework of the curriculum designed to fulfill those needs. If effective teaching/learning of English is to be accorded top priority in the national educational agenda, a clear perception of the needs of the Yemeni learners in the EFL (English as a foreign language) is an inevitable precursor.

The EFL needs of the whole gamut of Yemeni students are not homogeneous, but constitute a spectrum. While a vast segment of the student community needs a kind of 'bread-and-butter' English for 'survival' in an English speaking environment, a smaller segment requires higher level specialized courses for various occupational needs. Hence the curriculum should specify two sets of objectives corresponding to these levels.

Our preparatory and secondary level FL curricula should be geared to inculcate in the majority of learners proficiency in simple interactional skills, focusing on elementary 'Oratory' skills like speaking and listening as well as 'literacy' skills like reading and writing. However, the focus need to be on the promotion of basic skills of oral communication.

With such skills, the learners after their graduation can enter different trades and professions and can display the minimum level of competence in English in transacting business with non-Arabic customers and clientele. This would immensely benefit clerks and other officials in workplaces such as universities, hospitals, banks, government organs like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Immigration and Passport Offices, etc. who can then discharge their duties more efficiently. This places a weighty responsibility on the secondary EFL curriculum to develop the learners' fluency in English by the end of their schooling.

For the students entering the portals of universities and other institutions of higher learning, the FL curriculum may consist of two components:

- a) a General English component for the general stream and,
- b) another need based ESP (English for Specific Purpose) course or register-based EOP (English for Occupational Purpose) course for students branching out for various professional careers. However, all students entering the university after secondary schooling should undergo a com-

pensatory, remedial bridge course designed to consolidate their FL competencies developed at the secondary level.

This course would specifically prepare them to meet the foreign language demands of the university curriculum. The focus would be on essential areas of functional grammar, various study skills like note taking, note making, reference skills, inferring, forming critical and evaluative opinions, distinguishing facts from fiction, skimming, scanning, synthesizing, information transfer, locating, storing and retrieving information, writing brief reports, preparing and presenting seminar papers, participating in debates, group discussions, colloquia, symposia, practicing turn taking and turn giving techniques, handling group dynamics in classroom and other interactional contexts, preparing for interviews and so forth. Such a course would enable the learners to hone their linguistic readiness and mental alertness to receive and assimilate the incoming new information load confidently. In short, the FL curriculum from the preparatory through the tertiary stage may consist of the following four phases:

Phase 1:

Introduction (Elementary or Preparatory grade)
Learning the English alphabet, acquisition of mono-syllabic, di-syllabic or tri-syllabic words, describing simple objects within the immediate environment and experience of young learners, familiarization with the spelling patterns of English, grapheme-phoneme correspondence (phonics), listening to English speech sounds, simple dialogues, hand writing, etc.

Phase 2:

Expansion (Secondary grade)
Vocabulary expansion through semantic exercises, simple sentence patterns and usage, reading short texts with understanding, guided composition, listening to connected speech, speaking with clarity on topics within their conceptual range, elementary knowledge of stress, rhythm and intonation.

Phase 3:

Consolidation (Post secondary level)
Revision and reinforcement of the vocabulary and structures, functional bridge course, intensive and extensive reading and familiarization with different genres-based texts, functional language skills.

Phase 4:

Specialization and Wider application of skills: (Post graduate level)
ESP and EOP courses - Language awareness, further refinement of the receptive and productive skills.

If the processes of skill getting and skill using are effectively accomplished, then the English Specialist courses, which have been designed and which are currently being followed in the Yemeni universities, would be more meaningful and productive. These courses, offered during a span of four years, constitute a well-planned integrated module based on a holistic approach to language. That is, learning with the underlying assumption that the students have the necessary prerequisite of an appropriate entry behavior (EB) in terms of their competence in English, so that, after undergoing the prescribed course work, they would approximate the targeted terminal behavior (TB). But apparently a bulk of students at the post secondary stage hardly demonstrate what is called 'threshold level competence' without which the English specialist courses, in their present form, prescribed for students of colleges of Education and general stream students seem to be a trifle premature. In this context it is worthwhile to mention that the FL curriculum for students of colleges of Education need a more pedagogic slant.

College of Education students are the future generation teachers. As such, their English curriculum should envisage methods, approaches and techniques of 'how' to teach the four basic language skills. The pupil-teachers should be sensitized about a plethora of people skills, presentational skills and pedagogic skills encompassing areas like teacher development, educational psychology, motivation, lesson planning, lesson observation, microteaching, peerteaching, classroom processes, coding procedures, testing language and literature, evaluation of text books, curriculum planning, and methodology. Only then can they mature as potentially vibrant professionals with an adequate level of knowledge and control of the teaching learning process. Generations of foreign language learners would, then, be safer in the hands of such teachers who can justifiably be role models for learners in respect of knowledge in and use of English. I conclude this discussion by briefly reflecting on

the role, status and relevance of the English literature component in the EFL curricula in general in Yemen. The literature component across the EFL curricula is, in my opinion, needs to be designed, keeping the level of competence of the learners in view. Except for a few highly motivated, proficient students who want to make English as their career option, the vast majority of students need not be saddled with a heavy dose of canonical literature. For the majority of students simple narratives, retold classics, stimulating stories, short fiction, essays on exploration, adventure, sports, and other common, popular and interesting themes are enough. Simple lyrical poems carefully selected from the corpus of contemporary literature would serve the purpose of generating in them pleasures of reading so that later in life, they take to reading on their own. In so far as great poetry is enjoyed before it is understood, exposure to short and rhythmic poems would engender in them a healthy sense of appreciation of the sheer musicality of poetry and promote their innate aesthetic sensibility.

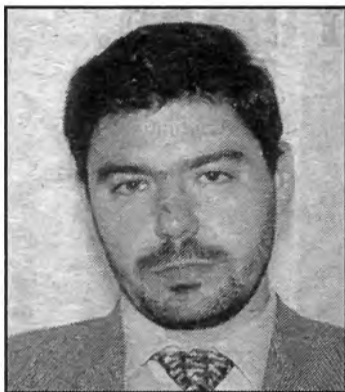
Conversely, the prescription of Shakespeare, T.S.Eliot and other heavy texts is more likely to stifle their linguistic growth for the simple reason that the highly stylized material with involved syntax and a heavy load of archaic expressions are all too obscure for them and much beyond their level of linguistic competence. This is why the current global trend is to phase out Shakespeare from the General English syllabi and replace him with representatives from contemporary British, American, African or post-colonial literature which can substantially contribute to the enrichment of their language and edification of their personality. Moreover, students are likely to be frightened by an unduly demanding course content. Hence, imposing on them a cartload of masterpieces from the treasure-trove of English literature without ensuring their requisite linguistic competence would be as counterproductive as putting the cart before the horse.

Curriculum is an evolving and dynamic concept. No curriculum, in this sense, is static, foolproof or complete in itself. If curriculum is to address itself to the contemporary socio-academic needs, there should be a continual evaluation, based on monitoring of content and framework, coupled with perceptive analyses of a spectrum of allied issues such as methodology, teacher training, text book designing and evaluation procedure. Such an exercise seems warranted now in Yemen so that the social accountability of curriculum is retained. The time has arrived and the moment is now.

By: Dr. Ramakanta Sahu, Associate Professor, Dept of English, College of Education, Mahweet.

Spain to Engage Yemen More Actively

It is well known that Spain and Yemen enjoy a very special relationship, which strengthened throughout the years, and reached its peak after the memorandum of understanding signed in December 1997. Apart from being a very close friend, Spain is also a contributor to the economic and democratic reforms in Yemen. This can be seen from the softloans and financial contributions worth millions of dollars it gave to Yemen. Hatem Bamehriz of the Yemen Times filed the following interview with H.E. Mr. Jose Antonio Sabadell, the First Secretary and the Deputy Head of Missions at the Embassy of Spain in Riyadh.



Q: Would you please introduce yourself?

A: My name is Jose Antonio Sabadell. I am the First Secretary and the Deputy Head of Missions at the Embassy of Spain in Riyadh.

Q: Is this your first visit to Yemen?

A: No, I have visited Yemen before. Yemen is a beautiful country, and I like to visit it as often as I can. I feel at home when I am in Yemen. In addition to this, Yemen and Spain have a very special relationship.

Q: What is the purpose of this visit?

A: We do have visits made on regular basis to Yemen, by different members of the embassy, and that includes the ambassador, and other people responsible of different fields of bilateral relations. On one side we have commercial relations. Our commercial consular comes to Yemen every few months, as do I.

Q: How are Yemeni-Spanish relations?

A: I have already met some people I wanted to see, and I have spoken to different people in the government, other embassies, as well as commercial organizations in order to gain an idea of how the country is doing, and what its

prospects are? I will be meeting more people in the next few days. I think our relations are positive, and we try to maintain and enhance it. As I always say, not having an embassy here forces us to work more to keep the relations on a very good level, as they are now. Mr. Alwan Shaibani, our Honorary Consul is doing a very good and important job.

Q: What are the fields of cooperation between Spain and Yemen?

A: We have more than one field, and it's a continuation of already excellent relations. On one hand from the commercial and economical point of view, I think there are an increasing number of Spanish companies that are taking an interest in Yemen. In this respect a soft loan of \$30 million dollars has been approved, which will be designated to electricity, and \$2 million dollars for feasibility studies. From the point of view of tourism, there are an important number of Spanish tourists visiting Yemen every year. From a cultural point of view, we will try and make our offer of scholarships more available to Yemeni scholars, so they can benefit from it. There is also an invitation which has been extended by the minister of

foreign affairs in Yemen to the minister of foreign affairs in Spain, which has been accepted, and we are trying to fix an appropriate date for this visit.

Q: How do Spanish tourists feel about Yemen?

A: Yemen has so much to offer, in almost every respect, such as landscape, culture, history, and the hospitality of Yemenis, and Spanish tourists appreciate that. I know many people, who had visited Yemen, and they all are extremely satisfied with their visit, and they are looking forward to coming back.

Q: Mr. Alwan Shaibani, would you like to add something?

The bilateral relationship between the two countries is not new. As a matter of fact Spain had provided a soft loan of \$30 million to the Republican hospital in 1990. Unfortunately, the project did not materialize due to the Gulf war. In the last eight years Spain has provided a few shipments of medicine to the ministry of health, which were very much appreciated by the Yemeni government.

