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YEMEN TIMES

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OUR VIEWPOINT

Elections & Independent Candidates A Personal Experience

When I decided to run for parliament, I was worried about many things. I know that as an independent, I am competing against competitors who are running under the umbrella of this or that party. By being a party nominee, my competitors have at their disposal advantages I do not have - financial resources, institutional backing, and above all, members who pledge loyalty and backing to their party's nominee.

I worried a lot then, though now I realize I should not have. Early in the game, I personally made visits to many villages, especially those in which polling stations are located. I presented myself as an independent candidate and invited "volunteers" to help me in the elections.

In less than two weeks, I was contacted by over a hundred enthusiastic young men whose zeal and vigor can never be matched by party cadres. Some of these are my relatives, others are former university students, and still others are persons frustrated with the current politicians. Soon we formed sixteen teams, which span the whole constituency. I feel these young volunteers are investing in me, or more appropriately, they have a stake in my success.

During the registration process, my campaign teams mobilized people to register and achieved a level of sympathetic registrants more than double that of the nearest party competitors.

Early in the process, it was clear that the efforts of a small group of dedicated individuals can match or even surpass those of even the large parties.

These days, my campaign teams are arranging Ramadhan (evening) meetings for me every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday with key and influential people in the main villages scattered all over the constituency. The selection is based on how many people have registered for the elections and how committed the people are. None of the local cadres of the political parties, in spite of the "incentives" have the interest in, or stamina for such hard leg-work and efficient planning.

LONG LIVE THE PRIVATE/
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The Publisher
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As Five-Party Joint Running Slate Unfolds:

SUPREME COURT RULES IN FAVOR OF GOV'T.

It has become almost certain that the Supreme Court will reverse the Electoral Committee's reading of item (b) of Article (55) of the Elections Law. As the paper went to print, the Supreme Court almost concluded deliberations and there was a clear inclination towards the government view point. A baffled Abdul-Fattah Al-Baseer, Chairman of the Legal Committee of the SEC, said he was amazed by the developments. (Read details to be released in an interview on the Yemen Times next week).

Prime Minister Al-Attas was gratified. In a statement to the Yemen Times, he said that the SEC interpretation was neither constitutional nor tenable. "We wrote a letter to the Presidential Council stating that the government is considered resigned if the SEC interpretation of the law stands," he said.

The SEC had demanded that ministers and vice ministers, and even the Prime Minister and his deputies, resign from their posts before the 27th February if they wanted to run for parliamentary elections. The idea was to avoid the use of their positions' authority to influence the elections.

Eight ministers had resigned prior to the 27th February deadline, which becomes irrelevant with the Supreme Court reversal of the SEC decision. At final count, as many as sixteen ministers, vice ministers and deputy ministers may run in the coming elections.

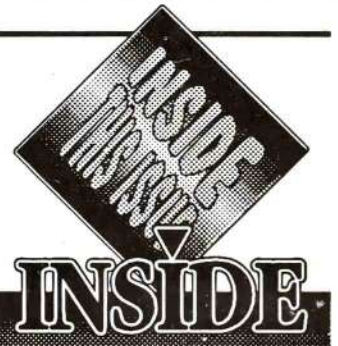
Meanwhile, negotiations between the People's General Congress and the Yemeni Socialist Party are in full swing. Although the two are unlikely to attain a full merger prior to elections, a consolidated association has emerged according to

which the PGC and YSP candidates will effectively not face each other in the elections. To further grease the bilateral arrangements, the two have invited coordination talks with the Yemeni Congregation for Reform (commonly known as the Islah), the Tanzeem Ashaabi Al-Wahdawi Annasari, and the Baath (Iraqi flank).

The other opposition parties and independents are screaming as the details of the alliances are unfolding, and some of them are even crying "foul play."

Next week, the major parties will disclose their candidates, and the constituencies that are set aside as their quotas in the new partitioning arrangements.

The coming Eid Al-Fitr holiday will be one of the most noisy ones in the modern history of the country as the clamour over the issue rises.



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YEMENI-GULF RELATIONS SEMINAR

A seminar - "Yemeni-Gulf Relations: Current Situation and Future Prospects" is scheduled for March 16th at the Sheraton Sanaa Hotel. Speaking at the seminar are prominent politicians, parliamentarians and academicians, as well as other distinguished public figures. Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, Coordinator of the one-day seminar, told the Yemen Times that its purpose is to bridge the gaps between Yemen and its neighbors, notably Kuwait, and heal the wounds that resulted from the Gulf Crisis.

RAMADHAN MEETINGS RESUMED

The traditional nightly qat chews with the country's political leadership were started last week. The first group was, of course, made up of theologians and clergy. Other groups invited to the Ramadhan qat chews include leaders of political parties, members of the government, educators, journalists, syndicates, etc.

It will be noted that the nightly qat chews during Ramadhan have been practiced for over a decade now. They are an opportunity to provide the leadership with direct feedback from the people.

A NEW ADDITION TO YEMEN TIMES

Jerome Bernard, a French volunteer, has just joined the Yemen Times to assist with the French Pages. Eventually, he is going to replace Emmanuel Giroud, who has completed his one year service in Yemen. Yemen Times uses this occasion to say, "Welcome aboard!" to Jerome.

DEMONSTRATORS BURY EFFIGY OF THE REFORM PROGRAM

A crowd of demonstrators, headed by educationists and researchers, are scheduled to march tomorrow, Thursday, March 11th, in a somber procession carrying the effigy of the government's Reform and Construction Program.

The procession starts at Tahreer Square at 1:00pm and heads towards the House of Representatives and the Prime Minister's Office. The demonstration is to express dismay at the government's reluctance to equate the educationists and researchers with their university colleagues.

"Later in the evening, another group of demonstrators will march towards the Prime Minister's Office carrying candles," Dr. Mohammed Al-Maitami, one of organizers of the demonstration. Prime Minister Al-Attas invited the demonstration organizers to a meeting today Wednesday, to head off the demonstration.

RABITAH PARTY STILL EXPOSED TO BLACKMAIL

"We have successfully repelled plans to take over the Rabitah headquarters in Sanaa," said Mr. Abdul-Rahman Al-jafri, Chairman of Rabitah Abnaa Al-Yemen Party (Sons of Yemen Party). He also mentioned that the office of *Raay* newspaper is under surveillance since Wednesday, March 3rd. "They are waiting for the right time to storm in and take it over," he said. Mr. Al-Jafri accuses the regime for all these steps which attempt to "make us kneel down in front of them."

THE TOURISTS ARE COMING!

The flow of tourists continues to rise as Europeans, trying to escape the cold weather find refuge in the warmer climate of Yemen. Tourist packages, which have placed Yemen in the regional and international deals, have brought to Yemen large bulks of tourists. The last in-flow has been the German liner s/s Archona which arrived in Aden last week carrying on board some 400 German tourists. The disembarked at Aden, and then travelled by land to Taiz, Sanaa and Hodeidah, where they embarked again. Yemen's tourists come mainly from Germany, Italy, and France.

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ترقبوا فروعنا في المكلا، عدن، تعز، إب

African Democracy Is Still in the Doldrums

Africa is on the threshold of the third anniversary of its post-Cold War move towards multi-party democracy, but the winds of change appear to have hit the doldrums.

Three years ago this month, they blew away South Africa's illegal rule in Namibia, long a sore in the international side and the subject of continual UN attention.

Eighteen months ago, they wafted Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda back to his farm after 27 years as president, proving that, given the chance, Africans were quite happy to vote legends out of office.

In both cases the change was through peaceful elections and was hailed as a sign of good things to come on a continent long plagued by the politics of violence. But a quick look at a political map shows that the rejoicing may have come too soon.

In the east, Somalia is in despair after ridding itself of a dictator and failing to replace him with a functioning government; while Ethiopians still wait for elections two years after deposing their own despot.

In the west, Nigeria's military rulers have decided civilians are still too unruly to rule, and Liberians are still killing each other in the name of democracy.

In the center, Zaire's Mobutu Sese Seko clings brutally to power after a cynical flirtation with some of the trappings of multipartism. And in the south, Nelson Mandela, South Africa's most famous son, still doesn't have a vote in his own country.

While some African leaders may be playing foul in the new game of multipartism, many ordinary voters would doubtless like to pelt Western referees with useful or useless ballot boxes. Two elections last year in particular have brought bitter disillusion in their wakes.

In Angola, the man the United States had backed as a champion of democracy, Unita leader Jonas Savimbi, went back to war when he lost September elections declared free and fair by the United Nations.

At least 10,000 people are believed to have been killed in the renewed fighting, while the US has still not recognized the winner - the formerly marxist government of President Jose Eduardo dos Santos.

In Kenya, meanwhile, Daniel Arap Moi, an old Cold War friend of the West, is back in power with full recognition after elections, which even Western observers declared were corrupt. In Algeria, the West backed a military junta, which forcefully supplanted a Muslim fundamentalist group after its win in the polls.

The apparent double standard has not gone unnoticed in countries long lectured by the US and its allies on the virtues of democracy.

But there is still hope in a number of African countries that democracy will one day live up to its promise. In this regard, the developments of 1993 will be crucial to watch.

Tough Month for UK Prime Minister John Major

March is proving to be a crunch month for John Major, who faces crises over Europe, coal mine closures, a tide of gloom, and a budget vital to move Britain out of recession.

The British Prime Minister has been deeply hurt, personally and politically, by the questioning of his leadership and the shape his country is in after 14 years of Conservative Party rule. His aides promise a new, tougher stance from the mild-mannered Major over coming weeks. They say he has lost patience with rebels in his party and the doom-mongers of the media.

"It will help enormously if we ditch this habit of national self-denigration," Major said in a recent speech. He accused those who "spread doom, gloom and depression" of making the two year recession even worse.

But beyond his attempts to talk-up the economy and to try and counter a deep-seated malaise in Britain, Major faces a succession of crises and make-or-break decisions this month:

1) Ratification of the Maastricht treaty of the European Community union is dogged by disputes in his party and rivals' opportunistic attacks. It could be killed by wrecking tactics, jeopardising his vision of Britain "at the heart of Europe."

2) His government must say how many of 31 state-owned coal mines, earmarked for closure, it can keep open. A backlash forced a U-turn last year after a decision to close them all.

3) The government's budget statement next week (on March 16th) must restore the Conservative reputation for prudent economic management, but not destroy the signs of recovery. Many members of his own party are now urging him to avoid tax hikes.

His party now holds a weak position in parliament with his majority cut to 20 by the death of a Conservative MP. He may opt for a March by-election which, if lost, would cut his majority to 19 and increase the power of the rebels.

Mr. Major has also failed to strike a good relationship with the media, which was so beholden to his predecessor, the Iron Lady, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher. In fact, the media has infuriated Major by shining the spotlight on the alleged vacuum at the heart of his government.

The March predicaments will determine, to a great extent, Mr. Major's reign as well as political career. They will also have spill-over effects on the Conservative Party's clutch on power, and the continuous attempts by Labor to replace it in control. It is in this light that Mr. Major's actions in March are so vital.

Aborigines Emerge from Persecution

Change is in the air for the Aborigines, the native people of Australia, who are of African and Indian stock. An Aborigine who in 1992 was involved in a rowdy protest after being asked to leave a Melbourne bar for being black, has just been named Australian of the Year. Mandawuy Yunupingu, the 37-year-old headmaster of a school for black children in Yirrkala, northeast Australia, gained nationwide prominence as lead singer of Aboriginal rock music.

With 1993 being declared internationally the Year of Indigenous People, Australia considered it appropriate to honor an Aborigine. Yunupingu said after receiving the award for his cultural activities: "Through the band we can make people change their ideas (about Aborigines) so that they fit in and build one nation."

It is largely through the arts that the Aborigines are becoming accepted by the whites who, incidentally, classify themselves ethnically as "Europeans" - in spite of their expressed pride of being Australian. There is much talk of the Aborigines seeking to fuse their traditional arts with the European (or white Australian) culture.

Aboriginal actors, dancers, film makers, musicians, painters, and writers are much in demand. Take Sally Morgan, a West Australian painter and writer, whose book, *My Place*, has been reprinted 21 times since it was first published in 1987; she also made a big impact as a playwright with her drama, *Sister-girl*. Arts Management Association said the blacks' cultural successes were also due to government funding, political decisions to protect some of their sacred cultural sites, and a sudden international interest in them. The association regards it as a "major revolution" for the National Gallery in the Australian capital of Canberra to collect Aboriginal paintings at long last. "Survival concerts", in which Aboriginal rock bands celebrate the survival of their race after almost two centuries of persecution, have become annual events.

Black River, an opera about the death of an Aborigine in custody, appeals to the conscience of the 17 million strong white majority. Close to 100 Aborigines have died in prison cells and police custody. Thousands are driven to crimes and alcoholism by police brutality and racism.

However, there is an increasing change of heart among the white majority and the Australian government. The government and public are now providing generous funding to help Aborigines engage in the arts and move into the mainstream of creative endeavor. Early this year, the Australian Government donated A\$250,000 towards the staging of the first Aboriginal musical, *Brun Nue Dae*, which is now touring the country.



