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YEMEN TIMES

• SANAA • May 5th thru 11th, 1997

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PGC Rides High

The People's General Congress rides high. It now controls at least two thirds of the seats in the new parliament. This gives the PGC a free hand in managing the affairs of the coming government. As the politicians here see it, the people have given the PGC a mandate. Many people, including members of the PGC, did not expect this landslide victory. On the other hand, the Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah), at best, has not achieved any new ground, and at worst, could have lost some ground. Now, the number of seats it secured in parliament is around 54, and with the 'independent' members that belong to it, could have secured around 65 seats. For the first time, the Nasserites are represented by the real party, the Tanzeem Al-Wahdawi Al-Nasserite (Nasserite Unionist Party), with three seats. Prior to this election, the two Nasserite groupings formerly fabricated by the PGC and YSP, had held one seat each.

The Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party holds two seats. YSP 'independent' candidates secured two seats, and YSP sympathizers have an additional two. In terms of regional pattern of vote distribution, the cosmopolitan regions have shown more voter maturity and diversity. The less sophisticated governorates have been fully swayed. In Taiz, Hadhramaut, Sanaa and Aden, the vote distribution pattern was more balanced, whereas in other regions, it was skewed. In some governorates, all the seats were taken by the PGC. The next task is to form the government, which will indicate the relations between the PGC and Islah. The PGC, which will dictate its terms, will probably bring into the government individuals from other parties, as well as independents. This is the responsibility that lies ahead over the next few weeks.

President Saleh Plans a European Tour

President Ali Abdullah Saleh's office is putting together a tentative program for a European visit immediately after the summer. According to informed sources, the President September visit will cover several countries, including Britain and Germany. The purpose is to consolidate an already strong relationship between Yemen and these countries. It will also lead to further improvement in the international image of the Republic of Yemen.

In the same pattern, the President also plans an Arab visit before the end this year. This visit will take the President to North Africa. Yemen's external relations are steadily improving as the country is gradually taken back in the fold of the international community. Yemen has been making major efforts to shore-up its regional and international relations, which had suffered following the 1994 civil war and the subsequent effort of Yemen's foreign-based opposition.

Relations with the United States of America have also improved noticeably. This is clear from the exchange of visits by the two sides. Both the US and Europe have participated visibly in mounting a monitoring effort of the elections. Yemen is trying to expand trade and joint investments with Europe and the USA. Several business deals are expected to be consummated during the presidential tour as a number of businessmen will be included in the visits.

Now that the Islah Ideologues Are Out! PGC & Islah Agree to Continue Working Together

The People's General Congress (PGC) and the Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah) have finally reached an understanding according to which they will work together. One senior Islah source told the Yemen Times, "We are in this together. There is no way that we will take a confrontational position vis-a-vis the PGC. We have competed as well as coordinated during the elections. That phase of our relations is over. We are now looking forward to a more constructive association."

There is a visible receptive mood at the PGC. This is clear given that the leading ideologues of the Islah party have failed to win their seats in parliament. These include Mohammed Ali Ajlan, Abdullah Saatar, Mohammed Ali Al-Muayyad, Mohammed As-Sadeq Abdullah, Dr. Hassan Maqbool Al-Ahdal, Dr. Abdullah Al-Maqaleh, Dr. Mansoor Al-Zindani, Dr. Mohammed Al-Afandi, etc. The tribal leaders of the Islah, who are perceived as moderates, have all won their seats in parliament.

But 2 questions remain. First, what form will the new PGC-Islah cooperation take? It cannot be the old coalition, as the PGC will implement its own program. Second, what is the fate of the opposition? Fragmented and marginalized, the opposition parties cannot present an alternative. The opposition feels that the race for parliament was neither fair nor clean. Meanwhile, the new parliament will be sworn in on the 14th of May, one day before the expiry date of the current parliament.

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OUR VIEWPOINT

The Mandate and the Responsibility

The results of the April 27th, 1997, elections must be seen as a full mandate for the People's General Congress (PGC) and President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The clear majority that the party got in the parliamentary elections gives it a free hand in steering the country single-handedly.

I have heard the PGC leadership repeatedly stating that it will create a broad-based government, even though it can go it alone. This, I understand, it plans to do by inviting a minority participation of non-PGC cabinet members. The purpose behind bringing into the government other parties is to increase the sense of participation on all sides.

Whatever the reasons, this cannot relieve the PGC from full responsibility. The PGC has to deliver on the promises it had made. There is a general feeling among the general public and the intelligentsia that the PGC is given a full mandate. Therefore, it should live up to its end of the deal.

It is in this light that many observers see the election results as a victory which brings with it an enormous challenge for the PGC. A lot of people are waiting to see what the PGC will do with this mandate, and whether it will rise to the challenge.

In my opinion, there are four basic issues that a new government must tackle, as follows:

1. Stability, Law and Order:

One of the main issues which affects the lives of all of us is 'stability, law, and order'. It is imperative that the new government achieves a reasonable level of stability, respect for the law, and a sense of order. Yemen needs this.

2. Institution-building:

No modern state can function without effective institutions. Yemen needs modern institutions that handle the various aspects of life, which are getting more complicated. Key among these institutions are a properly working government bureaucracy, a legal system that can deliver, and an educational system that produces graduates with useful skills.

3. Fighting Abuse:

In the recent past, Yemen has seen the rise of excesses. The abuse and mismanagement of vital resources is a big headache. Water exploitation is a case in point. The use of qat is another. There is also abuse of authority and officialdom. The government must come down hard on the abusers.

4. National Fraternity:

In some circles, there is a growing feeling of double or multiple standards. The state must make all citizens feel they are equal, through the way it interacts with them.

The Publisher
عبد العزيز

President Saleh Receives Somali Leaders

President Ali Abdullah Saleh received on Sunday leaders of 3 Somali factions who are now visiting Yemen. The first group is led by Hussein Aideed, the second by Osman Ato, and the third by Dr. Mohammed Rajes. Yemen is trying hard to bridge the gaps between the various Somali factions in order to restore stability and peace in Somalia. A Yemeni source indicated that the Republic of Yemen respects the unity and territorial integrity of Somalia.

Preparations for Donor Meeting Underway

The World Bank is completing preparations for the June 18-19, 1997 Donor Meeting on Yemen. Many bilateral and multilateral donors will participate. A World Bank source added that for the first time, certain Arab countries will participate in the meeting.

British Team to Boost Trade Ties

A British delegation from the ECGD arrives here shortly for a few days of official talks on ways and means to boost trade. Mr. Abdul-Wahab Thabet, a leading businessman, indicated that talks with officials and businessmen will handle credit guarantees for trade. The Yemeni British Friendship Society will host a qat chew for the visitors on Friday May 9th.

Yafa Hosts Dr. Khalil

At the invitation of the USIS, Dr. Najat Khalil, a Palestinian-American will visit Yemen during 7-12 May. Her program includes lectures and meetings with Yemenis active in public life, notably in women's role and status in society. The Yemen American Friendship Association is hosting a lecture on 10th May. Dr. Khalil will talk on the progress of US Muslims in organizing themselves politically and their impact on decision-making.

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The Government of Republic of Yemen has received a credit from IDA towards the Cost of health Sector Development Project Cr2 151 and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payment under the contract for Supply, Installation, Commissioning and Testing of HOSPITAL EQUIPMENT.

- Bid No. 1 Radio Graphic X-Ray Equipment
- Bid No. 2 Medical Imaging Equipment
- Bid No. 3 Hospital Lab Equipment
- Bid No. 4 Operating Theatre Equipment
- Bid No. 5 Blood Bank, Morgue and Dental Equipment
- Bid No. 6 Electrical Generators

- The Project Management Office, on behalf of the Ministry of Public Health, (hereinafter described as "the Purchaser"), hereby invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the supply of the above mentioned goods and related services.

- Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from and inspect the Bidding Documents at the Health Sector Development Project at the Ministry of Public Health.

- A complete set of the Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders from the Purchaser at the Ministry of Health on submission of a written application and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of US\$50 Dollar for each bid.

- The provisions in the Instruction to Bidders and in the General Conditions of Contract are the provision of the World Bank standard bidding documents - procurement of Goods, January 1995.

- Bids must be delivered to the above mentioned office on or before 12.00 O'clock noon on June 16, 1997 and must be accompanied by a security of 2% (two percent).

- Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders representative who choose to attend at the time and date specified above at the PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE in the Ministry of Public Health.

Note: This Ad was expected to publish in last week issue

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Pieter Dorst:

“The economic reforms and political democratization are the basis of Dutch assistance to Yemen.”

The Netherlands and Yemen enjoy special relations. Part of that is reflected in the fact that the Netherlands is one of the leading aid partners of Yemen.

On the occasion of the national day of the Netherlands, April 30th, the Yemen Times interviewed Mr. Pieter Dorst, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Netherlands Embassy. Dorst is well-known and respected in Yemeni official, intellectual and business circles. He also enjoys excellent relations within the international community. Excerpts.

Q: You participated actively in the elections process. Could you give us your impressions?

A: As you know, the Netherlands now occupies the European Union presidency. When we realized that a large number of international observers are going to monitor the elections, we discussed with the UNDP the need for setting up a secretariat, which will organize as best as possible the efforts of these international observers. The Dutch government decided to finance this secretariat. We are happy that other organizations also helped organize the efforts of international observers. I am even more happy that the elections process was peaceful and transparent. I am sure the elections is a new milestone in Yemen's democratization.

Q: You were personally involved in the preparations for this effort?

A: Well, I helped in my little way. I was also able to follow the efforts of the local observers. For example, I attended the Taiz workshop of the Elections Monitoring Committee. I was highly impressed by it. And I am very glad to note that almost half of the observer-trainees were women. I believe that the Yemeni people are very much attached to their freedom and democracy. I was very glad to see democracy at work.

Q: Yemen Times recently published the names of the three top aid donor countries assisting Yemen. The Nether-

lands came in 3rd place after Japan and Germany. I heard you were not happy with that?

A: I think that given the excellent relations my embassy has with the German and Japanese embassies, we are not in competition for the first place. We are all playing a considerable role in assisting the Yemeni government to develop its economy. So the order of donors is not very important. I would like to say that all donors, including the Dutch, have, over the past one and a half years done their utmost to stretch their financial resources for Yemen for two reasons.

First, the economic reform program has been implemented, so far, with a great deal of success by the Yemeni government. It has the support by the international donor community.

Second is the democratization process in the country which also has the firm support of the international donor community.

In the past, Yemen received between 45 and 55 million guilders a year from the Dutch government. Last year, we have tried very hard to increase this amount, and we succeeded. I am very happy to say that the estimated 1997 disbursement to Yemen from the Dutch side will surpass the 100 million guilders. I am including the Mukalla power station, and the balance-of-payment support.

Q: Where does this money go? I mean what kind of projects is Dutch aid supporting?