Who Benefits from Undermining Tourism and Investment in Yemen?

By: Ismail Al-Ghabiry
Yemen Times

It is hard to talk about investment in Yemen without talking about the recent rise in abduction (or kidnapping) cases and its subsequent impact on the tourism industry and foreign investment.

Abduction of foreign nationals began in 1992 by tribesman to exert pressure on the government, principally to make personal gain, to bargain for more development projects, or to draw the government's attention to a particular injustice done on them. Except for the latest Abyan incident, all abduction cases ended peacefully through negotiations. It has been suspected for some time that some foreign forces encourage tribesmen to carry out abduction incidents to undermine the country's development efforts, especially in the tourism and investment areas. The rate of abduction incidents increased in the past two years alarmingly. In parallel with these incidents following the 1994 war, many bomb attacks occurred from time to time, largely confined to the southern provinces. It was widely thought that secessionist groups were behind these incidents, which the security forces managed to engulf.

We all remember the sad Abyan incident in December 1998. Extremists in the province of Abyan abducted a large group of tourists. The hijackers identifies themselves as faithful Muslims fighting enemies of Islam, in particular, they meant westerners. They gave the government a list

of demands and an ultimatum after which they threatened - as all kidnapers do - to kill the hostages. The government in a speedy reaction decided to crack down the hideout, and release the tourists. While most of the tourists were rescued, four were killed during the storming. After the kidnapers were arrested, they confessed that they belonged to a group lead by Abu Hamza, an Egyptian national who lives in London. A few days after the rescue operation, security organs captured a group of young British passport holders of Yemen and foreign origin and found in their possession explosives, advanced communication systems, arms, and designators. Police investigations revealed that they planned to carry out a number of terrorist attacks including the bombing of the British consulate in Aden. Abu Hamza threatened the Yemeni authorities of killing more foreign nationals in Yemen unless the hijackers are released. He also admitted giving permission to kill the Abyan case hostages. On the 22nd of January, the Yemeni government announced that the remainder of the Abyan kidnapers had been captured a well, and that one of them was the son of Abu Hamza himself.

The escalation of the terrorist incidents coincide with the tourist season which had began to flourish in the past few years, and further coincided with the intense efforts to attract foreign investment and with preparations to open the first phase of the Free Zone in Aden next month.

The sequence of events, their scale, foreign elements involved,

sophisticated weapons used and timing constitute empirical evidence that the waves of terror are imported to Yemen. They also show that they are too well organized, and too well financed to be the product of local conspiracy alone.

People ask: "Why should a group of British passport holders who have high living standards in the UK come to Yemen to carry out such terrorist attacks? and against whom? British targets!" Indeed, why risk their lives? What are the motives and gains? What interests does the Egyptian Extremist Abu Hamza have in waging this terrorist war, and sending his own son to be a part of his campaign, against a country like Yemen?

If Abu Hamza is a self proclaimed defender of Islam, and wants to fight non-Muslims, surely doing that would have been much easier for him where he is, and not in Yemen, or in any other country. Islam, the religion of tolerance and peace, is being exploited by some individuals and groups to settle political scores. Islam is unfortunately being taken as a pretext to fight the very same principles of Islam.

In conclusion, there are many activities happening around us that need to be explained and dealt with. We must be ready to face any threat of disturbing our development in two very important sectors: tourism, and investment. For without them, we cannot even assume that we will be able to cope with the ever-changing world around us.



ANNOUNCEMENT

TOTAL Yemen invites qualified individuals to apply for employment in the following job opportunities;

Only the applications that meet the following qualifications will be considered!

TELECOMMUNICATIONS ENGINEER

- Education University of Technology/Telecommunications Bachelor or Master degree from an accredited University.
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- Special Skills
 - Fluent in English.
 - Good knowledge of radio, satellite and telephone systems.
 - Familiar with computer and commonly used software.
 - Excellent communications skills including fluency in written and spoken English. Strong analytical skills.

Job duties/ Responsibilities

- Installation, operation and maintenance of VHF and HF radios of the company, both on site and in Sana'a.
- ensure good satellite communications between Sana'a and the site.
- PABX programming, management of phone lines.
- Study and implement new telecom systems.
- follow up call for tenders/requests related to telecom.
- Ensure good passage to Year 2000.

COMPUTER ENGINEER

- Education University of Technology/computer Sciences
- Work Experience 3 years installation/maintenance of computer systems. Network experience appreciated.
- Special Skills
 - Fluent in English.
 - Familiar with Windows NT (Workstation and server)/95/98.
 - Familiar with commonly used software and internet services.
 - Good knowledge of PC hardware.

Job duties/Responsibilities

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- Ensure good level of services (Internet connections, back-ups).
- Ensure full compliance for the passage into Year 2000.
- Follow up call for tenders/requests related to systems.
- Ensure full compatibility of soft/had as per Total S. A. standards.

Please submit your resume and motivation letter in English to:
Mail or fax C. V. (Resume) to:

TOTAL YEMEN
HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
P. O. BOX 842
SANA'A, REP. OF YEMEN
FAX: 967-1-414136
E-MAIL:(psoudier@y.net.ye)

- ** Applicants must be Yemeni Nationals possessing a valid Yemeni ID card.
- ** Only those candidates selected for an interview will receive an acknowledgement. All documents submitted by the applicant to the Company shall become the property of TOTAL Yemen and will not be returned to applicant.

Tips on How to Succeed in Business; and a Call to Invest in Iron Ore

When we create an industry, we must look into the five factors for its success - what I call (5 Ms), as follows:

1. Material:

This is most important in the success of any industry. Here we are talking about raw material and other inputs.

2. Market:

When you produce something, you have to make sure you can sell it. A good market is the basic factor for success of any industry.

3. Management:

Many industries fail because of bad management. How you put your resources together and go about your activities is critical.

4. Money:

Whether it is adequate capital upon investing, or whether it is a proper cash flow, money is at the heart of any successful business.

5. Men:

Trained, dedicated and highly motivated staff are the key to success. We call it men, but of course, it includes those indispensable women.

Now that we know the five Ms, let us go to a specific project - iron ores in Rada'a. These ores await investors to go into their extraction and use. Yemen today imports a lot of pig iron. We could be a net exporter of pig iron to the international market.

In addition, we import a lot of iron in two types:

1- Cast iron which is used in industrial and constructional projects.

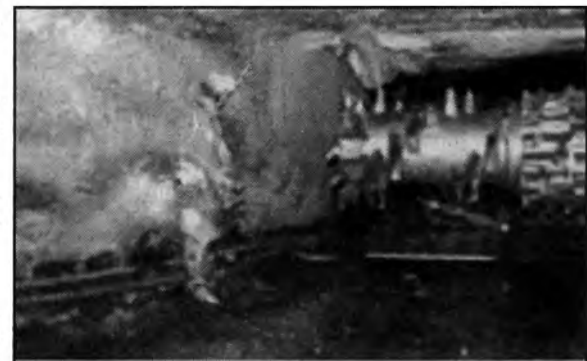
2- Steel, which has many uses.

Of course, steel products are imported into Yemen today in increasing volume.

Let me add here that no economy can really develop if it does not include heavy industries such as iron factories. The reason is that this factory can then

produce materials that go into the production of many other products which have high value added.

It is in this light that I call on our entrepreneurs to take advantage of the raw material that is



available in large quantities in our country. This can also serve as the base for other industries. The government must also support these endeavors because of the added employment value they generate.

By: Sa'ad Al-Mufti,
Consultant Mechanical Engineer



SALVAGING TOURISM

BACKGROUND:

In spite of some limited violence, including kidnappings here and there, Yemen's tourism industry continued to make slow but steady progress over the last four years. In 1995, the number of tourists who visited Yemen stood at 61,350; in 1996, the number had risen to 74,476; by 1997, it was 84,451; and by 1998, it was 101,341 visitors. If the trend continued, the country was hoping to receive a quarter of million visitors by the early 21st century.

In terms of revenue, the annual hard currency earnings from tourists was estimated at US\$ 350 million. The government's share out of this income is a solid 11%.

In spite of slow growth, and far less than potential performance, the tourism industry was pushing ahead and making visible progress. In fact, some circles were already counting on the tourism industry to replace the shortfall from the oil revenue.

THE PROBLEM:

As 1998 was coming to a close, suddenly there was a disaster. There were several kidnappings leading, for the first time, to the killing of the visitors. The sequence and pace of repetition is very telling.

- 1- On December 6th, 1998, 4 German tourists were kidnapped by Bani Dhabyan in Marib Governorate.
- 2- On December 28th, 16 American, Australian and British tourists were kidnapped in Moudiya, Abyan Governorate.
- 3- On January 9th, 1999, a failed attempt to kidnap two Italian tourists in Sanaa City.
- 4- On January 9th, John Brooke, a British national working for Haliburton, was kidnapped in Marib Governorate.
- 5- On January 10th, there was a failed attempt to kidnap two American tourists in Seiyoun, Hadhramaut Governorate.
- 6- On January 17th, 1999, four Dutch and 2 Britons were kidnapped in Sa'adah Governorate.
- 7- On January 26th, 3 Germans were kidnapped in Amran Governorate.
- 8- On January 27th, a UK national was kidnapped in Marib Governorate.

In summary, over the last two months, there were eight incidents involving 35 foreigners in six governorates. The picture is distressing indeed as one Western country after another of warned their nationals against travelling to Yemen.

CHANGE OF MOOD:

In earlier times, Yemen's kidnapping of tourists

was taken lightly. In fact, some travel agencies were talking of adventure tourism, and many visitors joked about arranging to be kidnapped in some of the remote tribal regions in order to have access to some ancient sites which are off-limits. There were no accidents. A few days of forced hospitality was a change much appreciated by the tourists who are often people caught in the rat race of city life.

Then came Abyan. This incident was different in more than one way. The motives were political, the instructions came from outside, and the tactics were violent.

In that incident, four foreigners and five Yemenis were killed. That incident also opened a Pandora's box for the Yemeni authorities. They suddenly woke up to the menace of religion-based extremism which is part of an international network of terrorism apparently headquartered in the UK. That was the beginning of a visible and sustained deterioration in the bilateral relations between Yemen and the UK.

YEMEN & THE UK:

Relations between Yemen and the UK are as strained as they can be. German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer is expected to lend his good offices in trying to mend the rupture. At least, as a friend to both countries, he will try to contain the deterioration by asking for restraint. The media, by bringing everything into the open, has not helped. The reason is that as more information is made available to the public, both government were looking for some place to throw the blame.

