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YEMEN TIMES

• SANAA • January 26th thru February 1st, 1998

Vol. VIII, Issue No. 4 • Price 30 Riyals



On Meteorological Services in Yemen. Page 3.

Jewish McCarthyism in the USA. Page 5.

Yemeni Children and the Toys They Play With. Page 10.

Ahmed Qassem: The Man and His Music. Page 12.

Bridging the Gap between Yemen's Pledges and Practices:

WORKING ON HUMAN RIGHTS

On paper, the human rights record of Yemen looks good. The country has acceded to the conventions, signed the documents, outlined good policies, and generally, Yemeni officials say the right things. In practice, the story is quite different.

From the outset, it should be noted that although there are politically-motivated human rights violations, the main abuse is due to social, cultural, economic, and other reasons. In other words, the institutions that are responsible for the violations do not have properly-trained cadres or the resources to observe the rights of the citizens.

Now, a number of human rights advocates are pushing for a meaningful understanding and implementation of human rights in Yemen. Here are some examples.

1. Training Effort:

The World Bank, European Union, and several bilateral donors have undertaken programs to educate and train Yemen's officer and judicial corps. Directors of security offices, directors of criminal interrogation departments, prison wardens, district attorneys, judicial staffers, judges, etc., are all targeted for local, regional and international training and re-education.

2. Inviting Critics:

Human rights advocates, journalists, pro-democracy persons, parliamentarians, and others make up a long list of potential visitors to Yemen. During a visit to Brussels last week, Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, Chairman of the Human Rights, Civil Liberties and NGOs Committee in the Consultative invited British, German, French and Dutch members of the

European Parliament to visit Yemen. In addition, several critical journalists have been invited to come.

3. Establishing Human Rights Bodies:

Over the last few weeks, two important human rights bodies have been formed.

The first is the Yemeni Institute for Human Rights Awareness (YIHRA), an NGO which is guided by independent Yemeni human rights advocates. This body is attempting to establish a hot-line to communicate with victims, and to document cases of abuse.

The second is an inter-governmental body which brings together the main ministries and government bodies which handle (or rather mis-handle) human rights. They include the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Justice, the Political Security Office, the Attorney General, etc.

This committee is to undertake training of its personnel on the one hand, and to explain the Yemeni view to the critics on the other.

4. Transparency International:

As a corollary to the human rights issues, there is an on-going effort to clean-up. Dr. Al-Saqqaf is establishing contact to interest Transparency International in Yemen.

The Berlin-based organization is an international NGO fighting corrupt government and business practices. A delegation representing the organization is expected to visit Sana'a during March, with the hope of setting up a Yemeni branch. This effort falls within the framework of the overall reform package which the government of Dr. Faraj Bin Ghanim is pushing.

"The human rights issue cannot be left to the lip service of the government. We need a genuine commitment. At the same time, over-politicizing the issue or using in the political posturing and bickering of politicians will not help," said Al-Saqqaf.

Yemeni-European Agreement Goes into Force

On January 29th, 1998, the Yemeni-European Cooperation Agreement will be read in the European Parliament. "It is not a process of ratification. It is just a routine exercise of bringing the document to the attention of the parliamentarians," explained Mr. Torben Holtze, in charge of Yemen at the Commission. Yet, the event is important because it will lead to publishing the agreement in the Official Journal of the European Communities, thus making it enter into force.

The Agreement was signed in Brussels on November 23rd, 1997, and was negotiated over a period of 15 months.

The 23-article agreement offers an advanced framework for the EU to channel economic and technical assistance, and for the Yemeni government to embark on policies leading to political democratization, economic liberalization, protection of the environment, balanced demographic growth, and the eradication of poverty.

Mansoor Rajih Case Resolved

It is over, though the fat woman has yet to sing. But, it is practically over.

Sheikh Abdo Al-Dhurafi has successfully mediated with the blood heirs of the deceased person to let him go. They have finally agreed, and Mr. Mansoor Rajih, after fifteen years in jail, will be free.

The departure arrangements are now underway. Norway has given the fugitive and his wife political asylum and that is where they will first go. It is possible they will settle there, or that they will eventually settle in some third country.

The details of the deal are not available for publication, though rumor has it that the President was generous with the blood heirs in order to secure their approval.

Yemen Times learned that the Human Rights Committee of the Consultative Council will lead the hand-over, possibly to the British Ambassador in Sana'a, as his country has presidency of the EU at this time. The Europeans have raised this issue often. This case represents the oldest human rights problem in the country. The case is resolved to the satisfaction of all parties.

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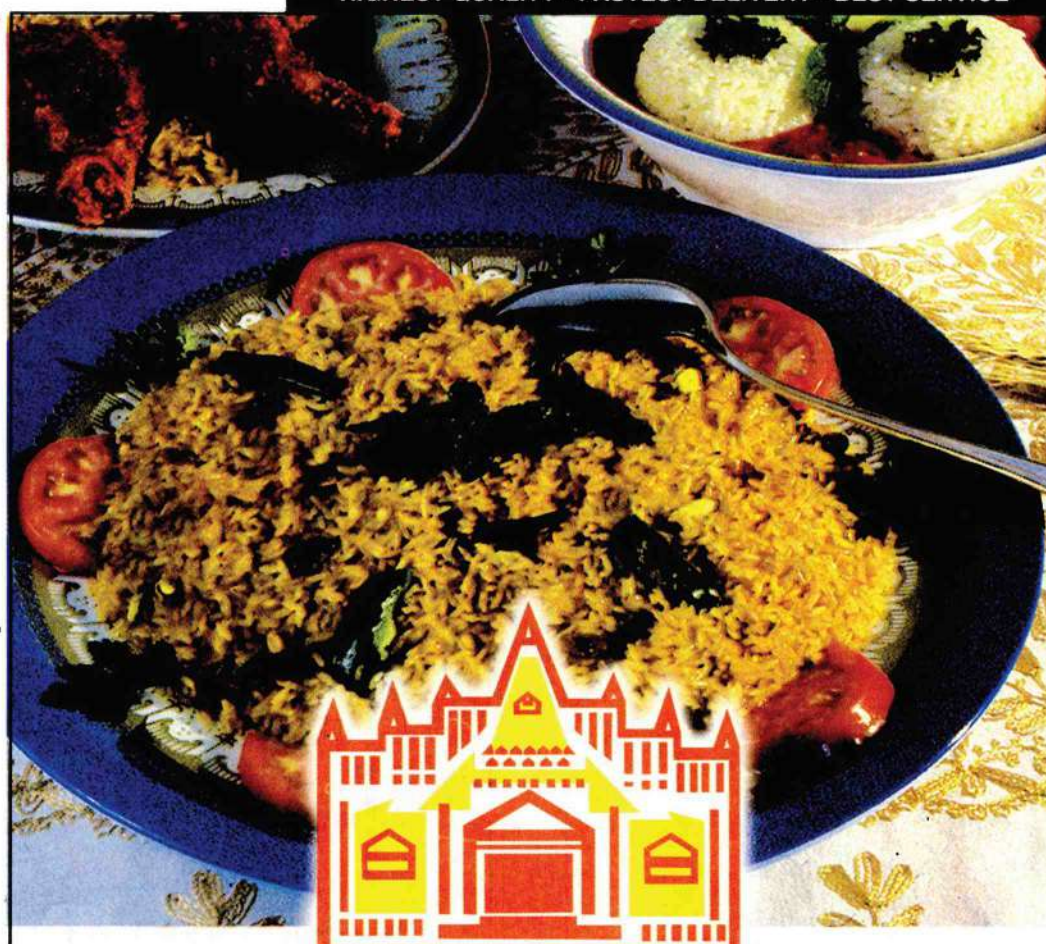
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OUR VIEWPOINT

Deadlines, Efficiency, and the Value of Time

One of the key characteristics of working in the media is the concept of deadlines. Everything has a deadline. Everybody is under some kind of time pressure. While this pressure may not be good for one's health, it is a wonderful contributor for efficiency.

Actually deadlines are frequent in many societies, notably the advanced ones. It is a direct reflection of the importance of time within the value system of the community. Thus, everything has a deadline. This is a key reason why things get done, and hence the high level of efficiency.

Here in Yemen, there is hardly any deadline. Getting anything done is a real problem as work lingers on and on, and not many people seem to mind. In fact, the very concept of deadline is virtually non-existent. To prove the point, let me just point out that there is no Arabic word for deadline. So, if you want to state a deadline in Arabic, you have to use a sentence; i.e., say 'the last day for completing this work/project/etc. is' or in Arabic 'akher mow'id li-injaz hadhal 'amal/mashroo'/ilakh huwa'.

I am asking our linguists to come up with a word for deadline. I am also asking our educators to instill the concept of deadline in the value system of our society. This is so crucial in a world in which time is increasingly precious.

The value of time should be one of the key aspects in our way of thinking. If a society is oblivious to time, it is definitely primitive, or at least backward, even if it has modern airports, and lots of machines. I believe that our political, economic, cultural and social leaders have a duty to insist on a better understanding of and interaction with time. This is a vital factor in our ability to join the 21st century.

Let us take examples.

Do we as Yemenis show up on time for appointments? Do we respond promptly to letters and other messages? Do our bureaucrats show up for work on time? Do they stay for the whole work time? Do they perform their duties, such as paperwork, without undue delay? Do our students show up for school on time? Do they undertake their studying on a regular basis with an eye to time? Do our officials make their decisions in good time?

The answer to most of those questions is "No!".

The concept of deadline and the value of time are two crucial differences that separate us Yemenis from the rest of the world. And we are on the wrong side of the equation. It is in our interest to start working to join the rest of the world, by emphasizing those values in our society.

The local media, which is quite conscious of both values, could play a major role in stressing them to the general public. Our senior officials can also play as role-models.

This is not a political matter. It is more like a socio-cultural matter. Could our society interact with it in an objective way with adequate commitment? It could be our ticket to a better future.

The Publisher
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Sanaa, Republic of Yemen

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

Managing Editor: Dr. Salah Haddash

Aden Bureau Chief: Mr. Ridhwan Al-Saqqaf,
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Senior EU Official to Visit Yemen

Mr. Manuel Marin, the vice-president of the Commission of the European Community is scheduled to visit Yemen next March. The highest ranking EU official to visit Yemen, Mr. Marin is going to discuss cooperation between Yemen and the EU, especially in the light of the Cooperation Agreement between the two parties, which was originally concluded on September 8th, 1997.

Recognizing the excellent relations and links of friendship between the European Community and the Republic of Yemen, the EU provides Yemen with an average annual financial assistance of ECU 35 million (US \$ 40 million).

Investment in Yemen Promoted

An official delegation will visit Geneva on February 4th in order to promote foreign investments in Yemen in general and the Aden Free Zone in particular. It will be headed by the Minister of Industry, Dr. Yahya Al-Mutawakkil; and will include the president of the General Investment Authority, Dr. Anwar Shamsheer and several prominent Yemeni businessmen.

The program of the visit will include the submission and discussion of research papers on the Aden Free Zone, tourism and banking in Yemen as well as the showing of documentary films about Yemen.

Members of the delegation will meet with officials of the Swiss government and Chamber of Commerce to help find new markets for Swiss products in Yemen.

Cultural Activities in Hodeida

Organized by the National Youth Cultural Center and the cultural committee at the Hilal Club in Hodeida, activities of the Youth Creativity Program were concluded on Thursday, January 22nd. At the cost of YR 400,000, the program included the recitation of Qura'anic verses and he Prophet's (P) sayings as well as various other cultural activities such as open poetry and short story competitions.

The activities were sponsored by the Hayil Saeed Anam Group of Companies, the Salahudeen Factory, the Yemeni Islamic Bank, and Mr. Mohammed Al-Dobai.

Also in Hodeida, the Hilal and Ahli clubs organized, in cooperation with UNPF, a special campaign to raise awareness among young men and women and the public in general of population and family planning issues. The campaign lasted for

two days (11-12 January) and consisted of several lectures on family issues from an Islamic point of view.

Yemen Included in Overseas Investment Insurance Cover

Mrs. Margaret Beckett, the President of the British Board of Trade, has announced that the Export Credit Guarantee Department's (ECGD) Overseas Investment Insurance scheme has been extended to encourage British companies to invest in Yemen as well as a number of other countries. This is part of the strategy announced last September by Gordon Brown, the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, at the Conference of the Commonwealth Finance Ministers (the Mauritius Mandate) to promote sustainable development in these countries.

"A key feature of this investment initiative is that the British Government will work in partnership with investors and investment insurers, both public and private, domestic and international," said Mrs. Beckett.

Eid Holiday Starts Today

The Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reform has announced that the Eid Al-Fitr holiday for public and mixed-sector employees is to start on Monday, January 26. The duration of the holiday which is scheduled to last for six days takes into account the Friday which lies within it. The ministry's decision is in accordance with Law No. 42 of 1997 concerning specifying public holidays.

Minister of Health, Dr. Abdullah Abdulwali Nasher A Statement



When I received my portfolio, the Ministry of Public Health was in a very bad administrative state in its main office, in its branches in the governorates, and in its hospitals. There is a lack in the first-aid programs, especially in the field of mother and baby care. The rate of infant mortality is 83 out of every 10,000, and the maximum number of mothers who die during labor is 10 out of every 10,000.

Malnutrition is very common among children. Recently, the average of the six fatal disease-vaccinations for children has increased from 1.85% (in the '80s) to 20-30% (in the '90s).

In addition, there are shortages in medical services in public and private hospitals, which exist all over the country without any control or legal monitoring to ensure good quality services. These are the main problems we met. After long discussions, we suggest the following solutions:

The administrative system should be improved and the medical staff re-trained, starting with the ministry and its branches in the governorates and ending in the private and public hospitals. For this purpose, we invited several teams of experts in medical

administration. We invited professors from Britain, America and from the World Health Organization to offer medical services either in first-aid care in the hospitals or in administration in general.

