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Establishment of the International Criminal Court:

Why Did Yemen Vote Against the World?

In Rome, on July 17th, at the end of five weeks of deliberations, following 3 years of drafting and re-drafting, an important world dream became a reality. The International Criminal Court (ICC) was created by a UN ministerial conference. That was the most important legal conference of our world over the last several decades.

The call to establish a permanent world judicial mechanism to act as a deterrent to gross human rights violations was first heard in 1945, following WW2. But many complications blocked any progress. It was only on December 17, 1996, that the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution to establish the ICC.

According to the ICC statute, individuals - not countries - who commit serious crimes of concern to the international community, such as genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity - including widespread murder of civilians, torture, and mass rape - will be brought before the court. In other words, the ICC is a global judicial institution, complementing national legal systems.

That is the good news. The bad news is that Yemen voted against the establishment of the ICC. Of the 185 UN nations which participated in the conference, only seven voted against the ICC, and Yemen was one of them. Why?

The 7 countries which voted against the world and stood opposed to the efforts of a massive coalition of NGOs were Algeria, China, Israel, Libya, Qatar, USA and Yemen.

Strange bedfellows, ha? Each nation opposed the ICC for a different reason.

The US voted against it because it wanted a privileged status, which the rest of the world refused. It demanded ironclad guarantees to preclude the possibility that any of its citizens will ever appear before the ICC.

Actually, that was not the first time that the US administration refuses reasonable safeguards responsive to its 'legitimate' concerns and ends up standing alone against the will of the world, only to be beaten back. It did so in Ottawa, on the Anti-Personnel Landmines Convention; in Kobe, on the Environment Protocol; and on the Minimum Age Labor Convention. It stood alone again in Rome.

Another country that voted against the world was Israel. The Jewish State objects to one of the court's articles which makes it a war crime for Israelis to settle in Arab territories captured in 1967. The ICC article defines as a crime "the transfer - directly or indirectly - by the occupying power of parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies, or the deportation or transfer of all or parts of the population of the occupied territory, within or outside this territory". China is excessively sensitive to issues of national sovereignty. Libya has an on-going legal problem on Lockerbie. I do not know the considerations that went into the Algerian and Qatari decisions. But why did Yemen vote against the ICC? I do not see any reason, except, and maybe, US influence.

It is no secret that as the US demands on the ICC were refused, Washington worked over time to spread concern among military dictators around the world that the Rome conference was something they should be concerned about. Experience has shown that rogue regimes are rarely willing or able to call their own gross human rights violators to account, especially those in positions of authority. Reaching out to governments that have militaries with poor human rights record, and countries where there is a fragile transition from dictatorship to democracy, US military personnel roamed the world to urge active involvement, in opposing the ICC.

Sadly, Yemen may have swallowed the bait. The price was negligible, given the lack of any local lobby effort on behalf of the idea. The birth of the ICC, headquartered in The Hague, is yet another progress for our little world. The 18-judge tribunal will start work once 60 countries ratify the treaty.

Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf,
Chief Editor, Yemen Times.

YT Seminar on Relations with Saudi Arabia

Duwaimah: Lost & Found

Yemen Times will organize a brainstorming session on Thursday, July 30th, to discuss Yemeni-Saudi relations. Dr. Mohammed Qubati will coordinate the talks.

Last week, Yemeni-Saudi relations witnessed a visible deterioration. There has been a military flare-up off Meidi city on the Red Sea. Saudi naval forces attacked and occupied the island of Duwaimah. The island was returned to Yemen following high-level contacts. Negotiations between Yemeni and Saudi officials have never really ceased. Yemenis believe that stability and prosperity in their country directly depend on good understanding with the kingdom. They also believe that that can be achieved through candid and frank talks.

The problem has been too much niceties in the talks when the 2 sides meet. The hugging and kissing replaces the hard negotiations they should engage in. However, observers note that the delegates have no real power to decide on any matter. "A political decision from the top level is needed to make break-throughs in most matters, including the small ones," said an opposition politician in Sanaa.

Foreign diplomats in the region also note the over-loaded package of sensitivities that each side brings to the negotiation table. "The two sides need confidence building steps in order to overcome their paranoias," a Western ambassador in Sanaa said. That is a big, although do-able, task.

Consultative Council Hearings on Food Security

Starting from Tuesday, July 28th, the Consultative Council (CC) will hold hearings on "Food Security in Yemen." The discussions will cover food local production, imports and stockpiling. Farming, animal husbandry and fishing are the

three sub-sectors that will be addressed. Experts from the Ministries of Agriculture, and Fisheries, and researchers and academicians will provide data and offer analysis on the inter-connected factors affecting the sector.