A: When I came in August, 1995,



I concluded that, contrary to what was promised by the Dutch side to the Yemeni government, we had done very little activities in the southern governorates. I am very happy to say that just a short while ago, we have approved a 10 million guilder project that is going to start this summer in Shabwa. This is for the development of the health, education, agriculture and drinking water sectors. That is now really getting off the ground.

We have, during the visit of Minister Pronk in July of last year, promised the Ministry of Health to assist them in training 4000 community midwives. I can confirm that this project will start this year and the required money has been allocated.

We are going to work with the UNFPA which is the implementing organization for a project that will cost 12 million guilders.

We have decided to continue our support for the Environmental Protection Council. There is presently a tender underway. The second phase of that project will start this summer.

We have also decided to set up a special fund amounting to half a million guilders for small projects in the field of health. In the past, sometimes, we faced requests for which limited funds are needed. I am talking about amounts in the region of 30,000 to 50,000 guilders. In our previous financial system, we did not have the capacity to respond favorably to such requests. We

have now approved a half million guilder fund for such small projects.

During the visit of my minister, it was decided that 60 million guilders will be provided for the Mukalla power station project. The financial protocol for this project was concluded at the beginning of this year. I am happy to note that a Dutch company has already started production of the power station equipment in Holland. The work in the power station has started last month.

Q: You are also continuing with your on-going projects like the waste disposal system in Hodeida.

A: We have at this moment a waste-disposal system in Dhamar which is going very smoothly. Dhamar was last year awarded a prize for being the cleanest city in Yemen, which is a compliment to the project. We are considering at this moment assisting the municipality of Aden with a similar project.

We are also in the process of preparing a primary health care project for Aden. As you may know, we have two primary health care projects - one in Dhamar and the other in Hodeidah. The Hodeida project is a very good model for primary health care in urban areas. We would like to use that experience to assist the governorate of Aden in setting up a similar project. I hope that this project will start by the end of this year.

Q: One of your ongoing activities involves granting scholarships, whether to the Netherlands or to a third country in the Middle East region. Could you tell us more about that?

A: There is a number of institutes in the Netherlands which provide fellowships for Yemenis. There is also a special program for training in the region, as we call

it, allowing Yemenis to study in universities in Cairo, Amman, or in other countries. This allows Yemeni students to continue with their higher studies. This project is fully financed by the Dutch government, and allows 50-55 Yemenis annually to do their master's degrees.

Q: You have traditionally focussed on certain regions of Yemen. Is there any chance of expanding your activities to other places?

A: We try in our development program to concentrate on a number of areas in Yemen, and not to spread our resources too thinly. The regions we have been involved with for a number of years are Dhamar, Hodeida, Redaa, Sana'a and Aden. After unification, we decided to assist the governorate of Shabwa. For the moment, I don't think that we will move into other governorates. But within our small-projects fund, we can assist projects in every governorate in Yemen.

Q: What is your role in next month's donor meeting in Brussels?

A: You will recall that the first donor meeting was held in The Hague in January 1996. The coming meeting, which will be held during 18-19 June in Brussels, is a follow-up meeting to be chaired by the World Bank. We will be there.

Q: Any last comment?

A: In my belief, the present donor support to Yemen - looking at the social and physical infrastructure needed for the development of this country - is not large enough. Therefore, I hope that, during the coming consultative group meeting in Brussels, other donor countries will pledge more support for the economic development of Yemen.

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GETTING THE ELECTION RESULTS OUT IN GOOD TIME

This is the 8th day since the elections of April 27th, and still, no final and comprehensive results have been announced. The constitution requires that such results be announced within 72 hours. Therefore, there is already, a constitutional violation.

Of course, there are objective reasons for the delay. The numerous representatives of candidates want to make sure that there is no cheating. If any side tries to push things ahead, he or she will be accused of a cover-up. That is why all sides have patiently resigned themselves to the vote-counting and re-counting process.

But, it is clear that some new mechanisms need to be introduced in order to overcome this problem (delay of announcing results). All sides have to agree on the mechanisms and feel comfortable with them.

There are various alternatives. Automation is one of them. In many countries, machines count the votes, especially if the ballot is made to conform to certain specifications. The ballots that the machines may be unable to 'read', could be then manually tallied.

Another alternative is a more standardized and stronger Supreme Elections Commission. If the commission is seen as neutral and strong enough to resist the influence of any party, group or individual, then it could be left to do the job on its own. Whatever the new mechanism, there is need for a speedy announcement of the final and comprehensive results.

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The Fight for Human Rights in the Arab World: 15 Years and Counting: Continued Concerns in Spite of Much Progress

The Arab human rights movement can be said to have started in Limassol, Cyprus, fifteen years ago. In 1983, a handful of Arab intellectuals met to discuss ways and means to promote respect for human rights, press freedom, minority rights, and other values of decent and civilized societies and systems.

At the time, no Arab government allowed the meeting to be held on its soil, forcing the group to go to Cyprus.

Last week, some of those men met in Sanaa. They included Mr. Mohammed Faye, Secretary-General of the Arab Organization for Human Rights, Mr. Ibrahim Abdullah of Lebanon, Dr. Ali Oumllel of Morocco, Mr. Mohsen Awadh of Egypt, and Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf of Yemen.

They sat down to review the record of the last fifteen years, and to chart the course for the future. They agreed to meet (along with others) in Morocco in June. Yemen Times talked to them about their assessment of their long fight for human rights, and their vision of the future.

Mohammed Faye:

“AHRO was a catalyst in the Arab human rights movement.”

Mr. Mohammed Faye, the Secretary-General of the Arab Human Rights Organization (AHRO) has had his share of trouble, but has also made his share of contribution to human dignity, liberty and rights. During the 1950s and 1960s, as one of the closest aides of Egyptian President Gamal Abdul-Nasser, Mr. Faye contributed directly to the independence movement in which Egypt played the role of catalyst. Much of the Third World was liberated in those two decades, and much of it happened due to resistance movements.

After Anwar Sadat took over, Mr. Faye and many of Nasser's aides were imprisoned. His share was a full ten-year term May 1971 - May, 1981. Three months after his release, he was again put back in jail, until President Hosni Mubarak took over following the assassination of Sadat.

Mr. Faye devoted the 1980s and 1990s to the promotion of human rights in the Arab World.

Q: How did the idea of human rights develop?

A: You will appreciate that I had a lot of thinking to do in my prison cell. Many other Arab intellectuals also had the foresight to realize that unless Arab regime respected the rights of their citizens, there was no way to create a decent system. In the early 1980s, a handful of Arab intellectuals started exchanging notes on how to promote human rights, at great risk to their lives. There was Joseph Mughayzel of Lebanon, Fathi Ridhwan and Saad El-Deen Ibrahim of Egypt, Khayral-Deen Haseeb of Iraq, Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf of Yemen, Farooq Abu Issa of Sudan, Ali Oumllel of Morocco, and others.

By 1992, the idea blossomed into a project for a regional organization devoted to human rights. A decision was taken to meet and announce the launch of such an organization. Unfortunately, no Arab government allowed us to hold the meeting on its soil. So we held the meeting in Cyprus in 1983.



Then, the Egyptian authorities refused to recognize us as a legal entity. We started functioning on a de jure basis, holding a couple of meetings in Cairo. The organization's first general assembly was held in Khartoum, Sudan at the beginning of 1987. Since then, several branches in various Arab countries were established, and other organizations that had the same goals were also established. AHRO today is headquartered at 91 Al-Marghani Street, Masr Al-Gadeedah, Cairo.

Q: What does AHRO exactly do?

A: We follow the human rights record in all Arab countries. We investigate whether there are abuses of human rights, and try to make Arab governments correct such abuse. In this endeavor, we issue an annual human rights assessment document.

We also encourage Arab legislative bodies to accede to international covenants and agreements that protect human rights. At the same, we help enactment of local laws that bring our societies closer to these values.

Arabs became quite apathetic, and largely ignored the basic issue that directly affect their lives. The only way out of this crisis is to uphold human rights.

Q: How is AHRO funded?

A: As an NGO we do not accept any governmental aid. In the beginning of our efforts, we were accused of advocating Western values. So we deliberately make sure that all contributions come to us from Arab sources only. We do not accept any funds from non-Arab organizations.

In addition, we receive membership fees and donations of AHRO members and friends. We do this in order to build trust and confidence in our efforts, especially at this stage.

Q: Do Arab governments interact positively with AHRO?

A: That varies from government to another. But in general, I can say that there is visible improvement all around. Of course, there are some pariah cases.

Q: Do you coordinate your efforts with other organizations locally and internationally?

A: Naturally. We reach out to whoever shares our objectives and goals, and uses similar means. We represent a culmination point, and much of the field work is done by our branch offices or other organizations on local or national levels. I would especially want to mention the efforts of lawyers and journalists.

We also link up at the international level with UN and other organizations.

Q: Can you give us an overall assessment of the human rights situation?

A: In my opinion, there has been tremendous progress and development. Let us consider the short history of AHRO, as an example. We had to hold our first meeting in Cyprus. Now we have branches in many Arab countries. Many Arab governments used to suppress, or at least avoid us. Now they invite us.

I can confidently say that human rights violations are now being uncovered and made public knowledge. This is a very important step.

The third most important thing is the ever increasing public awareness of the issue of human rights. Right from the beginning, we aimed to work with the general public and consolidate the human rights movement.

I can say that a real human rights movement now exists among the Arab masses. It exists through trade unions, political parties and various other organizations. I don't want to miss mentioning the role of certain individuals. Sometimes, one committed individual or a few persons can make a real difference.

Q: You came to participate in the parliamentary elections in Yemen. What is your impression?

A: These elections, as a whole, represent positive and civilized step forward. We have recorded some irregularities in various procedures, here and there. But there are many positive points.

The very idea of inviting international observers, particularly Westerners, is a good one. This was done with the full knowledge that they may discover many irregularities, which points to the strength of the system.

Public interest was enormous, competition very good, participation of women was significant, and in general, Yemenis can be proud of the elections.

Ibrahim Abdullah:

“The civil war had catastrophic results on all sides.”



Mr. Ibrahim Abdullah, a prominent lawyer, is the president of the Lebanese Human Rights Society (LHRS).

The Lebanese Human Rights Society was established in 1985 while the civil war was in its fiercest. The LHRS had 2 major objectives: to raise public awareness, and to defend human rights in Lebanon. The civil war was a catastrophe in many ways, least of which was the human rights situation.

Some of the continued concerns include torture, government interference in trade unions, sectarian violence, Israeli violations of Lebanese rights and international conventions, etc.

One area of tremendous concern is the attempts to clamp down on press freedom. The fight continues, and we hope to prevail.

Ali Oumllel:

“We have to catch up with rapid international changes.”



Dr. Ali Oumllel, university professor, was the first secretary-general of the Human Rights Society in Morocco, formed in 1979, and the first president of the Moroccan Human Rights Organization, which was founded in 1988.

There has been a gradual but steady improvement of the human rights situation in Morocco since the 1970s.