We formed the new draft for the Ministry of Health which will be presented to the council of ministers to be signed and implemented. Through this draft, modernizing the health program will come into existence by improving the administration and periodically re-evaluate the performances of senior health officials. In other words, we are going to advertise about the senior positions. People will apply according to the qualities, qualifications, experience, etc.. we demand in the advertisement. A special committee will choose the suitable people.

At the same time, we found that there are no rules to manage the medical services. We brought experts in this field in addition to our local experts and we ended up introducing four major laws. The first law is the law of the public and private medical establishments. It is applied to control hospitals, senior health officials, diagnosis centers and all that concerns medical care. We drafted a law for the Yemeni medical council which aims to protect patients and guide doctors. According to this law, every working doctor in Yemen, either Yemeni or not, will be registered in this council after looking at his or her certificates. We also drafted a law for professional conduct and another for pharmaceutical products. These laws are ready to be presented to the council of ministers and then to the parliament to be assessed by them.

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A Plea for Help

Mrs. Sharifa Abdu Anam is the 26-year-old mother of five little girls. Her husband works among the expatriate community of Sanaa. She appears healthy and happy, but it has recently been discovered that she is suffering from a rheumatic heart disease. Her heart is severely enlarged and she needs immediate surgery to save her life. At the request of Dr. Scott Kennedy of the American Embassy, a surgeon in Amman, Jordan, Dr. Yousef Goussous, has agreed to do the aortic valve replacement for minimal cost of US \$6,000. Members of the American Embassy, the American Women's Group, the Yemen Times and other individuals have so far raised US \$3,000. If anyone would like to make a donation to give this mother a second chance, please call Dr. Scott Kennedy at 238 843 / 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9.

Dr. Abdo Al-Makaleh:

"There is no coordination between the meteorological office and the media to help avert major disasters."

Dr. Abdo Ahmed Al-Makaleh is the Assistant Deputy Chairman for Meteorology at the Civil Aviation and Meteorological Authority (CAMA) and the Permanent Representative of Yemen at the World Meteorological Organization. He is also a solar energy engineering specialist.

Al-Makaleh, 44, has a B.Sc. in science from Baghdad University, a High Diploma in weather forecast from Britain, and an M.Sc. and a Ph.D. in civil engineering from the US. He has been working in the CAMA since 1979.

Dr. Salah Haddash, the Yemen Times managing editor talked to Dr. Al-Makaleh about various aspects of the very important domain of meteorology in Yemen. Excerpts:

Q: Could you briefly tell us about the establishment of meteorological centers in Yemen?

A: In the southern part of the country, meteorological centers were first established in 1935 during the British presence in Aden. During the reign of the Imam, on the other hand, there were two meteorological centers - in Taiz and Sanaa - which were primarily used for military purposes. In 1974, the meteorological department was established with stations in Sanaa, Taiz and Mareb, which have expanded to 17 stations now spread over all the governorates except Mahweet. Up to 1978, there were 65 foreign and 53 Yemeni meteorological experts. The situation has changed now - 100% of the cadre is Yemeni. We still invite a foreign expert or two for a couple of months for consultation. These centers measure all weather elements - temperature, atmospheric pressure, humidity, wind speed, solar energy, evaporation, rain fall, etc. The Sanaa station works for 24 hours a day; while, the Taiz and Hodeida stations for 18 hours a day, and others for 12 hours only.

Q: Do you have any sort of a meteorological institute for training your staff?

A: The Civil Aviation and Meteorological Institute is a mid-level academic establishment, graduating about 20 students every year. The study duration is nine months, and successful graduates go on to work in the various meteorological stations. Opportunities for higher studies are available for qualified candidates abroad. There are no meteorological studies in Yemeni universities for two reasons - there are not enough qualified uni-

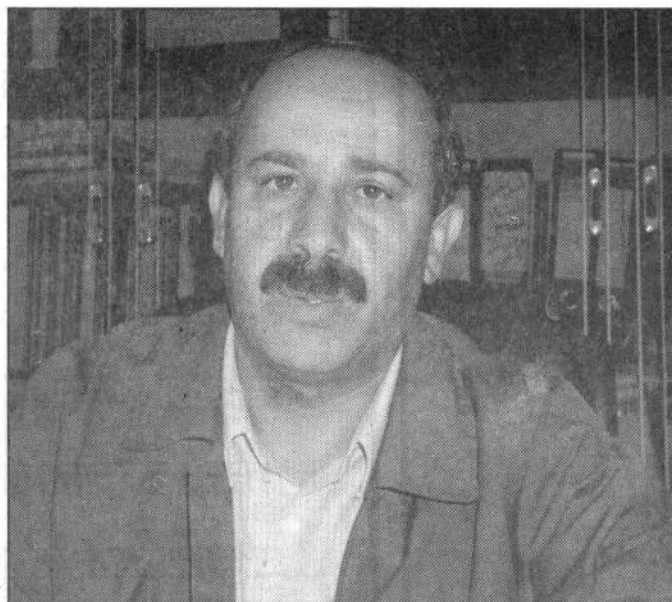
versity teachers in this field, and job opportunities are limited. So having a big number of meteorology graduates every year is just not possible to deal with. In the future, however, it is inevitable that higher meteorological studies will be introduced into Yemeni universities.

Q: How many people currently work in meteorology in Yemen?

A: There are presently more than 250 Yemeni meteorology staff, 14 of whom are women. We are trying to open more opportunities for women, but the main obstacle is that many of our meteorological stations are situated in remote areas with 24-hour work shifts where very few Yemeni women are willing to work.

Q: What major weather phenomenon or disaster have you successfully forecast?

A: Most of Yemen has a temperate climate all year round, except perhaps for the coastal areas where it is very hot in the summer and rather warm in winter. So we do not usually have weather extremes like snow storms or hurricanes like they do in Europe and North America. As far as agriculture is concerned, a long-term - several years - meteorological monitoring is required so as to help develop a national economic policy. The negative aspect is that Yemen has been the scene of many floods and torrential rains, which were successfully anticipated by our office at least 24 hours before many of them occurred. When informed about them, the media, unfortunately, did not give these matters their due importance. In fact they did not know how to deal with them, and several major phenomenon took place without the media giving prior warnings or notice to



the general public so take the necessary precautions.

Q: Do you monitor air pollution at all?

A: We have not been very successful in this field, I am sorry to say. Up until very recently, Yemeni towns and cities were pollutant free. With the increase in the number of cars and industrial plants in Yemen, our atmosphere is becoming increasingly polluted. All artificially produced gases that are released into the atmosphere are considered pollutants.

Air-pollution measurements taken in 1987 at two different locations in Sanaa have revealed that air pollution rises by 400% between 8 AM and 10 AM. The reasons are quite obvious. Car exhaust fumes and suspended dust particles stirred up by the cars themselves are to blame. Nowadays these suspended particles come from open cesspools, hospital waste, chemical waste, etc. which are carried by the wind to residential areas.

In our current measurements of air pollution, we take an average reading of the overall number of molecules suspended in the air. This does not include specifying the type or source of these pollutants, i.e., it indicates the existence of pollution but not its kind. Our main responsibility lies in monitoring air pollution, for which we are planning to establish special stations to monitor the levels of carbon monoxide and dioxide, ammonia gas, and other gas pollutants, for example. However, much finance and technical expertise are required for this job.

Yemen has a potentially bright industrial and tourism future, provided that air and other types of pollution are eliminated or controlled as much as possible. There are no laws in Yemen to control air pollution or any sort of pollution, for that matter. The only relevant law in this matter is the Environment Protection Law which is still 'ink on paper.'

Q: Is your office consulted when a tall building is to be built so as ascertain the possible effects of various weather elements?

A: We receive several requests for such consultations every year. Buildings in general and large ones in particular are affected by the various weather and climatic changes - heat, wind, humidity, atmospheric pressure, etc. The atmospheric pressure, for instance, varies between the top and bottom of a relatively tall

building. Building materials are also affected by heat, rain water, humidity, sunlight, etc. So all these factors have to be taken into consideration when erecting high-rise buildings.

Q: What regions in Yemen have the most extreme climatic changes?

A: Any open area that is surrounded by a large water surface such as the Island of Socotra is usually exposed to extreme climatic variations. There is also the general cycle of wind which sweeps this island.

Q: Do you employ any satellite data in your work?

A: We have been using satellite data since 1982. Every three hours, we receive three types of satellite pictures of the globe: visible pictures, water vapor, and infra red. They give us an overall picture of the earth's atmosphere. The visible pictures are of the cloud formations, expanses, types, and altitudes. Possible rainfall is indicated by the water vapor type of pictures; while the infra red ones show the wind movements and temperature variations.

Q: What difficulties do you face in your work?

A: The main problem is the lack of coordination among the various organs that have their own meteorological centers such as the Ministry of Agriculture, the Water Resources Authority, etc. There must be a unified national meteorological network. The information we get serves all activities in Yemen. The problem is that several new projects have their own special meteorological stations which are abandoned when the project is over, so the information these stations obtain cannot be used for long-term forecasts.

Q: What is the role of your office in aviation?

A: We have National Meteorological Centers at both the Sanaa and Aden airports to do all types of meteorological activities for the purpose of assisting internal and external aviation movements. We produce special pictures for weather forecasts in the region lying along aviation routes.

Q: What about navigation? How do you assist with that?

A: Unfortunately, we do not have enough financial resources to implement the plan we had since 1990 to establish marine meteorological stations in Mokha and Hodeida on the Red Sea and Aden and Mukalla on the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. It is the same reason hindering the implementation of air-pollution control in Yemen.

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Resorting to 'Jewish McCarthyism'

By: Dr. James Zogby

In a thorough-worded editorial entitled "The New McCarthyism," The New York Times' Anthony Lewis decried the decision of Washington's Smithsonian Institute to bend to pressure from right-wing Jewish groups and change their planned lecture series on Israel's 50-year anniversary.

The Smithsonian's program was to have been called "Israel at 50: Yesterday's Dreams, Today's Realities" and was to have been cosponsored by the New Israel Fund (NIF), which had initiated the idea for the lecture series. The NIF is a liberal Jewish group that promotes democracy within Israel, supports several projects that serve Israel's Palestinian Arab community and refuse to engage in any activity in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

What ired the far right was the fact that the NIF-Smithsonian program was to have attempted, from a "post-Zionist" perspective, to present a more or less balanced view of Israel's current reality. The program was to feature speakers critical of Israeli policy, such as journalist Thomas Freedman of The New York Times; Israeli professor Ehud Sprinzak, who has been critical of Israel's right-wing; and Azmi Bishara, an Arab member of Israel's Knesset. The program was to have provided discussions of the impact of the occupation of Arab land on Israeli society, Israel's treatment of its Arab minority and the growing gulf between the orthodox Jews and other elements of Israeli society. The response from pro-Likud Jewish groups was predictable. They condemned the Smithsonian for presenting a "one-sided negative view" of Israel. They enlisted right-wing newspapers like the Washington Times and the New York Post to help make their case. Furthermore, they received support from right-wing members of Congress like Republican Mike Forbes of New York who wrote to other Smithsonian members, threatening hearings on the matter. Since the Smithsonian relies on congressional funding, this amounted to a significant threat.

In the end, the Smithsonian bowed to the pressure campaign, withdrew their co-sponsorship with their NIF and decided to redesign the entire program. It was the NIF that first used the term "Jewish McCarthyism" to describe the pressure campaign

against their program. It was an appropriate term. McCarthyism, of course, refers to the infamous campaign begun by the Republican Senator Joseph McCarthy who terrorized Washington in the 1950s. In his overzealous pursuit of communists, the senator launched a wave of intimidation that caused thousands of innocent people to be blacklisted and persecuted.

This same tactic of smearing one's opponents and seeking to isolate and intimidate those who hold differing points of view has long been a tool used by some pro-Israel groups. They have used it to repress debate within the Jewish community, and they have used it with varying degrees of success against Arab-Americans as well.

In 1985, following the murder of Arab-American activist Alex Odeh, I wrote to the U. S. Civil Rights Commission complaining of this tactic used by some U. S. Jewish groups against Arab-Americans.

"... These acts of violence and threats of violence against Arab-American organizations are but part of a larger picture of discrimination, harassment and intimidation. We can document numerous instances of active political discrimination against Arab-Americans, 'blacklisting' of Arab-American political activist and spokespersons, and efforts to 'bait' or taint Arab-American leaders and organizations as 'terrorists' or 'terrorist supporters'."

"All of these actions and practices create a climate in which Arab-Americans become fearful of speaking freely and participating in legitimate political activity. Further, these practices serve to embolden the political opponents of Arab-Americans to the point where, as we have seen, some have escalated their opposition by including acts of violence against Arab-Americans and their organizations."

I described this effort as a political agenda that had as its focus, "nothing less than the total silencing of the Arab-American community, its organizations and its leaders."

Negative campaigns of this sort continued unabated through the early 1990s. Following the September 13, 1993 signing on the White House lawn, these attacks subsided and for a while, only fringe groups from the far right continued to smear Arab-American organizations and their leaders.

Now it appears the anti-Arab campaign may be starting over

again.

In a recent syndicated column, the former Executive Director of AIPAC (the pro-Israel lobby) Neal Sher wrote the article "Why Zogby's actions don't match his rhetoric."

While the article pretends to be a criticism of my views (selectively excerpted from this weekly column), Sher's real target is the White House which he condemns for having included me as a participant in a recent conference on Hate Crimes. Sher's point is crystal clear—the White House should not invite Arab-American leaders like me who criticize Israeli policy.