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OUR VIEWPOINT

500 more Days and It Is the 21st Century

There are about 500 days left before we go into the 21st century.

Some people will hop, some will crawl, some will get stuck. Some people know we are moving into a new era. Some nations are aware of this. Some political and economic leaders are aware of this. Unfortunately many are not.

For those who are aware, and for those who are not aware, it is absolutely crucial that we all prepare ourselves for the next century. The main source of power and wealth in the next century is going to be knowledge, and the ability to organize it and use it optimally. There are two dimensions to knowledge - education as an overall base, and informatics as a tool for its use is a specialized sense. Therefore, for those who want to prepare themselves, they better address those two issues.

Last week, I was one of a handful of persons asked by President Ali Abdullah Saleh to help in generating change in the system. We are required to address two changes.

- First, an assessment of the people who run the show today; i.e., who does what, and how efficiently. If replacements are necessary, a list of names need to be proposed of individuals who can do a better job.

- Second, an assessment of present policies and approaches; i.e., what we do, and why we do it. If changes are necessary, a list of alternative policies need to be proposed of ideas and issues which can improve performance of the system.

We were told that this matter has to be given top priority because of its urgent nature. I felt the President was in the group that is aware that the 20th century is in its final days, and that there is need to prepare for the 21st century. He is asking for help, from people he believes can help.

That is a good step from the President. Now it is up to those of us who have been asked to advise, to give him the best we got.

I am not at liberty to discuss my proposal to the President, but it is clear that the proposals should include:

1. In my opinion, a good official in government is a person who can survive well in society, even if he/she were outside government. Those individuals whose stature, prestige and fortunes are directly dependent on their government post, are the ones who should be kicked out. After all, we want people who are worth something on their own, not as government officials.
2. Financial integrity is high on my agenda. People with loose morals who are looking for opportunities to steal or to ask for handouts should not represent us.
3. Human resource development is a key factor for our future. The future of Yemen is in education, vocational training, continued re-education and re-training, family planning, health services, etc. These sectors have to be re-structured so that they enhance self-confidence, responsible behavior, and the ability to do productive work among our people.
4. We need to address qat, the tribal system, urbanization, the role of the media, youth issues, water and the environment, etc.

The trick is to find instruments/tools to achieve those goals. You got ideas?

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FAAY Gala Dinner

The Fulbright Alumni Association of Yemen (FAAY) holds on Wednesday, July 29th, a gala dinner in honor of Ms. Marjorie Ransom, founder of the Fulbright program in Yemen some a quarter of a century ago. She was in charge of USIS at the time.

The occasion will also go to mark the official launch of the FAAY, as well as a moment to recognize financial contributors and other supporters.

The FAAY is a non-government organization which intends to expand the scholarship opportunities for Yemenis to study in the USA. "As opportunities through the US-government financed official program dwindle, former Fulbright Yemenis have come together to establish the FAAY," said Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, a former Fulbrighter and Secretary-General of the FAAY. He added, "We look at this as a legacy. We want our kids to be availed the same excellent educational opportunities through the FAAY."

The official US Fulbright program sends about three Yemen students to the US for post-university studies. The FAAY will probably add another three every year.

The dinner reception will also serve as an occasion to honor Mr. Adam Erel, USIS Director. Adam worked very hard for closer Yemeni-American understanding and cooperation in media, cultural and educational fields. He was also instrumental in the establishment of the FAAY.

There are in Yemen today about 120 former Fulbrighters. The total number of Yemenis who studied in the USA (whether on their own, or through US-assisted programs) is estimated at 4,000 graduates.

Combating Malaria

The Coordinating Meeting to Combat Malaria in the East Mediterranean and East Africa Region starts in Sanaa today, Monday, July 27. Organized by the Ministry of Public Health in cooperation with the WHO, the 3-day meeting aims to achieve a fruitful exchange of information and expertise. Participants will also review the support provided by the WHO to countries in the region in order to combat the malaria epidemic. Participant countries include Yemen, Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Djibouti.

Internal Tourism

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism has, in cooperation with the Environment Protection Council, organized a seminar on internal tourism and environmental protection. The necessary means to vitalize the tourism sector and in an environmentally friendly way were addressed by the participants.

Pollution Control Boat

The Yemen Maritime Authority placed an order with Halmatic Limited to design and build an 18 meter oil pollution control boat. The boat will be stationed at Aden and will provide an emergency service combined with collection capabilities for oil spill incidents. Halmatic selected the 18 meter Arun type hull from their wide range of available designs. The excellent sea keeping qualities and load carrying abilities of this well proven hull is ideal for the demanding task.