The British Government started the bitter recrimination by over-reacting to Yemen's botched-up operation to free the hostages. It made a lot of fuss about not being consulted by the Yemeni authorities before taking decision to use force to liberate the hostages. Yemeni officials said that their decision was an internal matter. The presence of a Scotland Yard team in Yemen added to the irritation of the Yemeni authorities.

Then came the turn of the Yemeni Government to point the finger at the British Government. As more information became available on the activities of extremist elements based in the UK, the authorities in Sanaa started painting the UK as a hub for extremism directed at Muslim countries. Further revelations of false documents from UK circles further strengthened the Yemeni resolve to put more blame on London.

STEPS TO SHORE UP TOURISM

Over the last few weeks, there were many steps to shore up the tourism industry in the country. First and foremost among these are the enhanced



commitment of the authorities to increase safety and security in the country. The President has chaired two meetings - one military/security in nature, and the second civilian. Both addressed the security issue. Then the government enacted the law for the establishment of the Tourism Promotion Board (TPB). This organ brings together the government, business, media and NGOs. It is to be jointly financed and managed.

The TPB held its first meeting on February 2nd, 1999, and elected a 14-person steering committee or secretariat as follows:

1. Minister of Tourism and Culture: Chairman;
2. Mr. Abdul-Karim Abu Taleb - YATA: Vice Chairman;
3. Deputy Minister of Tourism: Member;
4. Chairman of Tourism General Authority: Member;
5. Vice Chairman of TGA: Member;
6. Deputy Chairman of TGA: Member;
7. Chairman of Yemen Airlines: Member;
8. Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaq - Yemen Times: Member;
9. Yahia Mohammed Abdullah Saleh - Tour Operators Association: Member;
10. Alwan Saeed Shaibani - UNIVERSAL: Member;
11. Fadel Wehbe - Sheraton Sanaa Hotel: Member;
12. Zain Hajjaji - Taj Sheba Hotel: Member;
13. Mohammed Abdo Shaibani - Shaibani Restaurants - Member
14. Abdul-Malik Al-Sindi: Executive Director and Member

The General Secretariat of the TPB held its first meeting on Thursday, February 4th, and made the following decisions:

1. To invigorate Yemen's participation in the BIT Milano Fair to be held during 26/2-2/3/1999. A committee headed by Mr. Alwan Shaibani was formed to finalize arrangements for this purpose.
2. To confirm and bolster Yemen's participation in the ITB Berlin Fair to be held during 6-11/3/1999. A committee headed by Mr. Abdul-Karim Abu Taleb was formed to finalize arrangements for this purpose.
3. To confirm and bolster Yemen's participation in the Paris Exhibition to be held during 18-24/3/1999. A committee headed by Mr. Sadek Al-Sa'ar

was formed to finalize arrangements.

4. To confirm Yemen's participation in the one-month Dubai Shopping Festival that starts on March 18th. Arrangements towards that end will be headed by Abdul-Malik Al-Sindi.

The General Secretariat also requested that Professor Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaq, who is already on a mission to Cairo, discuss with Egyptian authorities their experience in limiting the fall-out on the tourist industry from terrorist violence. Arrangements have been made to hold meetings with the Minister of Tourism and other Egyptian officials. A blue-print for Yemeni actions and steps are expected to come out from reading the Egyptian experience.

At another level, Professor Al-Saqqaq has been charged with the job linking up with the world media regarding the security situation in Yemen. To help in this effort, consultants from Britain, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands will soon be contracted.

MOBILIZING NEW FUNDS:

A fund was established to promote tourism and finance efforts towards that end. New sources to finance the fund include the following:

1. A committee was formed to weed out free riders in the tourism industry. This refers mainly to some tour operators who are not licensed by the authorities. Abdul-Rahman Mahyoub, Chairman of the Tourism General Authority, was named as chairman of this committee. Within a few days, he is expected to present the General Secretariat of the TPB with an assessment report on the overall picture of the tour operators business. This is expected to generate new funds.

2. Another source is the increased commitment by the private sector to invest in the promotion of tourism. Towards this end, all companies directly linked to tourism are asked to make a minimum allocation towards a Fund established for the promotion of this industry.

3. The government has agreed to make an initial contribution of YR 20 million to the Fund.

A World Bank team that was visiting Yemen last week, and which traditionally financed efforts to preserve old/historic cities, showed interest in the re-structuring and re-invigorating of the tourism industry. Though previously not involved in tourism per se, the World Bank team expressed an interest in exploring financing development projects in this sector.

Important Players Talk About the Situation & Future Plans

Three key players in the tourism sector spoke to the Yemen Times about the present predicament, and the steps that need to be taken to protect the industry.

1. Mr. Abdul-Malek Mansour, Minister of Culture & Tourism:

Tourism faces a distressing predicament today. The country is subjected to a well-planned disinformation campaign. You can see the meanness of some of the articles immediately.

I believe that the tourism sector can overcome the fallout from the anti-Yemen informational barrage. The life-span of lies is short. We plan to provide accurate and full information on the situation to the world.

Now that the Tourism Promotion Board (TPB) law has been issued, we can say that we have started the process of overcoming the problem from the theoretical point of view. The Board has already taken many corrective steps, and I think we are starting on a sound footing to redress the problems.

The majority of the board members are from the private sector. This means that the private sector will have a greater say in the decisions of the TPB. This is also true of the General Secretariat which is the steering committee for all our efforts.

One issue that is of maximum concern is security. I believe that security and defense systems need to be enhanced to play a greater role in preventing violence. It is not enough that the criminals in the recent events have been caught. We need the capability to stop such crimes before they take place.

I am optimistic that the security and defense systems will be up to the responsibility they shoulder in protecting the tourist industry and the nation.

We are in close contact with other countries who face the same threats. We are getting information from Egypt and other countries regarding the problem and how they have handled the solutions. We will, of course, apply some of these only in as far as they are relevant to our situation.

We have approved the tourism promotion plans for 1999. Yemen will produce films, books, brochures, maps and other relevant material in five languages - English, French, German, Italian and Spanish.

2. Mr. Abdullah Al-Mutarrif is the Marketing Manager at Yemenia (Yemen Airlines):

The national carrier has doubly suffered. It carried the brunt of the fallout, and it must now lead in carrying the expenses of the promotion plans. But this we willingly do because we are an integral part of the tourism industry. Actually, we used to do most of the promotion on our own for a long time.

It is important that all members of the Yemeni society realize the gravity of the situation. The tourism industry has been hit hard. Many companies are losing money, and some have already gone under. Some officials do not realize that this sector touches on many sub-sectors like airlines, tour operators, ticketing agencies, hotels, restaurants, transportation, museums, artisan and folklore products, etc. Even beyond the directly-affected businesses, tourists add to the local demand for all goods and services, thus impacting the whole economy.



Yemenia will continue to work with all sides in order to protect Yemen and the tourism industry. We will participate in all the fairs and exhibitions, and will join in the promotion efforts.

We ask the authorities, in return, to consider some measures that will alleviate the burdens of the airline. These include correcting the tariff rates, adjusting the price of jet fuel, and the removal of dis-

counts for government-financed tickets. In addition, it would help our cash flows if the authorities paid up accumulated debt.

We are waiting for the state to come up with an official plan to restore to the government its dignity and prestige. This plan must also give guarantees to foreign investors and foreign tour companies. It ought to show that Yemen is secure, safe, stable, and peaceful for businesses. Otherwise, all foreign and local investors including Yemenia's will be held back. If this happens, we will not be able to modernize our fleet and cover destinations in Europe. All investments will be lost if the government does not take a firm decision to protect tourists, and ensure their security and safety. European and insurance companies now prohibit many of their clients and tourists from coming to Yemen. They advise their clients not to risk coming to Yemen.

Finally, let me say that I am grateful for the new spirit that now permeates our work. I am sure with the dominant role of the private sector and the media in our new organs, we will address issues in a new light. This will also make it easy to mobilize world expertise in our 1999 plans.

3. Mr. Alwan Saeed Shaibani, Chairman UNIVER SAL Group of Companies

We are losing money on a daily basis. Unfortunately, our group has business in all the sub-sectors of the travel industry - airlines, hotels, tour operating, car leasing, etc. It is not a secret that we have closed down one of our companies, and we are considering closing down another. A lot of other tourist companies also face imminent bankruptcy, because of the present situation.

We have to be sure that the government is genuine in its intention to do something tangible to protect the industry. Sometimes, we are not so sure. We do not know if the government is acting on political expediency or it is genuine and candid in its support for the sector.

In my opinion, there are two jobs the state can do. These are providing adequate level of security, and clean our cities. The volume of garbage that accumulates in our streets is shameful. The Supreme Tourism Council is said to be considering a lot of solutions for the problems. But till now, we have not seen any tangible action. We have heard many promises.

We continue to face terrible problems. But the Universal Group will of course do all that is necessary so that the sector can come back to life.

By: Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaq, Jamal Al-Awadhi, and Ghassan Al-Ahdal - Yemen Times.



The Mukathiya or Shari'a

Mukthiya or shari'a is an integral part of most marriage ceremonies in Sanaa, as well as in a number of other areas in the country. This is the name of the woman who beautifies the bride and teaches her some facts of life. In the West, families discuss different aspects of reproduction and sex-related facts with their children at an early age. In traditional societies, this is shunned until very close to the marriage date. Here enters the shari'a (الشارية).

Families, especially rich ones, still stick to this old tradition and assign the woman with advising the bride on certain health and sexual habits. She also advises her not to let her husband touch her until he gives her a certain amount of money or golden ornaments.

This woman is professional and has no other work to do. She seizes the opportunity of marriage festivals to sell combs, rings and other ornaments to women attending the ceremony.

Low income families may not invite the shari'a to their marriage festivities because they may not afford her fees, which could reach 2,000 rials a day. Marriages usually last for three days, which mean that her fee could rise to 6,000 rials. Rich families often pay a flat fee of 10,000 rials.

Today, the tradition of shari'a is withering away except in old Sanaa, Hajja and Thula. Most brides prefer to go to modern salons for beautification, and schools, friends, families usually fill-in the information the bride needs to start a family.