This is the old tactic of attempting to smear and isolate Arab-Americans, thereby denying us full rights as citizens.

Sher's article was followed by another longer piece entitled "Israel's Arab Detractors — back Again," written by AIPAC's Director of Policy Analysis Michael Lewis.

Lewis began his article, 'James Zogby, president of the Arab American Institute (AAI), and over the years, one of Israel's foremost detractors in the United States....'

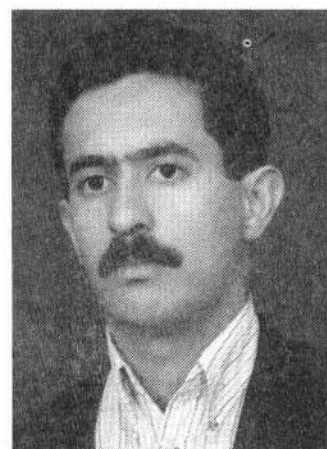
Included in the nine-page piece is the author's highly biased description of 15 Arab-American and Middle East-related organizations, to which Lewis refuses to grant any legitimacy. They are, for him, merely anti-Israel vehicles. They should not be recognized or accepted, he argues, until they cease their criticism of the Jewish states policies.

The old game is back. It is McCarthyism to be sure, and its targets are both Arab-American institutions and some Jewish organizations that criticize Israeli policy.

The good news is that this effort, though burdensome, will not succeed. The Sher article, for example, was criticized in writing by several Jewish leaders and a prominent State Department official. The debate over Israeli policy is too crucial and too vigorous to shut down because of threats and intimidation. Moreover, the divisions in the Jewish community are too deeply rooted to be silenced. What is also true is that Arab-Americans have succeeded in establishing their presence in U. S. politics, and while still vulnerable to attack, will not be isolated and silenced as they were in the past.

Reprinted from:
The Jordan Times,
Wednesday, January 21, 1998

Public Works Project and The Local Usage of Sources



The PWP budget still has allocation enough to finance another group of 100 projects, all of which were carefully studied and await tender announcement.

These numbers indicate that the PWP has achieved 135% of its targets. In other words, it will employ 120 additional projects. This great success is due to the competition generated among contractors leading them to receive bids of 50% of the equivalent value of the governmental ones. Success is also a direct result of avoiding the bureaucratic routine and commission that usually accompany such projects. This success is also accredited to the World Bank. PWP forms the strongest point of cooperation between Yemen and the World Bank. The projects of the PWP are visible to people all over the country. In each district, there exists one or two projects. It is worth saying that the PWP is one of the main factors that enabled the government to gain confidence in the donations con-

ference in the Hague and Paris Club. It can, in the long term, enable the government to gain the people's confidence and support. Many people started to compare PWP to the Investment Program of the General State Budget. It is certainly a very important dimension towards development. Many experts consider that within 6 years of PWP's consistent works, the infrastructure of Yemen will be fulfilled. It is clear that it will enable the government to drop many names from its Investment Programs' long lists.

Apart from all these facts, PWP is led by a group of hard working, honest and dedicated young engineers, who don't believe in propaganda. They work silently and contact the press only for the tenders.

To conclude, one should say a big 'Thank You' to this small number of engineers, who are working endlessly all over the country. They should be honored by the people and the government.

Ali Abdullah Al-Ghail,
Sana'a University
(former member of parliament)

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محمد أحمد عبد العزيز العريقي
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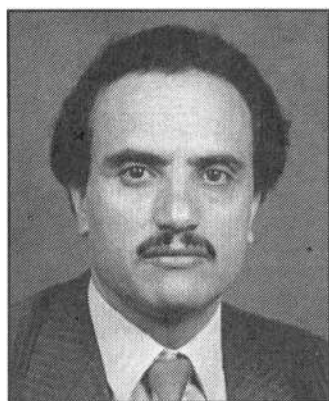
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This is an **OPINION** page.

Every week, a different intellectual writes a **FOCUS** on a pertinent issue!

Yemen Fights Terrorism



By: Ismail Al-Ghabiri*

not really of violent kind. In Yemen, kidnapping of foreigners occurs from time to time. But, despite the widespread possession and carrying of arms in our country, incidents in which a foreigner gets hurt are very rare indeed. The tribesmen, who carry out the kidnapping treat their hostages as their 'guests'. The reason is that the foreigners are not the target themselves, but merely a way to get the attention of the government.

Goals:

The tribes' aims are often to make particular demands such as asking for the implementation of local projects, or to meet old grievances. The tribesmen understand that the government is keen to maintain the safety of the tourists, as well as its international image. That is why they use the tourists as a way to pressure the government to grant them privileges for which they are not normally eligible.

Although no tourists have been hurt and many of them feel excited about being part of a hair-raising adventure and being at the center of international publicity, this phenomenon remains harmful to Yemen's tourism industry. With freedom of the press and the democratic system's general liberties prevailing in the country, these incidents are often

over-publicized. Many similar incidents occur in other parts of the world, particularly in neighboring countries, with little or no publicity.

There is another dimension to this terrorism. In a couple of cases, bombs were planted in busy residential areas in Aden. Although the casualty in lives was minimal, the events created many complications.

The government claims that the problem is politically-driven. It says that Yemeni opposition residing outside the country and financed and trained by unfriendly neighbors are behind both kinds of terrorism. It alleges that the neighbors and opposition politicians are out to discredit the system and to de-stabilize the country. The objective is to eventually replace the people in authority.

Counteraction:

The government has taken several measures to address the issues, as follows:

- 1) To eliminate kidnapping, especially that of tourists, security elements are added to the tourist caravans. This cumbersome solution did not work. In part because it limited the freedom of tourists, and in part because of the financial costs involved.
- 2) Tougher measures were also taken against kidnapping

tribesmen. Such measures include besieging a tribe which has repeatedly kidnapped tourists, compiling information on their key actors, etc.

These measures have helped to lessen these incidents.

3) With respect to the explosions, a lot of people have been held for interrogation. The security people say they have broken a ring of local and foreign collaborators whose goal was to disrupt the peace and safety of the nation.

4) The fact that the explosions were all in the city of Aden, which is destined to become the Free Zone area of the country, adds an economic twist to the whole affair. Some officials believe that these efforts have exactly the same objectives as the blocking of the oil exploration along the Yemeni-Saudi border. The presumption here is that potential income to the Yemeni government is being cut off.

Two terrorist groups are being put on trial for these explosions in two different courts. These trials are open to the public and the media. Tighter security measures have been adopted resulting in a more secure environment.

Long-term Solutions:

The real solution for these problems, however, lie in two dimensions:

- A) BETTER MANAGEMENT OF THE NATION.
- Of course, the small counteractions will help, but they will not solve the problems. In my

opinion, the best thing that the authorities can do is to manage the system better, to engage in a clean-up of the system. What does this mean?

It basically means that transparency and accountability should be the rule.

Everybody is aware of the economic hardships that have affected the lives of most Yemenis. This happens at a time when a small minority of Yemenis uses its political influence and power base for self-enrichment.

I do not think any person would ask me for examples, for these are plenty. We have many examples of politicians who rob the state just because they are part of the power structure. We have many examples of military commanders, security officers, tribal sheikhs, senior bureaucrats, community elders, and even religious leaders abusing their powers. All this happens because the crooks act with near-complete impunity.

If the authorities want to strengthen political legitimacy

and enhance safety and security, they should present a system which the general public can respect and defend. The one we now have can neither be respected nor defended. What I am saying is that for the regime to succeed in facing its opponents who try to de-stabilize it, it has to have the moral upper hand.

B) COMING TO TERMS WITH SAUDI ARABIA: The second dimension to the

solution lies in reaching agreement with Saudi Arabia. It is clear that Saudi Arabia has a lot of influence inside Yemen. It has over the years bought a number of leading politicians, tribal leaders, and even military officers. Even if that were not true, for the sake of good neighborly relations, Yemen needs to resolve the border issue.

As a matter of fact, let me state that President Ali Abdullah Saleh has tried hard to reach out to Saudi Arabia. So, it doesn't help if the Saudis are not willing to walk part of the distance, even halfway. If that is the case, the President has a duty to bring the whole matter into the open. It is logical that both Yemen and Saudi Arabia will gain from resolving the border difference. They just have to work harder at it.

Yemen has embarked on a major political, social and economic transformations. It needs internal stability to achieve success. Successfully fighting terrorism and violence is a pre-requisite.



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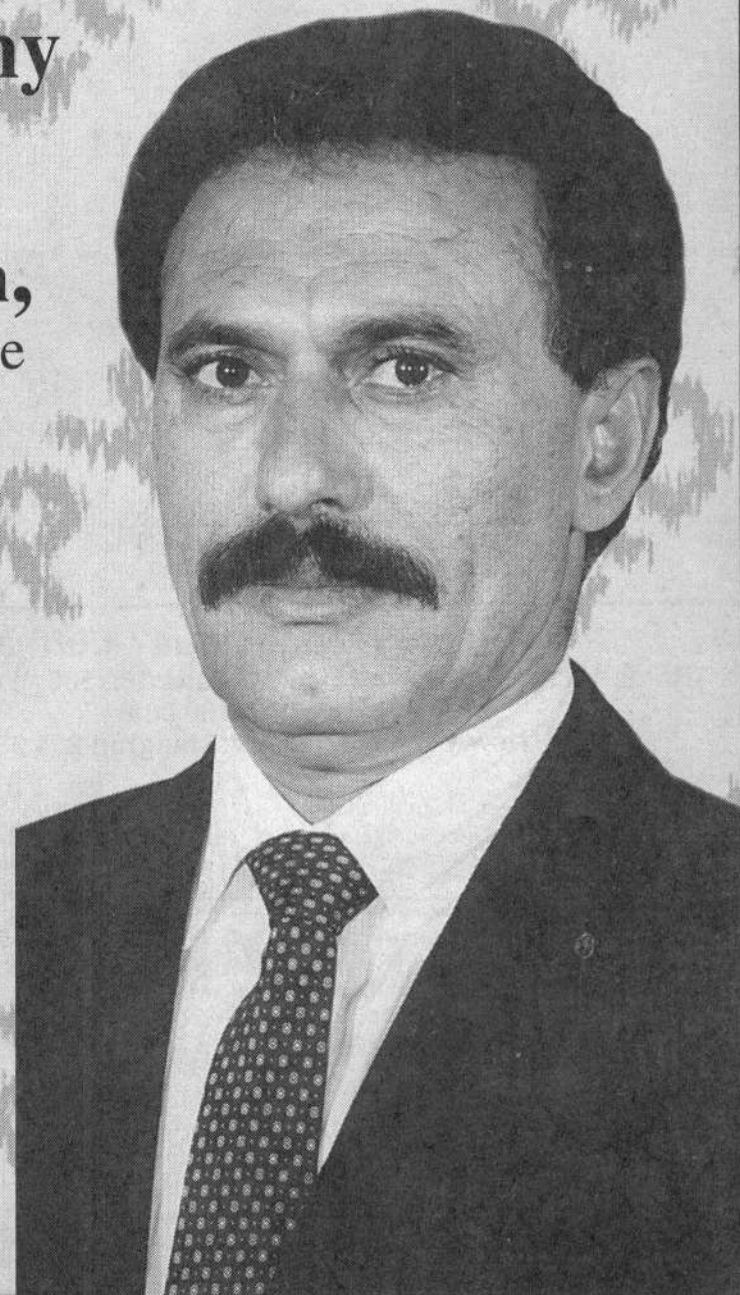
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بمناسبة حلول عيد الفطر المبارك.

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DAMAGING YEMEN'S RED SEA FISH

Prepared By P. A. Jones,
M.Y. Connda Vennessa
Al-Saleef, Yemen

My work earlier this year with our vessel M.Y. Connda Vennessa and the United Nations/World Bank-sponsored project for the Protection of Marine Eco-Systems was carried out by the Yemeni Ministry of Fish Wealth and the Global Environment Fund (GEF). We were involved in surveys of many of the northern islands in the Southern Farasan bank (e.g. Uqban, Tiqfash, Fasht, etc.) and the Zubair Group of islands. Two Australian marine biologists and four Yemeni counterparts were heavily involved.

In addition to this, I was involved with the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Egypt with establishing an Envi-

Yemen with diving trips. This gives me plenty of opportunities to dive on the reefs, witness the problems relating to over-fishing and talk with the locals, especially fishermen.

The following report intends to focus attention to the potential long-term negative impact of recent developments on the diversity of marine life in the Yemeni Red Sea.

1.1 Egyptian Fishing Boats

We have noticed that many (40-60) Egyptian 'Suez-type' fishing boats are operating in these areas. The majority come from Suez and operate with a license from the Yemeni government.

They fish with trawling nets, some of which are as large as two or three kilometers and are often left for more than 24 hours in the sea. The small mesh size (less than 1 cm) traps all marine life including dolphins, turtles and juvenile fish. This is a very destructive method and is extremely wasteful as over 50% is inedible and are invariably thrown back dead into the sea.

On several occasions, we witnessed large areas of open sea covered with dead fish. On closer inspection, we found that they had been thrown from these fishing vessels. This can only suggest that these fishermen are catching large quantities of fish to fill their stores on board, once full they then put the nets back out to try and catch more fish. If they find that the new catch of fish was better or more valuable than the last, they would then throw away what they had already in their stores.

My understanding is that these fishing boats pay a relatively small amount for the annual license with little or no control over the amount or variety of fish they catch. Discussions with local Yemeni fishermen from Al-Saleef suggest that they are also catching shrimps.

If these fishermen are allowed to continue in such a way, many areas in the next few years will be left with very little fish and will cause irreparable damage to this sensitive and valuable eco-system. The Egyptian Red Sea offers thousands of miles of fishing and raises the question as to why they are coming all the way to Yemen. This is because this method of fishing has been occurring in Egypt uncontrolled for many years and fish stocks have been severely damaged.