In Morocco, the major (human rights violations) files have been successfully dealt with and closed. What we have now are minor and isolated incidences. We still have great ambitions regarding the law enactment. Compared to many other Arab countries, the human rights situation is quite favorable. There is, however, need to catch up with the rapid international changes.

Mohsen Awadh:

“Trial of civilians in military courts is a source of concern.”



Mr. Mohsin Awadh, Deputy Secretary-General of the Arab Human Rights Organization, is one of the human rights activists in Egypt. He writes extensively on the issues.

The Government often tries to implement unconstitutional laws. We contest them and win.

One of the major violations of human rights in Egypt today is torture of suspects or prisoners. This happens primarily under interrogation. But we fight back, and recently, the government had to put on trial a number of its police officers. That was a success for Egypt and human rights.

Another issue of concern is the trial of civilians, albeit those called extremists or terrorists, under military courts. Military trials are not subject to internationally recognized standards.

Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf:

“The gap between the law and the practice is big.”



Mr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, professor at Sanaa University, is one of the founders of the AHRO. He is an human rights activists and a promoter of civil society and democracy in Yemen.

We have come a long way in Yemen. I remember when I came back from the Limassol (Cyprus) meeting, I was summoned by the dean of my faculty at the time (Dr. Ahmed Al-Kibsi), to express to me his displeasure and that of the (PSO) system with what I did.

Today, there are numerous organizations working on the promotion of human rights.

The main problem in Yemen is the gap between what the law stipulates and the actual practices. One main achievement would be to bring PSO under the control of the government.

Common Sense

By: Hassan Al-Haifi

On Monkeys, Peanuts and the Will of the People



"I am going to run," said Nagi as he and Hussein walked out of the polling station after casting their votes.

His friend Hussein was somewhat startled. "Why? There is nobody else but us!"

"No, no, I don't mean run away. You know, I never do that kind of running from anyone. I was talking about running for Parliament," explained Nagi to his friend.

"Sorry Nagi, but aren't you a little bit too late. The elections are already over. Don't you remember we just finished casting our vote for the members of parliament three minutes ago! By the way, who did you vote for, the Monkeys or the Peanuts Party?" asked Hussein excitedly.

Nagi was somewhat puzzled by Hussein's excitement. "Look, Hussein, We all know that the parties represented by the Monkey and the Peanut have pretty much decided the outcome of the elections before-hand - at least as far as the minimal seats to be allotted for each party, give or take 10 - 20 seats. Yet, because both parties have a lot of money and they need to show the world that Yemen is really a top notch democracy-because they can't show much of anything else, they carried on with this elections game. Well, the next time around, I am going to put my name in as a candidate."

"If you really believe that the election results were pretty much decided, why did you not just join those who boycotted?" asked Hussein.

They stopped by a refreshment stand that was near the polling station to have a glass of juice. Hussein was speaking to the refreshment stand waiter: "Two lemon juices, please to cool off the election heat."

Nagi came back to the discussion on the elections with his pal. "Turning your back on events in the country is not my way of expressing my feelings about such events. How can you complain then about situations you did not take part in? Just because you cannot play like the big boys anymore, you turn the other way. I do not think that is really being sporty. No, boycotts are not the answer." Nagi always liked to talk about taking big challenges as the only way to live.

Just then, a man, both of whom knew as a member of the Monkeys Party walked to the refreshments stand and ordered a fruit cocktail juice. He remarked to the two men. "Hey, you guys, the Monkeys are going to really wrap up this elections. Those Peanuts could not stand a chance. Now the Monkeys can really show what government is really all about. Coalitions are really a drag. You guys saw how difficult it was for government to function with three coalitions in the past. We first got rid of the beans and now we put the Peanuts back in their shells. How do you like that for organization and mastery of the political games people play?"

"Youssef, you Monkeys may have wrapped up this election, but four years from now, you will not only face Peanuts, you are going to face Nagi also, at least in this district. Nagi has today declared his candidacy for the First Parliamentary Elections of the 21st Century in the Republic of Yemen!", Hussein returned to his old state of excitement.

"Come on, Nagi, they have not even finished counting the ballots of this last election, and you are already talking about the upcoming elections. Let me give you a piece of advice. Be a Monkey and you can be sure to win, if you work your way fast enough in the party organization over the next four years. I will be glad to help you. But, first, you have to join. I will get you your Monkeys ID tomorrow. "Youssef was interested in displaying some power he has in the Monkeys organization and seeing an opportunity for enlisting a new member.

Nagi, was not impressed by Youssef's political bragging. "Look Youssef, The only point that you Monkeys have is that for now, at least, you can keep the Peanuts under control. I think that the majority of Yemenis are not ready to allow the peanuts too much of an upper hand in the political set up of the country. That is one of the reasons your chances were better. So, don't get all that excited because you Monkeys just happen to be the lesser of two evils to choose from. That was really what the last election really boiled down to. But, with two parliamentary elections experiences behind them, the Yemeni voters, at the third round will be more selective. Can't you sense that there is a lot more awareness in this past election than the 1993 elections. At least, on this election people did choose candidates for some political reason. That was why the Peanuts had to settle for what they got. The political reasoning of the majority of the voters was in the Monkeys' favor and the Peanuts had known this fairly well in advance. Thus your friends, the Peanuts tried to maneuver outside the coalition, but met with the difficulty of communicating with the opposition. The opposition were unable to confirm whether the Peanuts were not playing a tactical move for the coalition, as a whole, or were just feeling around for safe grounds from the Monkeys' mastery of the political game in Yemen, as much as I have to admit that I don't like the over-reliance of the Monkeys on political arithmetic and sheer power, and the latter's total disregard for proper government functions. If we get lucky to have a third round of Parliamentary Elections, you Monkeys will face some tough voters unless you manage to show some sound government over the next four years. I think you owe it to the people who voted for the Monkeys."

Youssef assured his friends, "Look despite all the politics, the country is, relatively speaking in stable conditions. The fact that the elections went on is proof of the stability. All the international observers vouched for the way our democracy is working."

Nagi did not have to wait long to comment on Youssef's remark. "I would not rush to say 'vouched'. The foreign observers here and abroad were more intrigued by how things in this country somehow manage to proceed despite all the disorder, chaos and the absence of predictable systems and functioning institutions. Yes, we have democracy, but it is not quite the democracy that underscores the importance of rights, the equitable application of the law and the accountability of government officials, at all levels of government. I know, and you know and everyone else knows-even your foreign observers - cannot be fooled by all the political theatrics you Monkeys cling to. How long can you carry on that way?"

"Hey, Youssef," said Hussein, "Four years from now, Nagi is going to be your toughest opponent. Nagi is the kind of guy who does not accept defeat. He is going to make it, because he can hustle. He is well known in the district for his integrity, sincerity and patriotism. In fact, a lot of people asked Nagi to be a candidate during the last election and those that were ready to sign the petition to have his name put in were enough to get him elected considering how thin the votes were spread, no matter how many boy scouts you Monkeys bring along and how many veiled women the Peanuts drag in. The majority of the people in the district would have voted for Nagi."

Youssef explained how his party would have been glad to have Nagi take the nomination in their name. "In fact, our branch of the

Monkeys Party had already drawn up plans to convince Nagi to either run in the name of the Monkeys or else withdraw with a promise of a big administrative position and lots of goodies, if he insisted on running. Nagi, did not even run. You do not know the opportunities you are missing, Nagi."

"That is not my idea of conditioning yourself for democratic politics. I want to be elected - really elected. I want to prove that, in Yemen, the people can decide what they want freely without political maneuvering. I do not want to be elected because my party gave out free meat to the voters during the holiday, or have paid the local big shots to vote for me and get their people to vote for me. I want my voters to vote for me because I am the one they feel who can represent them. By the next elections, I think people will start to think like that. That is, I think it is better to wait. I am not looking for opportunities at the expense of people's rights and interests. The worst kind of opportunities for self-enhancement are those that are based on the politics of the times. You just think that people are only after positions, power and money, and that everybody must be the same as you guys are.

There are a lot of good people who want to really do something for their people-for their country. But, the doors are closed to them, even in the limited democracy we have. Good intentions have no place in a world beset by people who have turned government into a private club of political muscle, greed and careless and irresponsible authority. What does it take to get people like that to realize that misuse of power is really intolerable and a breach of public trust? Political tactics do not protect our borders and islands from those who really know to take advantage of the opportunities we give them.

On the other hand political maneuvers based on narrow interests cannot eliminate corruption and the misapplication and misappropriation of our national resources. "It is not just important to have successful political maneuvering that just keeps the powerful political machines that have bled the country on top of the power machines that run the country, without so much as taking into account the aspirations of 17,000,000 people who call for a half-way decent life: free from fear, hunger and oppression."

Hussein's excitement was raised to the highest level. "I am telling you, Youssef, one speech like that in the next election will get Nagi right up there in Parliament. this is what the people like to hear - someone who understands their ideals, dreams and sorrows."

Youssef didn't care much for the ideals: "This is a tough country and to get anywhere in it is going to take a lot more than just wishy-washy dreams with no beginning and no end. Be realistic! Even your ideals require elements of power to put them onto the surface. We have lots of people with great visions also in the Monkeys Party, but they have fallen into the quagmire. They speak their minds every now and then, but their words bounce off a lead wall that is just impregnable."

Nagi continued to elaborate on his visions of the ideal government: "The ideal would be to have government functions de-politicized, so that government functions can proceed without any snags. As for your Monkeys Party, the time has come for the Party to give more weight to the grass roots membership and there is an obvious need to turn the party into a people's party rather than the party of its leadership."

Youssef continued his realistic outlook: "Look Nagi, your kind of rhetoric is not only bad news to the Monkeys. You can also bet that the Peanuts Party will not greet you with open arms. You must remember that this kind of rhetoric does not have any appeal with the Peanuts leadership either. They could sentence you to hell before you even die!"

Nagi showed his indifference: "Look Youssef, the Monkeys and the Peanuts all come from the same roots. It is just that the latter have taken on a different cloak, in the hope that this will make them more attractive to the general population who are quickly taken in by matters of religion. But it appears that even that kind of appeal has worn out as the Peanuts failed to deliver up to expectations as the last election clearly shows."

Hussein quickly came to the defense of his friend: "No, Hussein, Nagi is only speaking the way people out there really feel about the politics of the country."

Youssef elaborated on his realistic outlook: "Look Hussein, even if Nagi gets elected, with the Monkeys and Peanuts in full control, it is going to take more than just individual guts to beat the system. Nagi's one man crusade will be crushed or dissolved before our mutual friend here gets sworn in!"

Hussein was not about to be quieted down: "Look, Hussein, you guys are going to have to start taking into account the strong will of the people which can never be crushed, no matter what these parties possess in terms of power. In the end it is the will of God and the choice of the people that prevails, no matter how many Peanuts you Monkeys eat up!"

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الفريق علي عبدالله صالح - رئيس الجمهورية

وإلى كافة أبناء اليمن

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presents

its heartfelt congratulations and best wishes

to

President Ali Abdullah Saleh

and the whole Yemeni population

on the success of the elections process

and on the International Labor Day - May 1st.