I have asked a number of girls in Sanaa whether they prefer having a shari'a come to their house when they get married or going to a salon. Many said they preferred the shari'a. First, this is done at home, giving the girl and her friends more privacy. Second, it does not exclude getting modern cosmetics and other services. Third, the shari'a accompanies the bride to her husband's house.



Educated girls felt less at ease with the shari'a than the less educated ones. Some even described the shari'a tradition as obsolete.

As a general summary of the survey, it is clear that the shari'a service will not continue in its traditional format. The need for some kind of moral support by the young brides who are not adequately informed in the facts of life will make the shari'a an indispensable person.

By: Khayriya Al Shibibi,
Yemen Times.



Awad Ahmad: The Bana Nightingale

Awadh Ahmad was so called by his fans who greatly admired his beautiful voice which rose high in Aden during the golden era of Yemeni songs and Bana is the beautiful valley in Abyan.

The artist is originally from Abyan governorate and was born in Zanzibar in 1950 amidst the vast greenery of that governorate known for the production of cotton and best agricultural products.

He was fond of music ever since his early childhood and was influenced with the renowned singers at the time especially in nearby Lahj and other Arab singers.

He was discovered by late Fadl Ahmad Al Salamy and Nasser Gharam who admired his voice and told Sultan Abyan Ahmad bin Abdullah Al Fadly who was known for his encouragement of arts and artists. He asked them to adopt him after taking permission from his relatives in the early sixties. Awad started his musical career as the first singer from Abyan.

In 1962, Awad recorded his first two songs accompanied by the Aden radio troupe. He formed a successful musical couple with composer Mohammed Mohsen Atroosh who managed to shed light on the beautiful layers in voice of Awad.

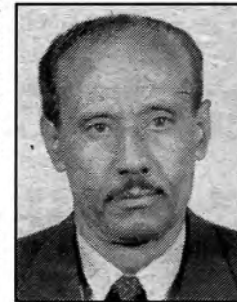
Atroosh had then recently returned from Egypt where he studies music and brought back with him many new ideas and excelled in playing on the lute.

In 1972, Awad settled in Aden and sang to other composers a number of songs including the one titled "Sari Al Leyel" which swept through the gulf. Our artist's reputation spilt out to nearby Saudi Arabia and other gulf countries. In the early seventies, he was invited to Kuwait where he recorded a number of his songs and sang in a number of parties.



Awad's latest participation was in 1998 in Ismailiya, Egypt where he was joined by an artistic and folklore troupe from Abyan. During his presence in Sanaa in Summer last year, he recorded a number of his songs for the Yemeni space channel. He is still singing on various occasions, pleasing his fans with new and genuine Yemeni songs.

By: Saleh Abdulbaki,
Art Editor, Yemen Times



Committee on The Rights of The Child Welcomes Yemen's Efforts to Implement the Convention

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, a world body in charge of monitoring implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child - at the end of its 20th session last week - issued concluding observations and recommendations on reports submitted to it by Austria, Belize, Guinea, Sweden and Yemen.

The five countries, in keeping with their obligations as stated by the Convention, presented to the Committee over the course of a 3-week session, written and oral summaries on their efforts to promote and protect children's rights. The countries also sent official delegations to answer questions and hear the comments of the Committee's 10 independent experts.

The Committee expressed concern that the adoption of structural adjustment program in Yemen might have adverse effects on the implementation of social programs, especially those related to children. The specific issues of concern were:

- persistent disparities in the situation of children in the northern and southern regions of the country, and in urban and rural areas, and among male and female children;
- traditional societal attitudes still regarded the widespread use of physical punishment as an acceptable practice by parents;
- the practice of female genital mutilation and other harmful traditional practices affecting the health of the girl children persisted in some regions.

The Committee then cited positive developments in Yemen, including the following:

- the adoption of several initiatives such as the National Population Strategy, the Social Security Network, and the Social Welfare Fund, which aimed at combating poverty;
- initiative to eliminate school fees for girls as a way to reduce gender disparities in education.

Among factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention which the Committee noted were that Yemen was still facing serious political, economic and social challenges, such as transition from a feudal to a modern society, and suffering effects from its recent process of reunification, both of which affected the situation of children. The panel also noted that certain traditional practices and customs, particularly in rural areas, continued to hamper progress.

The Committee reiterated its concern that Yemen has not complied with its recommendations that the government ensure that domestic legislation was in full conformity with the principles and provisions of the Convention. It remained concerned that the state did not appear to have fully taken into account the general principles contained in the Convention.

The Committee recommended the following:

- that appropriate measures be taken to ensure that Yemeni legislation is in full conformity with the principles and provisions of the convention;
- that reviewing and updating of data-collection systems be continued to include all the areas covered by the Convention;
- that further steps be taken to disseminate the Convention among adults, including professional groups, community and religious leaders, as well as children;
- that the state continue undertaking measures to the maximum extent of its available resources, including international cooperation, to ensure that sufficient budgetary allocations were provided for social services for children;
- that the Government reinforce measures to raise awareness of the negative effects of corporal punishment and ensure that discipline in schools, families and all institutions was administered in a manner consistent with a child's dignity.
- that measures be taken to establish alternative care

centers for abandoned girls;

- that the government allocate appropriate resources, and consider seeking technical assistance when needed, to reinforce its efforts to make basic health care accessible to all children;
- that all appropriate measures be taken to improve and update school infrastructure and equipment and to accelerate the implementation of a compulsory education system;
- that the Government take measures to ensure adequate legal protection of refugee children, including physical safety, health and education; that steps be taken for the protection of children affected by armed conflicts;
- and that the State party review its legislation and practices in order protect children from being economically exploited.

The General Assembly of the UN had adopted the Convention unanimously on 20 November 1989, 30 years after the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of the Child. The Convention makes statements which hold it legally accountable for their actions towards children. Work on its drafting had begun in 1979 -- the International Year of the Child -- at the Commission of Human Rights in Geneva.

The Convention was opened for signatures on 26



January 1990. That day, 61 countries signed it, a record first-day response. It entered into effect just seven months later, on 2 September 1990. All nations, except the United States and Somalia, have ratified the Convention.

Ratifying the Convention entails reviewing national legislation to make sure it is in line with its provisions. The Convention stipulates, among other things, that: every child has right to life; that states shall ensure to the maximum children's survival and development; that every child has the right to a name and nationality from birth; and that, when courts, welfare institutions or administrative authorities deal with children, the child's best interests shall be the primary consideration. The Convention recognizes the right of children to be heard.

By: Nadwa Al-Dawsari,
Yemen Times

February 8th, 1999



Solar Energy: The New Old Fuel

Many stories around the world have been published in magazines and newspapers about solar vehicles, solar cars and the unlimited applications of solar energy. A lot of research is being performed to promote the use solar cars and to make their wide-spread use practical in the future. In some sense, however, all automobiles are solar-powered.

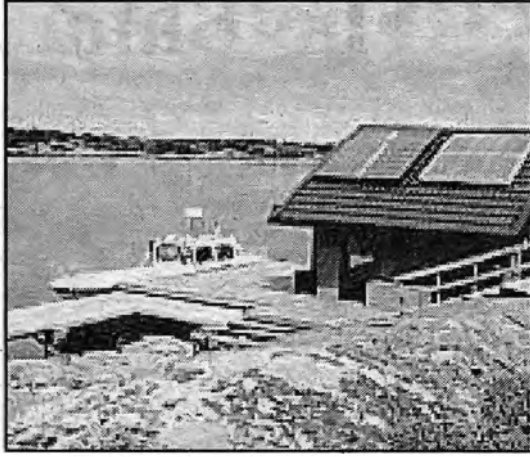
Almost all vehicles currently on the world's roads are powered by a petroleum derivative. Petroleum is pumped from deep in the earth. It was formed a long time ago from dead plants that used solar energy directly. Hence, petroleum energy is a type of solar energy captured in the petroleum products. When a petroleum product, such as gasoline is mixed with air and ignited in a conventional internal combustion engine, that ancient solar energy is released in a sudden explosion of gas that drives the piston and moves the vehicle.

Although we have never driven a vehicle that was not powered by a fossil fuel, the ancestors of the modern vehicle were powered by a variety of energy forms.

The steam power was the first used to mechanically drive road vehicles. In 1769, the French engineer, Nicolas Cugnot modified a horse-drawn tractor, originally designed to pull a cannon by adding a drive mechanism and a steam engine. It seems that Cugnot's steam-driven tractor was not designed for long trips. Its top cruising speed was two miles per hour, and it had to stop every ten to fifteen minutes to build up steam.

Steam engines work by external combustion. The fuel used for external combustion engines is coal, wood or oil. The fuel is burned outside the engine to change water into steam, which drives the engine. Many steam-powered engines were developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, they have many serious problems among which is their tendency to explode. It is amusing to note that in Great Britain, in the 1830s, a law required steam-driven vehicles be preceded by a person on a horse, carrying a red flag.

Although considered since the seventeenth century, no break-through in the internal combustion engines was made until 1860 when the French inventor Etienne Lenoir built a small single-cylinder engine. The German engineer N. A. Otto adapted this design for a four-stroke engine that



burned coal gas fuel in 1876. Eleven years later, Karl Benz put the internal combustion engine on the road in a three-wheeled vehicle, driven by chains like those on a bicycle. This was the first Mercedes, with a top speed of 13 km per hour.

There were more than seventy experimental internal combustion automobile manufacturers in the United States of America by 1895. Mostly, those were designed to use some form of petroleum products.

Some automobile manufacturers concentrated on electric cars, as they are very quiet compared to the very noisy internal combustion cars and they do not emit any fumes. Electric cars were the most popular cars in America in the 1890s. Their main problem was that they needed recharging after about fifty minutes of driving.

The cars with internal combustion engines became the most popular cars after they achieved higher speeds and assembly line mass production was introduced. The electric cars are being reconsidered after the dark face of fossil fuel is unveiled. The serious concern over the fossil fuel supplies, their pollution, high prices and dwindling supplies, caused the engineers to look once again at electric cars. This time new technologies are explored using the same old fuel: the solar energy.

For Yemen, solar energy is the energy of the future.

Letters to the Editor

Is "Yemen Airways" under Siege?

I attended a meeting with the "Acting" Chairman of "Yemen Airways" Captain Abdul Khaleq Al-Kadi. As I entered the building, my identity was checked at the lower level. I was then allowed to proceed to the 9th floor. Upon reaching the entrance of the secretary's office, a guard in military camouflaged uniform pointed his Kalachnikov at me, with an obvious effort to block my office access. To be able to speak to the secretary, I had to push aside the guard and his gun. Then two bodyguards in civilian clothes appeared on the scene. After some friendly conversation, my meeting was re-scheduled for the next day.