1.2 Shark Fishing

Fishing of sharks for their fins is now becoming a worldwide problem and a source of concern to many governments. In many cases this practice has been banned and sharks have been declared protected species. Large quantities of shark are being removed from Yemeni waters and exported to the

Far East, fishermen are being paid high premiums for the fins which are removed from the sharks (up to US \$80 per kg for some species of shark.)

Thousands of sharks are being removed from the areas around the northern Yemeni Red Sea on a monthly basis. The majority of the sharks are thrown back into the sea with only their fins removed, with the rest of the meat just wasted. The beaches of Uqban island for example are littered with dead sharks and rays which look and smell terrible and this is a great shame.

The most popular method used to catching sharks are large nets which are set at night and hauled in at first daylight with the sharks already dead in the nets. These nets not only trap the sharks, but also catch other species such as rays, mantas and even dolphins.

In a matter of two to five years, the shark population in Yemen will be severely affected, and, in some places, wiped out altogether. This will inevitably have a detrimental affect on the marine eco-system as a whole, and disrupt its very delicate balanced.

1.3 Aquarium Fish Collection

Several speed boats are operating from Al-Saleef with Filipino divers and are removing coral reef fish for the aquarium trade, probably in Europe. The divers net selected reef fish then bag them in oxygen and water to be sent on to

wholesalers. In Europe, for example, coral reef fish can fetch up to US \$500 each!

The main problem is that certain reef fish are targeted such as butterfly fish, angel fish and turkey fish. The fishermen will visit a reef continuously until all the required species have been removed, effectively eliminating that species of fish from the reef with very little chance of re-establishing the population. With each boat removing 100-150 fish per day, a complete area can be wiped out in just one day.

In most cases the destroyed fish are the prettier and more colorful species. Areas planned for tourism development will be greatly affected by the absence of the main attraction - colorful fish. The process also causes irreparable damage to the natural reef areas and an imbalance in the delicate eco-system.

1.4 Commercial Prawn Trawling

In the last two months, Al-Saleef port has seen an influx of commercial prawn trawlers. More than fifteen vessels are now in the Saleef area waiting for permission or already operating. Some are from Saudi Arabia and have very professional freezing plants on board, which grade and package the prawns ready to be shipped out of Yemen. About 1,000-1,500 kilos of prawn are fished per day, compared to the local fishermen who trawl, with the Sambuk, 100-200 kilos over two to three days. The other vessels are, I believe Lebanese owned, were previously operating from Aden.

This intensive style of trawling is not sustainable and will rapidly lead to the destruction of shrimp and fish stocks in these waters. This is especially so because the large nets used have a large by-catch and will throw away many other dead marine species into the sea. This in turn will lead to socio-economic problems for the indigenous people of the Tihama who have relied on fishing for their income for thousands of years. People will be forced to leave these areas in search of work in the cities and swell the already present problem of beggars on the streets.

I understand Yemen receives 20-40% of the revenue of the catch but this is often hard to control and regulate, if not impossible. So Yemen can expect short-term minimal financial gain but long-term irreparable damage to the delicate and priceless natural resource that should be protected and preserved.

Recommendations

1. Projects, Funding, Donor Agencies:

Projects should be immediately initiated to study and review the impact of such types of fishing on the marine environment and controls and/or restrictions should be implemented. Funding could be allocated by the relevant ministries or from outside donor agencies such as the United Nations, World Bank, USAID, ... etc.

2. Egyptian Fishing Vessels:

The operations of Egyptian fishing vessels should be more closely regulated if not stopped altogether. The revenue generated from the license is by no means comparable to the damage they are causing to Yemeni fish stocks. As all the fish are taken back to Egypt, the benefits to Yemen are not only minimal, but in fact severely negative.

3. Protected Areas:

Many of the offshore islands such as the Zubayr Group and those in the Southern Farasan Bank should be declared protected areas with the introduction of management plans, conservation measures and legislation. Arguments in favor of marine conservation policies in these areas are unassailable.

A project conducted in the early eighties by the International Union for Conservation of Nature



ronmental NGO and new Marine Protected Areas. We dealt with issues such as over-fishing, recreational use of coral reef areas and islands (diving, snorkeling, etc.) introducing laws and regulations, training and licensing local boat captains, and in training and educating local people in conservation measures, etc.

Beyond that, we have been working since October, with our vessel in the northern Red Sea area of

stocks have been severely damaged.

produced a survey of the entire Red Sea with a view to identifying areas where marine parks should be established. Areas recommended for special protection in the Yemeni Red Sea are:

- Saleef - South-west side of Isa Peninsula for coral reefs.
- Zuqar Islands - for coral reefs and also the gazelle population (which are reported to have been eliminated by the recently appointed military).

4) Shark & Aquarium Fishing:

Both of these are relatively new fishing practices and should be banned. They are extremely difficult to regulate and control with quota seasons and cause irreparable damage to the marine eco-system as well as any future tourism projects.

5) Enhancing Local Fishing Methods:

With the introduction of the above mentioned projects (Recommendation 1), fishery experts could be employed to maximize the catch of the local fishermen compensating in a way for the loss in revenue from a ban on shark fishing for example.

In Saleef, the annual shrimp season is not controlled and in the early stages, fishermen are driven to catch large numbers of juvenile and smaller shrimp before they have had a chance to mature to the larger more valuable shrimp. Preventing the catching of shrimp until they have reached a mature size will produce larger more profitable catches in the long term.

6) Commercial Prawn Trawling:

This volume fishing method should be stopped before it gets out of control. Already in the last two months, fifteen vessels have arrived and will start to trawl at a level of which a relatively small area of shrimping grounds cannot sustain.

THE GERMAN EMBASSY

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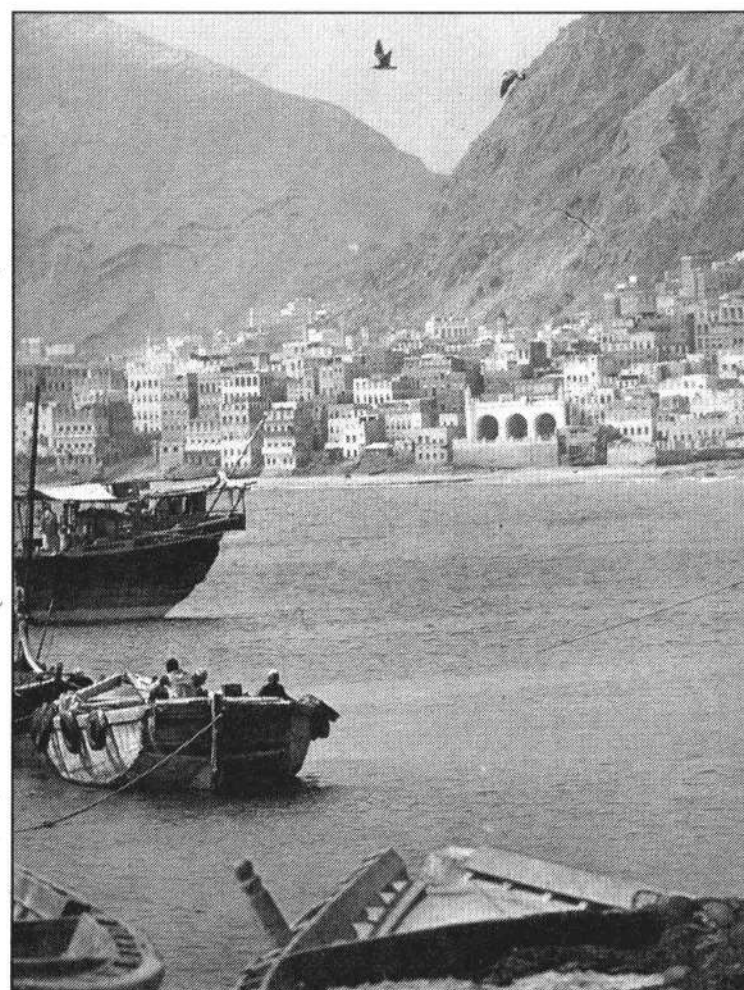
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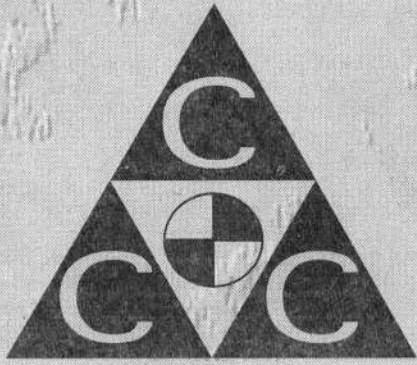
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Happy Eid

"My husband beats me!"

By Khairia Al-Shabeebi

Spousal abuse is a lot more common than you would think. It is a harsh reality for millions of women across the world. Abuse can be very destructive in many ways. It can cause physical injury to women. Worst of all, however, it lowers a woman's self-esteem, making her feel worthless. Here are some real examples from Sanaa.

1) A woman aged 39 with 5 children, tells her story:

I met my husband by chance at my job. He was very impressed by me. He is from Taiz and I am from Sana'a. We have been married for 21 years and we have 5 children. He is in contracting. He never hit me until 2 years ago, when business starting going down, and he started to chew qat heavily. Since then, his psychological condition has changed for

the worse. He has become nervous. At first, it never affected the way he treated me. Then suddenly, he began to get upset at any trifling thing and swears at me. This is very hard for the children and me.

In his second year of chewing qat, he would lose his temper if I rearranged the furniture or if there was not enough food. He curses me saying "Damn you, you bastard!". I try to explain to him that this is wrong, but he does not listen to me. One day, he lost something from his pocket and accused me of losing it. When I told him that I did not know where it was, he slapped me so much that I became dazed. I swore I will not stay in his house, and he swore back at me. The children often stand by me, so he feels alone.

Our eldest son has begun to imitate his father in his acts, commands and lies. I am

enduring this so that my sons will not have to become bums.

Not too long ago, my husband got so angry that he broke the telephone on my head. I was badly bruised that a doctor was brought in to look after me. After he is finished beating and cursing me, my husband calms down and apologizes. I am very soft-hearted and, in the end, I always accept the situation. Until when, I don't know?

The bad business complicated by heavy qat chewing led to the change in his temper. He doesn't deal with people the same way that he used to. He breaks many promises that he makes.

2) A 40 year old woman tells her story:

I got married to a 25 year old man when I found myself an old maid and no one had asked for my hand. I got to know him through his sister. I used to visit them at their house and he used to give me looks of admiration. He was very handsome and I am average looking. The difference between us in age is obvious. I have worked in a bank for a long time while he was a university student. One day he asked me to meet him outside the house. And we met and he asked for my hand in marriage and I agreed with pleasure. I did not know that he wanted to live in my house. The marriage took place, in spite of the objection of his relatives. I have two brothers, aged 15 and 12 who also live with us.

I soon found that my husband was a lazy bum who was good for nothing. He only wanted to stay at home while I provided for him. He used to take my money and drink alcohol with it, without my knowing. I didn't know that he was an alcoholic, since he came



home after I was asleep. One day he came home drunk and I could smell it on him. I said to him, "You get drunk with the money that I work hard for?" And he broke a bottle on my head. I was bleeding so my brothers took me to the hospital to have my wound stitched. When we returned home, he was asleep. Of course, my brothers could not do anything to him, since they are still too young. I didn't want to ask for a divorce, to avoid the malicious gossip of people. But the problems continued.

The marriage didn't last long as he started to beat me and tear my clothes when I refuse to give him money.

Then, one day I finally went to the court and asked for a divorce. I told the judge everything and he issued a judgment of divorce.

By this, my drama ended after living one year of a miserable marital life.

3) A 29 year old woman tells her story:

I married a 33 year old man nine years ago. The problems started

after 3 years of our marriage, mostly due to household needs and expenses. He could not provide me with food and other necessary things. I sold most of my gold to survive. I was left with only one ring because of my husband's carelessness and low income.

I urged him to look for a second job, in the afternoons. He paid no attention to me. My husband works for the Ministry of Supply and didn't want to look for another job. I told him I would not take it any more.

The problems got worse and he started to insult me. One day, I responded to his insults likewise. He hit me, but I could not complain to my family because they would say that we are only having problems and it has been just 3 years of marriage.

To make things worse, I got pregnant and we had a baby, which means more needs. My husband did not want to bear any responsibility. One day we started shouting over milk for the baby. I lost my temper and cursed his father, and he cursed

my father. Then he hit me, and the neighbors intervened. The following day, I went to court to complain to the judge. The judge ordered my husband treat me fairly.

We returned home and after a short time he asked me to sell my ring. I refused, so he threw me and my baby out. I went to the court asking for a divorce, which I got.

My daughter is with me because she is still young. I think the main reason for my husband's behavior is that he could not provide us with our needs.

These stories are true examples true of what happens to Yemeni women every day. Men are often blind to the damage they do to their wives by beating them. If they would only stop to think about it, maybe they would see how wrong it is to abuse their partners.

At the same time, society should consider what options abused women could have. At this moment, the poor women have no real viable recourse.



Ramadhan & Eid Events to Help the Handicapped

Sponsored by the Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs, Al-Zahra Social and Charitable Society is organizing the First Bazaar for Productive Families and Rehabilitation Centers, which is held from the 20th to the end of Ramadhan (18th-28th January) at Dar-ul-Kutub in Sanaa. In addition to the organizing society, nine other charities are taking part in the bazaar.

On this occasion, Nayif Al-Saqqaf of Yemen Times met some of the people responsible for holding this event and filed the following interviews.