The boat will be built, within 12 months, under Germanischer Lloyd's classification and fitted with a comprehensive arrangement of oil pollution control systems including floating booms, collection and dispersant equipment.

Interior Minister in a Press Conference:

"J'accuse!"

Interior Minister Major-General Mohammed Hussain Arab pointed the finger at Saudi Arabia. In a press conference held in Sanaa on Saturday, July 25, the minister announced that Saudi Arabia had violated bilateral treaties, agreements, Memoranda of Understanding, and whatever was between the two nations 73 times in less than one month.

Violations enumerated by the minister included the recurrent violations by Saudi forces of Yemeni territory. He indicated that during the period from 13 June to 15 July, there were 73 violations of Yemeni border territory in the air, on land and in the sea. "These violations were mainly concentrated in the eastern and western border regions of Yemen," announced the minister.

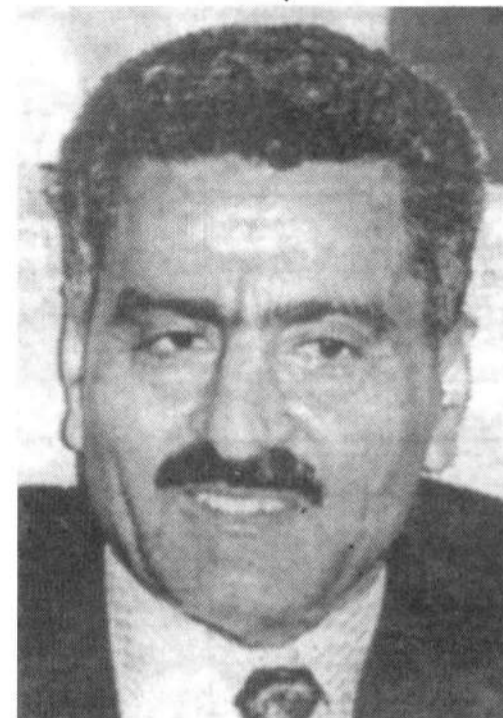
Speaking about the island of Duwaima, he insisted it was 100% Yemeni. "Saudi Arabia has absolutely no historical or legal rights to the island," he asserted. Sharing the island - as Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayif Bin Abdulaziz had suggested - "was totally out of the question" the Yemeni official said.

One particular incident narrated by Mr. Arab involved besieging the Saudi troops that drove into Yemeni territory. Contacts were made with Saudi authorities, which resulted in securing the release of their troops unharmed and with their full weaponry. "This was a good-will gesture by the Yemeni leadership to keep the good neighborly relationship between the two countries."

Another issue touched upon by the minister is car theft and smuggling. He indicated that there are specialized gangs operating from Saudi territory. They steal cars - usually belonging to oil companies operating in Yemen, take them over the border into the Saudi region of Najran, change their bodies or chassis, re-paint them and sell them back in Yemen!

"Saudi Arabia is also always trying to introduce de facto installations and army positions over the border into Yemeni territory."

According to Mr. Arab, Yemeni has requested Saudi Arabia to hand over a number of elements involved in acts of violence and subversion on Yemeni soil. "Five people were named to the Saudi Authorities who are believed to be in Najran."



On another level, he talked about the ambush, which he himself, the Minister of Local Administration, the chief of the Political Security Organization, and the Governor of Al-Jawf had incurred while returning from an inspection visit to Matamma, Al-Jawf.

"A number of suspects have been apprehended, and army troops are surrounding the area where the rest of the armed gang is believed to be holed up." Some of the wounded perpetrators are thought to be now in Saudi Arabia being treated at Najran military hospitals.

By: Ismail Al-Ghabry,
Yemen Times.

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"Suwar Min Biladi brought Yemenis together."

Mohsen Al-Jabri is one of the senior radio and television announcers in Yemen. His television series "Suwar Min Biladi" (Pictures or Images from My Country) is the longest running program on the Yemeni tube.

From the program, you can quickly note that the man has a message. He feels he has a role to play in building cohesion and national unity. He works hard to make Yemenis wherever they are, appreciate the unique features and qualities that exist in this or that tribe or region. He also encourages domestic tourism by discussing the beauty of the landscape, the opportunities, the folklore, and the various enjoyable sites.

Ismail Al-Ghabry of Yemen Times spoke to Mr. Al-Jabri and filed the following interview.