It appears to me that "Yemen Airways" more and more looks like a police station rather than the office of the national airline.

What is the Chairman afraid of?

By: Mr. M. Pierre.

How Should Students Spend the Summer Vacation?

I met some students and we talked about the summer vacation. We argued intensely about how to spend the vacation.

Some of them said they worked in order to save money or to help their families meet the rising cost of living. Others spend the vacation working in the family business. In both cases, the youngsters get experience in the field they are working in.

A number of students spend the summer holidays in sports such as football, tennis, chess, etc. Others engage in hobbies of various kinds.

Unfortunately most students do nothing over the summer. The walk up and down the streets, and they often tease girls.

This is a bad habit. Students should find better ways to occupy their free time. They should find ways to learn new skills or improve their language proficiency. If they can't find anything at all to do, they should spend their time in reading stories, novels or poetry.

By: Farres Mohammed Mothamoon, Sana'a

Unemployment Pains

With much respect I write this letter to you. In the past few months I sent several letters to the paper which contained various subjects about what

happened around us, society and life. Unfortunately, I do not know if you have received them or not. None were published, except one entitled "From the frying pan into the fire". I do not know the fate of the others.

I once thought they could be intercepted by censors, because I know all your activities and business is being watched closely. Any way, I decided to keep writing to the paper if that does not annoy you, and I do not care about any censorship.

I want to profess that my English was not so good, but my persistent contact and continuous reading of Yemen Times enabled me to improve my English language. I became able to compose and write as is now clear from my letters to you. The following is a letter concerned with the unemployment problem in our country.

Unemployment is a big problem in Yemen today. It creates despair and frustration among individuals. Not only that, but it is also liable to make a person very depressed and unfaithful to everybody and everything around him.

If a person is unemployed for a long time, he starts to hate his society and becomes violent. Nearly half of the Yemeni society suffers from this problem. In spite of repeated appeals and warnings against the dangers of this phenomenon, nobody is tackling this problem. To the contrary, more workers are sacked due to the new privatization policy.

So, we do not know what the future holds. Years pass by and our hearts are broken. We hope that our politicians will think of the poor and the jobless, otherwise they will lose our good feelings for them and our faith in them.

Where does our country's wealth go? I have concluded that the policy of our officials is just to keep themselves, the officers of the army, and the heads their tribes in comfortable life.

Abdul Majid Ahmed Bin Ali Jabir Mukalla, Hadhramaut.

Friendship Makes Peace

The 20th century is about to elapse. The world still live in instability, economically, politically and socially. There are wars which harvested the lives every day. Children are deprived of health care and education.

The friendship mechanism has been dismantled by the above mentioned factors. Why we don't insert the fittings to enable it to start strongly.

Friendship plays a pivotal role in peaceful co-

Al-Khawkhah: Exquisite Conventions

Visiting some places in the Tihama gives one an immense pleasure. To go there and see the life of the people living near the sea is actually very interesting. Truly, one cannot fail to read the ordeals of these people living in these areas surrounding the Red Sea. It is very clear and obvious in their faces. However, it is very amusing to meet these people and get face-to-face contact with their conventions and traditions. Now let's go together and visit some of the most outstanding landmarks of the city of Al-Khawkhah.

Al-Khawkhah is one of the cities that belong to Hodeidah governorate. It is roughly 35 km far from Makha. The most outstanding feature distinguishing this city is the long line of palm trees stretching along the sea shore. Anybody who visits this city praises its distinguished breezy and fresh air and moderate climate. For this reason, it has become a tourist destination for a good number of people from inside and outside the country. Whenever they have a chance to go on holiday, school and university students pick up the city.

Abu Zahr: A promising Tourist Attraction

Abu Zahr is the most beautiful tourist village in the city of Al-Khawkhah. It is marked with its dense palm trees, covering most of its area. These palm trees are used as tents where people visiting this city camp near the beach. It is really fascinating to go sightseeing there.

This beautiful village has been announced as a tourist village but it is short of many essential facilities and services like electricity, water, health and telephone services. I believe this village can be developed into a promising splendid tourist attraction. This will take place if the people in authority pay more attention to it.

Tourist dive in Al-Khawkhah

It is noticeable that the hotels here are very traditional. They are made up of palm trees where small rooms are built from clay and reed. I talked to a hotel owner in Abu Zahr about the tourist drives nowadays. He told me that it is considerably affected by the recent kidnapping and terrorist incidents. He noted that tourist drive was very active in the last year, particularly during Christmas days. He also added that many tourist agencies canceled their reservation. Therefore, this problem should be promptly addressed. At another level, I noticed that the hotel is not provided with a telephone service. When I asked him how he could manage this, he told me that they use a pager to keep in contact with their clients. After that they have to go to the city of Al-Khawkhah, 5 km away, to make telephone calls. This is very difficult, isn't it?

I wonder what would really happen if these essential services are introduced to this village? Surely, it can attract a good number of tourists and thus earn a lot of hard currency.

People of Al-Khawkhah: Hard life

People living in Al-Khawkhah are having a very difficult life.

existence. If friendship prevails all over the world there will be no wars, no hatred and no envy. Friendship makes the world as nice as the serene sky.

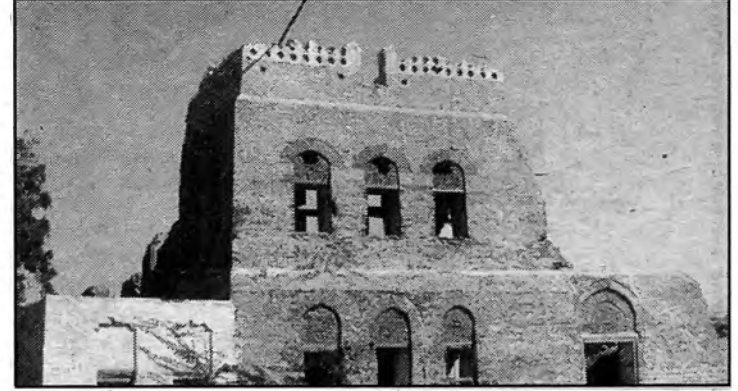
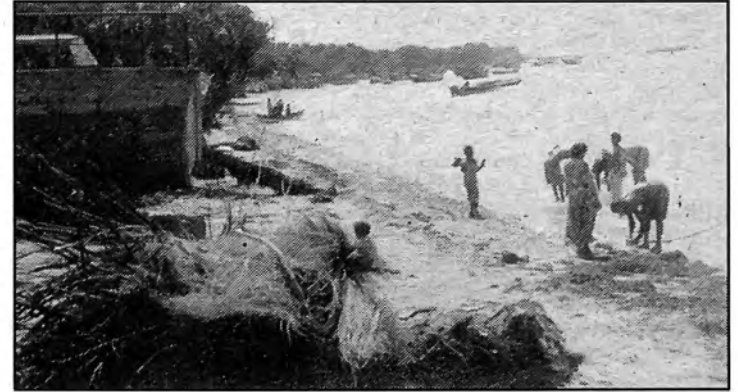
Nowadays the world has become a global village, due to the modern advanced communication. I suggest an International Friendship Organization to regulate friendship and to help poor pen-friends to visit each other. Friendship must spread among male and female, but pure friendship as Islam advised. Thus the world can get rid of destructive weapons which devastate the people and their civilization. We want peace, religious tolerance and mutual love to be eternal.

One can read this clearly in their faces. When you reach the village, children and youngsters catch you tightly, starting to offer their own services. Most of the people are fishermen. Some are involved in the business of making boats in the approximately 30 boat workshops in the area. They travel far away in their profession, a fisherman told me that the longest fishing journey lasts for 15 days. Some of these fishermen earn a lot of money but some others do it to keep their body and soul together. Most of the time they sell their fish in Hodeidah. These fishermen complain against the heavy taxes levied on them which amount to more than 10%.

gratulations of her friends and relatives. On Thursday, the bride moves to her groom's house and in this very day a party is made for men only. A tent called "Makhdrah" is set up for men and a platform is made for the groom; he sits on a bed and chews Qat with his friends and other VIPs; others sit on beds made up of reed. They all chew Qat while dancing and drumming goes on. One of the highly visible and newly introduced customs in the Tihama area is firing guns in marriage festivals.

Female Circumcision

Female circumcision, a term used for different surgical operations carried out on Female genitalia, is



Marriage Ceremonies in Al-Khawkhah

Marriage festivities differ from one place to another inside Yemen. The Tihama area has its own style in celebrating these festivals. More over, each city in Tihama has its own distinguishing features. In Al-Khawkhah, the dowry, as reported by people there, was not much; it was around YR15,000. But now its has shot up. The minimum expenses of a marriage ceremony are YR 300,000. The ceremony usually starts on a Tuesday. It is called Al-Quma'a, where the bride embroiders her hands with hena. On Wednesday, a session is held for the bride; she receives the presents and con-

one of the deeply-rooted practices performs in the Tihama. There are traditional reasons for this practice, and it is supported by great social pressure. This practice is dominant in all the areas of Tihama. Asked about at this illegal practice, people of Al-Khawkhah told me that it has been a tradition for a long time. This practice is carried out by a woman or sometimes a man and is mostly performed at home.

By Mohammed Hatem Al-Qadhi
Taiz Office Editor
Yemen Times

It will be very nice if the suggested organization has its own radio station. The Friendship Associations in the different countries should supply the Friendship Radio with the colourful programs.

I think the UN will not be behindhand. It will finance the organization. AS we know the first objective of the esteem UN is to make peace and keep it.

Finally this scheme will not see the light unless the people of the same country live peacefully.

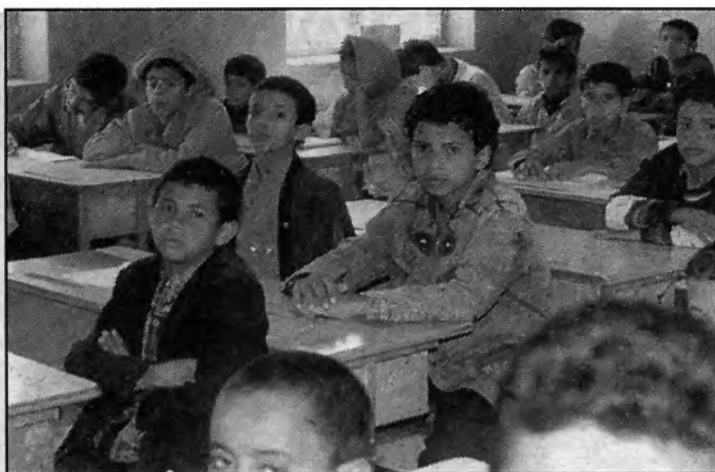
Friendship will not grow without faithfulness as the flowers will not grow without water and air.