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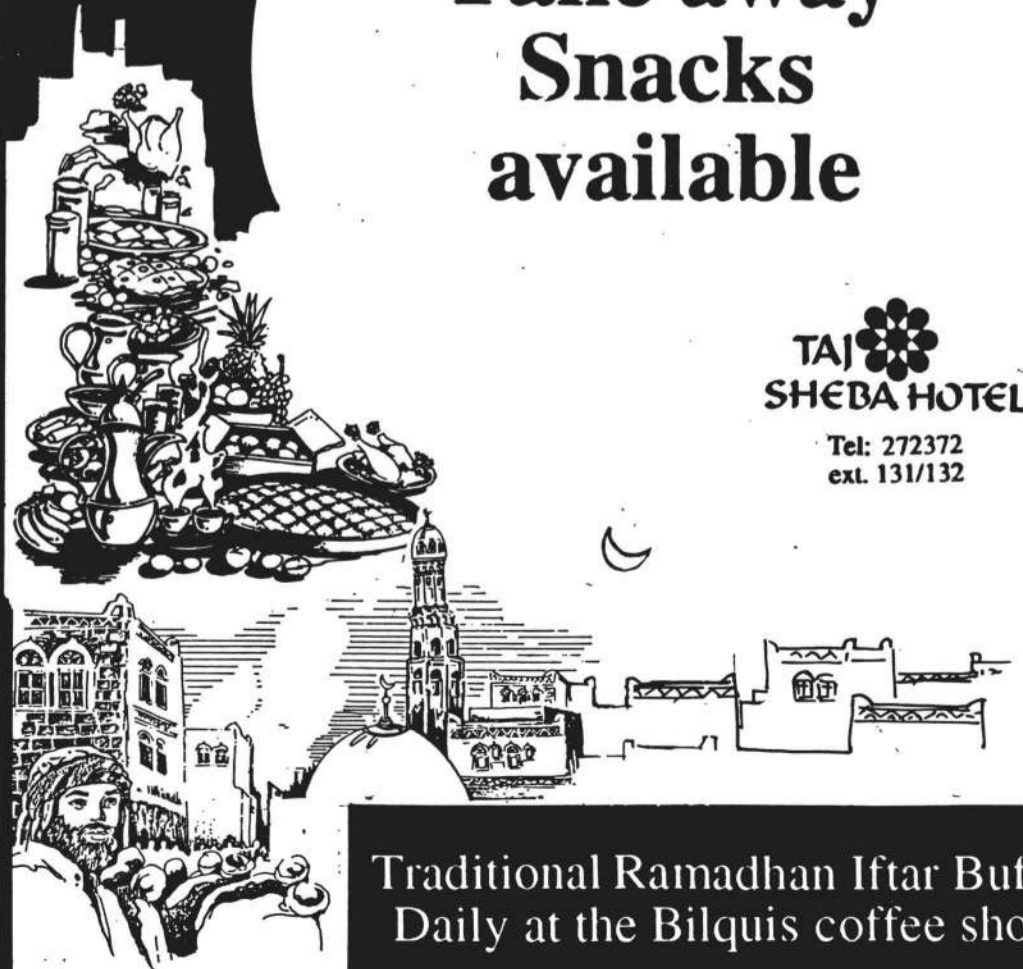
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MORALITY IN ISLAM

The message of the Prophets was to urge people to hold to refined morals. The Quran emphasises the necessity for adhering to them, since it is these morals which secure the attainment of paradisaal bliss to people.

1. The Purpose of Morals
Ethics deal with the principles of good and evil, and shows people how they should treat one another; it sheds light on the aim they should seek, and illuminates their way to what should be done.

No doubt, morality is the pillar that keeps the structure of a nation firm: That is why scholars and philosophers agree on its importance to the welfare of the individual and the community. An individual harms himself when he follows the course of evil through envy, deceit and the like - a society would decay when such qualities spread among its members.

Consequently, the first step that philosophers and legislators have highlighted - among those concerned in the promotion of human society - is to advocate refined morality, because it is the basic pillar in the structure of any healthy nation. Chateaubriand even considers morality as the foundation of every society. That is why the message of the prophets was to urge people to retain refined morals. The Quran emphasizes the necessity for adhering to them, since it is these morals, which secure the attainment of paradisaal bliss for people.

One cannot neglect, in this connection, the vicious attack waged by Islam's enemies in a manner that badly distorts the reality of things. In Monsignor Colli's book *In Search of True Religion*, for instance, the author attributes the most disgraceful stains to Islam and claims that it is void of morality.

The falseness and absurdity of this defamation becomes clear when one takes a close

and comprehensive look at the moral strength of *The Quran*; every one of its verses is a refutation of the false claim.

Before scrutinizing the moral principles contained in *The Quran*, one might read the views of Dr. Gustav Lobon in this regard; he says, "The principles of morality in the Koran, are as sublime as they are in the other religions." Dr. Lobon's testimony has great value. He only means to be a witness of truth. In fact, Lobon's view was only expressed after the man made a thorough study of *The Quran*, dealing first with the virtues that people should adopt, then the vices they should avoid.

The virtues imparted by *The Quran* are the same humanitarian virtues that philosophers and reformers have always agreed on and asked people to follow. Had men acted according to them, they would certainly have gained goodness and peace for this troubled world. Similarly the vices that *The Quran* forbids are the causes of disputes and hostilities between people.

2. Righteousness and Spiritual Promotion and Purification

Man's life is submerged in good and evil, and he is often driven to one of them by inner motives or outside factors.

Among the basic goals of religion is to protect man against the temptation of evil, by revealing its harm, warning against it, and calling its victims back to righteousness of God's promise of good rewards to the righteous in both the present world and the Hereafter.

A. Spiritual Promotion:

Spiritual promotion goes hand-in-hand with uprightness too, because involvement in evil leads individuals and whole communities into very bad consequences. That is why God promises those who amend their spirits, with His Forgiveness and Contentment.

God requests mankind to amend themselves, to ensure their gifts in the Hereafter.

B. Spiritual purification

The spiritual purification referred to in *The Quran*, also goes hand-in-hand with uprightness. Spiritual purification combines the cleanliness of one's heart with rising above disgrace so that one can attain a share of God's Contentment, as well as dignity among people. *The Quran* urges people to purify themselves, rewarding those who do so with prosperity. God explains that spiritual purification will benefit only those who embrace it; that is why one should keep one's care for this purity. Uprightness and the promotion and purification of the spirit give hope to those who are already indulged in vice, so that they might change for the better. This helps keep despair away from their hearts and make their redemption possible; when one falls a prey to despair, he turns into a helpless victim of evil.

3. Beneficence

Beneficence denotes charity and kindness, but it covers a wider range of meaning. It includes the doing of good as opposed to the doing of evil.

Good deeds include all kinds of virtuous and humanitarian actions that discipline one's character and bring him closer to the Creator. In this sense, the Commandments of *The Quran* require beneficence and induce people to practice it in their daily lives.

The Quran regards beneficence in a way that leaves a strong impact on people, especially their work ethic. It explains the qualities of philanthropy, specifies certain groups of people who deserve charity more than others, and asks people act with beneficence so that they may achieve the noble ideals for which philosophers and reformers wish.

A. The Worth of Beneficence in Islam

The Quran explains that acts of beneficence should be the natural duty of everyone, and that, as God has bestowed his blessings on man, man should likewise be beneficent to others. Similarly, *The Quran* explains that the reward of beneficence shall go only to those who are generous because philanthropists experience a sense of peace which others do not. It suffices that they are met with affection and high esteem from those to whom they are beneficent.

Evil, however, makes its people rejected and despised, and robs them of comfort and stability.

God commands people to be beneficent and puts a special emphasis on it. *The Quran* gives special worth to beneficence and links it with devotion to God, describing both as the noblest qualities of a pious person; in other words, he has grasped the most reliable route to God's Contentment. God promises those who do good with the gift peace on the Day of Resurrection.

B. Some Qualities of Philanthropists

Among the qualities of philanthropists, as stated in *The Quran*, is that they stay up most of the night praying, and as night approaches its end they reap forgiveness from God. They reserve part of their wealth to give to the poor and the deprived to help them meet their need.

Another quality of philanthropy is the effort made in the Cause of God, both in body and wealth.

Beneficence also includes adherence to the message of Mohammed regarding Forgiveness and Patience. *The Quran* teaches people to do good deeds, promising fulfilment of their wishes. This is because people of good enjoy a clear conscience. When they are stricken by rejection or ingratitude from their community, the Quranic Commandments hurry to

console them, reduce their dejection, and provide them with the good news of God's Contentment.

C. Those Who Deserve Beneficence More Than Others

The Quran specifies certain groups of people who are worthier of beneficence than others. First, come parents; *The Quran* shows how God joins worship with acts of beneficence conferred on one's parents, especially when they attain old age.

Five points are mentioned in particular, so that the son may show them the utmost kindness:

(1) He should not show contempt of what they say or do.

(2) He should not disturb them with cruel words of repulsion.

(3) He should talk nicely and respectfully to them.

(4) He should humble himself before them with a sense of mercy.

(5) Out of gratitude, he should plead to God to bestow His Mercy on them.

Similarly, *The Quran* specifies further acts of beneficence to be conferred upon other groups of people who might be relatives or neighbors of the person, or those who have lost their means of support.

The Quran combines a range of good deeds, which

spread a general well-being among all of humanity. First comes the worship of God. Then comes being good to parents and to relatives, which might lead to the progress of the nation, since a nation consists mainly of groups of families. God commands people aid orphans because they have lost their support.

Similarly God commands good deeds to neighbors, so that the residents of the same quarter may live together in peace and harmony, and that they may cooperate. Then God recommends goodwill be extended to one's companions, those who share travel, or are one's associates at school, at work, or elsewhere. Being good to one's associates establishes a firm companionship, which contributes to the general welfare. Finally, God instructs good be conferred on wayfarers, especially one who has lost his money on the way before his arrival.

This boon is not merely for the human race to lavish on itself; such kindness should also be shown to animals that you possess, or otherwise encounter.

The teachings of The Koran and the prophets were designed to make better people, not a better religion. In Islam, good morals supercede the rituals.

SUPERSTITION IN YEMEN

The Thin Line between Religion and Witchcraft

By: Dr. Abdullah Al-Thaifani, Educational Editor, Yemen Times.

"Read it all! Read it all! The Bait Al-Faqeeh astrologer has disclosed the future." So was the lad shouting at the intersection of Ali Abdul-Mughni and Zubeiri Streets, raising high above his head the new version of the prophecies of the Bait Al-Faqeeh 'astrologer'. In female gatherings, women sip coffee from small cups which are then presented to a specialist to look at their cups and tell them about their futures. In Bani Matar, a man can tell people who have lost valuables (e.g., jewellery) where they are and who took them. A woman in Al-Qaa hosts flocks of young maidens daily to tell them when their grooms are coming. A man at As-Safiyah 'helps' infertile women bear children, (don't ask me how!). In Dhamar, a man helps to strengthen the love of husbands for their wives, and 'stops' them from marrying again.

The examples are many, and it is a lucrative business. Soothsayers, fortune tellers, palm readers, astrologers, etc. are an important of Yemen's social culture.

When something goes wrong in the welfare of the individual or family, many wonder what caused it to happen. It is not enough to answer how it happened. Many people still believe in

spirits, curses, and evil magic. Even businessmen, politicians, and parliamentary candidates refer to the sorcerers for support and 'guidance' in their affairs. Bad luck and haunted houses are still serious business in the Yemeni psyche, and an important part of the social culture.

"Superstitions are fused with traditional medicine and religion," states Dr. Mohammed Al-Khayyat, lecturer at the College of Education at Sanaa University. "It is imperative that we separate those elements; this is one of the most important roles of education," he added.

Even among educated Yemenis, there is a strong belief in superstitions which affect their decisions directly. These may be in the form of jinn (spirits who have featured so prominently in the history and folk stories of Arab culture and traditions), or in the form of luck which gets a daily representation in the description of the stars in the newspapers, magazines and various booklets.

Superstitions have ruined many families, wrecked businesses, and even destroyed lives. The agony of having to succumb to the unknown and unexplainable is enormous. Our educators and school system have a responsibility to shape our society's "spiritual beliefs", and fight the helplessness that Yemenis experience in the face of their superstition.

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FUNDAMENTALISM

I am astonished about this universal campaign against the so-called fundamentalism for it is directed towards the Muslims only. If the Muslims want to adhere to their religion, the outcries come from here and there accusing us of fundamentalism.

Why aren't the religious Jews and the Christians regarded as fundamentalists? The point lies in stiving against Islam. The Muslims of Bosnia were Muslims in name only and Islam to them was just a slogan. Then, how can they become fundamentalists or extremists? And yet, they are persecuted.

The Christians, the Jews, and even the Hindus have the license to do whatever they like, destroying the mosques of the Moslems here and there and no one has said that they are fundamentalists.

Does adherence to religion mean extremism or fundamentalism?

It is really an astonishing issue and we don't know how to explain it. What do you call the behavior of the Jews and Christians? Is it not fundamentalism?

By:
Ali bin Abdullah Alwasee,
Al-Sahwa, Sanaa,
4/3/1993.

IRAQ DEMANDS OF YEMEN THE PRICE OF OIL AND SUMS TRANSFERRED BEFORE THE GULF CRISIS!

Informed sources stated that the visit of Barazan Al-Tikriti, Iraqi President Saddam Hussain's special envoy to Sana'a, focused on demanding that the Yemeni government pay the price of oil which was the cargo of two Iraqi vessels stranded at Aden harbor during the Gulf Crisis, after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August, 1990.

The same sources added that the Iraqi demand was unexpected and seen as strange by the government. The envoy also demanded payment of certain sums transferred by Baghdad to Sana'a during the same period without mentioning the sum of money.

It is known that the two Iraqi vessels which brought the oil are still at Aden port and have not paid any of the anchorage fees. The political spectators connect between the timing of the Iraqi demands and the rapprochement in Yemeni-Gulf relations, in general, and with Saudi Arabia, in particular.