Q: Could you tell us about your early days in broadcasting?

A: I come from Thulath. I completed my elementary religious schooling at the Shibam mosque, following which I moved to Sanaa to study at the preparatory and secondary schools. One of our teachers was the famous martyred revolutionary leader Ali Abdulmughni.

During preparations for the Revolution of September, we were assigned the task of occupying the Sanaa radio. To employ the radio broadcast to serve the revolution, we started to prepare special propaganda programs to be broadcast in a simple language to be understood by the majority of the uneducated masses.

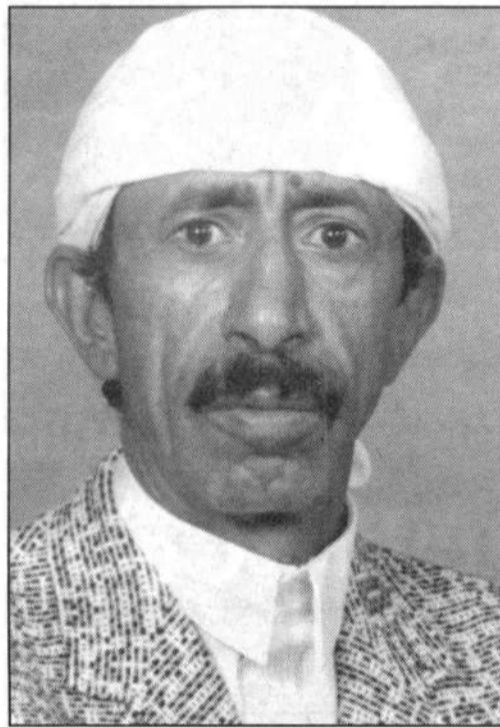
The first program I presented was called "Ruah Al-Shaab" or the people's aspirations, which was followed by a number of daily and weekly programs, all presented in simple everyday parlance.

I later worked in the Aden broadcasting station until when President Ali Abdullah Saleh invited me back to Sanaa.

Q: How did you hit upon the idea of your famous program - Suwar Min Biladi?

A: I used to present a daily radio program when the President summoned me for an audience along with the then minister of information, Yahya Al-Arashi, and asked me to start preparing a TV program. I already had the idea for Suwar Min Biladi as a means of making all parts of Yemen known to all Yemenis. The program also proved to be a good method of documenting Yemen's unique heritage and culture.

A section of the program is called "Sawt Al-Sha'ab" or voice of the people in which ordinary citizens are given the chance to freely express their opinion and demands. Another section deals with folkloric arts, traditional clothes and handicrafts, popular



regional dishes, historic sites, tourist attractions, architecture, handicrafts, etc.

Q: What has been the impact of this program, in your opinion?

A: Following unification, Suwar Min Biladi played a major part in bringing the people of the erstwhile two countries together. I said to the President at the time that there are many people living in remote and deprived areas who will benefit greatly from such a program. They will find a good means of expressing their hopes and grievances.

Most important of all, I asked the minister of culture to instruct the censors not to interfere with our freedom to present the country's reality. The request was granted.

Q: How many episodes of the program have been recorded up to now? And how many people have worked with you

over all those years?

A: During the program's course, I worked with a large number of TV directors, cameramen, technicians and drivers. The directors include Mohammed Lutf Al-Haleeli, (7 years), Nasser Al-Awlaqi (5 years); while, the cameramen include Ali Al-Amrani, Abdulrahman Wohaish, and, the longest serving of all, Mohammed Abdullah Al-Absi. The latter has been with me almost everywhere in Yemen.

As for the number of episodes, I am sorry to say that I do not have an exact figure. I believe the number is in the thousands. The TV archives are not very thorough in keeping their records. Many of the program's episodes were recorded on an old type of film, which is normally used of daily news coverage and is disposed of after a while. Due to bad storage conditions, films have started to disintegrate, literally. Some of the material was salvaged by transferring them onto new tapes.

A more extensive archival system is currently being prepared.

Q: How does the Yemeni information media in the past compare with the present?

A: There is no comparison really. With the advent of satellite TV, the Internet and modern means of communication, the world has become a small village. You can see satellite dishes everywhere in Yemen, even in small and remote villages.

Moreover, democratization and the multi-party system adopted in Yemen have made it possible for many publications to appear, giving people more choice and a plethora of information. The information media in the

past, on the other hand, were put exclusively in the service of individual regimes. A lot has changed after unification.

Q: Can you remember a particular anecdote from the past 20 years of your program's existence?