Siddiq Ahmed El-Bashir El-Kenany

The Fight Against Illiteracy: Yemen's Road to Prosperity

It is a known fact that education is a key factor in development and change. It is the main vehicle towards a more glorious tomorrow in any society. In other words, the more a society is educated, the easier and quicker it is to achieve social, economic and political progress.

It becomes a means to building a new social structure. So, combating illiteracy in a society means modernizing its whole structure and burying poverty. This is because it is very difficult for an illiterate society to accept or interact with any efforts for change. Therefore, it is a must for any society to fight against illiteracy to achieve prosperity and welfare for its people.



Illiteracy versus Progress

Over 30 years passed since the Yemeni revolution. Still, the number of illiterate people in the society is staggeringly estimated at around 85%. So, what has been done during this time is very little. In these years, wonders could have been done to eradicate illiteracy or at least reduce its rate. Many countries could do a lot in this field in a very short time.

It is noticeable that the campaign launched against illiteracy in Yemen was active in the 1980s. Many centers for this purpose were opened all over the country including rural areas. But, they began to gradually disappear in some areas. They are now closed down. In fact, they are available only in the government payrolls while in reality some centers are not really there. But they are not working properly and as they should. A lot of money is wasted while nothing is achieved. It is actually staggering to hear that some of the current centers are phantom. The equipment and appliances of some of these centers disappear. This story is applied to one of these centers in Mawiyah in Taiz where thousands of dollars are wasted.

Illiteracy and Backwardness

Neglect on the part of the people in charge is clearly visible. People in authority are not conscious enough of the danger of illiteracy. Maybe

they don't understand that illiteracy makes society susceptible to all sorts of diseases, poverty and many other evils that hinder development and progress. The most important task for the government is to enlighten the minds of the people. It is only in this case that a real change or new life can be breathed into the society.

I wonder! How would we be able to move into the 21st century with such a heavy burden of backwardness, poverty and fragile infrastructure? While the advanced world is doing its best to minimize computer illiteracy among its masses, we are not even able to teach our people how to read and write.

It is quite natural that humanity goes hand in hand with advancement and modernization. To make things short, as history moves forwards, people get more and more advanced and their conditions get better. But for us the case is different.

We move backward. The more the western world is advancing and developing, the more we are getting poorer, illiterate and in worse situations. While they are going faster towards the new age of information, knowledge and revolutionary technology, we are not even able to crawl. Backwardness is riding high.

The UN human development report of 1998 put Yemen in the 152 place in a list of 202 countries around the world. Around 15% of the Yemeni population are afflicted by hepatitis B. Over 6,000

Yemenis die every month from malaria, dysentery, respiratory diseases, typhoid. The list can go on. So, this is a pointer of deteriorating conditions.

In seeking the basic reasons, one can not forget illiteracy. It really hurts the situation a lot. This is because when the majority of society is illiterate, they become oblivious and answer of their health, food...etc. They are entirely different in their future outlook. This should not be understood as a critical attitude. Rather it is the truth.

Observing our living conditions in the 1980s, one can see the difference. It seems that we always like to be 'exceptional' and 'extraordinary'. Why? I don't intend to say illiteracy is the only reason behind our constant deterioration. Rather, it is one of the main stumbling blocks and obstacles in the way of any development and change. Therefore, unless we do something to minimize the number of illiterate people, our plans for the future will move erratically.

Illiterate Educated

It is not only that. Even some of the educated

persons who have joined schools and universities can be labeled as illiterate educated. Some educators see our universities today as a mere center for removing the illiteracy of the educated.

To put it in another way, students of schools and graduates of universities have not been given proper education that qualifies them for the job market or even for their personal lives. Some of our university students make horrible mistakes or errors in spelling, grammar or sentence structure which can not be made by a student in elementary school who has received good school education.

Just a visit to any school, especially in far-off rural areas, is enough to tell much of the plight of education in Yemen. We are proud of having millions of students but we have forgotten their proficiency and skills. In reality, only a select few are qualified to be called students. Some of them are still illiterate. So, does this mean that even in this we are 'exceptional' for we have two kinds of illiteracy?

The people in charge should pay more attention to the question of education. Otherwise, the current situation will lead to more destructive damage. Can we stop it before it gets out of hand? I think that we still have time!

Mohammed Hatem Al-Qadhi,
Taiz Office Editor,
Yemen Times.



Yemen LNG hosted Dinner at Sheraton Sana'a Hotel

Dinner Party hosted by Yemen LNG at Sheraton Sana'a Hotel on Sunday 31/1/99. H.E. Minister of Oil and Mineral Resources, Mr. Mohammed Al-Khadem Al-Wajeh and Board Members attended the Dinner Party.



Saba' Yemen Insurance Co.

Saba' Yemen Insurance Company was established in 1990 and started accepting business by January 1st, 1991 with a paid up capital reached YR, 130,000,000 by end of

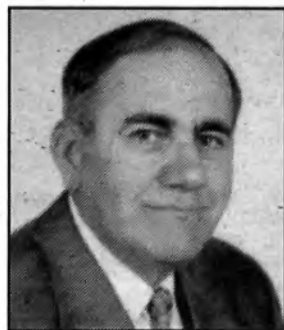
1997. The name of Saba' refer to an ancient Land of Yemen known as the Kingdom of Sheba.

Major Shareholders:

- Al-Rowaishan Group of Companies.
- Al-Hadha Co. for Trading & General Agencies.
- Red Sea Flour Mills Co. Ltd.
- General Corp. for Foreign Trade & Grains.

Management:

- 1- Sheikh Mohamed Bin Yehiah Al-Rowaishan - Chairman
- 2- Kassim Al-hadha - Vice Chairman
- 3- Mohamed Hussein Zawiyah - Managing Director
- 4- Sabah D. Haddad - General Manager
- 5- Kais A.Khalaf - Technical Manager
- 6- Abdul Wafi Bakir - Finance & Administration Manager



Sabah D. Haddad
General Manager

Reinsurers:

Saba' Yemen Insurance Company deals with first-class security among which is Gerling Konzern Globale - Cologne, being the Leader followed by ARIG of Bahrain.

This gives Saba' Yemen Insurance Company a high degree of stability and support to enable the company to underwrite large risks with competitive rates and conditions.

The company provide wide range of coverage as follows:

- Fire & Allied Perils.
- Group Life Scheme.
- Motor Comprehensive Insurance.
- Marine Cargo.
- Engineering Insurance.
- Workmen's Compensation.
- Employer's Liability.
- Money Insurance (CIT & CIS).
- General Third Party Liability.
- Fidelity Guarantee.
- Personal Accident Benefits.
- Plate Glass Insurance.
- Householder Comprehensive.

Saba' Yemen Insurance Company

have well trained staff with professional technical know-how in insurance. The company held various training courses mainly in insurance elements (Fire & Engineering Insurance) in 1995, 1996 & 1997 respectively. The participants were not only Saba' staff but from all the local insurance companies as well.

Head Office:

Sana'a - 47 Al-Zubairi St.,
Ishaq Bldg.
Tel.: 240908/ 240894
Fax: 240943
Telex: 2445 (Sabamin)
P. O. Box: 19214

Aden Branch:

Tel. & Fax: (02) 253464
P. O. Box: 70154-Aden

Hodeidah Office:

Tel. & Fax: (03) 226627

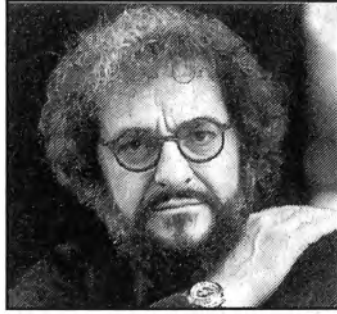
Taiz Office:

Tel. & Fax: (04) 233082

Financial Highlights (Currency in (1000) Yemeni Rial)

	1995	1996	1997
Gross Premium	119,511	177,528	180,006
Legal Reserve	4,770	5,797	9,140
Total Assets	156,283	191,363	311,948
Investment	67,084	91,894	218,784
Paid up Capital	50,000	50,000	130,000

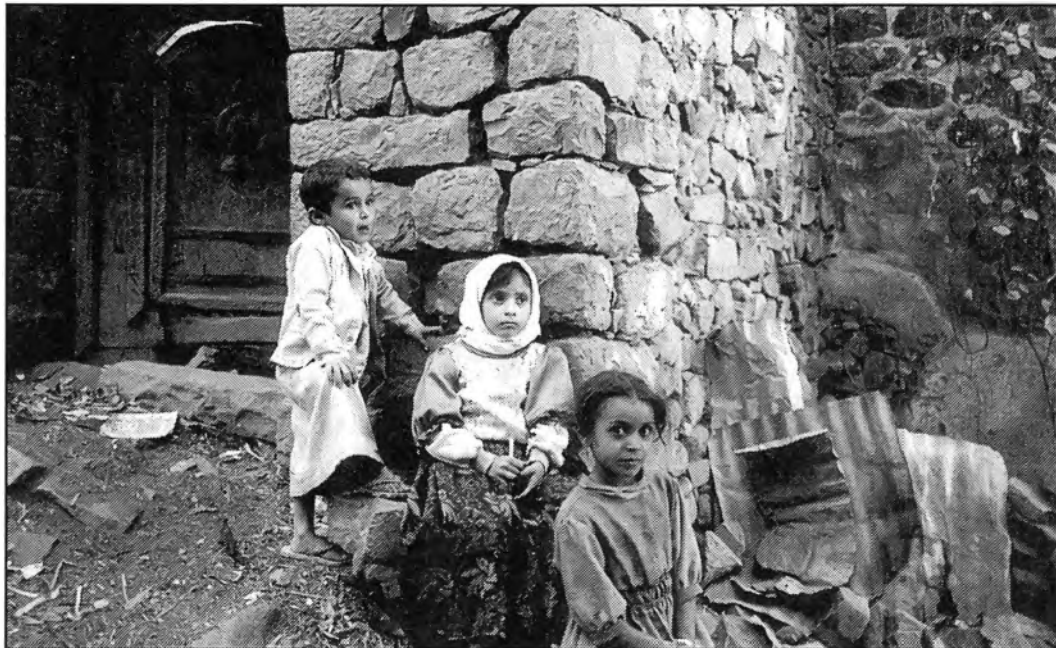
**Peter Schweizer's Contributions Continue:
A Permanent Photo Exhibition**



Yemen as a country is quite known in the world. For many reasons, the most recent ones are the kidnapping and killing of four tourists, the on going trail of the young Britons, and it's known for being the only democratic country in the Arabian Peninsula. Yemen culturally is not well known, for a simple reason, there have been no many serious attempts to unveil our rich culture to the outside world, except for few people who are interested in Yemeni culture, and are keen to promote it. One of these people is Mr. Peter Schweizer.