Al-Ayyam, Aden,
3/3/1993

THE UNIFICATION OF THE YSP AND THE PGC

Garallah Omar, member of the Political Bureau of the YSP, declared that the issue of unification between the two parties (YSP and PGC) is a matter still under discussion. The idea is not shelved. Unification is regarded a legitimate long-term, but it can not be

executed an administrative decision.

He also stressed the need for discussing the unification or any other project within the framework of the party cadres, given that the issue is directly related to the party and should be tackled within the laws of the party. It should not violate the regulations. He concentrated on the need on the part of the YSP to enrich the project through the general congress which has the right to make the decision to unify with our partner in power (the PGC).

The 28th session of the Central Committee of the YSP, which was held in January authorized the Political Bureau to continue dialogue with the PGC and other political parties with the aim of serving the supreme interests of the homeland through the consolidation of the democratic path.

Al-Thawri, Sanaa,
4/3/1993.

SECURITY, JUSTICE, DEMOCRACY?

Democracy is our choice, and one of its stabilizing factors is justice, which is the vehicle through which we can eliminate a lot of our shortcomings.

Some of those who talk about democracy do not practise it as it is intended. One recurrent violation of it is that these people roam around with their armed bodyguards stressing the point that there is no real security in Yemen. This behavior reflects an inferiority complex. I think there is no need for bodyguards for most of these people if they truly believe in equality, justice, and democracy.

Bodyguards are also a burden on the state's budget. Democracy is a frame of mind, a behavior and a means for general participation which leads to more safety and security. However, the inequality, injustice, and corruption prevalent in our society today lead to chaos. It is not helpful to encourage the phenomenon of armed men inside the capital city and other big cities because it creates a feeling of disappointment, frustration, instability, in addition to spreading fear.

This is a plea from a citizen to avoid any illegal and undemocratic practices which might limit our choices and impede our progress in building a modern state. Let us consolidate and spread trust among ourselves and justice all over the country, thinking of the interests of the country before our private interests.

By:
Mohammad Al-Saeed
Raay, Sanaa,
2/3/1993.

THE AUTHORITY AND ITS WHIMS!

It is normal for our executive authority to run the affairs of the nation single-handedly and by violating all the laws and regulations.

It is also normal that such behavior brings criticism, particularly when there is inconsistency between the stated objectives and the actions.

We hear about creating a nation governed by law and order, about the application of the principle of reward and punishment, about putting the right person at the right position, and many other lofty goals. But the reality, is quite different. How are we to react to the new appointment of an inexperienced man replacing the previous general director of the customs office in Taiz? The previous director was an experienced and efficient official, who acquired, during his thirty-plus years of service in the various customs offices, a good reputation of honesty and decency.

We not interested in defending this or that officials, but the replacement by an experienced person by one who is not is something to be questioned. Such a case reflects whimsical decisions. It is just a point to ponder!

By:
Adeeb Al-Hattami
Al-Tagammu', Aden,
1/3/1993

FREE SPEECH

I want to clarify that violence, aggression, and criticism of others do not tackle our problems. On the contrary, they increase the enmity and not serve the national interest.

Honest competition, good ideas and respect for them and expression of thought in a democratic environment are vital for all parties to evolve by expressing their opinions through the press, conferences, and seminars.

It is the incumbent upon the authorities to accept sound opinion. The continuation of the disruptive in-fighting between the two ruling parties, the low-level of participation by the other political forces, and other factors will not serve the country at all.

Such a policy will place us in jeopardy, since there is an increase in plundering of the state's funds. Such a situation will make the rich richer and the poor poorer, which is against the tenets of Islamic Sharia.

The resolution to stabilize prices for certain essential articles, the reduction of public expenditures, and a stoppage of purchasing fancy vehicles are all regarded sound steps if they are implemented fully. The non-implantation of the resolutions will lead to negligence, indifference, and division; chaos will prevail over us.

In my opinion, the only solution for us is to proceed with the elections honestly and with complete acceptance of its outcome, with a hope of transferring the authority peacefully.

By:
Ali Mohammad Abdullah
Al-Bashiri,
Al-Balagh, Sanaa,
2/3/1993

THE RULERS AND THOSE WHO SHOWER THEM WITH PRAISE

It is well-known that our religion rejects any barriers between the people, and the rulers, confirming the principle of justice and equality and direct access between them as a base for government. What we see these days is different from these principles.

Wherever we go, we see discrimination, flattery, favoritism, tribalism, praise and other forms of negative behavior.

All these phenomena refer to failure, on all accounts. The rulers in the Third World usurp power through various, often illegitimate, methods so they surround themselves by a number of opportunists, lobbyists, and people who praise them with praise and tell them how great they are. These opportunists try in many ways to praise the rulers, turning them from ordinary men into monsters who gloat with avarice and think of themselves as miraculous saviors of their peoples.

Thus, the rulers change their moods and nature throughout this musical rhythm of flattery. Those who flatter them bring much harm to the rulers and the people. Is there a way to bring an end to this folly?

By:
Abad Al-Radamani,
Al-Tas-heeh, Sanaa,
2/3/1993.

LESSONS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL CHANGES

The major problem in the Arab World is that it still does not take the economic repercussions into account when taking any political decision. The Arab states are still run by slogans without any realization that such slogans, should have a substance that serves the citizens' interests. The Egyptian writer, Mohammad Hassanin Haikal, pointed out this shortcoming during the first three months of the Gulf Crisis.

The new US President, Clinton, focuses on tackling the economic situation, launching his long-term vision striving to make his country's economy flourish once again. Construction is for the present and future. Each generation is responsible for the completion of all the efforts started by preceding regimes.

George Bush's role came to an end, because there is no room for emotions when the future and interests of the (US) nation were at stake. The time for change had come, and the US required a new leadership to confront the economic challenges.

Economic interests today represent the basis for all political decisions.

By:
The Political Editor,
Al-Mithaq, Sanaa,
1/3/1993

THE RESIGNATIONS OF THE MINISTERS

It seems that it is our fate to live in a homeland plagued with crises after another. It seems that whenever we get out of a crisis, we find ourselves trapped in a new one which is more serious than the one before.

Since we have chosen democracy as a guiding force in our relations, some believe that we will not face any distress.

The recent demand for the resignation of the ministers and even the premier (if they chose to run in the elections) came as a violation of the law of elections which established this condition only for the "senior" bureaucrats of the state. The issue which puzzled me regarding the resignation demand is as how the affairs of the homeland will be managed in the absence of the government during the next sixty days.

The situation might be even more complicated and the sixty day vacuum may be extended to a longer duration. Many of the citizens are preparing ourselves to hear and see things we have never sensed before.

What is essential is to work as early as possible to fill this vacuum, and this is not an easy job. It is an issue of grave consequences and great concern.

By:
Abdul-Kader Mughallis,
Al-Gumhuriyyah, Taiz,
3/3/1993.

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"In the beginning, there was the word!"

How Did Life on Earth Start?

By Amjed Abdul-Hamid
Science Editor,
Yemen Times.

Questions about life's origin are very old and yet as young as each new morning. For scientists, there are no definitive answers, and there are no two people who see things quite the same way. After all, how can anyone really know what happened when Earth formed 4.6 billion years ago? Two things these scientists can agree on, however: that the first kinds of life, whatever they may have been, must have been able to reproduce themselves and they must have carried information about themselves to continue the species from one generation to the next, in the form of inheritable characteristics or genes.

In 1982, a paleobiologist, named J. William Schopf, after a decade of work in western Australia, established beyond any doubt that the oldest organisms on Earth were filament-like bacteria that lived 3.5 billion years ago, but even these creatures were quite sophisticated, since they had genes of DNA and RNA and were made of protein, lipids, and other ingredients. Something simpler must have preceded them. A few years ago, a team of scientists showed that certain kinds of RNA, which is much simpler than DNA, could

replicate itself just like DNA. The news galvanized scientists, who enthusiastically painted a picture of an ancient world inhabited by RNA genes, which went on their merry way replicating themselves until DNA and protein evolved to assist in the procedure. While this proposed RNA world was certainly closer to the origin of life, it certainly wasn't the beginning, because RNA is still a complicated piece of molecular machinery, which contains more than 30 atoms connected in an intricate way.

What were the first simple organic compounds? How did they form? These questions bedevil "origin of life" researchers. Over the years, they have come up with a host of imaginative possibilities; perhaps the first one to surface, 40 years ago, was and still is the most influential.

In 1953, a graduate student, named Stanley Miller, simulated the origination of life in his laboratory. An experiment one can read in all evolution books. He and his research director, Harold Urey, designed a glass apparatus that consisted essentially of two flasks connected within a closed circuit of tubes. Miller pumped into one of the flasks the gases thought to be present in the early atmosphere: hydrogen,

methane, ammonia, and water vapor. The other flask was partially filled with water, representing the primitive ocean. He then shot bolts of electric current through the gaseous mixture to simulate the primordial lightning storms. For a week the electricity sparked, while Miller sat back watching. Then the "ocean's" clear water began to change to pink, then deep red, then a yellow-brown. When Miller analyzed the brew, he found that it contained amino acids, the building blocks of more complex proteins like RNA.

Thus emerged the picture that has dominated origin-of-life scenarios. Some four billion years ago, lightning (or another energy source, like ultraviolet light or heat) stimulated a catalytic reaction in a hydrogen-rich atmosphere to produce organic compounds, which then rained down into the primitive oceans, lakes, rivers, or even a "warm little pond" as Charles Darwin once suggested.

Once there, these simple compounds, or monomers, combined with each another to produce more complicated organics, or polymers, which gradually grew even more complex until they coalesced into the beginning of self-replicating RNA. With that, came the RNA world and ultimately, initiated

the evolution into cells and the bacterial ancestors of life.

A very powerful and appealing picture, but even Miller isn't convinced.

"The first step, making the monomers, that's easy; but then you have to make the first replicating polymers, and that's just like making money in the stock market, all you have to do is buy low and sell high, but nobody knows how it's done." What made this scenario seem less probable is the recent discovery that the early atmosphere of the Earth had more oxygen than was thought. In an Oxygen-rich atmosphere, lightning would form more inorganic compounds, like the ones polluting the air these days, than the organic compounds necessary for RNA formation.

Another scenario, which uses most of the reactions found in the previous one, occurs in hydrothermal vents, hot springs on the sea floor. It has been found that the sea floor is cracked, and the cracking sometimes reaches one kilometer inside the Earth's crust. At these depths the temperatures reach 1000 deg. cent.; however, at the vent on the sea floor, the water temperature would drop to 25 degrees centigrade. Such a temperature gradient offers enormous possibilities for different chemical reactions to take place, where the essential organic molecules would be cooked in the hot places deep inside and the circulating seawater would take them out for a warm place to be deposited onto the minerals lining the mouth of a vent, rather than emerging and dissipating into the vast ocean where they might never encounter another

organic molecule. There, in a concentrated colony, they would be able to interact with other molecules in the endless supply of new compounds rising in the hot springs until over time the first stirrings of primitive life would emerge.

The prospect of this scenario is bolstered by the fact that the clay lining the vents could have been far more than just a convenient medium on which organic compounds could evolve. Some researchers see clay itself as the first genetic substance, or what they call crystal gene. Clay, like any crystal, grows by itself; think of crystals of frost expanding on a windowpane. Crystals in other words, self-replicate. So the mineral clay was not an inert surface upon which organic reactions happened to take place; it was living, growing, and assisting the reactions of these crystals by providing shelter, in their repetitive layers patterns, for organic molecules to settle in and to react with nearby molecules. The crystals then catalyzed the formation of new organic compounds.

In time the organics evolved into RNA which is a self-replicating molecule. It could, at this stage, jettison its clay scaffolding. Miller challenges this scenario by asking its writers to demonstrate it with an experiment.

There is yet another scenario that has nothing to do with these others. Christopher Chyba and Carl Sagan at NASA are trying to solve the mystery by including the influences of asteroids, comets and meteorites. In 1969, a meteorite that fell in Australia contained a large number of amino acids, the components of RNA,

DNA, and other organic compounds. The scientists who checked the meteorite definitively concluded that these compounds weren't of Earthly origin. In 1986 the spacecraft fly-bys of Halley's comet revealed that one-third of its mass was composed of organic compounds.

It's likely that most organic matter aboard meteorites and comets never made it to Earth, because they enter Earth's atmosphere at speeds reaching 20-25 km/second and generating high temperatures, and upon impact the temperature would be so high that it would fry almost everything, and the organic matter that survived would probably be too sparse and too scattered to evolve into life.

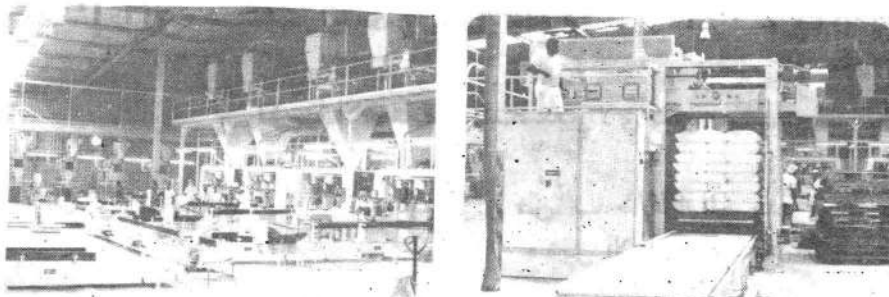
Another extraterrestrial possibility involves interplanetary dust particles. These tiny motes routinely reach Earth, where their progress is delayed by the atmosphere. They may float around for months and even years before they come down. NASA is using U2 spy planes fitted with adhesive collectors on their wings to collect the interplanetary dust particles at very high altitudes and it has been found that they do contain organic compounds.