We back you as you raise Yemen's name high among nations.

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A Cornerstone for Yemen's Development.

How the International Observers Assessed the Yemeni Elections

Yemen's Elections Are Given High Marks by Observers

Two groups of international observers monitored Yemen's April 27th, 1997 elections. The first group, led by the Dutch, included the European delegations and a few more. This group perceived its mandate as passing judgement on the elections. And it did. The second group, led by the National Democratic Institute of the USA, included mainly American observers, but also a few more, including some from the region. This group perceived its mandate as assessing the experience in order to help Yemenis improve their system to rise up to standards accepted worldwide. Towards that end, it offered a few recommendations. Yemen Times is happy to give below the exact text of their statements.

OBSERVATION FINDINGS 30 April 1997

Statement by JIOGY Spokesperson, Ms. Fre Lee Poole, Senator (Netherlands)

INTRODUCTION

On 27 April 1997, the Republic of Yemen held its second multi-party parliamentary elections. Yemen has recently undergone a radical transformation of its political structures which has been a challenging process and the country is looking to improve its current difficult economic situation. Against this background, these elections are welcomed as an important step towards the further development of democracy and democratic institutions in Yemen.

At the invitation of the Supreme Elections Committee and the Yemeni Government, a number of countries, groups of countries and organizations decided to send observers to follow the electoral process. They also decided that, in order to conduct as comprehensive and meaningful an observation as possible and to maximize the use of resources, such observers should operate as an integrated international network known as the Joint International Observer Group in Yemen (JIOGY).

Four long term observers (6 to 29 April) observing the pre-election phase as well as some eighty short term observers (20 to 29 April) observing the voting and counting process were deployed by JIOGY throughout the country. Their findings will be contained in a detailed report which will be contained in a detailed report which will be issued in the next few days. The present statement is to be considered a first general assessment by the JIOGY observers. Both the detailed report and the present statement have been prepared by the JIOGY Drafting Committee, consisting of Ms. Emmanuela del Re from Italy, and Mr. Maurits Wijffels and myself, of the Netherlands.

OBJECTIVES OF THE JIOGY MISSION

The main objectives of the JIOGY observation mission were:

- to visit polling stations;
- to collect information;
- to observe and evaluate the voting and counting process and notably to observe whether this process was administered in compliance with the provisions of the 1996 General Elections Law and the Poll Workers Manual.

PRE-ELECTION ENVIRONMENT

Legal issues
The entire spectrum of political parties has raised to the long term observers concerns about the impartiality and legitimacy of the SEC as stipulated by the General Elections Law. The JIOGY mission notes that the matter remains unsolved to-date.

Voter Registration

Although the JIOGY mission has not been in a position to extensively survey the pre-election environment, it received numerous reports regarding serious difficulties in relation to the voter registration process, some cases of which were actually submitted to the competent Yemeni courts of law. It was found by the long term observers and confirmed by the electoral authorities that the registration figures available were inaccurate and outdated. It would seem, however, that on polling day itself only few problems were noted with regard to registration.

Election Boycotts, Withdrawals and Co-ordination Agreements

The 1997 parliamentary elections in Yemen were boycotted by a number of registered parties including the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP), the country's largest opposition party. The General

People's Congress (GPC) and Islah as well as some of the opposition parties have entered into so-called co-ordination agreements avoiding the nomination of a candidate in a certain constituency in favor of the other party's candidate. The JIOGY mission notes that the boycott by a number of political parties, the withdrawal of a significant number of candidates and specifically female candidates, as well as the co-ordination agreements have reduced the range of choice of the Yemeni electorate.

ELECTION DAY

1. Number of constituencies and stations visited
The JIOGY observers have covered 101 constituencies and 717 polling stations on polling day.

2. Security situation

Although the overall security situation appears to have been well maintained, some observers queried the necessity of a rather heavy security presence at certain centers. The mission has received reports on the occurrence of violence in certain constituencies; such violence has not, however, been observed by any of the JIOGY observers. Moreover, the mission has no reason to assume that the said violence was related to the elections.

3. Organization

The observers were impressed with the work of the Election Commissions at all levels and with the commitment and efforts of the poll workers who were often dealing with difficult conditions. The lay out of polling stations was generally good although certain centers were only accessible with great difficulty. The election materials appear to have arrived in time. The mission was also impressed by the substantial efforts to train poll workers; it was noted that voter education was undertaken by various organizations. Furthermore the observers express their appreciation for the work undertaken by local observation and monitoring organizations.

4. Voting

The JIOGY mission was particularly impressed with the commitment of the voters who turned out as very many of them were required to wait long hours before being able to cast their ballot. The observers noted that many voters experienced difficulties in exercising their right to vote which seemed to be mostly due to illiteracy. This phenomenon appears to be particularly prevalent amongst women and in the rural areas. Whilst the majority of the polling station committees appeared to manage the voting process efficiently, fairly and in accordance with provisions of the 1996 General Elections Law and the Poll Workers Manual, a number of irregularities were either observed by or reported to the mission. These irregularities include:

Secrecy of the vote

Although in the majority of the centers the secrecy of the vote was well respected, some observers noted that in a number of polling stations the secrecy of the vote was not protected due, for example, to the presence of security personnel in the voting booth, the absence of (adequate) screens around the voting booth or the showing of completed ballot papers by the polling station committee to all present. Here again, illiteracy played a major role.

Ballot papers

In some constituencies, the ballot papers were double-sided which in certain cases was observed to confuse the voters and affect the secrecy of the vote. The legal provisions allow for the late withdrawal of candidates; in a number of cases ballot papers were not updated accordingly or contained mistakes.

Military and security officers

Whereas observers expected to see security personnel outside the polling stations checking voters



for weapons and maintaining order. They were surprised to see that in many centers security personnel entered polling stations at will and remained there, they security personnel were often armed. In many of these cases, the mission has not been able to establish that the presence of security personnel was requested by the chairperson of the relevant committee in accordance with the law. It was also observed that security personnel sometimes exceeded their legitimate functions, for example by checking voter cards. However this involvement often appeared to result from good intentions. JIOGY observers noted many circumstances in which security personnel displayed great helpfulness.

Military Voting

The long term observers observed that, in at least one constituency, a significant number of soldiers was imported and registered in order to vote and thus swing the results in favor of the interest of one candidate.

Irregular Political Activities in Polling Centers

It was observed that many candidates posters were prominently displayed inside polling centers and even inside polling stations. Some observers saw candidates' election materials being handed to voters in queues outside the polling stations. In certain instances it was observed that candidates attempted to influence the vote. Reports were made to observers of vote-buying, attempts at persuasion, and intimidation of voters, although such irregularities were not observed by members of the mission.

5. Counting

The counting procedure, requiring for example unanimous agreement on validity of ballots, may have been time-consuming but was undoubtedly highly transparent, as all candidates' representatives were allowed to express their views regarding each ballot paper.

CONCLUSION

The members of the JIOGY mission feel honored to have had the opportunity to observe the 1997 multi-party parliamentary elections in Yemen. The members of the JIOGY mission would like to congratulate all those who have worked hard to make these elections possible. The JIOGY mission notes that the 1997 parliamentary elections in Yemen have taken place at an early stage of the country's democratic development and in complex circumstances. Taking into account those circumstances and despite the aforementioned irregularities, the JIOGY mission is of the opinion that the 1997 parliamentary elections in Yemen can be judged, at this date and time, on balance as reasonably free and fair.

this delegation was not able to review the process by which candidates chose to enter or withdraw from the election process, an earlier NDI mission made an assessment of the pre-election environment and issued its report on March 23. The findings of that mission, together with those presented by this delegation, will be made part of NDI's final report. That report will address the political context and legal framework for the elections, registration and voting processes, the resolution of electoral complaints and other elements of the process.

II. THE DELEGATION AND ITS WORK

This 34-person delegation has been led by Chester Atkins, a former member of the US Congress, and Joycelyn Lucas, the former Chief Election Officer of Trinidad and Tobago. It includes senior governmental and political party officials, election experts, civic leaders, regional specialists and democratic activists from 13 countries in North America, Europe, the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa. The delegation met with members of the Supreme Elections Commission, leaders of all the major political parties and high ranking government officials, including President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

The delegation arrived on April 23 and was deployed nationwide in 20 teams following briefings in Sana'a. Both in the capital and once deployed, the teams met with election officials, political parties and domestic election monitors. After observing the balloting, counting and tabulation processes throughout the country, the delegation reassembled in Sana'a on Tuesday to review the teams' findings. Delegation members visited 160 polling sites in 64 constituencies throughout 11 governorates.

NDI remained in regular communication with all the major political parties, including those that decided not to participate in the elections, as well as with the principal nonpartisan Yemeni election monitoring organizations, including the Arab Democratic Institute (ADI) and the Election Monitoring Committee (EMC). NDI exchanged information and coordinated deployment with the Joint Electoral Assistance Secretariat (JEAS) in order to enhance the observation effort. The delegation also communicated with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the International Foundation for Elections Systems (IFES), which have provided technical assistance to the Supreme Elections Commission (SEC).

NDI began working in Yemen before the 1993 elections, and has been monitoring the electoral environment continuously since mid-1996. In addition, NDI conducted training programs for political party pollworkers as part of a continuing program with all major political parties. The Institute has also supported civic education programs of the Arab Democratic Institute, as well as its effort to train and deploy more than 11,000 election monitors.

III. FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

It is regrettable that the elections were marred by at least 11 deaths, which deeply saddened the delegation. These incidents cast a shadow over an otherwise peaceful election day. Politics in Yemen are heavily influenced by tribal factors, and it would appear that election day provided an opportunity for a heightening of some tribal tensions. The majority of the violent and sometimes fatal attacks were a reflection of these local conflicts.

The Yemeni Socialist Party, a historically significant party in southern Yemen, launched an election boycott that was joined by several smaller parties. The boycott was peaceful, and the government security forces did not interfere with the party's organized demonstrations in Hadramaut

and Abyan. The extent to which the boycott affected the election is unclear, but it may have contributed to a lower voter turnout in the southern governorates.

Government security personnel in and out of uniform appeared at times to be more numerous and conspicuous around voting and counting centers that was necessary. The security forces facilitated the process in many ways; however, civilian institutions should be strengthened in order to reduce reliance on the military in future elections.

The Yemeni voters conveyed their belief that they were exercising the right to choose their representatives. Election officials were committed to conducting their work in an open and transparent manner at all levels. The delegation encountered candidate agents representing virtually all the competitors, as well as many of the more than 15,000 independent observers. These diverse efforts demonstrated the strong desire of the Yemeni people to advance and contribute to their democratic process.

Compared to the 1993 elections, the secrecy of the ballot was greatly increased due to new administrative procedures. The use of symbols on the ballots facilitated voting for the large number of voters who could not read, which reduced the incidence of voters being obliged to state their preferences aloud. Greater efforts, however, are needed to educate illiterate voters about ways to mark their ballots.