He has exerted a remarkable efforts so as to establish many different cultural projects, and programs which had an important, and influential role in boosting the cultural cooperation between Yemen and Switzerland. One of his projects concerning Yemen is a proposal to have a permanent photo exhibition under the title YEMEN PEOPLE FACE TO FACE, present in his name and the name of the Swiss Government to the Yemeni people, and to one of the main Tourist Features of Yemen, and that is the Rock Palace at Wadi Dahar. The proposal was approved by

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism, The Ministry of Information and the General authority for the Preservation of Old Towns as well as other concerned authorities. This photo exhibition will give the Rock Palace a new look, and it will help tourists, to understand Yemen in a better way, it will also help in promoting tourism. The Exhibition shall be officially inaugurated on 19th Feb. 1999.



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Yemeni Press in a Week

by: Sameer Farawna

الطريق

ATTARIQ
Aden, weekly 2/2/99
(Independent)

Main Headlines

-A Thai fishing boat fled Yemeni territorial waters during the Eid Al Fitr holidays with its shipment without paying necessary dues.
-British press reports claim that Yemeni security authorities were still tracing the whereabouts of more Britons which they said were involved in terrorist operations in the country.
-24 citizens in Hodeida, including 11 children, were poisoned after eating bread from a bakery in Al Salakhana area.
-The stealing of sheep in Houta, Lahaj governorate has been increasing recently in that city.

Article Summary

Suicide cases increasing
Tawif Hael from Jalajel village in Houta, Lahaj governorate committed suicide two weeks ago for social reasons. The young man, 25, shot himself in the heart with a bullet from his machine gun. Another young man, 20, in Maifa'a village, Shabwa governorate shot himself three times in the heart last January 25. Abdul Razak Ali Ahmad took his life after a discussion with his father over his wedding arrangements, according to village sources.

The Shabwa governorate has lately witnessed a number of incidents of suicide that were attributed to various economic and social reasons.

الوحدويين

AL WAHDAMI
Sanaa, weekly 2/2/99
(People's Nasserite Unionist Organization)

Main Headlines

-More than 89,000 sacks of expired wheat have been sold in the local market in the past month.
-A nine years old boy was killed in the tribal war that has raged for the past two weeks between Al Hanshat and Eyal Sayyad in Nahm, Sanaa governorate. Sources said that the war, in which heavy artillery was used, started when a Hanshat man was killed on the Sanaa-Mareb main road a week before.
-The higher coordination council for the opposition parties in Hajja and Abyan governorates has denounced the Arab Foreign Ministers statement describing it as "degrading".
-Sporadic firing between two areas in Sabir, Taiz governorate over ownership of a water project has led to the killing of a woman and a young man over the past three weeks.
-The higher coordination council for the opposition parties in Aden discussed last week those parties' role in the upcoming meetings.

An Article Summary

A Deal is Struck in Aden Trial

Well informed sources in Sanaa have speculated that a deal of some kind is being formed in the trial of Abul Hassan Al Mihdar, who kidnapped a group of 16 tourists in Abyan late last December along with an armed group of his followers. They added that the deal calls for avoiding any reference to the presence of relations with local parties including military leaders. The sources pointed out that numerous pressures were exerted to avoid further leakage of information from the court of justice. The security forces had stormed the group's hideout and freed the hostages, but four tourists were killed in the process.

الوحدوية

AL WEHDA
Sanaa, weekly 3/2/99
(Official)

Main Headlines

-Yemen has officially cancelled entry facilities to British nationals. Britons wishing to visit Yemen should obtain a prior entry visa from the Yemeni embassy in London.
-Security authorities have recently arrested 38 persons for forgery. The first one (16) was forging foreign currencies while the second (22) was forging the local currency.
-The public money's attorney is

continuing investigations with elements involved in the embezzlement of more than five million dollars of public money.

-A senior official in the People's Nasserite Unionist Organization has told AL WEHDA that his party may differ with the President over local issues but agree with his Arab and Islamic stands as declared in his recent interview with an Arabic daily based in London.

-A high level tourism official in Yemen has accused Britain of launching a defamation campaign against his country.

-Yemen deports 3122 foreigners and seizes forged passports from the hands of fundamentalists.

البلد

AL BALAGH
Sanaa, weekly 2/2/99
(Independent)

Main Headlines

-An American researcher has claimed that the Yemeni government is keeping a copy of the Holy Quran that is different from what is known to Muslims but that it fears to disclose that information. The Yemeni government is being called upon to refute those allegations.
-Foreign Ministry sources have refuted reports of tensions between our country and Saudi Arabia, describing the relations as "calm".
-Yemen has lost 250 million dollars as a result of the recent wave of kidnapping foreign tourists, according to a senior tourism official.
-A number of schools will be changed into vocational institutes to upgrade that education in the country.
-The personal status administra-

tion is planning to issue new IDs for the Yemeni citizens within the few coming months following the reported loss of more than 100,000 old ones.

-Yemen has paid all its foreign debt commitments for the year 1998 which amounted to 16 million dollars, according to the Central Bank's Governor.

AL HAQ
Sanaa, weekly 31/1/99
(Independent)

Main Headlines

-The League of the Sons of Yemen has condemned the recent wave of kidnappings in the country, saying that it besmears Yemen's reputation and harms its foreign relations.
-Numerous sheikhs and notables in Shabwa governorate have denounced the kidnapping of foreigners, considering it a nightmare that threatens the economic resources of the country.
-A new rise in water prices in Yemen has been endorsed for this year.
-Yemen has officially increased prices of the Hadhramaut crude oil by five cents for March shipments.

الجمعي

ATTAGAMU
Sanaa, weekly 1/2/99
(Yemeni Unitary Congregation)

Main Headlines

-The people in Aden have denounced the unconstitutional arrest of Dr. Nour Uldeen Abdullah Qaed the Board Chairman of the Yemeni Ports - Aden, describing the arrest as

unprecedented in the port's history.

-The body of Mohammed Bawazeer, who was killed in front of a mosque in Shahr. Hadhramaut last Ramadhan was starting to rot, as rumours circulated that the police were colluding with the culprits to close the file.

-A late Socialist official had accused, in an unpublished interview, both the Socialists and People's General Conference of being responsible for the 1994 war.

-The press attorney has summoned weekly Al Shoura chief editor for an investigation of an article on the fire brigade in Mukala, Hadhramaut governorate.

الصحوة

AL SAHWA
Sanaa, weekly 4/2/99
(Yemeni Congregation for Reform-Islah)

Main Headlines

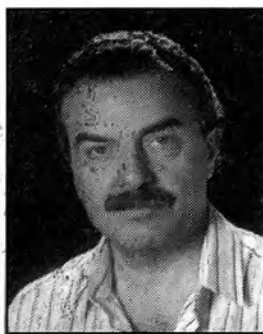
-The parliament members refused to discuss 30 laws that were issued during the parliamentary recess without any justifications.
-A Hodeida court of justice imprisoned those accused—of raping a girl between four to eight years and ruled that the girl should also be put in jail for six months for illegitimate privacy with another man. The latter had fled the scene when the four approached them.
-Security authorities in Aden have arrested a gang accused of making and selling alcohol.
-The remains of an old woman, 70, was found four months after her death in Qaeda, Ibb governorate.

Be Our Guest

By Riad al Khouri

The Jordanian interior minister's statement last year that the number of foreign workers in Jordan is equal to the number of Jordanians in the country's domestic work force should come as no surprise. Myriad Egyptians and others resident in Jordan, including some Yemenis, are simply doing the jobs Jordanians don't want, a labor market pattern familiar in the Arab world. Traditionally, these "guest workers" from Arab states have been welcome in Amman. The minister talked about Jordan's usual "openness" with regard to Arab visitors. He added however that Jordan would apply existing laws it had not fully enforced in the past to crack down on illegal workers. However, he insisted that Jordan will "stick to labor-exchange agreements" with other countries and "preserve the rights" of legal workers.

Fair enough: Jordanian rules in this regard are reasonable, and their application was also and continues to be tempered politically. Jordan has always been tolerant when it comes to issues which do not impinge directly on its national security, and I predict that this time was no exception: the kingdom's Arab guests -- and many of its foreign ones as well -- are still largely here months after



the crisis broke. If on the other hand, members of the non-Jordanian Arab workforce of Amman started to riot to protest Jordan's relations with a non-Arab state such as, say, Ruritania, they would be expelled before you could say "normalization." The state's message to non-Jordanians is clear: stay away from political issues; otherwise, if you don't actually commit a felony, be our guest. Of course that was a lot easier to say when the economy was booming a decade or two ago, and unemployment was not an issue.

The trick of course is to bring down unemployment; once that happens, a lot of the headaches regarding guest workers will disappear.