Mr. Ali Mansoor Munassar, the head of the organizing committee and president of the Al-

Zahra Social and Charitable Society:

The Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs has played a big part in organizing this bazaar. The participant societies are the Popular Society, the Social Society of Productive Families, the Abu Bakar Al-Siddeeq Society, the Society for Rehabilitating the Disabled, the Society to Rehabilitate the Deaf and Dumb, the Cooperative Handicrafts Society from Hodeida, the Hazaz Women Charitable Society, the Al-Safa Society, and Bir Al-Azab Society. The bazaar's general goals include helping needy people to augment their income, coordinating between the various charities and presenting their

social role so as to ultimately achieve a kind of social integration.

The bazaar's revenue will be distributed to the participating societies after deducting the expenses of organizing the bazaar.

Mr. Othman Al-Silwi, the president of the Handicapped Society:

Our society is having a big presence in this bazaar, which is receiving a lot of visitors because of the imminent coming of the Eid when people want to buy clothes and other goods for their children. The products on offer here are very cheaply priced so that they are within the means of many people. More turnover, of



course, also encourages the participant families and handicapped people to do more and work harder.

I really hope that similar events will be more in the future as the benefit is quite encompassing. I'd like to seize this opportunity to call on all compassionate and kindhearted people to provide the participant charities and others with donations, both monetary and material. These charities regularly assist many poor people, especially during blessed and happy occasions such as Ramadhan and Eid.

The work of these charitable societies is greatly consolidated and complemented by the Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs. Organizational and coordination

aspects are mostly conducted by the ministry.

Mr. Arafat Abdullah Abdu, the general secretary of the Handicrafts Cooperative Society in Hodeida:

This is the first bazaar to be sponsored by the Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs. Since the establishment of our society one year ago, we have been very active in helping needy families as well as indirectly aiding in preserving the Yemeni heritage by encouraging traditional handicrafts, especially weaving.

Eng. Qayid Mohammed Qayid, the president of the Abu Bakar Al-Siddeeq Society:

This is the first time our society takes part in such an event. We immediately responded to the invitation by Al-Zahra society. Our main aim is to introduce our activities to benevolent and compassionate people and encourage them to give more help.

Our other goals include training women the skills of tailoring and sewing so as to provide them with stable sources of income. The society sells the products to enable the productive families to increase their income. The society also has its own health center which provides valuable services to people who cannot afford to go to private doctors.

I call on all benevolent people to help us help other people who are in dire need of assistance.

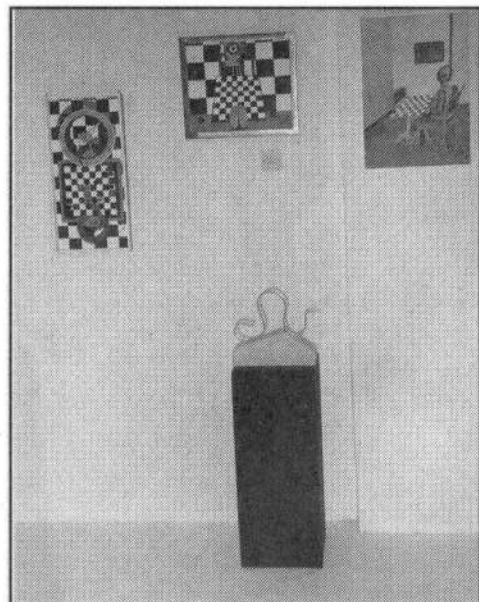


What to Look for in Fine Art

Dr. Omar Saleh, vice-general of the Halaqa spoke on the types of buyers that buy Yemeni work. He said that 70% of the buyers are

sical art forms and realistic art. I am reminded of the art forms I noticed at Italian businesses, like the Banca Nazionale di Lavoro in Italy where there are prints from the more traditional Canaletto scenes of old Venice to Kandinsky's metaphoric symbol-like paintings.

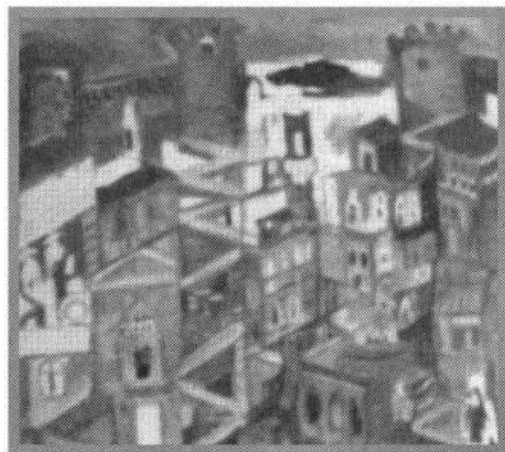
Encouragement came recently in the form of an exhibit held last month when a syndicate of plastic artists was formed. There are repetitive elements which artists use and that can somehow represent a sort of artistic signature. The horse is a common symbol representing knighthood in this country, much like the bundle of grain depicted in a



Pieces by Jacques Veerman

European but there are also people from the foreign ministries, the ministry of culture, government establishments and Yemeni businesses. Not all buyers are connoisseurs, some want just to have a memento of the country. The Ministry of

Ukrainian artist's painting would symbolize abundance. Yemeni artists like foreign ones like to experiment with the use of space. The abstract is popular in Yemen as there is the urge to examine age-old themes like mother and child scenes, or the woman in various poses, through the abstract. These are the painting subjects which sell the world over. Amin Nasher, who did Women I and II, used bits of cloth attached to full length painted boards which portrayed his women. Other artists are less abstract and more naïf like Abdullah Amin's depiction of the old city of Sanaa.



Unfinished Bab Al Yemen by M. Dansky

Culture buys some to encourage Yemeni art. As far as professionals are concerned, people like doctors buy paintings that represent modern schools like the post-modernists. Businessmen on the other hand tend to prefer clas-

The city forms are kept but the colors emanate from the fantasy-world of the artist. In "embracing" and other works by Makrami, the human outline is visible as the artist wants to employ dark lines to relate



Woman 1 by Amin Nasher



Woman 2 by Amin Nasher

movement. Dr. Veerman's works represent the inner world of the mind as it plays an eternal game of chess. The chessboard is his repeated theme. Do Yemenis have a style particularly different from that of foreign artists? Not in the least suggested Saleh. Many have been abroad to foreign schools and have been educated and influenced there. It's well known that any artist who wants to get ahead gradually has to discover a niche of his own, something that people can identify with. But most are influenced by the great European artists and that shows in their paintings.

Of the recent December exhibition at the Halaqa, 30% of the paintings sold including works from both Yemenis and foreigners. Many of the Yemeni artists have their workshops at the Bab al-Yemen. Foreign artists are also encouraged to participate at Halaqa exhibitions; 10 % goes to the center for members and 15% goes to the center for non-members.

Martin Dansky/ Yemen Times

Yemeni Children & Toys

In the United States, children go through hundreds of toys just in their first ten years. Toys do not play a major role in Yemeni children's lives. Some of the parents cannot afford them and others only buy them for special occasions. This problem especially manifests itself during Eid when almost all kids come out on the street to play with their new toys and show off their new clothes, much to the envy of their poorer peers. Here, we take a look at three different families with ranging incomes.

A poor family of 3 girls and 5 boys. The father is the only one who is employed.

Since we have 8 children, we are not able to buy them many toys. If we get a Ramadhan bonus or support from relatives we will buy toys for the children, if there is any left after buying clothes and food. Some of our wealthy relatives give us their broken toys for our children to play with. I usually only buy toys for the youngest child. I buy the cheapest toy that suits the child. The most I ever spent on a toy was YR200. We cannot afford toy prices with our income, they are too expensive. The poor

must work hard to provide their children with food and clothes.

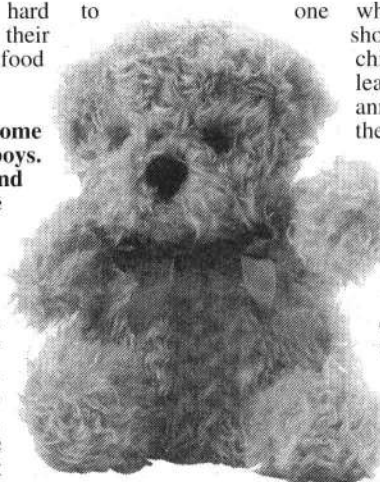
A middle-income family of 4 boys. Both mother and father are public servants.

My husband and I save money together so that we can buy them toys for Christmas and Eid. We buy them at least 2 toys each annually. I buy toys for all of them at the same time. We buy educational toys for the oldest and amusing toys to keep the youngest distracted. The most expensive toy I ever bought was YR800, and that was 14 years ago. Toy prices are not suitable to our incomes, since we must save up money to buy toys.

A rich family consisting of 4 boys and 1 girl. The father works in a Gulf country.

I buy toys for my children for different occasions such as birthdays, Christmas, graduations Eid and if they pass exams or if the child wants

one while we are shopping. Our children get at least 5 toys annually. If it is the birthday of one of the children, I buy toys for everyone. We prefer toys with educational value, but we sometimes buy pointless toys if they really want it. The most ever spent



was YR25,000 for a swing. If you go abroad, you will find new and interesting games and toys but the prices are much higher than the prices in Yemen.

Athena Al-Absy

TENDER NOTICE - 3rd TIME

The Public Corporation for Maritime Affairs (PCMA) wishes to purchase a Pollution Control Boat of the following approximate specifications and in accordance to the following conditions:

Length: 18 meters
Breadth: 5 meters
Draft: 1.5 meters
Speed: 18 knots
Hull: GRP

1. Tender documents and specifications can be purchased from our Head Office, South of Hadda Rd. and 60 meter Rd. Junction for a sum of US\$ 500 non-refundable.
2. Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Bond in favor of PCMA, of value not less than 2% of total price in a confirmed cheque or anon-negotiable bank guarantee valid for at least 90 days from the date of opening of Bids.
3. Bids should be submitted in one Original and two copies in closed sealed envelopes addressed to: **The Chairman, PCMA, P. O. Box 19395, Sanaa, Yemen**, or to be delivered by hand to our Head Office.
4. Bids will be opened in public, in the presence of Bidders or their representatives at the head Office of PCMA at 1100 hrs. On 16th February 1998. No bid will be accepted after 1000hrs. of the same date.
5. Bids must be accompanied by a brief history of the Bidder to indicate its experience and its technical and financial capability to execute the project.
6. The PCMA is not obliged to accept the lowest or any bid at all.

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Another Problem for Iraq

An outbreak of the potentially lethal Old World Screwworm livestock pest has reached epidemic proportions in Iraq and threatens to spread to neighboring Near East countries unless urgent control measures are implemented, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) warned recently.

In December alone, some 50,000 animals were newly infested by the Old World Screwworm in 12 out of 18 Iraqi governorates, compared to 31,000 in the previous 15 months. Samples have been found in an infected animal in Kuwait and the pest has also been detected in Iran, FAO said.

Old World Screwworm, while generally affecting livestock, particularly sheep and cattle, can also spread to humans and a small number of cases affecting people have been reported in Iraq. The Screwworm fly is an obligate parasite of all warm-blooded animals. Flies penetrate the flesh and feed on living tissue, causing the disease myiasis which, if not treated, leads to other infections and eventually death.

In December, FAO and the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD) jointly organized a workshop in Damascus attended by representatives of countries affected and threatened by the outbreak. The workshop recommended a two-year action plan to tackle the pest using chemical insecticides, costing some \$7.3 million. The Netherlands donated \$600,000. Discussions are under way with financial institutions to raise the necessary funding for the action plan.

The Damascus workshop underlined the urgent need for concerted efforts to control legal and illegal cross-border movements of infested animals. Risk analysis has identified Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Syria as being seriously threatened, while the danger for Bahrain, Lebanon, Qatar, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen is estimated to be lower. Between 1989 and 1993, FAO was closely involved in successful efforts to rally international action to fight an infestation of the very similar New World Screwworm in Libya which resulted in the complete eradication of the pest.

Talbott Defends Turkey's EU Bid

US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott defended Turkey's bid to become a full member of the European Union (EU) in a speech he delivered on "The New Europe" in Helsinki, Finland, last Wednesday. Addressing the members of the Paasikivi Society, Talbott said, "The end of the Cold War gives us an opportunity to heal old divisions.

We must be sure not to create new ones." Talbott said the US believes in "the broadening as well as the deepening of the EU. And hence, more specifically, our advocacy of Turkey's desire for eventual membership in the EU".

Libya regards flight ban as worst sanction: UN panel

Libya is anxious for the easing of an air embargo that is part of UN sanctions imposed in connection with the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am airliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, a UN report said.

The report, circulated among Security Council members, was drafted by a UN fact-finding mission that visited Libya last month to study the effects of the sanctions. It was led by Vladimir Petrovsky, the Russian director-general of the UN office in Geneva.

The sanctions were first imposed in 1992, and later tightened, because Libya refused to allow two of its citizens to stand on trial in Britain or the United States in connection with the mid-air bombing which killed 270 people.

According to the Libyan government, the economic situation had deteriorated during the last five years of sanctions, with a decline in the gross domestic product and foreign direct investment, while unemployment had increased from 1% in 1992 to 12% in 1996.

Israel Committed to Construction of Jabal Abu Ghneim Settlement

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has given an unequivocal commitment to continue building a new Jewish settlement in occupied Arab east Jerusalem, Jerusalem's Israeli Mayor Ehud Olmert said last week.

The move underscored Mr. Netanyahu's intention to ignore a U.S. call for a "time-out" to Jewish settlement activity in order to help revive the fragile peace process with the Palestinians.

Israel's ground breaking for the settlement last March on Jabal Abu Ghneim sparked the impasse in Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking. U.S. President Bill Clinton put forward proposals to end that 10-month deadlock in separate meetings with Mr. Netanyahu and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat in Washington this week but there was no indication of a breakthrough.