IV. PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

Women played a significant role in these elections, a phenomenon unique in the Arabian Peninsula. The delegation noted the important role played by women in the administration of the elections, as party agents, election monitors, voters and candidates, although there were fewer women candidates than in the previous election. In 1993, women constituted 19 percent of the country's registered voters and this figure climbed to nearly 30 percent in 1997. Concerted outreach and education efforts by the SEC, the political parties and the Arab Democratic Institute contributed to this increase.

In some provincial capitals, the percentage of voter turnout among registered voters was higher for women than men. It must be noted, however, that in a significant number of polling sites, particularly in rural villages, there were no ballot boxes for women. In some other polling stations few or no women voted. Restrictive access to polling stations and other encumbrances to women's participation were noted by the delegates. Continuing improvement is vital if Yemen is to secure an equitable place for women in public life and fully realize its democratic potential.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the spirit of international cooperation and in light of the many positive features of the election process, the delegation offers the following recommendations.

General Considerations

- 1) **Voting by Election Workers:**
A procedure should be developed to allow voting in the polling stations for the tens of thousands of civic-minded Yemenis who will participate in future elections as pollworkers, political party agents, election monitors and security personnel at the polling stations.
- 2) **Improving Conditions for Illiterate Voters:**
Further voter education and illiteracy programs should be conducted to better prepare illiterate voters and to ensure ballot secrecy.

3) **Expanding Women's Participation:**
The successful programs to encourage women's participation in political life should be continued between elections. In addition, steps should be taken to provide unimpeded access to voting stations and voting facilities for women.

4) **Reducing Conflict:**
Steps should be taken by political and civic leaders to develop strategies to help reduce the potential for violence in future elections.

Technical Considerations

5) **Extending Electoral Calendar:**
The electoral calendar should be modified to allow sufficient time for ballot production and inspection by candidates before distribution. The electoral calendar might, for instance, set the final withdrawal date for candidates as much as 30 days before election day in order to ensure accurate ballots. Candidates would therefore have to be nominated well in advance of that date to allow time to test their political viability.

6) **Improving Voter Calendar:**
A simplified voter registration process and accurate voter registry should be developed to ensure that eligible voters are not disenfranchised and to reduce the potential for multiple voting. This would relieve confusion and related problems caused on election day by the use of a variety of voter lists that led to some prospective voters being turned away from the polls.

7) **Expedited Counting & Tabulation of Results:**
Expedited procedures for counting and tabulation of results should be implemented. Such procedures should address the method for resolving questions regarding ballot validity and other disagreements among election officials and party agents. In addition, electoral officials and others concerned with the election process should give serious consideration to modifying the electoral law to provide for the ballot count at the polling stations; this would eliminate time and risks to ballot box security posed by transporting ballot boxes from polling stations to counting centers.

8) **Improving Procedures:**
Further refinements of the legal framework and further plans for training election officials should be developed to eliminate or reduce administrative difficulties encountered on election day and to remove the possibility of persons exerting undue influence on voters. Issues to be addressed should include: voting by those whose names are on voter lists but who do not possess current voter cards; challenges of a prospective voter's identity, age or other qualifications to vote; questions relating to the validity of ballots; and determining who should be granted access to facilities during the counting and tabulation processes.

VI. CONCLUSION

While the final tabulation and certification of results, and the adjudication of complaints that have arisen, have not yet concluded, the April 27 parliamentary elections appear to be a step forward in Yemen's democratization. The delegation appreciates that elections are but one facet of a much broader and more complex political development process. At the same time, the delegation would not want the international community to overlook the significant accomplishments that are represented by the conduct of this week's elections. Important precedents are being established among government officials, political party leaders and civic activists, as well as among the millions of Yemeni voters. Great attention is being paid to the details of the law, appreciation is growing for public accountability and transparency on the part of public institutions and a culture of civic responsibility is emerging. At the same time, many Yemenis recognize that additional efforts must be made to ensure that democratic practices take root; the national legislature will need to assume a larger role in governance, for instance, and local government ought to be established on a democratic foundation.

The delegation hopes that Yemeni political leaders, including those who did not participate in this week's elections, will respond to opportunities for continued political dialogue and search for consensus about the character of pluralistic political institutions in Yemen. Like many others in the international community, NDI is committed to supporting such efforts.

الف مبروك

كافة أفراد أسرة «يمن تايمز» يتقدمون للزميل

رضوان علوي السقاف

بالتفاني الحارة والتبريكات العطرة

بمناسبة إرتزاقه مولوده الأول الذي أسماه

((أسامه))

نفع الله به أهله ووطنه وأمته ، وألف مبروك

عن الجميع:

الدكتور/ عبدالعزيز السقاف

TAJ SHEBA HOTEL Honors Employees on Labor Day

Continuing its tradition of awarding due recognition to the local staff members, the management of the Taj Sheba Hotel has on Labor Day awarded:

- 1- Best Employee Awards for the year 1996-1997.
- 2- Good Attendance Certificates to those staff members who were never absent for a single day without pay during the year.
- 3- Long Service Awards to those staff members who have completed 5, 10 and 15 years of service with the Hotel.
- 4- Six Staff members who have been selected for training at Taj hotels in India for a period of eight to twelve weeks during the second half of 1997. The Awards Ceremony was presided over by Mr. Hayel Abdul Hak,



SHERATON SANA'A HOTEL recently was chosen as the venue to host a group of **ITALIAN TOURISTS** who came on a cycling trip to Yemen. Seen above, the group enjoyed their stay in Yemen. The program was the result of joint effort by **SHERATON SANA'A HOTEL** and a local tour operator, and aimed at continuously promoting Yemen as a viable tourist destination.

Managing Director, and Mr. Vijay Albuquerque, General Manager of the hotel. The guest of honor was Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, Chief Editor of Yemen Times. The hotel, in its endeavor to increase the number of local staff, extended full cooperation to the Catering School in the Republic of Yemen by providing training and employment to the students of this Institute. The employees pledged to continue working hard to keep the Taj Sheba Hotel the country's Number One Hotel.

Funding for Biodiversity Inventory of Socotra

The Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species was inaugurated following the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. By funding small projects, this British initiative has made great strides towards safeguarding the diversity of nature. A premise of the program is that sustainable development and preservation of biodiversity can go hand in hand. Selected projects are directed by UK educational and scientific institutions such as BirdLife International, the world's foremost bird conservator. These institutions work with partners in developing countries, achieving their aims through the transfer of technology and expertise to host country organisations.

Recently, BirdLife International and the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh announced that they have been jointly awarded a £158,000 Darwin Initiative grant to conduct a 'biodiversity inventory' of Socotra. The 3-year grant was the largest of 32 awards given this year. In addition to the inventory, the grant will pay for the publication of two books on Socotran wildlife: one on the island's birds, and a second on its plants. However, the bulk of the money will be used to train Yemeni (especially Socotran) biologists in biodiversity research and field techniques including the establishment and maintenance of a biodiversity database for the island.

In implementing this project, BirdLife and the Royal Botanic Garden hope to work closely with the Yemen Environmental Protection Council (EPC). Staffed by professionals with extensive conservation experience, the EPC is the perfect local partner for this program. With Socotra poised on the brink of large-scale development, the funding for this project has been allocated at just the right moment for the future welfare of the island and its inhabitants.

الدكتور محمد السعيدى - رئيس مجلس الإدارة
ومدراء الفروع والمهندسون والموظفون والعمال في:

المؤسسة العامة للمياه والصرف الصحي

يتقدمون بخالص التهاني والتبريكات

إلى سعادة الأستاذ أرنه ميربروخ

سفير المملكة الهولندية باليمن

وإلى كافة أعضاء السفارة والجالية الهولندية باليمن

والشعب الهولندي الصديق

بمناسبة العيد الوطني - ٣٠ أبريل

ونتمنى لعلاقات بلدينا الصديقين

المزيد من التطور والتقدم

وكل عام وأنتم بخير

Dr. Mohammed Al-Saedi, Chairman of the Board,

Top Management, Branches, Engineers and Workers in the

National Water & Sanitation Authority

Present

their felicitation and congratulations

to the ambassador, Embassy Staff and

the Dutch Community in the Republic of Yemen

on the National Day

of the Kingdom of the Netherlands - 30th April.

We aspire for still stronger cooperation and relations

between our two friendly countries.



SANA'A BRITISH SCHOOL

GIVE YOUR CHILD A BRITISH
EDUCATION IN THE VITAL
EARLY YEARS

Sana'a British School offers children from
ages 4 to 11 years the chance of a fine

British-based education, a solid foundation for their future
We are a non-profit making school with small classes to ensure that
all pupils receive individual attention. Your child will develop
confidence, knowledge and skills in a friendly, caring international
atmosphere.

Enrollments are now being made for the limited number of places
available for the next academic year. To ensure a place for your child
in September please contact;

The School Administrator
Sana'a British School
No. 18 Street 21 (off Naukshaut St.)
P. O. Box: 15546 Assafia Sana'a
Tel. 203950 Fax. 206134

Sana'a British School Announces a
VACANCY
for a full-time
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

to take charge of the financial and administrative tasks of the school
office.

The person appointed will have a background in office and financial
administration, smart appearance and good telephone manner. A
native speaker of English would be preferred. Knowledge of spoken
and written Arabic would be an advantage.

please contact the above address for further details.

May 5th, 1997



2,500-YEAR-OLD SETTLEMENT DISCOVERED IN UAE

A 2,500-year-old settlement spread over an area of 1.0 Square km has been excavated at the foot of Al-Faya Mountain in Sharjia, said Dr. Sabah Abboud Jassim, an archaeologist with the Antiquities Directorate of the Sharjia Department of Culture and Information.

A local archaeological team headed by Dr. Jassim completed the two-month-long excavations. A number of important discoveries were made during the excavation. "It is a huge site with artifacts," said Dr. Jassim. He added that the initial diggings turned up parts of a wall and stone structures. Several significant findings have helped experts pin down the age of the settlement to the first half of the first millennium BC. Listing the findings, he said that the team discovered a large quantity of shards of pots and utensils made of soft stones, as well as stones used for grinding grains.

One of the artifacts found at the site is a beautiful painted head of an Arabian leopard (now an endangered species) which Dr. Jassim believes was probably a toy or a decorative piece. He said, "This item does not have any special significance because it was found in one of the rooms, along with mud toys, rings, pins, beads and spinning wheels."

Such a discovery, Dr. Jassim explained, would have been historically significant if it had been found in a tomb because that would shed light on the religious beliefs of people who lived in the area at that time. "Location of the findings determines their archaeological significance," he said.

The site will be excavated further next season. "Since it is a large and rich site, it may take us a few years to complete the dig in that area," said the archaeologist.

IRANIAN LIBERAL CALLS FOR BETTER RELATIONS WITH US

A liberal Iranian opposition figure seeking to run for the upcoming presidential election, has called for normalized relations between Iran and the United States. Ezzatollah Sahabi said in a public speech that there would be no constraints in having good relations with the US, short of dependance should he get elected in the May 23 polls. But he called on Washington to "remove its forces from the Persian Gulf to create a peaceful atmosphere for negotiations."