A: It happened when I was in the southern governorates before unification. The filming crew were ensconced in a hotel, overlooking the sea. While I was standing on the balcony looking west, I saw the most amazing spectacle - the sun sinking into the horizon. It was a wonderful scene, which I felt it a pity to waste. So I immediately called the cameraman and asked him to film.

We were closely watched by the former regime's secret police. Two of them rushed into our room. "What do you think you're doing," shouted one of them. "I'm only filming the sunset," I replied innocently. I added: "If you want, we'll only film the northern part of the sun and mask the southern. Do you also want to divide the sun into two halves, like our country!"

Another anecdote I was doing a program about Yemen's Jewish community. The plan was to broadcast the program through the Jordanian satellite channel - Yemen had not started its satellite broadcast then. The aim was really to show the Yemeni Jews who immigrated to Israel how their kins live back in Yemen after the revolution's victory. It was also intended as a response to the lies propagated by the Western media, alleging

that Yemen's Jews are oppressed by the government.

We filmed practically all aspects of life of the Jewish community. A senior Yemeni rabbi said, "During the reign of the Imam, all Yemenis were oppressed, whether Muslim or Jew. When the Yemeni Jews immigrated to Israel, they were made to do menial jobs and were exploited by the Western Jews."

I remember when we were filming the program, I sat in a main sitting room and people were brought in turn to be interviewed. It happened that whenever a man entered the room with his son, he would order the son to greet me saying, "Shake hands with your uncle Mohsin, boy!" The phrase was repeated so many times, that at the end I laughed and said,

"Now I've become one of you!"

Q: How successful is Suwar Min Biladi in introducing Yemen to the world?

A: It has of course helped encourage internal cohesion. Its external influence is limited, although it is visible.

Q: Any last comment?

A: I must emphasize that I never owned a car or was given a car by the government to help me in my filming trips. I have to make do with local transport. Many of the people who worked with me left because they found it difficult to continue with very little financial rewards. We are only given enough money for transport and accommodation. Only the most devoted of the filming crew are kept going on.

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Yemen's Difficult Path to Democracy

The poorest country in the Arabian Peninsula, Yemen seems to be opening up to democracy. It is the only country to do so in the region, and as yet it is a fragile process, supported mainly by the trade unions and civil society.

One cheek filled with the ubiquitous qat, the euphoria-inducing plant that like millions of other Yemenites, he chews and keeps in his mouth for a whole afternoon, Yahya Mohammed Al-Matari, with his keffiyeh on his shoulders and a jacket over his futtah, proudly wears the traditional curved dagger, the gambia, on his stomach as a symbol of virility. But his real source of pride is the newspaper he is holding out to us.

For several years now, Yahya, a graduate in political science from the University of Sana'a, has edited "The Worker", a weekly journal of the General Federation of Workers Trade Unions (GFWTU) of Yemen. Page by page he invites us to peruse his latest edition: The problems of privatization, articles on corruption in certain enterprises, a survey on child labor, editorials and opinions, all embellished with cartoons and photographs in a layout that would make many trade union editors green with envy.

"In the past," says Yahya, "I worked for a government newspaper, but when the paper moved to Aden, the country's economical capital since re-unification, I agreed to work for the union. I earn less, but I have more freedom." When asked about the unions independence, everyone points to it's journal. "To gauge the changes that have taken place in the union, you only need to compare editions of the journal before re-unification with some of the latest issues," Ahmed Al-Kuwati assures us. "Before the journal was a sectarian political organ, whereas now it talks about workers' real problems, without bias."

Ahmed knows what he is talking about. As a shop steward at Yedco, the Yemen Drug Company, a pharmaceutical enterprise which employs 600 workers (including 150 women), Ahmed was deemed to be too disruptive, and was sacked in 1994. It took a court decision ("the first of its kind," smiles Ahmed) and the freezing of Yedco's bank accounts to get him re-instated. "Every week, the trade union journal reported on my case and the federation always supported me," recalls the trade union activist.

Today, he works in the sales department and can pride himself on obtaining substantial pay rises for his colleagues. Yedco is one of the many state enterprises. Everyday it produces more than 20,000 doses of dextrose, cough syrups and antibiotics. It also produces medicine for children, distributed free by the Ministry of Health, and financed by international aid.

Like many other state enterprises, Yedco may be privatized under the adjustment programme begun by the government. But Ahmed is not worried: "The federation is keeping a look out for problems, and anyway Yedco has a bright future, it may even begin to export."

It is also Yedco that prints the Yemen Times, the only English language weekly in the country and not given, under the leadership of the editor-in-chief Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, to indulge

towards the government whose poor performance on human rights it regularly criticizes.