The radio said Mr. Netanyahu confirmed Mr. Olmert's statement on the Jabal Abu Ghneim settlement after meeting the mayor. Mr. Netanyahu's

office also announced the establishment of a committee to "strengthen Jerusalem economically".

Baghdad signs \$2bn worth contracts

Iraq is currently exporting about 1 million barrels a day to meet its quota under the third phase of the UN oil-for-food program, Oil Minister Amer Mohamed Rasheed said last Friday.

Iraq had also signed contracts that virtually make up the \$2 billion worth of oil it is allowed to export every six months under the programme, he added.

Twenty-three of Iraq's 29 contracts had already passed the UN sanctions committee in New York, he said.

Earlier this month, Iraq said it was exporting about 860,000 barrels a day, but it had to increase the exports when prices slumped on international markets.

Iraq is currently suffering from severe shortages of kerosene and liquefied natural gas, but the minister said recent measures would solve the problem. He said the oil ministry had to stop work at the country's major refineries for several weeks in October "for fear of a military attack by the American enemy."

Cholera, Malaria Taking Heavy Toll

Outbreaks of cholera and cerebral malaria have killed more than 150 people in Somalia since the beginning of the year, a Somali radio station reported. In parts of western Somalia, 115 people have died from cerebral malaria so far this month, said the radio, monitored in Nairobi.

The radio quoted a spokesman for the faction controlling the area as saying that all parts of the western Hiran region were affected.

He added no relief agencies had come to the rescue of the victims. He appealed for urgent medical assistance to cope with the malaria outbreak.

Cholera has also broken out in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania where prolonged heavy rains have caused extensive flooding.

World's Eyes Turn to Algeria

An upsurge of violence linked to the Muslim holy month of Ramadan in Algeria showed no signs of let up with 103 people killed in the latest massacre of civilians in the North African country.

The new killings, announced by the authorities on 12 January, took the death toll in massacres blamed

on Muslim rebels to more than 1,100 since Ramadan began on 30 December.

The carnage has pushed Algeria into the international spotlight and led to a flurry of diplomatic contacts to seek ways to end the slaughter.

More than 65,000 people have died since the conflict began, but there has been a consistent upsurge in attacks on civilians during Ramadan.

Egypt's Rivals Offer Natural Gas to Israel

Israel's National Infrastructure Ministry said on mid-January it had received initial proposals from Russia's Gazprom and suppliers in four other countries to sell its natural gas.

The offer from Gazprom, which was made together with Trans Canada Pipelines Inc, is to supply Israel with gas by pipe through Turkey, the ministry said. Egypt would also supply its gas by pipeline.

Israel plans to begin importing natural gas in large quantities starting in 2001, with the aim of increasing imports to 12.2 billion cubic meters annually over the following 15 years.

Officials have said that Egypt would be the most logical supplier, since it is next door to Israel and can export the gas by undersea pipeline easily and cheaply.

Falling Oil Prices to Restrain Iran GDP Growth

Falling oil prices are likely to hurt Iran's economy, holding gross domestic product (GDP) growth to about 3.5% in 1997-98, a leading economist said. "Given the outlook for weaker oil prices, the growth could slip again next year," said Gill James, Standard Chartered Group senior economist for the Middle East and South Asia. Iran's GDP grew 4.5 per cent in 1996-97.

Import growth may also slide. "Weaker oil prices are expected to translate into a much smaller current account surplus of \$1 billion in the current fiscal year." But the country's economic imbalances are likely to worsen and measures to stabilize the economy will be wasted unless a clear political consensus emerges on crucial issues, the bank report said. According to official data, oil and gas exports grew 28% to a ten-year high of \$19.3 billion. Non-oil exports continued to under-perform, reflecting the negative impact of an over-valued exchange rate and import restrictions.

Orbit		Orbit		Orbit		Orbit Weekly Programs		Orbit		Orbit	
<div> SUPER MOVIES </div>											
<div> 26 January 1998 1300 The Witch's Daughter 1700 Black Beauty 2100 K2- The Ultimate High </div>											
<div> 27 January 1998 1300 Maid To Order 1700 The Princess Stallion 1900 Little Shop Of Horrors </div>											
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AHMED QASSEM: The Man Who Presented Yemeni Music to the Arab World

Ahmed Bin Ahmed Qassem is an outstanding Yemeni singer and musician. He was born on March 11th, 1938 in an old neighborhood in Aden.

Ahmed Qassem was brought up in Crater's famous neighborhoods like "Al-Qadhi," "Hussain" and "Al-Quta'e" quarters. His being brought up in Crater was the main

Mohammed Abdulwahab and Riyad Al-Sonbsati. At that time, he recorded for Sawt Al-Arab radio station some of his songs which he composed before arriving in Cairo.

In Cairo, he met the Yemeni poet Koor Saeed who was studying there for whom Ahmed recorded the song "Dakhalt Gannat

Center in Aden until 1963. Between 1970-73, he studied art and music science in France. Then, he went to Hollywood, Moscow and London to gain more knowledge about music.

Ahmed Qassem has his own contributions to Yemeni art and music. In 1956, he, with the help of Mr. Yahya Makki, opened a class for teaching music in Abyan. During the 1960s, he established the Ahmed Qassem Modernizing Music Group, the first of its kind in Yemen. Several Yemeni talents played with that group, and are now famous singers. Through that institution, Ahmed Qassem was able to represent the best of Yemeni folk songs in a new and never-heard-before form.

Being a highly patriotic man, his great love for Yemen was obvious in his rousing and expressive patriotic songs such "Biladi" (My country) and "Min Kulle Qalbi Ahebbic" (I love you with all my heart). Though these works made him famous all over the Arab world, he himself acknowledged that his two songs Ya'aibah (A shame) and Sodfa (By Chance) were his passport to the Arab fame.

Ahmed Qassem was the kind of a person who intensively went through all his works. He talked a lot about a note book, always there in his briefcase, which he hoped to be published during his lifetime. "My life is not my own, it belongs to my Yemeni audience," he used to say.

Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh wrote in his weekly essay in Al-Thawra newspaper (Issue No.10373, April 6th, 1993): "He was the most knowledgeable about music. His studying in Cairo, Russia and France had given him the ability to acquire the latest techniques in music. Just one year ago, he came asking me to write a preface for a book which included the latest of his songs and compositions. And though I did not know much about music, I wrote him a two-page preface. He

took the preface with the book to the Minister of Information who promised him to publish it. The question now is where is that book? Why is it not published?" The book, "Music Rudiments and Theories," is now with Qassem's sons. From the preface of that book we quote these lines: "In these bad circumstances, Ahmed Qassem wrote his book benefiting from his wide experience and inspired by his love for music and art in general. He simply presented art as a spiritual uplift from the absurdity and difficulty of life."

Qassem's death deeply shook the Yemeni artistic media and people. He died at noon on Thursday, April 1st, 1993 in a car accident on the Sanaa-Taiz road. With his death, the curtain came down on a rich era in Yemeni art. What he contributed to Yemeni art and music was great, but that which is still in his famous briefcase and among his unpublished works is much greater.

So can we expect some other unique achievements? All what we hope is that young Yemeni talents will follow in the footsteps of Ahmed Qassem.

فقيه الفن اليمني

الموسيقار أحمد بن أحمد قاسم



reason behind the speed with which he became a distinguished genius in music and singing. He did his elementary education at Bazara'a school. There he proved his early talent as a musician by becoming the maestro of the school's music group following in the footsteps of Yahya Makki, the old maestro who was actually Qassem's teacher.

From Bazara'a School, Ahmed Qassem won a scholarship to study music in Cairo in 1956 where through his genius in music, especially in composing, he became famous at the hands of Egyptian music professors. Because of that, the Egyptian radio decide to record his songs in 1956. Right up to his death, he used to record his latest songs at the Egyptian radio whenever he visited Egypt. As a tribute to Qassem, the Egyptian radio broadcast a special program about his life and works after his death. During his study at the Teacher's Music and Art Education Institute in 1956-1957, when he studied playing lute at the hands of Mr. Abdulrahman Al-Khateeb and Mr. Goma'ah Mohammed Ali, Ahmed Qassem was greatly influenced by the two great singers,

Redhak" or I entered the paradise of your happiness.

After that, Ahmed Qassem continued his study at the Music High Education Institute. In 1960-61, he was granted a certificate for best student on the occasion of the Teacher's Day. During his study there, he was able to develop many Yemeni folklore songs. Ahmed Qassem was the first Yemeni singer to be appreciated by the audience in the City Lights concerts in Egypt. In 1966, he recorded the song "Ebta-deina" or we started, the lyrics of which the poet, Mostafa Khadhr presented to him in 1963.

Ahmed Qassem was fond of cinema. More than being a musician and a singer, he wanted to act. His dream became true when he got a chance to act with some great Egyptian actors like Mahmoud Al-Meleegi, Tawfeeq Al-Deqn and Zeezi Al-Badrawi. It was the first time a film was made starring a Yemeni actor. "My Love In Cairo" was made in 1965 starring Ahmed Qassem and was produced by him and his friend Anwar Hamid.

On returning from Cairo in 1961, he taught music in public schools and at the Teachers Training



TOP 5

2 Back Street Boys [As long as you love me]

1 Coolio [C U when U get there]

3 Mariah Carey [Butterfly]

4 Michael Jackson [Superfly Sister]

5 Elton John [Candle in the wind]



MUSIC ROCKS



By Waheed Samir

Song Of The Week

The Cranberries

الخلاص

Salvation

To all those people doing lines
Don't do it, don't do it
Inject your soul with liberty it's free, it's free
To all the kids with heroine eyes, don't do it, don't do it
Because it's not not what it seems,
No not it's not not what it seems

Refrain
Salvation, Salvation, Salvation is free
Salvation, Salvation, Salvation is free

Na, na, na (x14)
Doo, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo,
doo, doo, doo, doo, doo (x2)

To all the parents with sleepless nights,
sleepless nights
Tie your kids onto their beds, clean their heads!!!
To all the kids with heroine eyes, don't do it, don't do it
Because it's not not what it seems
No, no, it's not not what it seems

Refrain (x2)
Na, na, na (x14)

الى كل الذين يتناولون المخدرات
توقفوا ، توقفوا
زودوا انفسكم بالحرية فانها مجانية، انها مجانية
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الخلاص، الخلاص، الخلاص فهو بالمجان

كلا، كلا، ثم كلا (١٤ مرة)
دوو، دوو، دوو، دوو، دوو، دوو،
دوو، دوو، دوو، دوو، دوو، دوو، (مرتين)

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الموقرين
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الى جميع الشباب ذوي عيون الهروين، توقفوا، توقفوا
لانها ليست كما تبدو
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كلا، كلا، ثم كلا (١٤ مرة)

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AL-WAHDA: Sanaa weekly, 20-1-98. (Nasserite Unionist Party)

Main Headlines:

- 1- Opposition parties study proposals to amend elections law & procedures so as to avoid shortcomings in future elections.
- 2- World Bank & IMF to oversee reform program of the Yemeni judicial system.
- 3- National Committee to Resist Normalization with Israel is to hold a mass rally in solidarity with the French thinker Garoudie.
- 4- Carlos: "I hold a Yemeni diplomatic passport, and have enough evidence to drown several Arab leaders in the sands."

Article Summary:

Embezzlements in PMEPC

By Abdulqawi Al-Udaini

Despite the recently uncovered misappropriation of YR 9,010,389 and several forged cheques at the Petroleum and Minerals Exploration and Production Corporation (PMEPC), no legal or punitive measures have been taken. The prime culprit is given an open leave of absence; while, the other responsible persons are still in their posts. The money was embezzled via the payment of rents for a building formerly occupied by the PMEPC during a seven-month period after vacating it. Renovating the building, as stipulated by the contract, was also a major source of siphoning off more money.



AL-TAJAMMU: Aden weekly, 19-1-98. (Yemeni-Unitary Congregation Party)

Main Headlines:

- 1- Mismanagement of the Ministry of Interior retirement fund has sent fears among retired employees.
- 2- Oil production in Yemen is to reach half a million barrels by end of 1998.
- 3- Three opposition figures go on hunger strike for being detained without charges for two months in an Abyan prison.

Article Summary:

Public Administration & Despotism - editorial

In his customary Ramadhan meeting with ministers, MPs, members of the Consultative Council, and other prominent figures, the President called for discarding all past conflicts and putting the nation's interests above all other considerations. The official media, however, is still waging its campaign



Yemini Press in a Week

by: Adel J. Moqbil

against all opposition parties. The state, with all its organs, is propagating a culture of subjugation among the people.

The recent criticism of the 1998 budget by the Islah bloc in parliament does not solicit this all-encompassing attack by the official media on all opposition parties. Financial and administrative reforms do not mean starving the people as the current budget is likely to lead to.



AL-SHOURAH: Sanaa weekly, 18-1-98.

(Federation of Popular Forces)

Main Headlines:

- 1- Conflict between the PGC & Islah worsens following an exchange of accusations of political & financial nature.

2- Islah leader, Al-Zindani indicated that the Abd AL-Koori Island, part of the Socotra archipelago, was occupied for a few days by an unnamed foreign force.

3- Two senior members of the League of the Sons of Yemen are banned by Yemeni authorities from going on pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

Article Summary:

Extremists Break into Schools

A group of religious extremists broke into the Arwa and Nahdha schools for girls in Ibb. They destroyed all paintings, musical instruments and other contents of the art education rooms in the two schools, including Qura'anic verses, claiming these articles to be sacrilegious. They also drew a beard on the President's photograph!



AL-THAWRI: Sanaa weekly, 22-1-98.

(Yemeni Socialist Party)

Main Headlines:

- 1- YSP welcomes the President's call to close the "dossiers of the past."
- 2- YSP secretariat discusses political & organizational aspects, especially issues concerning the recent statement issued by a YSP splinter group.