"We are opposed to the US policy of dual containment of Iran and Iraq," said Sahabi, a veteran nationalist dissident and director of the Liberal monthly, *Iran Farda* (Future Iran). The United States boosted its presence in the region since the 1991 Gulf-War, to protect oil-rich monarchies from perceived threats from Tehran and Baghdad.

Tehran and Washington broke diplomatic ties after Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution which deposed the pro-American Shah, and have been at sharp odds ever since. Sahabi said he had decided to run for president to fight the conservative clergy's monopoly of power in Iran and for democracy and freedom.

Sahabi acknowledged that he was unlikely to be elected, but he said he hoped Khatami would win in the first run. He argued that the ruling conservative clergy was supported by only 12% of the people, and complained that he was not given equal campaign opportunity. If the ruling faction does not open the society, it is because it uses incompetent officials for executive posts, a fact which will spread corruption.

The person most likely to win the presidency, according to sources, is Mr. Nateq Nouri, presently the speaker of the parliament.

SINGAPORE & MALAYSIA OPPOSE BURMA SANCTIONS

Singapore said that constructive engagement - not sanctions - was the best way to bring about positive change in Burma. A foreign ministry statement said constructive engagement would help foster economic liberalization and in turn bring about further internal change in Burma. The statement was in response to media inquiries over the United States' decision to impose economic sanctions on Rangoon. Singapore is a member of the seven-nation Association of Southeast Asian Nations, ASEAN, which has a policy of not interfering in the internal politics of neighboring states. It said sanctions only work in cases where the economy of a country was plugged into the global economy.

Burma has been opening slowly to the outside world but remains largely isolated on the international stage. The United States earlier this week banned new US investment in Burma, citing what it described as deepening political repression.

Burma has applied to join ASEAN and is largely expected to be admitted later this year along with Laos and Cambodia. ASEAN foreign ministers will meet in Kuala Lumpur on May 31ST to discuss various issues including the expansion of ASEAN.

Malaysia also opposed the US sanction. Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad said that he disagreed with the US sanctions on Burma, pointing out that the measures would hurt the country's people, not its government.

Malaysia is this year's chairman of ASEAN, which also includes Brunei, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

ALGERIA RATIONS WATER SUPPLY

Drought-stricken Algeria started rationing water supplies, limiting millions of people to six hours flow every three days.

The authorities told the nearly three million inhabitants of the capital, Algiers, and those in nearby Tipaza province they would receive water only for six hours every three days in some districts.

Other areas in Algiers would get water for a few hours each day, depending on the network supply. In other main cities, like Western Oran and Constantine in the east, most residents would get some water every day, said in a statement broadcast on run radio.

The government has set up a task force to try to ease the impact of drought on agriculture and industry.

ISRAEL AIDED APARTHEID REGIME

Central figures in South Africa's government and army are confirming for the first time in public that Israel assisted South Africa's Apartheid regime in programs for the development of nuclear weapons.

South African Deputy Minister Aziz Fahd said the nuclear subject was top secret, and many documents were destroyed. "We have many reports about the fact that there were scientific relations between the two states, and collaboration about very specific equipment." He said that this collaboration was directed to military ends.

Israel and South Africa involved nuclear arms deals worth billions of dollars, and engaged in joint ventures to improve mutual, nuclear research and launching of long range missiles, as well as close coordination in the field of intelligence.

KUWAIT COMPLAINS ABOUT OPEC VIOLATIONS

Opec's decision to maintain its official production ceiling is prompting some members to continue violating their quotas, Kuwait's oil minister said last week. But Issa Al-Mazidi said his country would remain committed to its output quota of two million bpd allocated by the 11-nation Organization of Petroleum Exporting Companies (OPEC).

Opec has kept the production quotas of its members unchanged since 1993, with the exception of Iraq, which was assigned between 500,000 and 600,000 bpd of crude oil in December, 1996, following its oil-for-food agreement with the UN.

Kuwait, which controls nearly 10% of the world's recoverable oil reserves, would demand a higher output quota if Opec oil ministers decided to raise the production ceiling. Kuwait's sustainable output capacity is at 2.4 million bpd.

SAUDI MEASURES TO PREVENT ILLEGAL STAYS

Saudi Arabia tightened security to prevent foreign pilgrims who just performed the Haj ritual from overstaying in the country. The Saudi authorities have set up checkpoints at all exit routes to ensure that non-resident pilgrims return to their home country.

Saudi Arabia says violators pose a security threat. It has organized nationwide campaigns to arrest and deport absconders. Interior Ministry sources said that more than 14,000 people who had stayed over after their pilgrimage last year were deported.

It is a difficult task when you have more than 2 million haj visitors to the country every year.

EGYPTIAN PRIORITY IN POULTRY, DAIRY & FISH INDUSTRY

Deputy Premier and Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, Dr. Yussif Wali, stated that a total of 43 million ECUs have been ear-marked for the ministry's dairy produce sector, besides Egyptian Pounds of 255 million for feeding calves. The funds are meant to upgrade meat production in Egypt.

Dr. Wali added that the ministry also ear-marked 50 million ECUs for consolidating poultry and fish resources development sector. He said that the state is focussing on the development of the meat and dairy sectors.

Within the general framework of sea wealth in Egypt, the minister noted that a strategy was developed to assess the fish reserves at Egyptian coasts in light of the application of advanced fishing technology.

PAKISTAN OFFERS INVESTORS TOP RETURNS IN ASIA

Pakistan plans to attract substantial foreign investment to its refining and hydro-cracking industry as 84% of the world's total investment in the oil sector has been planned for Asia and the Far East. According to a study by the Ministry of Petroleum and National Resources in Islamabad, the focus of most of the investment is Asia, where 94% of new atmospheric distillation is expected.

The Pakistani market mirrored these trends. Attractive rates of return - around 20% - would give it an edge over other countries which offered lower rates of return on foreign investment.

China, India and Indonesia, the major markets of Asia, offered investment returns of 15, 16 and 19% respectively.

INVITATION FOR BIDS FOURTH FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT PROJECT MINISTRY OF FISH WEALTH

The Government of Republic of Yemen (ROY) has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the cost of Fourth Fisheries Development Project and it is intended that a part of the proceeds will be applied to eligible payment under the contract for the construction of FOQUM / RAS IMRAN road project in Aden Governorate.

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and bidding documents at the following address:

The Director General's Office
Project Implementation Unit
Ministry of Fish Wealth
P. O. Box: 1299, Tawahi, Aden
Fax: 00 967 2 203011
Tel: 00 967 2 203874

A complete set of the bidding documents may be purchased by interested eligible bidders on the submission of a written application to the above address and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of USD 500/-.

Interested eligible bidders may submit their sealed bids according to the following conditions:

1. The bidders must provide evidence to show their past experience with similar projects.
2. All bids must be accompanied with a bid security of not less than 2% of the total bid amount and valid for 120 days.
3. Local bidders must furnish tax registration certificate.
4. Bids must be submitted to the above mentioned address not later than 10.00 a.m. on 9/6/1997. Any bid received after this time and date will be not considered.
5. Any bid not corresponding to the required conditions, will not be considered.
6. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend at 10.00 a.m on 10/6/1977.

اعلان مناقصة مشروع تطوير الأسماك الرابع وزارة الثروة السمكية

دعوة لتنفيذ طريق فقم / رأس عمران - عدن

حصلت الجمهورية اليمنية على قرض من مؤسسة التنمية الدولية (ايدا) لتمويل مشروع الأسماك الرابع، وقد خصص جزء من هذا القرض لتنفيذ طريق فقم / رأس عمران في محافظة عدن.

يمكن للمقاولين المؤهلين الراغبين في الحصول على معلومات اضافية واستلام وثائق المناقصة الاتصال بالعنوان التالي:

مكتب المدير العام
مشروع تطوير الأسماك الرابع
مكتب فرع وزارة الثروة السمكية - عدن
هـ. ب: ١٢٩٩ - التواهي - عدن
فاكس: ٢٠٣٠١١، تلفون ٢٠٣٨٧٤

يمكن الحصول على وثائق المناقصة بعد تقديم طلب كتابي للعنوان أعلاه وبعد دفع مبلغ قدره (٥٠٠ دولار) غير قابل للاسترجاع.

على الراغبين من المقاولين المؤهلين تقديم عروضهم المغلفة والمختومة بالشمع الأحمر وفقا للشروط التالية:-

- (١) أن يكون المتقدم من الشركات المقاوله التي سبق تأهيلها لتنفيذ مثل هذا المشروع
- (٢) على المتقدم ارفاق ضمان بنكي أو شيك مقبول الدفع من أحد البنوك العاملة في الجمهورية اليمنية بواقع ٢٪ من قيمة العطاء وبنفس عملة العطاء، على أن يكون ساري المفعول لمدة (١٢٠) يوما من تاريخ فتح المظاريف.
- (٣) على المقاولين المحليين ارفاق شهادة ضريبية سارية المفعول.
- (٤) آخر موعد لاستلام العروض هو الساعة العاشرة صباحا من يوم ١٩٩٧/٦/٩م إلى العنوان المذكور أعلاه، ولن يقبل أي عرض بعد هذا الموعد.
- (٥) لن ينظر إلى العروض والعطاءات التي لا تتضمن كافة الشروط المطلوبة.
- (٦) سيتم فتح المظاريف بحضور المتقدمين أو من يمثلهم في تمام الساعة العاشرة صباحا من يوم ١٩٩٧/٦/١٠م

NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

MALTA

TRADE DELEGATION

Visit us at this venue:
TAJ SHEBA HOTEL - SANAA
on

Saturday 17th May between 16:00 - 20:00 hours
Sunday 18th May between 16:00 - 20:00 hours
or by appointment.

MEET WITH LEADING MALTESE MANUFACTURERS, EXPORTERS & SERVICE PROVIDERS OF:

- Commercial photography
- Computer systems
- Consultancy on construction and country planning
- Brooms and brushes
- Furniture and furniture components
- Health and hygiene products
- Information technology
- Biscuits
- Smoked meat products
- Fruit juices and nectars
- Non-alcoholic beers
- Kitchen sinks
- Transshipment operations
- Ship chandlery
- Fire and security equipment
- Lifts and electrical equipment
- Medical disposables and equipment
- Oilfield services
- Industrial paints and lacquers
- PVC pipes and conduits
- Sandwish panels for construction
- Steel fabrication
- Veter pharmaceuticals and related products.

YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO DO BUSINESS WITH COMPANIES FROM MALTA

Well over 2.6 billion US dollars worth of Maltese products and services are exported from Malta to the Middle East, Europe, and North America every year. Most of the Trade Delegation participants are actively seeking agents and distributors in Yemen. This could be your opportunity to make contact with established Maltese manufacturers and exporters renowned by their good quality products, competitive prices and reliability.