Now for the tough part: commenting on Jordanian unemployment and the guest worker issue, the prime minister said last year that "bold measures" to combat poverty and unemployment among Jordanians would be taken, and that work would begin to introduce a minimum wage. Alas, this tune is now being played again in Amman, and talk of a minimum wage has surfaced again during the past few days. If this happens in an unemployment crisis like Jordan's present one, look out. Such a measure would be disastrous if enforced -- though it would probably be unenforceable. Most foreigners in Jordan work for far lower wages than Jordanians, thus making businesses run. An argument can be made for Jordan to abandon its cheap-labor economic model, but this will mean massive restructuring, retraining, and retrenchment in the labor market, an elsewhere in the economy. Meanwhile the minimum wage idea is virtually impossible in a country wallowing in economic crisis. Once the economy picks up, through a combination of the right exogenous factors (comprehensive regional peace) and an internal attempt to improve the investment climate (to

a considerable extent a function of the Jordanian government's deregulation of the economy) measures like a minimum wage will have a chance. Whether one should be imposed or not is another question: my point is that it would be impossible to apply under the present circumstances. Till annual GNP growth goes back to the seven percent or so which will allow new entrants to the labor market to be absorbed, a minimum wage applied to Jordan is a bit like prescribing sophisticated organic diets to somebody who is in a coma: he has to be revived first before he can get the fancy medicine. Until then, Jordan and other Arab countries should concentrate more on economic liberalization than on interference with markets, including those for labor.

I say "other Arab countries" because the simultaneous existence of unemployment and guest workers is also present elsewhere in the region. Take for example Saudi Arabia, where that country's interior minister recently said last year that the country was paying a "high price" for foreign workers and urged Saudis not to shun any job offered to them. The minister, Prince Nayef bin Abdelaziz, told a meeting of Saudi businessmen then that the kingdom was taking steps to ensure more Saudis take up jobs currently held by foreigners and said authorities may soon announce new measures to boost the employment of nationals. "We appreciate those who come to our country and work with us. But, of course, we pay a price for those who come from abroad and it is a very high price," the minister said. He expressed the hope that Saudi nationals would work in all fields and not shun any job, and explained that if Saudis turned down those jobs, non-Saudis must take them. Saudi Arabia is eager to replace many of its foreign workers -- still including some Yemenis -- with its nationals. The government has told private firms employing more than twenty people to increase their Saudi staff by five percent a year. In my opinion, this would be as unenforceable as a Jordanian minimum wage under the present circumstances. With the Saudi economy still largely dependent on oil, and with petroleum prices stagnating badly, such measures may be difficult to take. Nevertheless, when it comes to expelling non-Saudis, Saudi Arabia has proved a lot tougher than Jordan, especially over the past few months.

The lesson which has yet to be learned by many

government officials in the Arab world is that interference with markets is tricky and should be done rarely and very carefully. Minimum wages and statutory employment of nationals are steps which can be undertaken only under certain circumstances, preferably accompanied by other measures which would ease economic distortions instead of aggravating them. Otherwise, the rule must be to leave markets alone: whether in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, or elsewhere, the government's role in the economy has to shrink, and not to expand through more regulation.

أجمل الأبنيات القلبية وأعطر التهانئ من:
عائلة محمد صالح معيار، وعائلة علي محمد عثرب،
وعائلة محمد الأعز، وعائلة عبدالملك الداعري،
والجدة والجد محمد عثرب، ومن أم كمال محمد معيار وبناتها،
ومن أم سمير الأعز وبناتها، وأم وليد الداعري
وبناتها إلى الأبدية الغالية
نجاحة علي محمد عثرب
بمناسبة الخطوبة وقرب الزفاف على الشاب الخلوقة
كمال محمد معيار
فألف مبروك

أطيب التهانئ وأرق الأمانئ
تهنئ من:
علي زيد السلطان، ومحمد شرف الدين ورضاء عبدالرحمن السقاف، وعبد
الرحمن الحوري، وعز العرب الأصبحي، وزيد عبدالله الأمير،
وزيد يحيى باكر، وحسن محمد سريع، وهيف عبدالرحمن السقاف، وكافة
موظفو البنك العربي وبين تأييد
إلى الشاب الخلوقة
كمال محمد معيار
بمناسبة الخطوبة وقرب الزفاف
فألف مبروك

ألف مبروك
أجمل التهانئ وأطيب التبريكات نرفها للاخ سمير علي محسن
بمناسبة ارتزاقه مولود البكر الذي أسماه
عصماء
جعلنا الله فترة عين والدنيا وأسعد بنا أهلها
المهتوزون
هاني عباس محمد السقاف، عماد أحمد السقاف
نانف عباس محمد السقاف
وجميع آل السقاف

أعضاء هيئة تدريس مدرسة خولة بنت الأزور بصنعاء
تهنئ
الاستاذة القديرة
انتصار ياسين العريقي
بمناسبة الخطوبة على الشاب
محمد ابراهيم العريقي
فألف مبروك..

At the End of the Seventh Week Excellent Football Tournament

Al-Ahli & AL-Wahdah In A Competition For The Lead!

The Seventh Week of the football tournament witnessed seven strong contests last week in the Excellent division. Sana'a Al-Ahli was able to maintain its lead position in the tournament standings. In a tough match against Taiz Al-Saqr Club, Sana'a Al-Ahli was in a poor condition. The first half went poorly for both teams, while the Ahli attacks were scattered around the playing field and were stopped in general. Sana'a Al-Ahli defense was very strong in withstanding continuous Al-Saqr attacks. Against the powerful Al-Saqr defense, and with its weak unco-ordinated attacks, Al-Ahli lost several chances of scoring goals on Al-Saqr. In the second half, the entrance of Hani Ju'rah

Team	Point	Results			Goals	
		Won	Tie	Lost	For	Against
Ahli Sanaa	18	6	-	1	15	4
Shaab Ibb	16	5	1	1	15	7
Wahda Sanaa	16	5	1	1	14	7
Shaab of Mukall	14	4	2	1	6	3
Shullah	13	4	1	2	12	5
Hassann	13	4	1	2	12	5
Ittihad	11	3	2	2	7	11
Tilal	10	3	1	3	16	12
Wahdah of Aden	8	2	2	3	6	8
Hilal	7	2	1	4	8	12
Zohra	5	1	2	4	5	13
Sagr	4	1	1	5	8	11
Taliah	3	1	-	6	4	14
Majd	1	-	1	6	6	18

and his participation with Jamal Al-Qudeimi improved Sana'a Al-Ahli attack significantly. After many attempts, Ali Al-Nunu scored the solitary goal on Taiz Al-Saqr, ending the match successfully (1/0). Sana'a Al-Ahli raised its point total to 18, and became the leading team in the tournament.



Chess Tournament Starts on the 18th February

The General Yemeni Chess Association (GYCA), decided to hold the Republic Chess Tournament from 18th Feb. in Sana'a under the auspices of Dr. AbdulWahab Rawah Minister of Youth and Sports. This tournament is part of the GYCA agenda to promote and improve the game, on the national and International levels. These efforts of the GYCA were highly reflected in the enormous performance by the Yemeni master Hamed Al-Qadi in the International level.

The teams participating in this tournament are as follows: Sana'a Ahli, Taiz Ahli, Sana'a Wahda, Shamsan, Badan Tawan, Marawah Siham, Al-Mukalah, Sabta Najim, Damar, and Danfer.

The Republic Cycling Championship in 25th Feb.

The Yemeni Cycling Association (YCA), approved in its meeting last week the holding of the cycling championship, which will be held in Taiz governorate in 25th Feb. The YCA is keen to develop and spread the game in all the governorates. Many participants from different governorates such as Sana'a, Aden, Lahje, Hadarmout, Taiz, Ibb, and Damar will take part. Abyan governorate is disqualified, for not holding the pre-qualifying rounds. A committee was appointed to prepare for the finals. The committee is headed by Mr. Mohammed Aidros (President), Mr. Ali Al-Swary (Vice President), Mr. Ali Al-Hadda (head-of Technical Committee), and Mr. Tareq Al-Said (head of Financial Committee).

Taiz :
Women Sport Federation
 Mr. Abdullah Al-Ammari, Director of Sport and youth Office in Taiz, approved the appointments made by Ms.

Ammatul-'Alim Jahhaf President of the Women's Sport Federation Committee in Taiz. Due to the general interest and its development in framework of various qualified women experiences, the appointments were as follows:
 1. Ammatul-Rahman Jahhaf: President of the Committee.
 2. Fawzia Abdo sa'eed: Vice President.
 3. Nabeeha Tareh: General Secretary.
 4. Inas Taher: Assistant Secretary.
 5. Rihab Ahmed Sa'eed: Technical

Supervisor.
 6. Nadia Yousef Ahmed: Assistant Technical Supervisor.
 7. Bushra Al-Iryani: Culture Officer

Fresh news claimed that the Women's Sport Committee in Taiz Governorate started work the first day the committee was formed. The committee is to consolidate women's position in sports and to develop and advance the status of women's sports in Taiz especially, and Yemen generally.

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Formative Artist: Mohammed Abdo Da'el

Yemeni artist Mohammed Abdou Wa'el "Al Da'el" is one of the distinguished artists in our country today. His artistic methods combine between sharp intuition lending itself to a remarkable sense of space and proportion, and a visible ability to evenly distribute color on his paintings.

He depicts movement and motion, even in still moments in life. When there is no motion, the spirit is moving and you can sense a smile or inviting eyes. He also depicts issues with which people can easily identify.

Then there is the originality that makes Mohammed stand out. Although a fisherman coming home with his catch is a theme known since the beginning of time, the special Da'el touch gives it a certain originality.

As critics often say, "It is his ability to bring together a moving spirit, a moment of beauty and a certain sense of originality that makes Da'el's work stand out."



Fisherman.
Oil on canvas (50x70 cms).
Possessed by UN representative



Childhood smile.
Oil on canvas (50x60 cms).

the masterpiece he is now working on. He is busy with an ambitious giant work of art depicting the historic stages of the Yemeni revolution. Da'el said once, "I am the son of this land, and I like my works to be mixed with its soul."

By Afra' Al Zubair,
Yemen 21 Forum.



Manhood
Oil on canvas (60x80 cms)
Possessed by Mr. Abdulrahman Al-Akwaa, Minister of Media

He obtained his first diploma from Aden University. Then he got an MA in oil painting from the State Academy for Arts in Moscow.

Da'el now teaches painting at the Faculty of Engineering-Architecture of Aden University. He co-founded the youth society for fine arts, which he chaired and represented in the Arab Youth Carnival in Baghdad in 1977.

He is also one of the founders of the Yemeni Formative Artists Association and participated in many of its exhibitions in Yemen and outside. In addition, he presents his work in many galleries locally and outside the country.

Da'el also participates in seminars and workshops in the field. Now he is busy trying to produce a book that is more like an instructor's manual or guide. "We expect this document to be the bible of the profession," a colleague said.

But the climax of Da'el's work must be



Traditionally-cosutmed woman. Oil on canvas (50x70 cms)
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