3- Security forces in Ja'ar, Abyan evicted two families & destroyed their houses without giving any reasons or prior warnings.

Article Summary:

A Chinese Man Abducted

A number of the Ba-Kazim tribesmen in Abyan have abducted a Chinese person working for a road-building company. The kidnappers did that in retaliation to a quarrel that took place between them and a number of soldiers who intercepted them and searched their luggage while they were on their way from Abyan to Lahaj.

During their rough search, the soldiers allegedly destroyed a number of beehives which the tribesmen were taking to start a bee-keeping business in Lahaj. Sources have indicated that the Chinese man is now being kept somewhere in Shabwa.



AL-HURYYA: Sanaa weekly, 18-1-98.

(Independent)

Main Headlines:

- 1- Islah leader, Sheikh Al-Zindani calls for strengthening defense of Yemeni islands.

2- Yemeni official sources deny any foreign attack on Abd AL-Koori Island in the Socotra archipelago.

3- Merchants in Hodeida complain of mismanagement by the general director of the Hodeida Chamber of Commerce.

4- Following serious breaches of security in Abyan last week, several security officials were fired.

Article Summary:

Abyan Women Harassed

A large number of women in Abyan have been complaining of harassment by soldiers manning the Alam checkpoint on the Aden-Abyan road. Women passengers are made to alight from the car, and ordered to uncover their faces! The soldiers justify their actions by claiming to be looking for illegal female Somali immigrants and other women banned from entering Aden. Heated quarrels often occur between the soldiers and the women travelers

because the former often refuse to accept ID cards as proof that the women are Yemeni.



AL-WAHDA: Sanaa weekly, 21-1-98.

(Official)

Main Headlines:

- 1- Several political figures praise the President's call for strengthening internal Yemeni solidarity.

2- Headed by the Prime Minister, a meeting of the General Investment Authority discussed the problems it faced during 1997.

3- Holland to open a cultural institute in Yemen.

Article Summary:

Medicine Smuggling

By Mohammed Al-Sayyid

Medicines are often smuggled into Yemen by sea or through unofficial desert routes. Some consignments are buried in the sand until a suitable time for distribution. Many of these medicines are usually of poor quality or have expired, thus, causing numerous health problems.

Recently, 45 pharmacies have been closed by the health authorities for stocking smuggled or expired medicines that could damage health. Many pharmacists, however, have complained that the health authority's pricing system is outdated and imposes very low prices that cannot be met when legally imported medicines are concerned. This encourages smugglers to bring in poor-quality cheap medicines.



26 SEPTEMBER: Sanaa weekly, 22-1-98.

(Yemeni Armed Forces)

News Review:

- 1- President Ali Abdullah Saleh 'phoned the Algerian president to condemn brutal terrorist attacks.

2- Vice-President inspected work at the Aden container platform - 2nd stage of dredging & platform construction to cost \$250 million.

3- Supreme Council for Economic & Petroleum Affairs ratified PAS with First Calgary oil company.

4- Holland to provide Yemen with credit facilities and to hold annual bilateral talks.

5- Supreme Elections Committee is to review elections law & suggest amendments

6- International symposium to be held in next February in Geneva to promote investment in Yemen.

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor

The Woes of a Yemeni Teenage Girl

As a Yemeni teenage girl, I feel strongly that in order for our country to progress, women must play a full part in society.

Presently, Yemen is a man's world. Men make the rules, men lead the country and blame women for their own wrong doings. If adultery is committed, the woman seduced the man. If a child kills someone, his mother hasn't raised him properly. If a girl is raped, she was asking for it anyway. Women know their rights are written down somewhere, but not enforced.

I believe that women have the right to make their own decisions and lead their own lives. I've always been told that a woman's place is in the home. There she raises her children, cooks the meals, cleans the house and in the process she'll look about 50 when she is only 30 years old. It's usually then that her husband starts to lose interest in her, but it's alright because he can always marry another younger girl.

I'm fighting for all women. Some women have been brought up to believe that education is no use to them because their lives will only be housework. These women have been brought up to think they are nothing. These women have trusted the males in their lives, and so the men aren't doubted when they claim that a woman's life is of no value to anyone but herself.

A Yemeni girl's reputation is her most prized possession. If ruined, not only is it a disgrace to her, but also an embarrassment to the whole family. So almost every male closely related to her feels the responsibility to protect her. Although this is one of the many good traits of our culture, some interpret this custom to mean that a woman is to remain at home and follow the bidding of any male relative around.

From her father to her husband she's passed down, like an object or an expensive toy. Always at the mercy of men, a woman is hidden away at home or behind a black veil.

"Women do have rights, the Quran says so!" the men declare. Islam is a religion of equality and truth. Many Muslims would agree with that. I say to those who know that Islam is unprejudiced-why aren't you following it?

Many say that since women are happy with their lives, we shouldn't teach them that they're being treated unfairly. But I strongly disagree, some women don't know any better. It's unhealthy for a woman to think it normal for her husband to beat her or for half her children to die before the age of five. It's unhealthy for a young girl to meet her husband, who is twice her age, on her wedding night, having never been exposed to men outside her immediate

family. It's also unhealthy to have a woman never fully develop her full potential by being stuck at home.

Some men are very afraid of westernization and rarely accept new ideas. They enjoy western culture for themselves, but not for their women. Is this because they're afraid that women, given a chance, will be men's equals? Aren't they able to accept a rapidly developing nation, if women are partly responsible for it? At most, 50% of the population is functioning properly. There are more women than men. How many of these men are educated and working?

If women are given the chance to learn and speak, then their voices may be heard. How many brilliant minds are silent? How many women have been denied the right to learn, and are then said to be the "ignorant sex"? But then, which is the ignorant sex?

By: A Yemeni student at the American International School who wants to remain anonymous.

Who Is Responsible?

We are losing much patience, despite the growing international recognition of your castle-like office in Sana'a. For a long time the refugees were unclear of the work you do in your office.

When I visited the office a week ago, I was amazed to find a mob of angry refugees stationed in front of the main gate. Most of them were haggard, shabby, tired, sick, depressed and confused. 'Why are they doing this to us? Who is responsible for these problems?', were the questions that I heard. Some people went as far as describing the card business as a project meant to misappropriate their rights. Scholarship students were demanding their monthly allowances. Whereas the crippled, handicapped and sick spoke of the heedlessness of the staff, who treated them as insignificant creatures.

Before I left for the appointment window, I heard stones striking violently on the iron gate of the fortress and saw the whole lot shouting and rushing towards the closed door. Then they were allowed to see you in person in the front yard. In less than twenty minutes you and your translator were unable to calm or help the mob.

Your excellency, two weeks ago you returned from your long journey in Africa and next week you are planning to spend your Christmas holidays in your Ashanti houses in Accra, or in the whiteman's comforts of Manhattan Island, New York. You are heedless of our needs and aspirations. You are disguising yourself as a friend that you aren't. We clearly see that you've underestimated us and that you've been misled by insignificant, under rep-

resented informants and third rate job-seeking collaborators. Because of this, the attempt to select a Community Club Coordinator appears to be delayed again indefinitely.

In conclusion, I would advise you be to the more realistic and respectful of the people to whom you are responsibility for.

Jamal Aden Ali
M.A. in African Area Studies
Human Rights Activist.

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ألف ميروك وعقبال الزفاف

المنهون: محمد عبدربه، عبد اللطيف علوان، عبدالله عبدالله سلام، أحمد عبدالقادر، عبدالله الوصابي

Sports In Ramadhan at Al-Ahli Club

Al-Ahli Club of Sanaa always organizes many cultural and sports activities during Ramadhan to attract young people who par-

ticipation in these activities every year before Ramadhan. They come from different areas and there are some foreigners and soldiers. There are 20 sports teams, which we divide into 5 groups. As far as supporting sports in Ramadhan is concerned, added Hussein, "The facilities offered to the club are not really that sufficient. We try

participate in these kinds of competitions. It emphasizes through these activities that the roles of clubs are athletic, educational and cultural. Yemen Times has attended competitions of different sports, such as football, volleyball, basketball, ping pong and track and field. It followed these competitions until their conclusion last Friday in the presence of the Minister of Youth and Sports and several other sports officials.

Here are some interviews with some players, organizers and cultural personalities about the importance of these activities during Ramadhan.



Hussein Tantan, the Sports Activities Committee Director at Al-Ahli Club said: These

Ramadhan competitions have been held in the club for the past 18 years to attract young people and engage them in useful activities. Many young men rush to register for

much to make competition in different sports available to all participants. For the purpose, we call on all Yemeni financiers and businessmen to support sports. Sports will help our young men to spend their leisure time in what is beneficial for them and for the society. And this, of course, will qualify them to be good members in the society. It is to assure the proverb; Good mind is in healthy body."



Motahar Taqi, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism

member of the Al Ahli club :

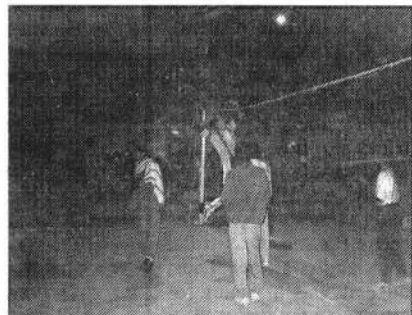
"The cultural and sport activities held by the national club in Sanaa and other governorates will play a distinct role in developing the youth sector, especially that these activities are in a

sense of an educating process. Youth sector, nowadays needs to be paid more attention from official and public organizations. The national club is one of the authorities that sets sports and cultural activities for the purpose of education. The great number of young participants of all ages assures that these activities, side by side with the cultural competitions, will help the new generation.



Mohammed Al-Mahaqiri, an official member:

"The purpose behind these activities is, in general, to reactivate all kinds of sports during Ramadhan. In addition to the various sport activities in football, basketball, volleyball, chess, tennis and body building, several cultural and scientific seminars are held. Usually, when these activities came to an end, the management of the club with the Yemeni Olympic Committee and the Ministry of Youth and Sports reward the champs and the winners. Such activities are a good chance to improve our son's intellectually and physically."



A Kid Table Tennis Champ:

Challenge of the Future

Ahmed Mohammed Al-Mahaqiri is an 11-year old athlete. He has been playing table tennis since he was 7 years old. He is one of those who came to prominence during the various competitions held at the National Club in Ramadhan. Yemen Times had a short talk with this champ;



National Club. I really hope to represent Yemen abroad and to secure good places in the future.

Q: And what kind of troubles do you often come by?

A: The difficulties are that there are very few championships and sports competitions organized by the Yemeni Table Tennis Association. You know that a player needs to gain a lot of experience. Training alone is not enough. This is added to the lack of training facilities for many sport games. Despite of that, I see that the national club offers good facilities as far as it can do.

Q: Why do you specifically play table tennis?

A: I played several sport games during the various competitions that the National Club organized. I played football and body building. But, as I found myself more inclined to table tennis, I continued training to improve myself in this game.

Q: Did you get enough attention to continue your training?

A: Yes, at first my father, who is actually a table tennis player, kept on encouraging me. Then the national club gave me good opportunities to continue my training and to participate in championships.

Q: As a young table tennis player, what are you looking forward to in the future?

A: I hope to continuing my training and then to join the national team. I was nominated for that by the



Sanaa Hosts 35 International Referees

The Yemeni Football Referees Committee has succeeded in obtaining an agreement with both the Asian and International associations concerning hosting a refresher course for referees.

These referees were nominated by their national associations in West Asian countries to get the International Referee Badge.

All in all, 35 referees will arrive in Sanaa from West India and will take 4-day basic tests in Al-Thawra Sports Stadium.

Mr. Farooq Bodho, president of the Referees Committee of the Arab and Asian Associations, will supervise the testing process.

Iran to host Asia Junior Competitions instead of Yemen

Due to the long communications and approval on hosting the competitions locally, the request of the Yemeni Football Association to host the Asian Junior Competitions has been delayed. At the same time, the Iranian Association requested to host the competition. Therefore, the Asian Football Association has decided that Iran will organize and host the games. Some countries that will be participating are Yemen, Iran, U.A.E. and Tadjikistan. The competition will take place in the middle of next year.

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Al-Qarrah Castle

This is the last part of the Ramadhan series on famous historical Yemeni castles.

Al-Qarrah castle is one of the most famous historical sites in Yemen. It withstood the

it all the more impregnable. The castle's only entrance is its main gate which was carved on the white limestones, the main material used in constructing the fortresses and the living quarters of the castle.

position, Al-Qarrah remained a safe shelter throughout history when Yemen was a country of continuous wars, especially the area of Yafi' itself. Alas, it was not all military fortification and armament. Al-

throughout the year. In addition to these cisterns, there is also a deep cave which was used to store provisions, making the castle's inhabitants able to carry on living during long sieges. The inner walls of these cisterns are covered with a water-proof, resistant cement-like material that has survived to this time, reflecting the very advanced Yemeni construction technique of that age.

Standing in the castle at 1800m above sea level, one can clearly see most of the very steep mountain chain which forms what was known as Yafi' Bani Qassed. An observer can also see the fantastic scenery of Aden which seems to be like a chain of shining pearls at night 120 miles away.

Al-Qarrah was the capital of Yafi' and later the capital of Yafi' Bani Qassed. At various times during the year, it used to become a gathering place for tribes to hold pageants and various tribal celebrations. However, at other times it was the scene for senseless tribal wars and conflicts. Thus, once it was a center for arts and another time, a horrifying prison which

witnessed only one escape incident.

Up until the 1950s, Al-Qarrah remained the capital of the Bani Yafi' sultanate, which later moved to coastal Ja'ar. It was the home of the Al-Qasbi sultans who were mentioned in The History of Yemen by Husamuldeen Abu Taleb more than 300 years ago.