For more information, please contact:

MALTA EXTERNAL TRADE CORPORATION (METCO)

Tel: (+356) 448-186/7/8; Fax: (+356) 496-687, 448-401
Attn: Mr. Joseph Galea

or

SANAA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Tel: (01) 232-461, Fax: (01) 232-412

or

AIR MALTA OFFICE IN DUBAI

Tel: (+971) 4 319-990 Fax: (+971) 4 319-760
Attn: Mr. Sam Portelli

Trade Mission organized by METCO (Malta's national trade promotion organisation) with the support of the Federation of the Yemen Chambers of Commerce & industry, the Sana'a Chamber of Commerce & Industry and AIR MALTA, Malta's national airline.

MALTA: a small but dynamic country

Malta is a small island state situated almost in the center of the Mediterranean Sea between Southern Europe and North Africa. Perhaps well known for its sandy beaches and outdoor activities, Malta is also a profitable place to do business. In fact, the economy of Malta is continually growing, with real GDP forecasted to increase by about 5.0% during 1997. Unemployment stands at only 3.8% and inflation at a low rate of 4.1%.

Malta has embarked on a free market economy for the past decade, with the role of the private sector greatly increasing. The tourist industry also provides a large percentage of foreign earnings with over one million tourists visiting Malta each year. Transshipment operations, ship-repair, international banking and financial services all assisted in creating a healthy economic situation.

In many areas, Malta may be classified as an advanced nation with its industrial base concentrated primarily on manufacturing for export. Electronic and high-tech products are the main export sectors, where many international European and American companies have established subsidiaries. Malta's main export markets are the European Union, the Middle East and North America. The European Union accounts for about 76% of Malta's total exports with Italy, France and Germany being the three main trading partners.

Exports to the Middle East countries have also increased substantially with the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia receiving most of Malta's exports to the Gulf.

Malta's trade with Yemen, although still at low levels, have expanded rapidly in recent years with exports to Yemen more than doubling between 1994 and 1996 reaching about US\$ 1.5 million in 1996. Products currently exported from Malta to Yemen include mostly foodstuffs as well as toiletries, household goods, building materials and other goods.

In spite of the small size of the country and population of about 360,000, Malta has a remarkably strong export potential. Malta boasts one of the highest per capita in the world reaching about US\$ 8000 in 1996.

The Malta External Trade Corporation, Malta's national export promotion organization, is leading a group of twenty-five manufacturers and exporters from Malta on a trade visit to Yemen. The main purpose of this trade delegation is to assess the potential of Maltese products in this prosperous market and to establish sales contacts with potential importers, distributors, retailers and wholesalers in Yemen.

The Maltese companies offer excellent business opportunities and this is attributable to the high quality and competitive prices of their products coupled with reliability and flexibility to customers' requirements. The excellent sea and air links existing between the two countries also present regular and efficient transport connections.

Companies in Yemen are encouraged to avail themselves of this business opportunity by meeting the Maltese company representatives during their visit to Sana'a on the 17th and 18th of May 1997 at the Taj Sheba Hotel in Sana'a.

Yemen - A Key Point Business Delegation from Malta in Yemen

A trade delegation from Malta consisting of 25 leading manufacturers and exporters will be visiting Yemen during the 16th - 19th May with the aim of developing business relations with interested importers, distributors and agents in Yemen. The Malta Trade Mission is organized by the Malta External Trade Corporation, Malta's national Export Promotion Organization.

Malta exports over US\$ 2.7 billion worth of its manufactured goods and services to over 50 countries every year. Trade between Malta and Yemen is currently very low and the delegation's visit will assist to increase trade to more desired levels.

As stated by Mr. Stephen Sultana, General Manager of the Malta External Trade Corporation, "... It is the combination of quality, reliability and flexibility which has placed Malta-made products and services in a competitive position. That is to say, quality products and services priced fairly, rather than cheaply, and supplied with

reliability over time. Furthermore, we are a small country and most of our manufacturers and exporters are medium sized companies which are able to cope with substantial orders but at the same

time are small and flexible enough to genuinely care about their customers' particular requirements..." You are invited to meet with the company representatives at the Taj Sheba Hotel on the 17th and 18th of May between 18.00 - 20.00 hrs or by appointment. They are very keen to meet interested business persons with the scope of establishing lasting business relationships in Yemen. The already established good ties between Malta and Yemen, and the numerous business opportunities offered, makes Malta an ideal trading partner.

The Federation of the Yemen Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Sana'a Chamber of Commerce & Industry as well as Malta's national airline, AirMalta are supporting the visit of the Malta Trade Delegation.



Mr. Stephen Sultana
General Manager
Malta External Trade
Corporation

Malta Expects 60% Increase in Exports to Yemen

"Malta is expected to post a 60% increase in its exports to Yemen," said Mr. Dennis Vella, Marketing Manager of the Malta External Trade Corporation. Whereas Malta's exports to the Gulf region reaches over US\$ 16 million annually, exports to Yemen are currently at very low levels.

This is expected to get a further boost with the visit of 25 leading Maltese exporters and service providers to Sana'a. Products being offered include foodstuffs, paints, household goods, computers, information technology services, health and hygiene products, furniture, building materials, engineering services and other goods and services. Encouraged by the keen interest already shown in Maltese products and services by the business people in Yemen, the Malta External Trade Corporation plans to intensify its promotional activities in the Gulf region by means of similar activities in the future.



Mr. Dennis Vella
Marketing Manager,
Malta External
Trade Corporation

مجموعة شركات العالمية

تتقدم

بأحر التهاني الصادقة والتبريكات القلبية إلى
رائد التنمية وراعي الديمقراطية في اليمن

الفريق علي عبدالله صالح - رئيس الجمهورية

وإلى كافة أبناء اليمن

بمناسبة نجاح الإنتخابات - هذا العرس اليمني الكبير
وبمناسبة الأول من مايو - عيد العمال

وإلى مزيد من العطاء بما يرفع إسم اليمن عالياً بين الأمم

مجموعة شركات العالمية :

الرواد في صناعة السياحة اليمنية



UNIVERSAL Group of Companies

presents

its heartfelt congratulations and best wishes

to

President Ali Abdullah Saleh

and the whole Yemeni population
on the success of the elections process.

We join you as you raise Yemen's name high among nations.

The UNIVERSAL Group
Pioneers in Yemen's Tourism Industry

This space is usually devoted to representative clippings of the Arabic press in Yemen. This week, as an exceptional step, we have decided to provide clippings from the wide international (English) press coverage of the Yemeni elections. TV and radio coverage has also been plenty.



International Coverage of Yemen's Elections

Democracy in Yemen

If this weekend's elections in Yemen are any indication, Israelis may soon have to give up one of their favourite clichés - "the only democracy in the Middle East."

It is true the voting was marred by fatal violence, which left nine people dead [sic], but it is possible to look beyond this to appreciate what Yemen is trying to achieve. Most of the deaths were caused by one soldier going berserk in a polling station. The shooting does not detract from the fact that around 70% of the country's people turned out to cast their votes in what international observers called a free and fair exercise in democracy.

Yemen deserves all the more credit for trying - some 2,300 candidates freely campaigned for parliamentary seats - since it was long regarded as a poor and divided land of fractious tribal loyalties. It is true President Ali Abdullah Saleh's party and its junior coalition partner look likely to retain power, but the president certainly deserves credit and congratulations for his democratic mandate. Even his Islamic coalition partner is unique in the Arab world. Not only does it preach a tolerant Islam, but it has moved from opposition to serving in a coalition government only through free elections. Yemen may indeed be poorer, more tribal, and more divisive than many of its richer, more sophisticated Gulf Arab neighbors, but it is setting them all a democratic example it can be extremely proud of, and they can be ashamed of not emulating.

Editorial
Jerusalem Post (Jerusalem)
April 29, 1997

Interior Decoration?

The Saudis did what they could to stop the democratic experiment on their southern doorstep. According to the Yemeni government, Saudi officials pleaded with it either to cancel the parlia-

mentary elections, or to stage-manage things so as to produce an obviously phony 99.9% result. Many Yemenis suspect that the recent spate of foreign hostage-taking by Yemeni tribespeople was instigated by Saudi Arabia in a bid to disrupt the election and tarnish Yemen's image.

The partners in the ruling coalition have divided a lot of the seats between them in a "cooperation agreement." The socialists, the main opposition party, are boycotting the election because of alleged unfairness.

There is reasonably free speech in Yemen, but so what? As one politician joked, pretending to quote the president, "You can say whatever you want to say. I will do whatever I want to do." Nothing but "decor" snort the government's critics.

Yet all the parties agree that the election is extremely important for the economy, providing the chance to show Yemen in a good light to international donors and investors.

Yemen is at a crucial stage in an economic-reform programme. After the upheavals of the 1991 Gulf war, and its own civil war (1994), its economy hit rock bottom. The government is asking the World Bank for advice on the painful issues of subsidies and civil-service reform. The corruption is said to go all the way up, with top politicians and soldiers the biggest offenders. The pace of reform, so far, has been fast.

The Economist (London)
April 19, 1997

Doves & Eagles Fight for Votes

Before the polls open on Sunday, [radio] announcers will read out the names of all 2,311 parliamentary candidates, summarise their policies and describe their logos. They will then read the names of 25,000 electoral officials.

For the illiterate, each party or independent candidate has a unique logo for use on the ballot paper. This has turned the election - Yemen's second

under a multi-party system - into a contest between horses, camels, doves, eagles, owls, and such aspirational symbols as a Harley Davidson and a Kalashnikov.

At the other end of the literacy scale, President Ali Abdullah Saleh's party, the General People's Congress (GPC), has launched an Internet website. In a land where blood feuds last for generations and tribes maintain well-armed militias, alliances offer the only route to political survival. President Saleh knows that well. The other reason for coalition is that Yemen's party system is curiously fluid and devoid of ideology. There are differences of style, but few disagreements on policy.

For many Yemenis the electoral process is more important than the outcome. It is about creating stability, civil society and a modern state. For others, it is about integrating Yemen into the international system.

If elections monitors give a favourable verdict, the country will have established its democratic credentials. If not, Yemen will pay a heavy price in lost foreign aid.

Brian Whitaker
The Guardian (London)
April 24, 1997

Elections Could Complete South Yemen's Defeat

Three years after their secession bid was crushed, southern Yemenis are bracing for what could be a deadlier political blow - the first parliamentary elections since the 1994 civil war.

President Ali Abdullah Saleh's opponents fear he will tighten his grip on the south. Western diplomats expect Saleh's General People's Congress to return as the governing party and some even argue the YSP boycotted the contest to avoid bitter defeat. Some YSP members will run as independents, a move that has raised concerns among

party officials. Many complain that the government in Sana'a treats the south as a conquered land, rather than an equal part of Yemen. Saleh rules the south under martial law, southerners are branded permanent traitors and discrimination is rampant, according to the opposition. Sana'a officials deny the charges.

Along the dusty streets of the port city of Aden, where young boys in tattered clothes shuffle barefoot past piles of fetid rubbish, the politics of an uneasy unity boil down to the price of bread, meat and milk.