Now on the Internet, the Yemen Times has become both the conscience of Yemen and the symbol of its democratic achievements. Although Yemen is rightly criticized by humanitarian organizations such as Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch for its violations of human rights, perpetrated mainly by the Political Security Organization, the political police which the present government has been unable or unwilling to control effectively, there are undeniable signs the country is opening up to democracy. It has got to the point where the oil-rich monarchies of the Arabian Peninsula are getting worried, looking disapprovingly at the democratic developments in what is admittedly the poorest but also the most populated country in the region, and strategically situated, with its western coast on the Red Sea and its southern tip reaching into the Gulf of Aden.

"Our neighbors do not want to hear any mention of multi-party systems, freedom of opinion or democracy. The words 'tripartism' and 'trade union' alone makes their blood boil," confides a high ranking government official. However, the democratization process which began in Yemen following the unification between north and south in 1990 and resumed in 1994 following a six month civil war is not so much the work of the political parties or the government - more concerned with restoring stability to attract foreign investors and impose reforms than encouraging the freedom of expression - than of civil society, including human rights and women's organizations, co-operatives and the trade unions, now highly respected and proudly independent.

In the trade union federation's meeting room in Sana'a, Yahya Al-Kahlani, its fiery president, recalls how the trade unions together with other non-governmental organizations contributed to the record levels of participation in the April 1997 legislative elections, the second since re-unification. On the walls, maps marked with arrows, red dots and comments give the impression of an army headquarters. It was here that they coordinated the supervision of the elections by the supreme popular committee, composed of human rights', women's, employers and trade union organizations and presided over by Yahya.

"One year before the elections, we launched a campaign to encourage voters to register," recounts Yahya, showing the figures on a table, divided by region and sex. "We concentrated our attention particularly on women," he added. However to have paid off: 300,000 more people registered to vote than in the 1994 election. "In all the factories, we posted up an appeal to workers to encourage them to vote for the candidates they knew and respected. We didn't give them any other instructions," continues Yahya. Judging by the maps on the wall, the whole country was covered and a supervisory center was set up in every electoral constituency, with its own supreme committee.

"Thanks to our network of educators and the fact that the ballots were held in schools, we were often the first to report incidents," explains the trade unionist. And there were plenty to report. Shots were fired in several polling

stations, pressure was put on voters, and fraud was committed. But there is no doubt that the presence of supervisors limited the damage. Foreigners declared that the elections were "reasonably free and fair," given that in a country where electoral differences and political quarrels are usually settled by the gun.

The GFWTU has now become a respected negotiating partner, unified in 1990, before the re-unification of the two Yemens, it represents some 350,000 trade unions in the north and south of the country. "In the south we had a socialist regime and in the north a capitalist-styled system. Our

diesel oil which followed in October roused the anger of farmers. The worst was yet to come.

According to Al-Shoura, a world bank delegation visiting Yemen last February recommended the total lifting of subsidies of essential foods and new austerity measures in exchange for more aid. A rise in the price of wheat and flour is expected and the reform of the civil service, which could lead to 35,000 job losses. All of which comes before the country has managed to recover from the economic consequences of the Gulf war. Yemen paid dearly for its refusal to support

Yemen Times, civil servants, who represent 40% of the working population, have seen their purchasing power reduced by nearly 80% between 1993 and 1997. Many of them now fear, as privatization looms, they will join the ranks of the million plus unemployed.

Mohammed Mohammed Al-Tayeb, the dynamic Labour Minister, seeks to be reassuring. "The government will pay civil servants who lose their jobs through privatization from its budget until they have been retrained and find a new job," he promises, in perfect English. The US educated Minister, a sup-

porter of the "social clause" believes the most important task now is to create a stable economic and social situation in Yemen and environment that will attract foreign investors.

Tripartism, doubtless unique in the Arab Peninsula, has become a reality and the trade unions are an organized social partner. The GFWTU has even succeeded in delaying an agreement between the government and the WB, demanding that a law protecting workers be introduced before there is any privatization.