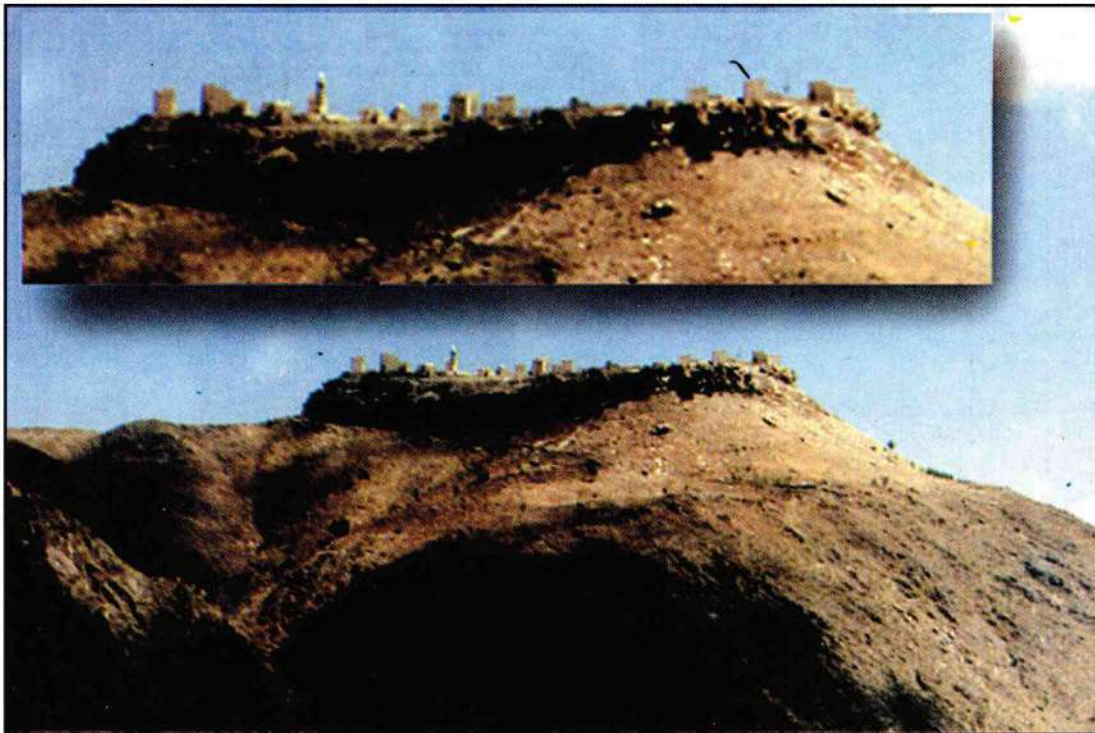
Three decades ago, all the castle's historical grandeur was wiped out. That was the time when all its historical documents and manuscripts were taken by force and burned. Nothing is left but its neglected fortifications and empty cisterns.

No specific date or era is known for Al-Qarrah's construction. It is for the most part, connected to the Sultans of Al-Yafi'. Some historians, though, date its foundation back to Al-

Sa'ad dynasty or to the to the first Ottoman Sultanate which ruled Yemen that time. But Al-Qarrah, as a natural fortress, seems to be much older than that.

There is no doubt that people liked to inhabit it from the beginning and still enjoy coming to it to this day. One who visits it will surely feel its greatness and adore its distinguished nature and unique atmosphere. A visitor will believe that this castle is not supposed to be a merely historical memory which takes people back to those early times of our history. On the contrary, it should be restored and then prepared to be a tourist attraction in the future.

Mundae Dayan
 A Yemeni writer & Journalist



passage of time - more than 1,200 years - due to its unique natural features. Its fortifications, living quarters and cisterns were all built on the top of a white limestone mass which seemed to be carefully put on the edge of the high black-stone mountain, making

It is 5 to 10 floors high on a curved slope which added to its invincibility. The castle is like a small village located upon a single rocky block on the peak of the mountain. Due to that, no army was able to break into it. As a result of its distinguished

Qarrah was mostly surrounded by fig trees that bear their delicious fruits during the spring. In the past, there was no water supply for the castle's inhabitants but from the cisterns located on the roof of the castle, which were used to store water

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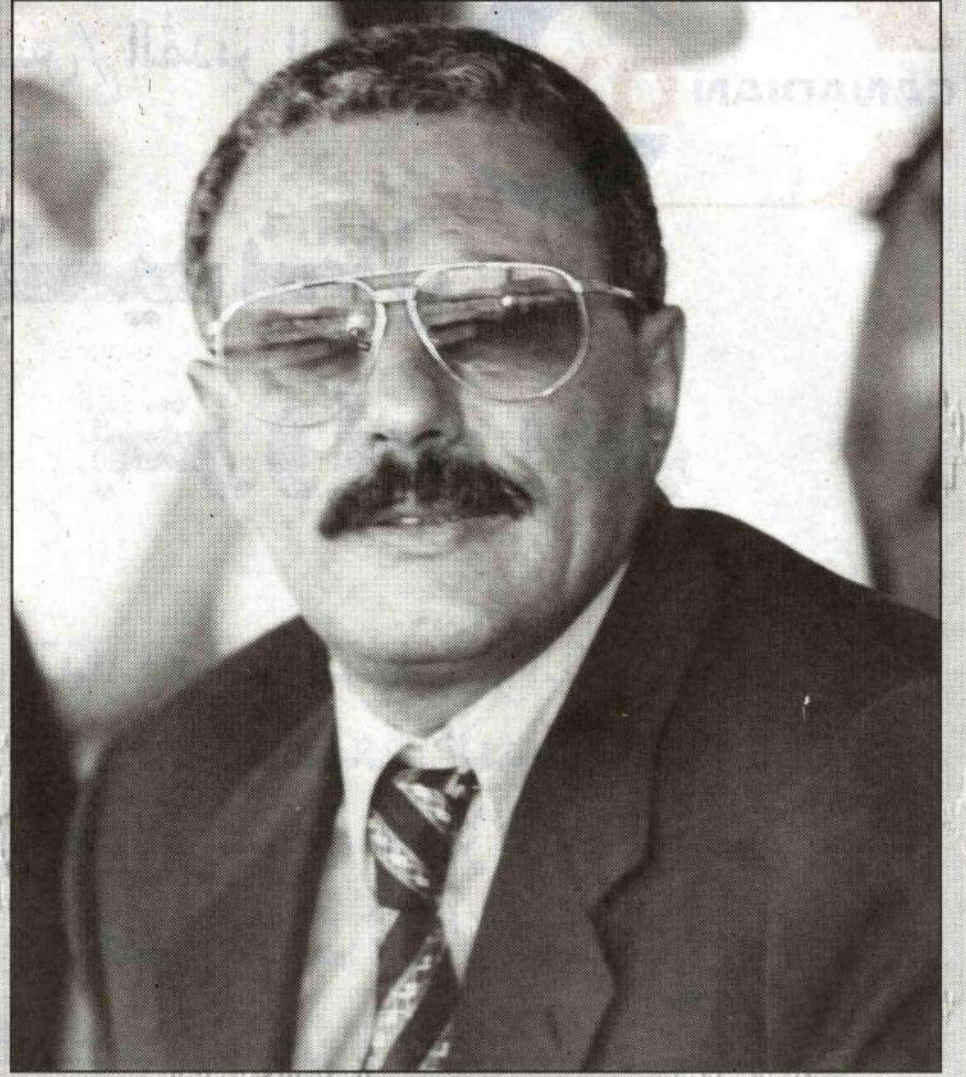

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توتال اليمن

تتقدم بأحر التهاني والتبريكات
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اليمن البار الرئيس
علي عبدالله صالح
والحكومة الرشيدة
بمناسبة مقدم عيد الفطر المبارك.
عيد سعيد،
وكل عام والجميع بخير

Happy Eid



TOTAL YEMEN

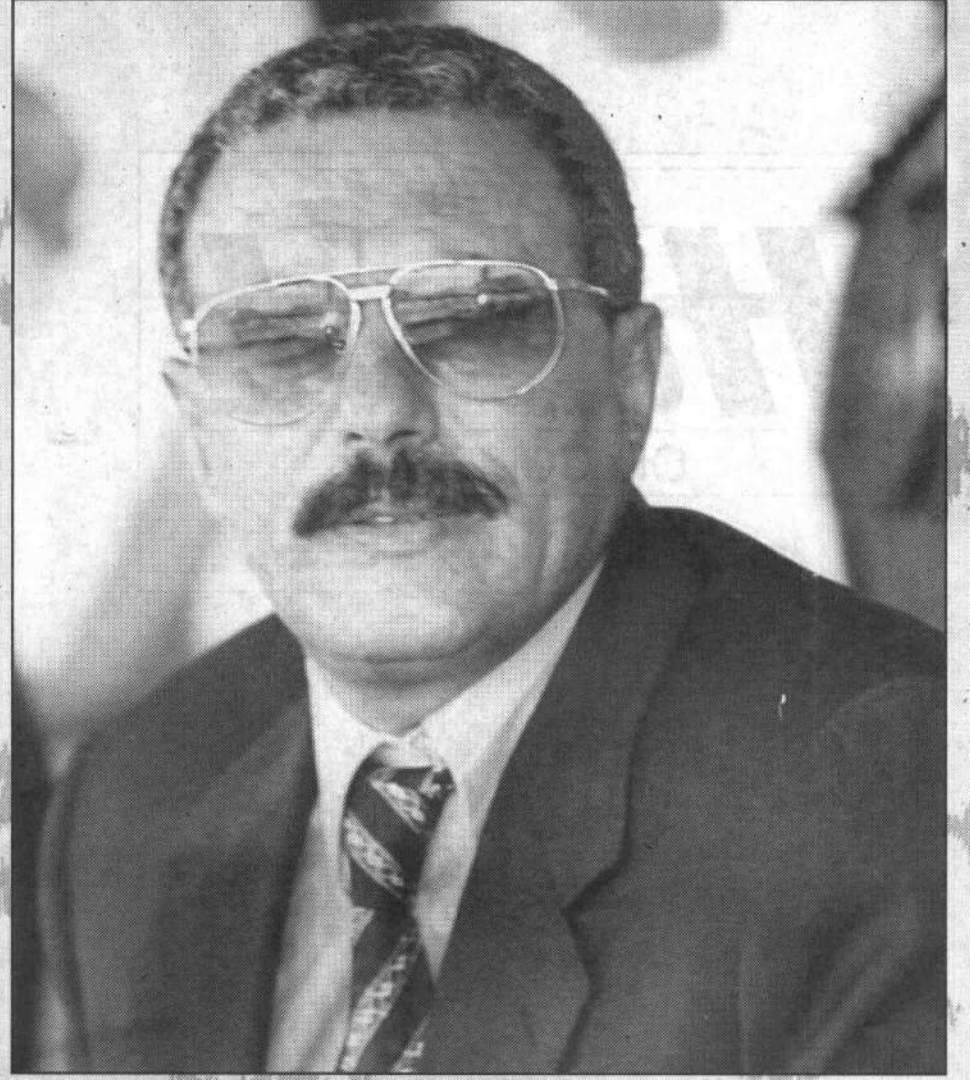
Presents
its best wishes and
felicitations to
President

Ali Abdullah Saleh,
and the Government
on these blessed
final days of Ramadhan,
and the forthcoming
Eid Al-Fitr.

Joyous Holidays for All.

مجموعة شركات هائل سعيد أنعم

تتقدم بأحر التهاني والتبريكات
إلى الشعب اليمني، والقيادة السياسية
بزعامه ابن اليمن البار الرئيس
علي عبدالله صالح
وإلى رئيس وأعضاء مجلس النواب،
وحكومة الدكتور فرج بن غانم
بمناسبة خواتم شهر رمضان المبارك
ومقدم عيد الفطر المبارك.
أعاده الله علينا وعلى اليمن
وعلى الأمتين العربية والإسلامية
بمزيد من التقدم والرخاء،
وكل عام والجميع بخير



ASGA

Hayel Saeed Anam Group of Companies

wishes

the best to the Yemeni people, to
President Ali Abdullah Saleh,
the speaker and member of parliament,
and the Government of Dr. Faraj Bin Ghanim,
on the joyous days of Eid Al-Fitr.
Many Happy Returns to All.

Happy Eid



الدكتور وليد جزراوي - الرئيس / المدير العام،
ومنتسبو شركة

كنيديان اوكسيدنتال

بتروليم يمن

تتقدم بأحر التهاني والتبريكات
إلى الشعب اليمني،
والقيادة السياسية بزعامة الرئيس
علي عبدالله صالح
والحكومة الرشيدة بمناسبة قرب حلول
عيد الفطر المبارك.
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Dr. Waleed Jazrawi - President / General Manager, and staff of

**CANADIAN OCCIDENTAL
PETROLUUM YEMEN**

forwards

its best congratulations to

President Ali Abdullah Saleh,

and the Government, and the Yemeni people
on the joys of Eid Al-Fitr.

Happy Returns to All

Happy Eid



شركة هنت اليمنية للنفط

تتقدم بأحر التهاني والتبريكات

إلى القيادة السياسية بزعامة الرئيس علي عبدالله صالح
ومجلس النواب والحكومة والمجلس الإستشاري وكافة أفراد الشعب اليمني
بمناسبة حلول عيد الفطر المبارك ، وكل عام والجميع بخير

Happy Eid

Happy Eid

Yemen Hunt Oil Company

Presents

its best wishes and felicitations to

President Ali Abdullah Saleh,

Parliament, Government, Consultative Council and the
people of Yemen on the joyous days of Eid Al-Fitr.

Many Happy Returns to All.