The candidates looking down at Aden from campaign posters promising a better standard of living and political stability do not seem to be allaying daily worries.

For some, the folk songs of a popular Yemeni singer running as an independent candidate seem to offer the only refuge from a bitter past and an uncertain future.

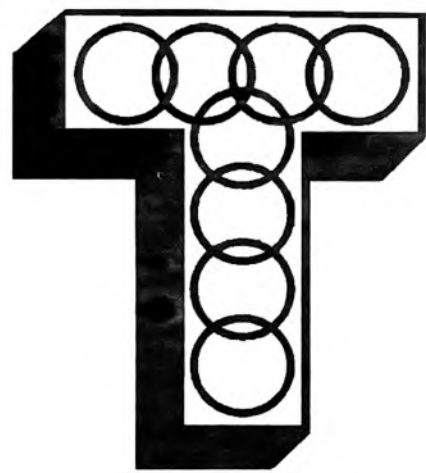
The Gulf Today (Reuters)
April 24, 1997.

Yemen Steers a Path Toward Democracy, With Some Surprises

Yemen is ahead of most of its neighbors in moving toward democracy, and the preparation of the country's second largest parliamentary elections next month show how democracy might really work in the Arab world. Tribes, rather than resisting elections, adapt to them by acting like Western-style pressure groups. Islamists embrace women's voting rights - if doing so increases their clout. At the same time, women rarely challenge male ascendancy when they vote.

Tribesmen in Hajjah see no danger that women will demand changes in their status if they vote. The Islah recently allowed the head of its women's division to give a brief speech at the party conference - the had her escorted back to a separate room. The ruling People's General Congress also has been tentative. One month ago, during a conference in Sana'a, part leaders promised to work for at least 20 women in parliament. [But] this week only two women appeared on the ruling party's list of 221 candidates.

Daniel Pearl
Wall Street Journal (New York)
March 28, 1997



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Hazim Jassam:**"Yemen's national team will be put to a real test with Uzbekistan."**

The Iraqi football coach, Hazim Jassam, is one of a few Arab football coaches who enjoy a good reputation and a high degree of professionalism. He trained several national football teams in the Arab Gulf countries. While coaching Al-Ahli team in Sana'a, he was able to help the team win the Excellent Football Tournament twice. The Yemeni Football Association invited Jassam to train the national team for the 1989 World Cup finals. Within a short period, Jassam was able to prepare the team -- enabling it to equalize with Indonesia, and defeat Cambodia. Yemen Times talked to him.

Q: What special techniques have you relied on in training the Yemeni team?

A: When I first met the players on the national team, they had problems. Most of the players are quite young with limited experience in international matches. I selected the players according to special tests I devised myself. The final selection included a mix of young and older players. This was essential in order to strike a balance between young age and experience. Afterwards, I set on the harder task -- building confidence among the players. In a series of specially designed lectures, I succeeded in raising their morale and enthusiasm by talking to them about

Yemen's great history, and how they could become good descendants and heirs to great ancestors. I hammered on their confidence.

The second stage was to enhance the players' physical fitness. We started with defensive playing, and progressed to more sophisticated attack tactics. Their performance gradually, but steadily, improved. They gained four points in their matches with the more experienced Indonesian and Cambodian teams.

Q: What were the conditions at the training camp?

A: The national team was given adequate care and attention at the Olympic Center. There were good recreational facilities, and nutritious food.

Q: What Asian teams, in your opinion, are going to be formidable opponents to our national team?

A: The Uzbek team is one of the very powerful Asian teams. Most of its players are professionals who have played in some European teams. We will play with them on May 9th in Sana'a. We plan to win. The home ground, the enthusiastic fans, and the suitable weather are all factors to the advantage of the Yemeni team.

Q: What is the extent of your ambition regarding the team's performance?

A: I cannot really say until after the game with Uzbekistan. It will be a decisive match that will give a clear indication as to the true level reached by the Yemeni players. This game will be a true test that will tell a lot about the Yemeni team. Our goal behind all the vigorous daily training is to win. As they say, 'the sky is the limit' for our ambition. The May 9th match will determine a lot of things, including the extent of ambition we can harbor.



PROGRESS THROUGH PEOPLE at SHERATON SANA'A HOTEL

SHERATON SANA'A HOTEL recently launched the first TEAM OF 7 in their drive for achieving service Excellent by PROGRESS THROUGH PEOPLE. The first team of 7 is going to work on a laundry project to improve guest satisfaction for their laundry services.

**Naseem vs Hardy: K.O. Before O.K.!**

In 90 seconds flat, it was over. Naseem delivered successive, strong, and effective punches to Hardy's face. Europe's featherweight champion was down even before the ematch started. Naseem Hamid, the champion of the World Boxing Organization (WBO) and International Boxing Federation (IBF) was able to defeat his challenger in the fight in Manchester on Saturday, 3 May. Hardy, 32, has 45 fights to his credit and far more experience than Naseem, who is 9 years his junior and with only 25 fights. Hardy was visibly scared, avoiding any direct eye contact with Naseem during their pre-fight face-to-face meeting. As soon as the referee gave the start signal, Naseem jumped with a few test punches to try his opponent. Then Naseem launched a left-hand hook punch tattering Hardy's lower jaw. Hardy tottered, got dizzy, and fell on the ground. Unconscious. The referee started to count. Hardy got up. He was unsteady. The Prince launched three direct "bee stings". Hardy fell again. It was over. This victory is a step in Naseem's flowering career. His next big fight is with the Puerto Rican World Boxing Council (WBC) featherweight champ, Vasquez, in the USA. Another challenge and a third title are awaiting the Prince.

تهانينا الحارة

يتقدم كل من

د/عبدالعزیز السقاف، ياسين أحمد محمد الأصبحي،

سعید أحمد محمد، محمد أحمد محمد،

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نبیل عبدالله الأصبحي

وداد أحمد محمد صالح الأصبحي

بمناسبة عقد القران وقرب الزفاف

الف مبروك، وأدام الله السرور

ألف مبروك

تتقدم كل من

أم محمد أحمد صالح،

أم عبدالحکیم علي،

أم محمد عبدالله أحمد

بالتهنئة إلى

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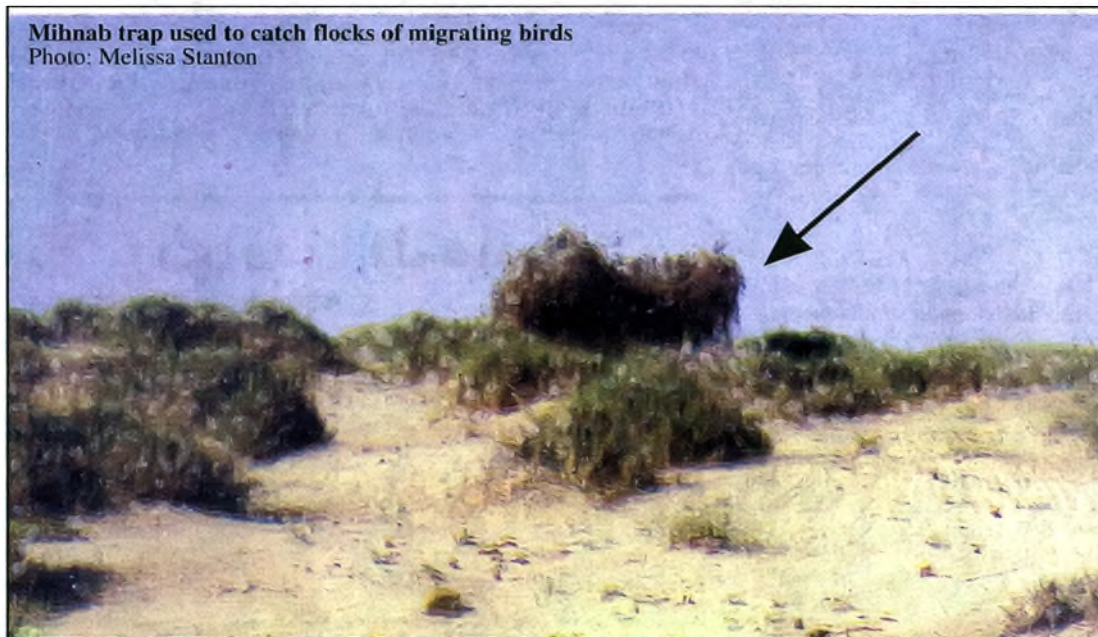
The War on Wildlife

Each year, many millions of birds embark on miraculous migrations. Following ancient routes called flyways, some of these birds complete unbelievable journeys. The Arctic Tern for example, a bird measuring less than 40 cm and weighing perhaps 100 g, practically flies from pole to pole twice a year. Due to its position on a major flyway between Central Asia and Africa, Yemen hosts large numbers of migrating birds. Hundreds of thousands of hawks and eagles are known to cross the straits at Bab al Mandab each Autumn. They cross the Red Sea at this narrow point because they are afraid of flying across water. Interestingly, many smaller birds don't have this fear and may

cross the sea almost anywhere. Waves of swallows, swifts, bee-eaters, and other migrants can now be seen moving up the Tihama or following mountain chains northward along the 'roof of Arabia.' Apart from the distances covered, these migrations are amazing for the range of hazards that the birds must survive. Predation, bad weather, food shortages, and exhaustion are all trials that kill huge numbers of migrants. Anticipating these calamities, nature has given birds the ability to produce more offspring than are likely to survive. However, one of the greatest causes of bird mortality - hunting and trapping - may be more than natural fertility can cope with.

In the words of Yemeni conservationist Dr. Omar Al - Saghier, we are waging a "war on wildlife." On both sides of the Mediterranean, millions of migrating birds are captured each spring and autumn for sale as pets or food. It is estimated that up to 540,000 birds are caught and killed every year along Egypt's Mediterranean coast alone. People in other coastal countries including Spain, France, Italy, Malta, and Cyprus, kill millions more. Birds migrating along the Red Sea coast suffer similar losses. On tiny Qummah island in the southern Red Sea, at least 10,000 birds are captured every spring. Using primitive traps called samus and mihnab. People up and

down the Red Sea continually reap this unsustainable harvest. Near Al-Luhayyah, I recently met two boys who, with fewer than ten traps, claim to catch at least 2,000 birds in a season. The birds that they catch are mainly wheat-eaters and warblers. *Less than half of the 20 or so grams that each of these birds weighs is edible.* Although the trapping of migrant birds has not been studied in Yemen, it is reasonable to assume that these two boys represent only the tip of an iceberg. We shouldn't deny these people the right to a living, but can this industry continue unchecked? As human populations and economic pressures increase, how will people in the Tihama respond? The inevitable answer is by escalating the 'war on wildlife.'



The wholesale trapping of birds for the few grams of meat that each yields is the result of ignorance, and a lack of other native occupations. We must provide these people with education programs to help them understand how they affect the overall balance of nature, and give them other ways of making a living. Unless we do, the trapping of migrant birds may lead to its own extinction.

By: David B. Stanton,
YOS Chairman



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