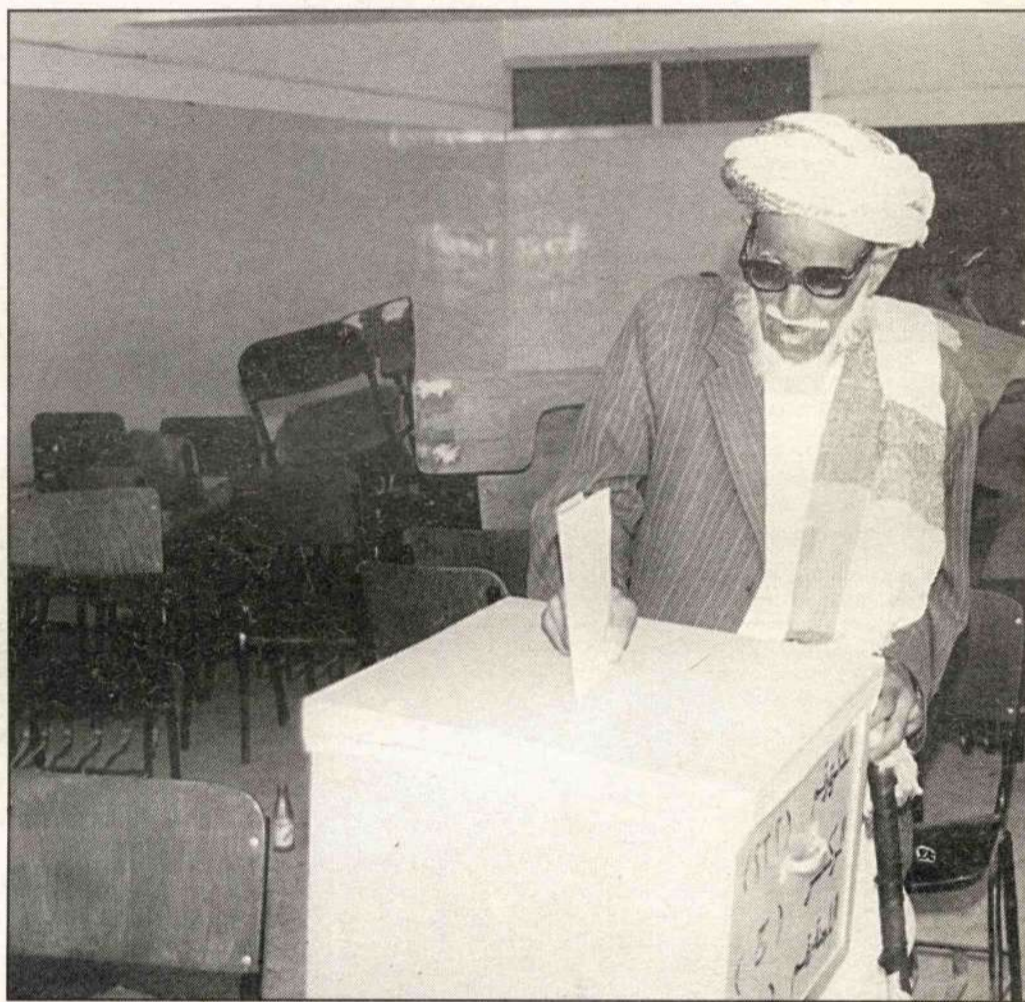
The growing influence of the trade unions however is not to everyone's liking, and for some, old habits die hard. The omnipresent Political Security Organization (PSO) answerable only to the president of the republic, distinguished itself a few weeks ago by arresting Dirhem Abdulfatah, a trade unionist at the Central Bank who was taken away during negotiations with the governor.

Held in secret for a week, he was released following the GFWTU's intervention. The teachers' strike to demand an increase in their pay, which does not exceed 70 dollars a month led to a smear campaign by the PSO which accused the trade union leaders of pursuing political objectives.

The GFWTU president is cautious. "It has not been easy for us, and although we're satisfied with the progress so far, we're determined to continue our fight and defend our principles," states Yahya Al-Kahlani. It remains to be seen whether the trade unions' fervent desire for democracy is shared by the government, as it prepares economic reforms which are bound to affect a sorely tried population ready to jealously guard it's new found freedoms.

By Luc Demart

[This article appeared in the April, 1998, issue of the 'Trade Union World' - published by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), Brussels.]



unification enabled us to avoid the mistakes of these two systems," explains Fadhle Abdulla Al-Akel, the unions education officer.

Although the tensions between the two communities seem to have been overcome within the union, it does still have some sizable challenges to face, particularly as it lost most of its resources in the 1994 civil war. Several of its offices were reduced to ruins and the training institute in Aden has been occupied by the Islah, the Islamist Party relegated to opposition in the last elections. "We have all the documents proving that this institute belongs to the trade union and the court ruled in our favor, but the government is reluctant to chase Islah out for political reasons, particularly as they have arms," explains Fadhle. Today it is the adjustment plan introduced at the behest of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank that is worrying the unions. With a comfortable majority in parliament, since the elections in April last year, President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his General People's Congress (GPC) government now feels free to apply a program that the Islah resisted when it was in the coalition. Last July Yemen's government raised the price of water, petrol and electricity, and the sharp rise (+ 60%) in the price of

the UN coalition against Iraq in 1991.