But once again, Miller jumps into the picture to shatter these hopes. He claims, "If you have to depend on such small amounts of organic materials then Earth would have probably just now collected enough of it to set the bacteria on." It looks like scientists in this field need to examine all sorts of possibilities to sort out the question of what happened to begin life on Earth four billion years ago.



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A NEW GENERATION OF COMPUTERS

The Japanese electronics industry has a new grand design to beat a worldwide drop in business. Firms have developed a project they are calling "multimedia" to create a new generation of machines, as small and light as possible, to carry out data processing, telecommunications and entertainment tasks.

In the future, a portable laptop will contain a telephone and a facsimile machine. It will have a compact disk drive, enabling it to play back music and pictures as well as data diskettes. The electronic entertainment industry is working on portable radios and CDs with computer companies.

To develop specially-made storage chips and the necessary technology, Japanese and US firms have joined forces to generate multimedia products. Experts expect the world market demand to hit 450 trillion yen in ten years.

Yet, the struggle for market supremacy is being hampered by arguments over standards and formats, holding up the introduction of the new technology.

A US manager from the Apple company, which is working together with the Japanese companies Sharp and Toshiba, explained at a recent Tokyo seminar, "there are too many different platforms which cannot be brought

together for multimedia usages."

According to Frank Ohgai, Audio and Video Product Manager for Matsuhita (National Panasonic), two different interpretations are clashing head-on.

The antagonist camps have, in the meantime, brought us the first multimedia products. Computer concern Fujitsu, in fact, presented its FM Towns series three years ago. This personal computer works using a CDROM (compact disc read-only memory). The user can, for example, listen to an opera and simultaneously read the text on screen.

The first multimedia books have already been developed. Here, photographs, the narrator's voice and accompanying music are stored on CD. Fujitsu is hoping to attract interest from schools and universities with educational program packages.

In the meantime, prices have fallen by half in Japan, while Fujitsu has opened up the popular Windows program from the US Microsoft company.

In October, Sony presented its "multimedia-player." The mini CD player, which is the size of two cigarette packs, has a liquid crystal display screen and a computer keyboard. This turns into a personal computer when a data disk is inserted.



Letters to the Editor

THUMBS UP FOR POET SAMIRA

Could you please publish the following message to Ms. Samira Ali Bin Daair:

Dear Samira:
We were reading your poem in the Yemen Times (issue No. 8 of February 24th) in a small circle of friends in a Ramadhan ght qat chew. I have to tell you your poem and yourself received a lot of applause. Every one of us expressed admiration and appreciation for the skill, gift and beauty in your poem. We have one thing to ask of you. Keep up the good work, and keep on writing. We take this occasion to also express appreciation for the Yemen Times, every issue of which carries informative and interesting articles and stories.

Almaqtari Shakib Mensur
Ghalib,
Abdulkadir Nouredin
Al-Tayyeb,
Abdul-Kareem Al-Saqqaf,
Khalifah Mohammed --
Sanaa.

WHY AN ISLAMIC SYSTEM?

We live in a world of materials, where we have developed the best in technology we have discovered the best of luxuries and technological marvels have packed our houses. We live in an age of guided missiles where peace and love have lost their meaning. We concentrate on things around us but ignore the things within us. We want to live in peace and happiness and desire good health and long life for ourselves and our loved ones. We want to see wickedness and suffering end. Every honest person wants these things. His march towards peace and happiness is being pierced by tension and frustration. Wars and aggression often dominate daily news. We see crime, violence, hunger and sickness are on the



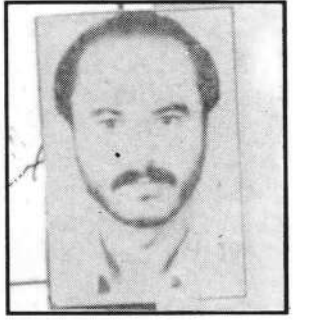
increase in all parts of the world. In this growing unrest, the true value of loving, caring and sharing in their true sense have virtually been banished from our world which revolves round with selfish materialistic motives. To help combat such social, emotional and spiritual chaos that is infecting our society, the need of organizing to promote love, service, sacrifice, respect and peace is strongly being felt. The human society has made rapid progress in the field of material comforts, education and economic development throughout the world. But there are race and religious differences and quarrels even over less important issues. Therefore there is a need to find how humanity can become one in peace,

friendship and prosperity with a common cause. Islamic system is the only solution when strictly established no one will be hungry or naked, there will be no injustice, no prejudices or frontiers. To achieve this we must strive towards attaining its ideals and noble thoughts. Let us all spread God's divine and spiritual message across the world to make this earth a better place to live in. We don't want the Islamic system for ourselves alone but for the whole world, for all human beings. In my view this is the last cure for the pains of humanity, a yearning which is the last hope of human dignity in this planet. But we have to better understand Islam ourselves, before we propose it to others. The Islam we need to apply is tolerant, peaceful, and forward/future oriented with the aim of assisting improve the quality of man's life. It is ironic I say man's life, but the meaning here is human life for both sexes.

By:
Abeid Salim Abeid,
Member of the Physically
Handicapped Society,
Sana'a

CONTEMPORARY YEMENI POETRY

"Tawfeek Az-Zikri died on the 1st of March 1993 at a very young age. He has published many poems in different periodicals. Az-Zikri has a B.A. degree in English literature and the M.A. degree in Education. Following is one of his poems.



Passing by the morning caravan
Who faraway made my waiting bleed
And bend his pack-saddle in the
tenderness of the distances.
He said: Talk about the water, the sand and the people
He said: Entertain by our gleaming names
And don't come near the sorrows of the caravans
You will see that your face
Is but a shadow for the other
Then you'll see the nipple of the water trickling supuration
The cities are nursing their sons from it,
and the dust revolts.

Passing by my memory;
The heart had shed its longings
and contained the pleasure of death.
It went on searching for its face
in the dust of merors
And faded in the heap of the pictures.

Passing by the high summer of the childhood:
I said to my mother;
let me, on the stairs of the house, crawl
to scratch the face of the wall
and eat from its stony mud
till I see my tear be a stone,
and the time is looking for another one
in the angels of the youth.

Passing by the cloud of my love:
I saw the wishes singing much
and the women are moving around
the candle of the heart,
like the butterflies.
I tried to make the water more conscious
and I run away from the cloud of the time
however, my water was pushing towards the morning,
and dragged the tails of the space
Near my window
Till I wake up.

Translated by: Soheil Najm, Sanaa.

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Zakat is the third pillar of Islam. Zakat (tithe) is a form of religious tax imposed on Muslims.

There are several types of zakat, and they all represent a transfer of funds from the rich to the poor.

Zakat payments especially intensify during Ramadhan. On this occasion, Yemen Times reporter Ismail Al-Ghabiri interviewed Mr. Ahmed Zaid Ar-Radhi, Chairman of the Zakat Department.

Following are excerpts of the interview:

Q: What is the purpose of Zakat?

A: Zakat is a religious duty according to which people have to part with some of their resources as a gesture of obedience and submission to God. But more importantly, Zakat has a socio-economic function. It helps bridge the gap between the rich and poor, and thus reduce class tension and increase collective well-being and harmony.

It is our job to help make it easy on people to abide by this requirement.

Q: Since unification, have you been able to expand in the former PDRY?

A: It is true the Zakat institution did not exist in the former PDRY as it existed in the former YAR or today's Yemen. But the belief and concept existed. We succeeded in opening branches in all the eastern and southern governorates. The response from the people is excellent, and this is natural as Yemenis, are all Muslims.

Q: What kinds of Zakat exist in Yemen?

A: There are many kinds of Zakat payments, the main ones are:

- 1- Zakat on agricultural produce,
- 2- Zakat on livestock.
- 3- Per Capita Zakat.
- 4- Commercial/Industrial Activities Zakat.
- 5- Zakat on Jewellery, Cash and Liquid Assets.
- 6- Zakat on Professions.

The revenue from these forms of Zakat are not nearly equal. We are working on all of them.

Q: What was the total Zakat revenue last year?

A: Last year, we collected YR. 542 million in cash, and 18,000 bushels of grains in kind.

The total revenue varies from year to year, but it is on the rise.

Let me mention here that the Zakat payments are payable in cash or kind based on the item subject to the Zakat. That is why we collect both types.

Q: How are Zakat funds dispensed?

A: Of course, the Quran itself has specified how Zakat funds are to be used. There are eight beneficiaries specified in the Quran, and we adhere to the Quranic order.

We are an organization that is part of the state. Therefore, all the Zakat revenues we collect are channelled to the central treasury of the treasury, which in turn pays out the Zakat funds as prescribed in the Quran. Most Zakat funds go to help the poor, the needy, orphans, etc., as well as the general development of the nation through investments in infrastructure, agriculture, etc. as well as for defending the country.

Q: What does the occasion of Ramadhan symbolize, and what is its association with the Zakat?

A: Of course, everybody knows that Ramadhan was the month in which our Prophet Mohammed's revelations started, and the Quran descended on him. The Muslims are required to fast during this month, this being the fourth pillar of Islam.

Therefore, it is Islam's most blessed month.

As far as the association with Zakat, I can think of two direct links. First, both are among the five pillars of Islam. Second, important Zakat payments are timed during the month of Ramadhan, especially the final days of it. The fasting during Ramadhan is not complete without payment of the Per Capita Zakat (of the soul).

The Zakat is an important component of Islam, and it is unique to it in many ways. I am happy to say that most Yemenis are forthcoming in fulfilling this obligation, and we face no difficulty in collecting it.

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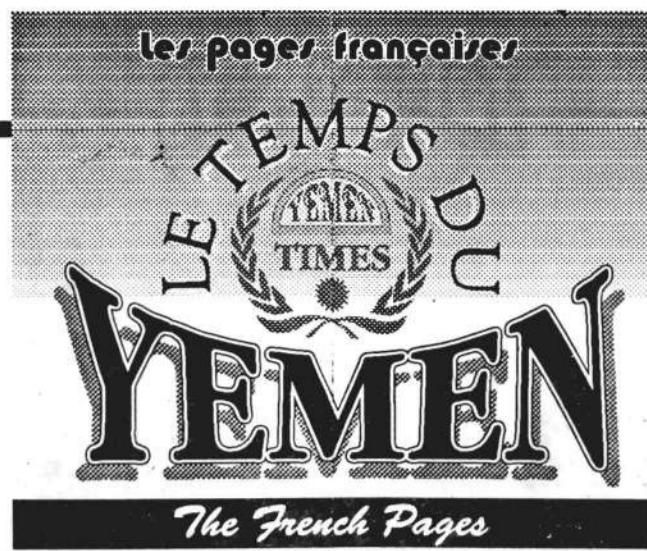
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CPG, PSY, Islah, Parti Baas et Nassériens

Cinq partis s'entendent sur 260 candidats uniques

Lundi dernier, une réunion "privée" a rassemblé les membres éminents des principaux partis du Yémen, notamment le président Saleh, le Vice-président al-Bid mais aussi, plus curieusement, des représentants de l'opposition, dont M. Omar al-Gaoui. On prétendait que la question de la fusion des deux partis au pouvoir y serait réglée. Rien n'est encore décidé aujourd'hui mais l'on s'achemine clairement vers un accord électoral avec candidats communs entre les cinq partis, plus ou moins déclarés, de la "majorité", en attendant une décision finale sur le partage du pouvoir et une éventuelle fusion, une fois les résultats des élections du 27 avril prochain connus: le partage des circonscriptions pour les candidats uniques se fera vraisemblablement comme suit: 100 pour le CPG, 100 pour le PSY et 60 à partager entre l'Islah, le parti Baas et les Nassériens. Soit 260 sièges sur 301 quasiment acquis pour une "coalition" hétéroclite et fragile à cinq partis.

25 janvier 1993, un communiqué du CPG rejette totalement - prenant ainsi de court le PSY à l'origine véritable de ce rejet - l'idée d'une fusion des deux partis, "véritable abandon de choix démocratique, voire tentative de falsifier la volonté du peuple (...)" 5 mars 1993, l'agence de presse SABA reproduit une interview du président au magazine yéménite Adoua' al-Yemen: "(...) loin d'étouffer la démocratie ou d'affaiblir l'opposition, la fusion est de nature à offrir des garanties pour éviter des tensions et raffermir la démocratie". Par cette déclaration officielle, le président (que l'on dit aux abois, lire notre précédente édition) opère un nouveau revirement en se prononçant officiellement et publiquement pour la fusion.

définition de la démocratie par le chef de l'Etat est sans aucun doute sa faculté de s'adapter aux circonstances, au moment où il apparaît de plus en plus certain que le parti socialiste regagne une partie de sa crédibilité à mesure que celle du CPG et de son chef se dégrade (lire notre précédente édition). Le président avait lui-même affirmé, en novembre dernier, qu'une fusion entre les deux partis était la négation de la démocratie puisqu'elle empêcherait les électeurs de pouvoir choisir entre deux sensibilités différentes; il avait fait cette déclaration alors que c'est le CPG qui renonçait, cette fois, à la fusion, après plusieurs revirements, tout comme le PSY d'ailleurs, qui n'a jamais vraiment su "sur quel pied danser" à ce propos.

n'en finissent pas de tenir des réunions pour décider de la marche à suivre. Une frange importante du PSY, notamment les intellectuels et les représentants de son aile gauche (dont M. Jarrallah Omar), est résolument contre l'idée de la réunion des deux entités en une seule: le PSY y perdrait beaucoup. Pour eux, le CPG est en fait la "chose" du président plus qu'un véritable parti, et surtout, ses hauts responsables bénéficient d'une très mauvaise image à cause de la corruption qui règne dans l'entourage du président.

Mais malgré ces désaccords et les lenteurs des négociations, tous les responsables des deux partis se sont entendus sur un plus petit dénominateur commun pour aller aux élections en ordre de bataille: un candidat unique dans 100 circonscriptions pour le CPG et 100 pour le PSY, sur 301 au total, ce qui devrait assurer déjà, en cas d'élection de ce candidat (ce dont on ne peut douter), une future majorité absolue aux deux partis. La seconde étape du rapprochement PSY-CPG pourrait ainsi intervenir après les élections. On aura sauvé les meubles avant, faute de véritable entente...

Emmanuel GIROUD

A la suite des fortes pluies

Les criquets envahissent la Tihama

Gare aux criquets pèlerins. Depuis plusieurs semaines, ces acridiens ont envahi les régions côtières du Yémen et de l'Arabie Saoudite bordant la mer Rouge. Le nord de la Tihama est notamment touché.

En provenance de l'Afrique de l'Est, ils ont profité des pluies qui sont tombées récemment pour se reproduire, selon Mohammed al-Quechm, chargé de lutte contre les criquets au ministère de l'Agriculture. Le gouvernement a réagi à la fin de l'an dernier et a lancé un appel à l'aide internationale. Il a notamment demandé des pièces de rechange pour les véhicules et les pompes utilisées pour répandre les insecticides et des tenues de protection pour les équipes de lutte.

Toutes les plantes détruites sur leur passage

En Arabie Saoudite, l'alerte contre cette invasion de criquets a été donnée le 5 janvier. Le pays disposant d'importants moyens, notamment d'avions équipés pour répandre les insecticides, le gouvernement saoudien reste confiant dans cette nouvelle campagne de

lutte ant acridienne. En 1987 et 1988 il avait réussi à contenir une invasion de criquets en quelques semaines seulement.

Les criquets ont la particularité de détruire toutes les plantes qui se trouvent sur leur passage. Un essaim peut compter plusieurs millions d'insectes et chaque criquet pèlerin consomme chaque jour l'équivalent de son poids, soit 1 à 2 grammes, selon les spécialistes.

Plusieurs pays d'Afrique de l'Est ont aussi été envahis. Environ 500 000 hectares de terre ont été infestés au Soudan et 12.000 en Erythrée, où les sauterelles ont également envahi 66 000 hectares supplémentaires, selon l'Organisation africaine de lutte contre les acridiens du désert.

L'apparition des criquets au Yémen et en Arabie Saoudite inquiète les autres pays du Golfe. En cas d'échec de la lutte anti-acridienne dans ces deux pays, ils craignent d'être envahis à leur tour. Le sultanat d'Oman a annoncé la mise sur pied en avril d'une unité spécialisée dans la lutte contre les acridiens. Une équipe d'experts s'est rendue à Ryad pour prendre connaissance de l'expérience saoudienne dans ce domaine.

(D'après AFP)

L'Irak réclamerait ses biens confiés au Yémen

L'Irak aurait réclamé la restitution de biens qu'il avait confiés au Yémen durant la crise du Golfe, notamment deux cargaisons de pétrole et quelque 50 millions de dollars, selon la déclaration d'un responsable yéménite à l'Agence France Presse. Selon ce responsable qui a voulu garder l'anonymat, cette demande a été formulée par M. Barzan Ibrahim al-Takriti, envoyé spécial du président irakien Saddam Hussein, en visite au Yémen fin février.

L'Irak aurait demandé au gouvernement de Sanaa de lui verser le prix du pétrole chargé à bord de deux de ses navires, que l'on peut apercevoir dans le port d'Aden depuis deux ans, bloqués par les autorités yéménites en vertu des résolutions des Nations Unies sur le blocus de l'Irak. L'émissaire de Saddam Hussein a également demandé la restitution de 600 millions de riyals yéménites (quelque 50 millions de dollars au taux officiel) que les Irakiens avaient confiés au Yémen après les avoir saisi dans les banques koweïtiennes. Ce responsable s'est refusé à révéler la réponse du gouvernement de Sanaa à la requête irakienne.

(AFP)

Dans un souci de "propreté"...

Le qat interdit dans les aéroports et les avions

Les autorités yéménites ont décidé d'interdire la consommation du qat dans tous les aéroports du pays ainsi que sur les vols des compagnies nationales et étrangères desservant le Yémen, a rapporté vendredi dernier l'agence de presse SABA. Voilà qui ne devrait pas réjouir les nombreux employés des aéroports ainsi que les soldats qui sont chargés d'assurer la sécurité dans leur enceinte. Mais qu'en est-il des pilotes eux-mêmes? Seront-ils soumis au même "régime"?

En effet un responsable du ministère des Transports, M. Ahmed Abdel Kader, a justifié cette interdiction en affirmant que les aéroports et avions doivent rester "propres", faisant allusion à l'habitude de ses compatriotes de jeter les feuilles non consommées par terre et de cracher le qat après l'avoir mâché pendant des heures! Or selon des témoignages au sein même de la compagnie Yemenia, certains pilotes ne se privent pas de qater pendant les vols, y compris les longs-courriers (nous avons pu le vérifier nous-même lors d'un récent vol intérieur)... Personne n'ira vérifier si la cabine de pilotage reste "propre" ou non.

La décision d'interdiction a commencé à être appliquée la semaine dernière dans l'aéroport d'Aden -théoriquement, car l'on se demande comment les autorités pourront effectivement la faire respecter-

et concerne les voyageurs yéménites et étrangers volant à bord des appareils de Yemenia et des compagnies étrangères,

ainsi que pour le personnel naviguant desservant le Yémen.

E.G.

Une "drogue" proche des amphétamines

Le qat a des multiples effets négatifs sur la santé et le comportement des individus. Sa consommation est notamment responsable d'accidents de la route, deuxième cause de mortalité au Yémen après la malnutrition, selon des sources hospitalières.

Il existe plusieurs variétés de qat. Certaines rendent heureux, d'autres tristes. Certaines ont des effets néfastes sur l'intestin, d'autres bénéfiques. Dans tous les cas, cette plante au goût amer donne soif.

Ses effets stimulants sont dus à deux composants chimiques, la cathinone et la cathine, comparables à des amphétamines. Les consommateurs ont le sentiment en chiquant pendant des heures ces feuilles vertes que leur élocution est plus facile, que leur concentration s'accroît et que leurs performances intellectuelles s'améliorent. Un sentiment de bien être les envahit pendant la période de mastication.

Cependant les effets secondaires se font rapidement sentir. Les consommateurs de qat se plaignent d'insomnie, ils n'ont plus d'appétit, manquent de concentration, ont des maux de tête. Tout cela n'apparaît tout d'abord pas trop sérieux. Mais à la longue les effets du qat sont de plus en plus néfastes sur la santé. Les plus graves sont les problèmes gastriques.

D'autre part si la consommation de qat augmente le désir, celui-ci ne s'accompagne pas nécessairement d'une activité sexuelle accrue. Au contraire, beaucoup de consommateurs sont confrontés à des éjaculations précoces et à une baisse de leur activité sexuelle. Le qat consommé en excès provoque aussi souvent des troubles de l'humeur, une certaine anxiété, un état irritable et parfois un comportement agressif.

(Source: Rapport sur le qat, FAO) J.B.

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Précisions sur l'Islam

par Najib Banabila*

"Le Sentiment religieux dis-sipe les sentiments de jalousie mutuelle et d'envie qui régissent chez les peuples animés de l'esprit de corps. Il oriente vers la seule voie de la vérité".

Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406)
La Muqaddima

Selon les statistiques de l'Organisation de la Conférence Islamique (OCI), l'Islam comptait en 1986 un milliard de fidèles dont 19 % arabes (populations des Etats membres de la Ligue Arabe).

L'OCI comptabilisait 50 Etats membres, soit en décembre 1992, 29 % des membres de l'Organisation des Nations Unies (ONU). Il faut cependant noter que dans certains de ces Etats, comme l'Ouganda, la population musulmane ne dépasse pas le dixième de la population totale, alors que dans un pays comme l'Éthiopie (pays non membre) elle représente environ le tiers, mais il n'y a pas de recensement crédible à ce sujet.

Signalons aussi que dans 28 Etats de l'OCI, l'Islam est religion d'Etat. Il est donc nécessaire de faire connaître les éléments clefs de cette religion. L'Islam répond à trois besoins fondamentaux de l'homme: une métaphysique de la création (*Khalq*); une direction dans la "voie droite" (*Sirat Al Mustaqim*); cette expression revient 31 fois dans le Coran (1); un équilibre entre les aspirations spirituelles et les désirs matériels.

Le cachet de l'Islam (Islam, Iman, Ihsan)

L'Islam est défini par Louis Gardet (2) comme "une soumission, une remise totale à Dieu". Il s'agit en fait d'une adoration du Dieu Unique sans sans rien lui associer (monothéisme pur).

Au cours des âges, le mot Islam a été associé au mot *din* qu'il convient de traduire par "religion"; c'est le sens qu'il faut donner au verset révélé par le Prophète et prononcé sur le Mont Arafat, l'année même de son décès, à l'âge de 61 ans. "Aujourd'hui, je vous ai parfait votre religion, je vous ai accordé ma grâce toute entière et j'ai agréé pour vous l'Islam comme étant votre religion". (Coran, V.3). L'acte d'adoration de Dieu s'exprime par la fidélité aux obligations cultuelles (*Ibadat*) et par le comportement social prescrit par le Coran (*Muamalat*).

La charte de l'Islam repose sur les cinq obligations cultuelles suivantes: la profession de foi (*Shahadah*), pour attester qu'il n'y a qu'un seul Dieu et que Mohamed est son messager, miséricorde envoyée à l'humanité et Sceau des Prophètes. Le terme de miséricorde (*Rahma*) et ses dérivés reviennent 79 fois dans le Coran. C'est le credo essentiel de la religion, condition *sine qua non* pour être musulman; la prière (*Salah*) devant être accomplie cinq fois par jour en direction de La Mecque suivant un rituel minutieux. Ces prières ne peuvent avoir lieu qu'après ablutions-purifications (*Taharah*). La prière est l'ossature de l'Islam; l'aumône (*Zakah*) est une *Faridah*, c'est à dire un devoir religieux. L'aumône des riches aux pauvres est citée 30 fois dans le Coran. Son taux dominant est

de 2,5 % des ressources, calculé sur une base annuelle. Quelle coïncidence étonnante avec les calculs du mathématicien français Maurice Allais, prix Nobel d'économie, qui considère comme pression fiscale optimum pour un pays un taux de 2 % (3)! Y aurait-il un fondement mathématique à la *Zakah*? Pour mieux le savoir, il conviendrait de "réactualiser" l'assiette fiscale de la *Zakah* et même, s'il le faut, d'opérer un "lifting". Afin de mener ces recherches à bonne fin, il faut éviter deux écueils: fétichiser les modèles du passé et mimétiser les systèmes fiscaux occidentaux; le jeûne (*Sawm*) pendant le mois de *Ramadan*, durant lequel le Coran fut révélé. Le jeûne est une pratique spirituelle et institutionnelle très antique que d'autres religions connaissent sous des aspects différents. Tel est le cas du Judaïsme, du Christianisme, de l'Hindouïsme, du Bouddhisme et même chez les Peaux-Rouges Indiens d'Amérique!

Des recherches modernes démontrent que le jeûne existe dans toute la nature: plantes et animaux y puisent de grands bienfaits et s'en trouvent régénérés. Le professeur Hamidullah dans son livre *Pourquoi jeûner?* (4) fait remarquer à bon escient que "le jeûne ne s'effectue pas dans l'intérêt de Dieu mais dans l'intérêt du jeûneur". Il faut entendre par jeûne l'abstinence totale des besoins "naturels", comme le manger ou le boire, ou factices, comme se droguer, fumer ou mâcher du chewing-gum. Quant à l'acte sexuel il est licite la nuit du jeûne. Le jeûne a lieu dès l'aube jusqu'au coucher du soleil. Il ne concerne pas les malades, les voyageurs, les femmes enceintes, les nourrices, les enfants avant la puberté ni les vieillards. La "défaillance" dans l'observance du jeûne oblige le fidèle à nourrir au moins un pauvre, soit d'après les bases de calcul de la Banque Mondiale en 1990, l'équivalent de 30 dollars US (5); le pèlerinage à la Mecque (*Hajj*) à une date particulière du calendrier islamique, doit être accompli une fois dans la vie par les croyants dans la mesure de leurs capacités. L'acte pèlerin est tout en même temps: un "pas" vers Dieu, un ressourcement et la recherche d'un "état neuf" pour celui qui l'accomplit. En 1986, 110 nationalités étaient représentées lors du pèlerinage canonique. Une visitation (non obligatoire) à la Mosquée de Médine, où se trouve le tombeau du Prophète, ajoute sa grâce au pèlerin.

Très tôt est apparu une distinction entre "Islam" et "Iman". L'Islam est un mot qui désigne la communauté de religion et "Iman" exprime l'idée d'une adhésion de la foi. Selon l'école asharite, école théologique dominante en Islam, l'Iman implique l'adhésion du coeur (ou de l'intellect, *Akl*); c'est le "pilier", le constitutif formel de la foi. Les "oeuvres" ne sont pas seulement le signe de la foi, elles sont foi et acte de foi. Selon un *Hadith* de Al Bukhari, la foi signifie croire en Dieu, les anges, la vie future, les Prophètes, la Résurrection.

Un débat théologique a longtemps passionné les esprits du Moyen Age et même ceux d'aujourd'hui, c'est le *Qada Wal*

Qadar, c'est-à-dire la Régulation et l'Omnipotence divine dans leurs aspects bénéfiques et maléfiques. Cette croyance en la Prédestination (connue couramment sous le nom de *Maktoub*) n'exclut pas la manifestation d'une "quantum d'énergie" ou de volonté que chacun de nous possède. C'est le point de vue partagé par l'Islam majoritaire (*Ahla Sunnah Wal Jama'a*).

La fréquence du mot *Ishan* et de ses dérivés est de 21 fois pour ne citer que les seuls trois premiers chapitres du Coran. C'est la vertu cardinale et la matrice des valeurs éthiques. Sa signification est plus vaste encore que celle d'"honnêteté". On peut lui trouver une correspondance avec le mot "probité". Le dictionnaire de la langue française *Le Petit Robert* lui donne la définition suivante: "vertu qui consiste à observer les règles de la morale sociale, les devoirs imposés par l'honnêteté et la justice".

La probité est donc une "hygiène" qui préserve ou améliore la santé pour soi-même ainsi que celle des autres avec lesquels on entretient des rapports. Le Coran énumère d'autres qualités humaines, personnelles (telles que la patience), inter-personnelles (*Muamala*, par exemple respect des parents) ou des us et coutumes (*adat*: par exemple voile ou polygamie) relatifs à des aires géographiques déterminées.

Résumons ce chapitre en faisant remarquer que deux morales, celle de la "Sainteté" (*Ibadat*) et celle de la "simple vertu" coexistent dans une même praxis.

Le tandem Sunnisme-Chi'isme

Le thème central du Coran est évidemment le monothéisme pur et simple: la croyance dans l'unité et la transcendance de Dieu; mais il traite aussi de nombreux aspects de la vie. La grande majorité des Musulmans sont sunnites (90%); ils reconnaissent les quatre premiers califes après le Prophète Mohamed et n'attribuent aucune fonction religieuse ou politique particulière aux descendants du gendre du Prophète, 'Ali.

Le Coran, attribut de Dieu lui-même, est sa Parole, créée en elle-même, créée dans ses formulations. Le Coran se divise en 114 chapitres (*Surah*) de dimensions très variées dont 87 furent révélés à la Mecque et 27, les plus longs, à Médine. Chaque chapitre contient un certain nombre de versets (*Ayah*). Le Coran contient un ensemble de 6.236 versets (édition standard du Caire, 1924) soit une fois et demi le nombre de mots contenus dans une revue hebdomadaire anglaise, *The Economist* (d'après leur propre citation).

Un nombre de 250 versets, soit environ 4 %, compose le corpus juridique islamique qui régit les rapports de droit. Le pénal n'occupant que 0, 7%, c'est dire son importance dérisoire! Les sources du droit sont le Coran, la *Sunnah*, le *Qiyas*, entendu comme raisonnement analogique, l'*Ijma'*, c'est-à-dire l'acte de consensus unanime de la communauté en ses représentants qualifiés. L'utilisation de ces quatre sources et d'autres encore, comme le jugement personnel (appuyé sur l'utilité et

le bien public: *Maslaha*) et la coutume, met en jeu la notion centrale d'*Ijtihad* qui peut se définir comme l'effort personnel du savant.

En Islam sunnite, la sagacité des grands juristes et des fondateurs d'écoles juridico-religieuses (Abn Hanifa, Malik Ibn Anas, Shafi'i, Ibn Hanbal) a été reconnue pleinement par la communauté pieuse, ce qui leur a valu le titre de *Mujtahid*, c'est-à-dire "ceux qui pratiquent l'*Ijtihad*". Cependant, le sunnisme n'exclut pas l'existence de l'*Ijtihad* dans le temps et dans l'espace. Enfin, notons la thèse de Abu Hanifa pour qui l'Islam est défini comme assez ouvert pour admettre des points de vue variés, de sorte qu'une homogénéité rigide n'est pas essentielle à l'orthodoxie.

L'Islam chi'ite voudrait maintenir en relief l'effort personnel et continue d'appeler *Mujtahid* tout docteur de la Loi. Les Chi'ites adhèrent aux mêmes dogmes fondamentaux de l'Islam (*Ibadat*). Etre chi'ite, c'est cependant être partisan de 'Ali Ibn Abi Taleb, cousin et gendre du Prophète, Premier Imam, mort en 661 à Koufa en Irak. Celui-ci est aussi aimé sincèrement par les Sunnites bien qu'il n'ait pas le même charisme qui lui est dévolu par les Chi'ites.

Le rite le plus répandu est le chi'isme duodécimain ou imamite que l'on trouve principalement en Iran (religion officielle depuis le XVIème siècle), en

Irak, au Liban et à Bahrein où il constitue le groupe majoritaire de la population de ces Etats.

Le mot Imam veut dire "guide", principalement au sens spirituel. La donnée de base de la doctrine imamite réside dans l'importance conférée à la notion d'Imam: "personnage impeccable, inflexible et miraculeusement instruit par Dieu des choses de la religion" (6). De plus, l'Imam doit appartenir à la famille du Prophète. Il faut ajouter aussi la notion de *Ismat* (toute pureté) et celle du *Nass* (désignation expresse par l'Imam antérieur). Enfin dans le chi'isme duodécimain, les Imams sont en nombre limité - douze. Le douzième et dernier Imam est Mohamed al-Mahdi, qui disparut à Smarra, en Irak, à la mort de son père en 874 et qui est le "leader" attendu. Cette année là commença l'occultation de l'Imam. Il appartient dès lors aux docteurs de la loi, dont les aptitudes sont reconnues par l'opinion publique chi'ite, d'interpréter la loi par leur *Ijtihad* et de préparer par leur action, le retour à une vie conforme à la loi et à une justice que l'Imam viendra parfaire.

Bien que le mot *Mahdi* ne figure pas dans le Coran, beaucoup de croyances populaires sunnites se rallient au messianisme du Mahdi sans toutefois conférer une spiritualité particulière aux Imams.

Signalons à toutes fins utiles une branche originale du chi'isme, à savoir le Zeydisme ou partisans des "cinq Imams, dont on trouve les adhérents au Yémen. Les Zeydites constituent le groupe chi'ite le plus modéré et le plus proche des positions sunnites.

Rappelons enfin qu'en 1959, une Fatwa de l'Université Al-Azhar du Caire avait fait du Chi'isme la cinquième des écoles juridiques de l'Islam.

* Najib Banabila est un économiste attaché au secrétariat de l'Organisation des Nations Unies. D'origine yéménite, il vit aujourd'hui en Suisse.

(1) Mohamed Talbi et Maurice Bucaille: *Réflexions sur le Coran*, Ed. Seghers 1989 (p.25).

(2) Louis Gardet: *Art "Islam"* dans *Nouvelle Encyclopédie de l'Islam* (Leiden EJ Brill, 1978).

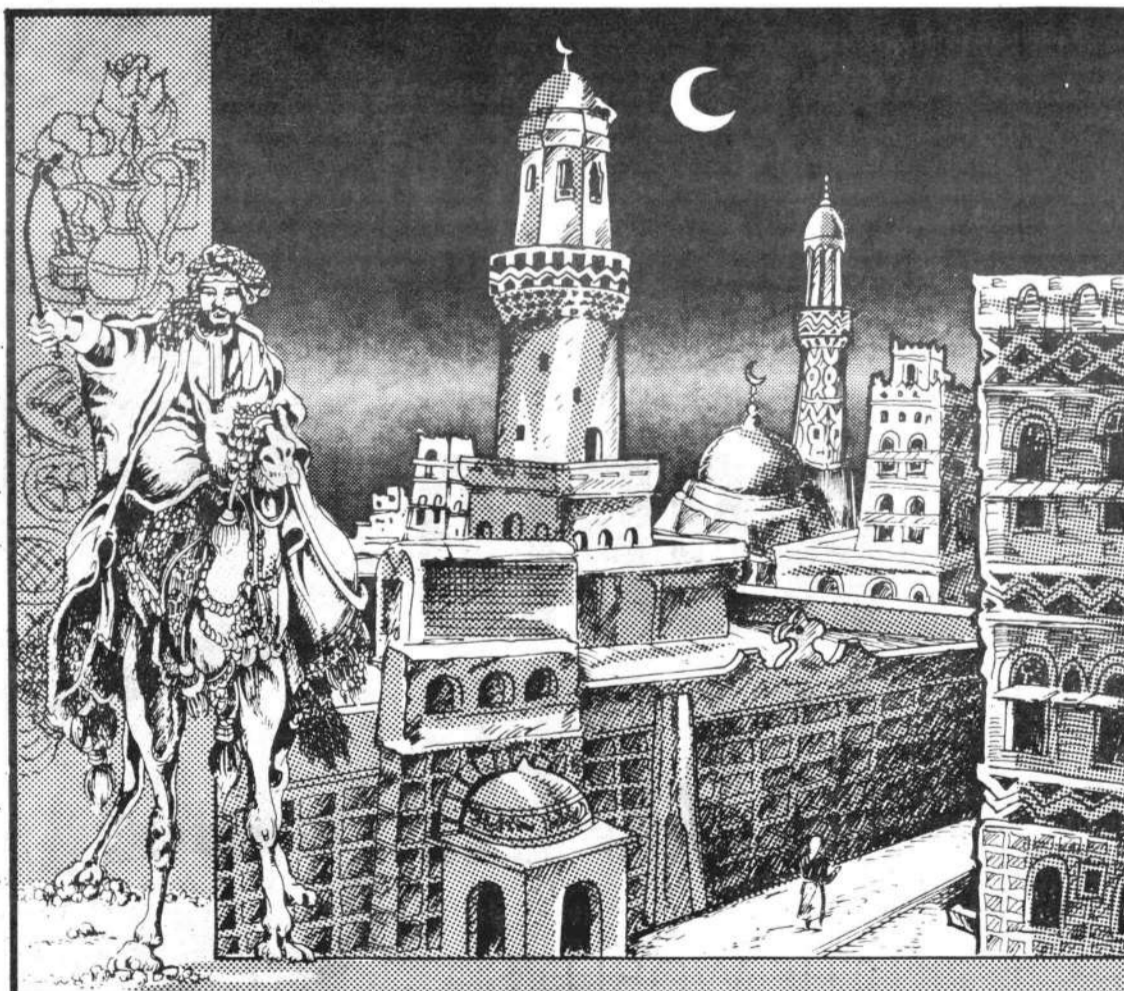
(3) Maurice Allais: *Pour la réforme de la fiscalité*, Clément Juglar, 1990.

(4) Professeur Mohamed Hamidullah: *Pourquoi jeûner?*, Ed. Tougui, 1983.

(5) Banque Mondiale: *Rapport sur la pauvreté*, 1990. La Banque Mondiale estime à 1 \$US les besoins d'un pauvre par jour, soit 30 \$US pour un mois.

(6) Henri Laoust: *Comment définir le Sunnisme et le Chi'isme*, Geuthner, 1985.

La semaine prochaine, nous publierons la seconde partie de cette analyse, intitulée "Islam et progrès économique"



Holy Month of Ramadan Traditional Iftar Buffet at Al Rawdha Restaurant

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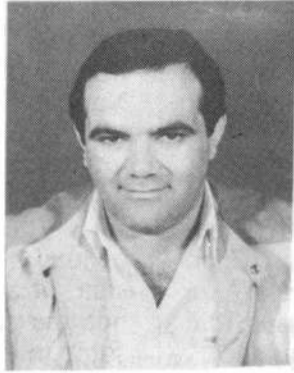
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LOVE IN THE REFRIGIRATOR ARAB CONCIOUSNESS FROZEN FOR A DECADE

By Saad Salah Khalis,
Cultural Editor,
Yemen Times.

A courageous vision towards politics, society, awareness and alienation has been expressed through an interesting attempt by the young Egyptian director Said Hammad, in his new film "Love in the Refrigerator." The film was an effective contribution to two major film festivals in Cairo and Rotterdam earlier this year. The fact that the film has failed to hit any major prize in both festivals is not surprising at all considering the shocking symbolic impact of the work as a whole, which was not, regrettably, backed by the efficient technology that is needed to produce such a fantasy-based vision. The idea of refrigerating a man till the year 2000 is not new in its essence, as many other films have already tackled the idea from vari-



ous aspects. Yet, for an Arab mentality, which is not exactly future-oriented in its approach or in its quest for knowledge of the events of the coming century, anticipating the year 2000 (as the film asks its audience to do) is quite a demand. But, to demand of an Arab audience to think of arriving in the 21st century inside a refrigerator would indeed require a lot of fantasy power. Yet, the purpose of the hibernation-like phenomenon; that is, the waiting, is indeed very simple - the search for a cheap apartment to live in.



The hero of the film, Yahya Al Fakhraani, is a simple, silent, king-hearted civil servant who represents the silent majority of people whose lives are plagued by a series of disappointments. The hero is the victim of many circumstances - a roof-top room is his home, a highly demanding fiancée

constantly keeps the pressure, and a work-life that almost disintegrates under the weight of corruption and materialism. He suddenly decides to sell everything he owns, which is not much, to produce an American made refrigerator - the symbol is quite sound and clear, of which he saw daily TV advertisements - again the same symbol is re-stressed. The refrigerator is capable of freezing a sheep, another symbol of the silent majority, and keep it alive for years. Our hero manages to buy the refrigerator, and decides to stay there until the year 2000 with the hope that his personal problems (which are in fact the problems of all of us) might find solutions by then.

The man finds out, or rather the spectators find out, that living in a modern American refrigerator is not but another series of disappointments, as the man gets involved in far deeper problems climaxed by a murder charge, after which the police drag him out of the refrigerator to be executed. But the story doesn't end here.

His companions in the refrigerator (all dead, of course) of the town appoint him as leader because he is the latest comer. He finally leads a rebellion of those living dead against the authorities which turn to brute force after politely negotiating with the rebels to surrender. "Dear frozen gentlemen, please avoid contact as it may cause heat and lead to decay of your bodies!"

Of course, our frozen heroes fight back, to which the response of the author-

ities is to let them melt under the morning sun, and eventually rot. That is the logical conclusion to the whole thing; yet the director optimistically returns the frozen victims to life. Maybe he is trying to tell us that Tomorrow's sun will witness the revival of those frozen "heroes".

The film in itself is highly entertaining,

yet the technology used is inadequate, as mentioned earlier, but the artistic and cultural values are of major importance.

The issues raised relate to the Third World's citizen's ability to adapt to the changes taking place in the world, notably the new world order.

The film director clarifies his vision through a TV interview which discusses the film and its message. "People believe everything stated in the refrigerator advertisement is true, as long as Americans said so. You know, Americans never lie." The lie that our hero (read = consumer) naively believed as many of our intellectuals believed is related to the credibility of the new world order, thus spending valuable time and resources discussing ways to adapt thereto, rather than how to deal with the threats it brings with it.



Another aspect of this new age is far more than the pressure of adaptation. The film makers clearly show during the scenes of the trial of our hero, (and we can clearly see it in the events taking place all over the world especially in the parts of the "old order"), the prosecutors, while discussing our hero's dark past, satirically accuse him of being a leftist - a charge that is not only out of date in the opinion of the new orderists, but that it should be apologized for.

Accepting or rejecting the author's and director's opinion is strictly a personal matter, but disregarding the threat is rather naive. Now, as we see all over the world, former socialists apologizing for having been so, and the Muslims are gradually being driven to do the same fate. Muslims, we note, are accused of every crime that takes place under the sun, and thus they

are victimized. I recommend the spectators to see this attractive move and think about its message. I also urge our writers to break through the doors of fantasy to convince those of us still out here to "stay," and not choose to go and live in a refrigerator "made in America."

If we accept that artistic work reflects its native habitat, then "Love in the Refrigerator" speaks for all of us Third Worlders. It is a cry of a young generation of artists trying to give or maybe re-create a new era for the aging orientally-directed cinema and theater of our Arab World. It is also a cry for identity in a world dominated by a persecuting mono-culture that attempts to wipe everything in its path.

Will we survive till the 21st century, or do we need to book our space in a refrigerator "made in America"?

THE RAMADHAN CULTURE

By: Ismail Ali Al-Ghabri,
Yemen Times.

The holy month of Ramadhan is a month like no other month. It is the month that is an embodiment of immense religious richness. This is inevitably reflected on our daily lives and pattern/style of living.

Ramadhan is not a month of penance and self punishment. Fasting during the daytime, for thirty days, is Self-restraint then is what Ramadhan teaches. However, affluent one is, he or she must abstain from food, drinks and other enjoyments in life.

The Ramadhan culture centers around the mosque. Day and night are rotated, as people sleep during most of the day, and stay awake during most of the night. Life is brought down to its simplest components, and visits of relatives and friends are more frequent. Social relations are stronger than ever, as the rich share their wealth more generously with the less fortunate members of society.

Even the usually not so religious Yemenis find the time to go to pray and read the Quran during Ramadhan. That is a great experience in itself and gives a lot of personal and spiritual satisfaction.

Ramadhan is the month when Muslims re-learn the message of Islam and re-discover its truth. It is the month when the Muslims recommits him/herself to the faith. The principles of equality and fraternity stressed so much by Islam, are given practical demonstration during Ramadhan.

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THE ESSENCE OF MANAGEMENT: The Issue of Motivation

By:
Dr. Nabil Ahmed Sultan*



Students of management and public administration-like myself - would agree that the essence or the main principle of management is the need to learn how to motivate people in order to achieve some desired ends or objectives. This need has been recognized by students of management since the beginning of this century and is still recognized to be of great importance today.

However, while most scholars of management agree that motivation of people at work is essential for the success and the continuity of the organization or company in which these people work, they have classified it into different categories depending on the people that need to be motivated.

Early classical managers and theorists (e.g. F.W. Taylor, Frank and Lilian Gilbreth, etc.) emphasized the 'carrot and stick' approach in dealing with the task of motivating people. Pay (one aspect or means of motivation), for example, was geared tightly to output. What people needed in terms of social or self-fulfillment requirements was not considered to be of overriding importance. It was a system based on more or less 'the more you produce the more money you will get, and the less you produce the less money you will receive'.

Nevertheless, it was a system that worked well for decades despite its shortcomings until the early 1930s. A new approach to management was considered by those who came to be known as the advocates of the 'human relations school' of management with academian Elton Mayo as its founding father. Through a series of experiments in the Western Electrical Company on the productivity of some of its workers. The fact that some of these workers were the subject of an experiment or the center of attention led to an increase of their productivity regardless of whether the condition of their working environments were improved or worsened. Other experiments conducted by Mayo in the same company also revealed the importance of social relations between workers and upper management. Some workers, it was found, needed the support and company of one another in order to deal with orders or conditions imposed upon them from the top.

Then in the 1950s, the motivation of people in organizations was looked upon from a different perspective. While material and social needs were considered important as a means of motivating people, there was more emphasis on 'self-actualization' as another way of motivating these people.

People who adhered to this principle were known as proponents of the 'neo-human relations school' with Abraham Maslow, an American psychologist, as its most prominent figure. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is based on the assumption that people's needs in organizations are structured in a pyramid-like manner. At the bottom of that pyramid are 'physiological needs' then 'safety needs', 'love needs', 'esteem needs' and finally at the top of that pyramid 'self-actualization needs'. In other words, different people are motivated by different needs depending on the psychology of their personality.

Later on in the 1960s, another American scholar, Professor Edgar Schein, saw motivation very much as a 'psychological contract' based on the expectations that employees and organization have of each other. Consequently, it is argued that motivation can only be understood when this interdependence between employee and organization is recognized.

The issue of motivation, therefore, is of significant importance in the study of management, and it is essential that people at decision-making levels in the bureaucratic hierarchy of this country realize this fact. There is no doubt that a great deal of the success of many capitalist countries could be attributed to the ability of the entrepreneurs to motivate their workforces. Since the capitalist class and the private sector are and have been the main driving forces of development and change in many developed Western countries, the role of change and development in many developing countries must be shouldered by their public sectors or bureaucracies. This is mainly due to the small size and recent emergence of the private sector in these countries.

For Third World countries to develop and change, it is vital, therefore, that their bureaucratic sectors should undertake a large part of that task. A well motivated bureaucratic workforce, in my view, is more likely to achieve its objectives than an unmotivated one. A Yemeni bureaucratic workforce whose pay is not adequate to meet even its housing expenses, let alone food and other expenses, can hardly be expected to lead the way towards the development and change of this country.

* Member, British Institute of Management, Liverpool.

G7 CO-OPERATION PLEDGE EASIER SAID THAN DONE

Finance ministers from the Group of Seven (G7) industrial nations, seeking to revive a golden age of economic co-operation, have pledged to work more closely together to boost world growth and restore their tarnished credibility. But economists say the promise will ring hollow unless the seven nations set aside their bickering over trade, call a halt to a round of competitive devaluations and turn their back on beggar-thy-neighbor policies.

The pledge to relaunch the G7, which had its heyday in the 1980s, was driven by an apparent new-found enthusiasm for international co-operation in the United States and unveiled by finance ministers at talks in their London meeting last week.

"The United States is committed to assuring a G7 process that is credible and produces substantive results," said US Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen after the talks.

The five-hour informal meeting of the seven - the United States, Canada, Japan, Germany, France, Britain, and Italy - will disappoint financial markets looking for a new currency pact to steer the yen higher, or signs of new economic policies.

But ministers and their central bank governors were keen to stress the talks were an important opportunity to make a fresh start and to clear the air after early worries the Clinton administration would be protectionist. So is it just empty rhetoric or a genuine attempt to pull together to fight recession and the scourge of unemployment?

Economists say it is always tempting to devise "global growth strategies" when news is bad and economies stall.

Germany and Britain are stuck in recession, output in France is sliding and Japan's economy is in dire straits, with Nissan's decision to close a car giving plant a severe psychological shock.

But the talks did also seem to embody a new spirit, driven by the enthusiasm and vigor of the Clinton administration. It was also

a tacit admission co-operation had failed.

A series of trade issues, from steel to aircraft production, have rapidly degenerated into transatlantic bickering. Last year was dismal for the G7, whose leaders failed for the third year to meet a summit pledge to conclude Gatt trade talks.

It is a far cry from the heyday of the 1980s. The G7's policies of that era may be discredited, but economists say the group, which expanded from a hard core of five to take in Italy and Canada, did pull together in times of need.

1982, they took on the first modern debt crisis when Mexico's payments problems shocked the banking world. In 1985, the 'Plaza Accord' forced down an overvalued dollar. In 1987, the 'Louvre Accord' set up target ranges to keep currencies steady and the G7 calmed markets after the October stock crash.

Co-operation was based partly on the personal chemistry of the big players then: Paul Volcker and Karl Otto Poehl as head of the US and West German central banks, Treasury Secretary James Baker and West German Finance Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg. But in the Bush era, US Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady and his European and Japanese counterparts lost interest.

Ministers at last week's talks welcomed Lloyd Bentsen, the 72-year-old former lawmaker, who has openly stated his goal of revitalising the G7 and vowed to stop "public bullying."

In terms of form, G7 finance minister meetings are likely to become more informal, dropping communiques. The annual summits of leaders could also become more informal, returning to the original 'fire-side chat' concept of the first meeting in 1975.

In terms of economics, each country will pursue policies best for its national interests. The hope then is that Adam Smith's invisible hand will then bring these interests to serve the interests of the G7 and the world.

GLOBAL ACCOUNTING EDUCATION INADEQUATE, UN SURVEY REVEALS

A United Nations survey reveals that accountants are not being well prepared to meet the challenges of the global economy. The survey was released at the current session of the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting, which is meeting at United Nations Headquarters from 4 to 12 March. The theme of the session is the improvement of education and training in the field of accounting.

The Working Group has conducted one of the most extensive surveys of the state of accountancy education throughout the world, and has come up with some tentative but nevertheless alarming findings, which are the subject of much of the debate at its session.

The survey states that the average profile of accounting education around the globe is a "technically oriented curriculum taught by underpaid (and often inadequately prepared) faculty who sometimes use irrelevant teaching materials." Problems are particularly chronic in Africa, where countries have difficulty providing the training necessary to produce fully qualified accountants. About half of the African countries surveyed lacked an educational and professional infrastructure to certify auditors. Under such conditions, it is difficult to achieve accountability in either the public or private sector.

Talal Abu-Ghazalah, who was elected Chairman of the session and is President of the Arab Society of Certified Accountants, said global problems required global solutions, adding, "We need something more imaginative and on a much bigger scale than hitherto -- a master plan educational development." The Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG) is charged by the Economic and Social Council to work towards the harmonization of national accounting standards to promote foreign direct investment and the effective utilization of resources for economic and social development.

The UN is particularly concerned that the accountancy profession is not equipped to meet the global challenges it faces. Unless the profession can meet these challenges, the goals of its IWG may not be met. Because of its international acceptance and credibility, the IWG is well placed to work with other international institutions for accountancy development.

SPREAD OF AIDS MAY NOW BE BEYOND REASONABLE CONTROL !!

The global spread of Aids and HIV is rapidly out-running efforts to stem it and may be out of control, yet resources and commitment against the disease are declining, according to a report released recently by a world voluntary organization.

No country affected by Aids can claim that the spread of HIV has stopped, and the report forecasts that the disease has peaked in Europe and the optimistic attitude of government officials and social figures may be dangerously mistaken, it says.

The 1,000 page report entitled, *Aids in the World*, is said to be the most comprehensive attempt to analyse trends, assess the present position, and predict future spread of the virus.

It has been compiled by the

Global Aids Policy Coalition based at Harvard University and has been edited by Jonathan Mann, former director of the World Health Organization's Aids program.

Professor Mann with colleagues Daniel Tarantola and Thomas Netter and 40 researchers around the world say: "The HIV/Aids pandemic is entering a new, more dangerous phase. As the global threat increases, there are many signs of growing complacency, persistent denial, and resurgent discrimination. Looking towards the mid-1990s and beyond, we see global vulnerability to HIV increasing not decreasing. We see a failure to mobilize and respond to a common threat as a united global community. As we enter the second decade of Aids it is time to ask: Is the Aids

pandemic now out of control?"

The report says that by the end of 1992 at least 12.9 million people worldwide had been infected with HIV - 7.1 million men, 4.7 million women, and 1.1 million children; 2.6 million of them had developed Aids and 2.5 million had died.

By 1995, 20 million will be infected with HIV, it predicts. By 2000 there may be 38-110 million adults with the virus and more than 10 million children.

"Against this background of a dynamic, evolving worldwide epidemic, the major impacts of HIV and Aids are yet to come." The report warns of 25 million cases of Aids by 2000, putting an impossible burden on health care systems and the economies of poor countries.

By 2000 it is also likely that Asia will have overtaken Africa as the center of the crisis, with 42 per cent of infections compared to 31 per cent in Africa, 8 per cent in Latin America, and 6 per cent in the Caribbean. The researchers say predictions that the epidemic has peaked in North America and Europe may be premature. Although there has been some levelling off of cases among homosexual men and injecting drug users, there is a slow but steady increase in infections among heterosexuals.

Approximately 720,000 adults in Europe carry the virus, including 122,000 women, says the report. Latest Department of Health figures show there have been nearly 7,000 Aids cases in Britain and more than 19,000 HVI infections.

**UNITED NATIONS
COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION
FOR ARABIC TRANSLATORS**

A competitive examination for the recruitment of Arabic translators/precis-writers will be held on 6 and 7 July, 1993 in the Arabic speaking countries and at New York, Geneva, Vienna and other locations according to the number and location of qualified candidates convoked. The purpose of this examination is to establish a roster from which present and future vacancies for Arabic translators will be filled.

Applicants must:

- a) have Arabic as their main language;
- b) have a perfect command of Arabic and an excellent knowledge of English. They must also have an excellent knowledge of Chinese, French, Russian, or Spanish;
- c) have previous translation experiences;
- d) hold a degree or an equivalent qualification from a university at which Arabic is the principal language of instruction.

Starting N.Y. gross base salary \$44,351 per annum plus post adjustment (\$12,374 net per annum at present but subject to change) and family allowances.

Further information and application forms may be obtained by writing to:

**United Nations Development Programme,
P. O. Box 551,
Sanaa,
Republic of Yemen**

The deadline for receiving in New York completed personal history forms from candidates is 9th April, 1993.

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More Fun with IN and ON**

PRETEST Fill in the blanks with **in** or **on**.

1. You can count _____ me.
2. Amin came to the dinner dressed _____ a business suit.
3. The director was disappointed _____ Ali's decision to leave the company.
4. We will arrive _____ Aden at 3:00.
5. The teacher likes students who participate _____ the lesson.
6. The baby relies _____ his mother for everything.
7. My father insists _____ speaking English in our home.
8. If you work hard, you will succeed _____ business.
9. Mahyoub is working _____ his history homework.
10. Khadija is interested _____ learning languages.

One of the most difficult things about prepositions is knowing when to use which one. The lessons of the past few weeks have tried to give you clues to help. Rules for prepositions of time and place are easy to understand and use. Other uses of prepositions must be memorized and it may take years before the student of English can use them with some degree of accuracy. Often the preposition is determined by the verb which precedes it. Two of the most frequently used prepositions (and ones that we seen as prepositions of time and place) are *in* and *on*.

These are some of the verbs which take *in*:

- arrive**--When will you arrive *in* Yemen? (for certain places *at* is used)
- believe**--We believe *in* God.
- be disappointed**--Hassan quit the university. His father is disappointed *in* him.
- be dressed**--For her wedding, Huda was dressed all *in* white.
- excel**--Aida excels *in* science; she wants to be a doctor.
- be interested**--Ali is interested *in* archeology; he likes to study ruins.
- participate**--Many people participated *in* the demonstrations.
- succeed**--Abdu is a successful man; he succeeds *in* all he does.

These are some of the verbs which take *on* (or *upon*):

- count**--I can count *on* my brothers for help.
- decide**--Munir has decided *on* the job in the ministry.
- depend**--I can depend *on* my brothers for help.
- insist**--The teacher insists *on* order in the classroom.
- rely**--I can rely *on* my brothers for help.
- work**--The men are working *on* that new house.

There are some verbs which when combined with a preposition have a special meaning. These are called two-word, or phrasal, verbs. Some of these verbs are separable--the verb and the preposition don't have to follow each other: *I handed in my test* or *I handed my test in*. Others are nonseparable; a noun or pronoun must follow the preposition. These verbs occur frequently in informal English

Practice A Match the two-word verb with its definition(s).

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| _____ 1. bring on | A. visit; ask to answer in class |
| _____ 2. check in | B. wear |
| _____ 3. hand in | C. register at a hotel |
| _____ 4. try on | D. begin a machine, light or faucet |
| _____ 5. call on | E. cause |
| _____ 6. put on | F. enter a car; arrive |
| _____ 7. turn in | G. put on clothing to see if it fits |
| _____ 8. turn on | H. submit an assignment; go to bed |
| _____ 9. have on | I. submit an assignment |
| _____ 10. call in | J. visit informally |
| _____ 11. get on | K. ask to come to an official place for a purpose |
| _____ 12. get in | L. dress, put clothes on one's body |
| _____ 13. drop in (on) | M. enter an airplane, bus, train, subway |

Practice B Fill in the blanks with the correct two-word verbs.

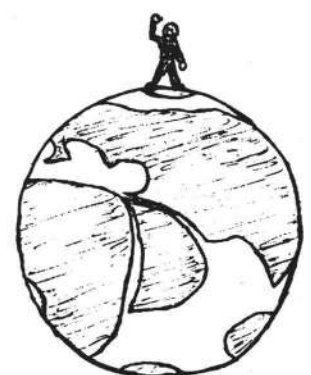
1. We must _____ at the desk to get our room keys.
2. You should _____ that dress before you buy it. It might be too small.
3. Please _____ the light; I can't see a thing.
4. When does your flight _____ on Thursday?
5. I'm very tired; I think I'll _____.
6. Ahmed finished his homework, but he forgot to _____ it _____.
7. Hurry! The bus won't leave until you _____.
8. Aisha has the nicest clothes. What does she _____ today?
9. Abeer never raises her hand, but the teacher always _____ her.
10. You're angry. What _____ this _____?
11. My brother is four years old. He still _____ his clothes _____ backwards.
12. If there is a riot, the president may have to _____ troops.
13. I have some extra free time; I think I'll _____ my friend.

WEEKLY IDIOM : on top of the world

If someone is "on top of the world," that means that life is going very well for them; they are happy to the point of absurdity.

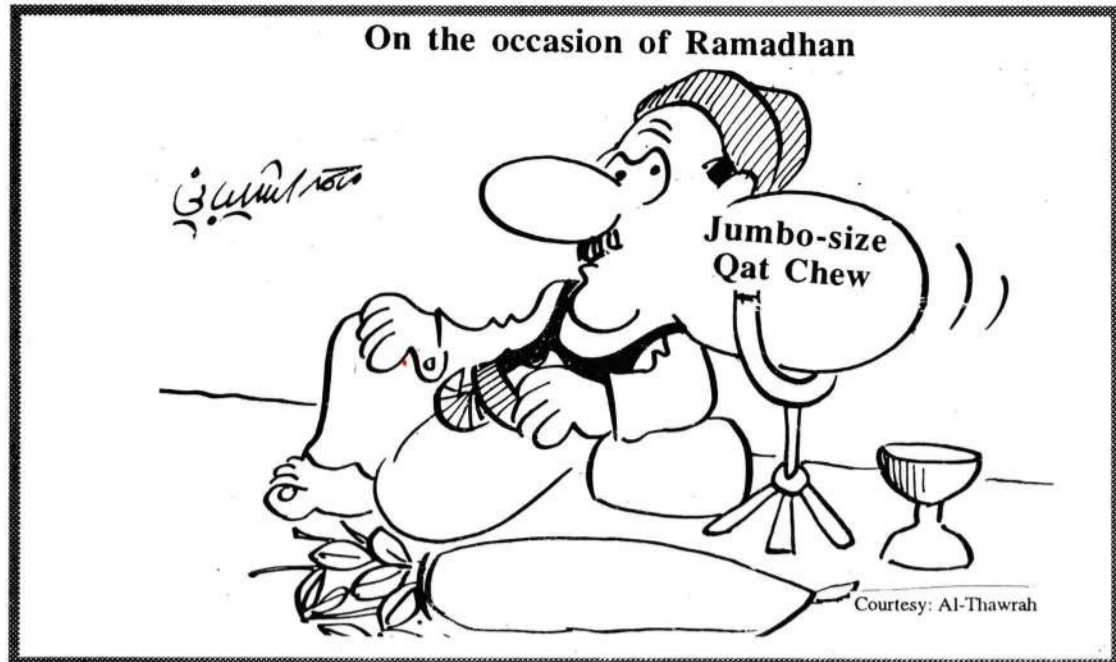
When Jamila agreed to marry him, Khalid was on top of the world.

Samira was on top of the world when she received a mark of "excellent" in her physics class.



ANSWERS Pretest 1. on 2. in 3. in 4. in 5. in 6. on 7. on 8. in 9. on 10. in Practice A 1. E 2. C 3. I 4. G 5. A 6. L 7. H 8. D 9. B 10. K 11. M 12. F 13. J Practice B 1. check in 2. try on 3. turn on 4. get in 5. turn in 6. hand (turn) in 7. get on 8. have on 9. calls on 10. brought on 11. puts on 12. call in 13. drop in on

Featuring Next Week



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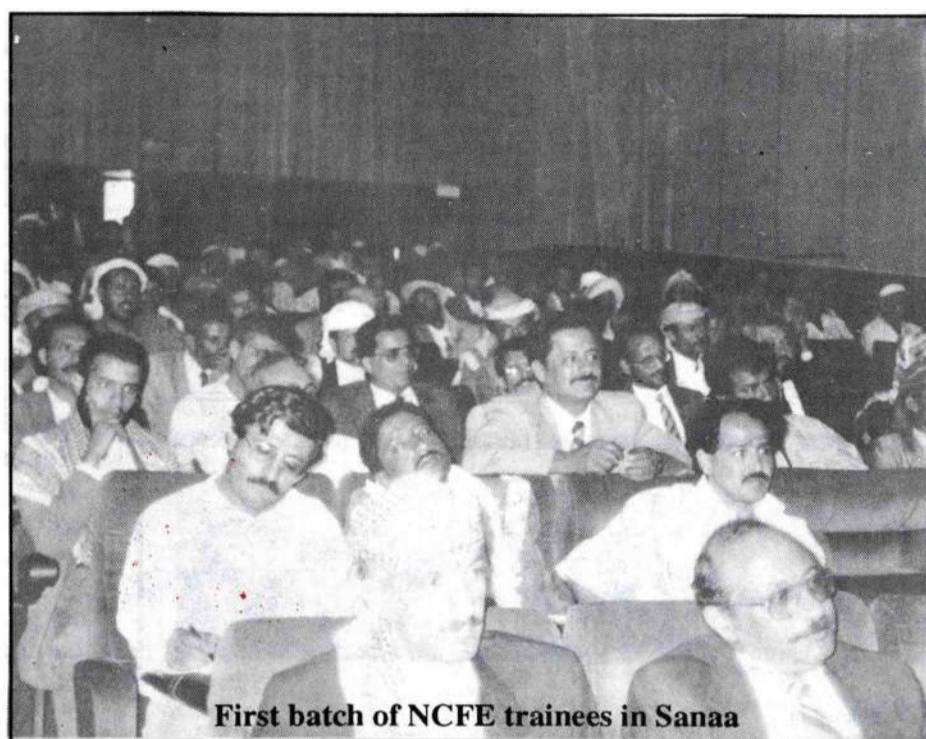
Yemen Times

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• Analysis •

The Americans Are Here!

Election Fever Catches On!



Two things happened on Monday, March 8th. First, the Supreme Electoral Committee (SEC) started recruiting the persons who will man the polling stations. There will be 301 stations which are charged with the duty of receiving and processing the candidatures of those who will stand in the coming elections. Second, the IDA team, which is charged with the training of volunteers who are nominated by the National Committee for Free Elections (NCFE).

(Please refer to table for list of names), has already arrived in Yemen. Both events are new milestones in the country's preparations for the April 27th elections. The volunteers, trained to become neutral and objective observers of the elections, are going to be distributed to all balloting stations in order to observe and document how the elections are managed. This effort is expected to give Yemen's elections badly needed credibility. "We will need about 6000 volunteers to

man (and woman) every election post and station in this country," said Dr. Ahmed K. Noman Al-Madhagi, Executive Director of the NCFE. Already, the training plans are being revised. "We are forced to extend current training schedules, and we will add new slots in the program. We are really gratified by the response," Al-Madhagi told the Yemen Times. The first training session was kicked off, yesterday, Tuesday, in Sanaa. Yemen Times learnt that the Yemeni Organization for Human Rights, which is also authorized by the SEC to send observer to

Names of Team Members to Train NCFE Volunteers

- Tom Melia - USA
- Melissa Estok - USA
- Krassen Kralev - Bulgaria
- Jean Kamau - Kenya
- A.K. Zaman - Bangladesh
- Dana Diaconu - Romania

the election posts, has expressed interest in joining hands with the NCFE and collaborate in this effort. Meanwhile, the potential candidates have already embarked on their campaigns to win the hearts of the voters. The Rama-

adhan nightly qat chews have become fertile ground for campaigning and for elections debates on various issues. The public, meanwhile, has used this occasion to extract as many personal and general services as possible. It has become customary for any citizen (read = voter) to approach potential candidates, who are often well-to-do and/or influential persons, and ask for this or that favor; often adding that he/she is planning to, of course, vote for the candidate. "The elections are an excellent idea. They gave some leverage back to the people by allowing us to exert pressure on the big shots. What a beautiful feeling it is to see the big guys courting us little guys," is the way a Sanaa resident described the elections. The Eid Al-Fitr occasion will inevitably witness a new high in the election fever.

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