Saudi Arabia sent home nearly one million Yemeni workers from its kingdom in the space of a few days, provoking a sharp rise in unemployment and depriving the country of one and a half billion dollars its emigrants sent home every year. Riyadh also suspended bilateral aid, estimated at 500 million dollars, and was followed by other donor countries who had been providing similar sums. Even though international aid has resumed, it will take Yemen many more months to recover.

"Today I earn the equivalent of 300 US dollars a month," says Abdullah Al-Mutawakel, an engineer at TeleYemen, the country's only communications enterprise, in which private capital now has a 49% stake. "In 1991, I earned the same number of riyals, but they were worth about 1,000 dollars a month," continues Abdullah, who knows he can think himself lucky, given that most Yemeni workers have to make do with 15,000 riyals, about 120 dollars.

The successive devaluations of the riyal became inevitable after the Gulf war and the evaporation of currency reserves in the Central Bank. In 1991 the exchange rate was one US dollar to 4 riyals. Today it is one dollar to 125 riyals. According to the

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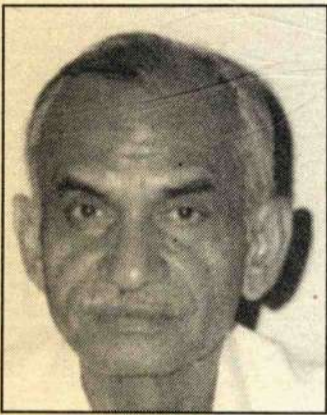
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This is an *OPINION* page.
Every week, a different intellectual writes a *FOCUS* on a pertinent issue!

ARABIC & HINDI



By Dr. K.N. Tiwary M.A., Ph.D.
Dept. of English,
Taiz University

reverentially identical; that is, they refer to the same phenomena in the external world; they are translation equivalents. Their formal difference is visibly minimal; they differ in respect of their initial sounds only. Their near identity is then accounted for by stating that the two words in English and Greek are the continuation of one and the same word in their parent language called Indo-European; and that Indo-European sound /p/ changed into the English sound /f/ but remained /p/ in Greek.

However, this explanation is not available to us in the case of the Arabic fiil and Sanskrit-Hindi piil. We cannot say that the two words are a continuation of one and the same common word in the parent language, the formal difference being sound change in Arabic or Sanskrit. The reason is simple:

Arabic and Sanskrit-Hindi have not descended from a common parent language. While Arabic is a Semitic language, Sanskrit-Hindi is demonstrably an Indo-European language; the two are genetically unrelated.

The other way of explaining such close similarity between two or more words in two genetically unrelated languages is to show that one language has borrowed words from another language. That is, the near identity between piil and fiil may be accounts for by demonstrating that either Arabic has borrowed from Sanskrit-Hindi or Sanskrit-Hindi has borrowed from Arabic.

First, let us consider the possibility of Sanskrit-Hindi borrowing piil from Arabic. Obviously, the possibility of it ever happening is near zero. Obviously, because a word like piil cannot occur in Arabic: Arabic sound-system does not contain the sound /p/ with which this word begins. Thus, piil is not a possible Arabic word. Besides, the animal itself referred to by piil or fiil does not exist at present nor has it ever existed in that part of the Arab world with which native speakers of Sanskrit-Hindi have been in regular contact with for centuries. Thus, we might conclude that Hindi could not have borrowed piil from Arabic. On the other hand, there is a real possibility of Arabic borrowing the word piil from Sanskrit-Hindi. The basis of this assertion are the same two complementary considerations used earlier to eliminate the possibility of Sanskrit-Hindi borrowing piil from Arabic.

Piil is not only a possible word used in Sanskrit, it is a real word in Sanskrit lexicon, from which Hindi have inherited it. Besides, it is firmly integrated into Sanskrit-Hindi lexical system. For example, one can add the suffix -maan or -waan to piil in Sanskrit to mean "he who possess or owns elephants." However, in the passage from Sanskrit to Hindi it has come to mean "he who looks after an elephant, feeds it, washes it, and generally tends it." The point worth making is that the Sanskrit-Hindi piil-maan or piil-waan in the past was, and still is, albeit with a slight semantic change, a living word, not a loan word, but a native word. Besides the animal so named is found in abundance even today in the deep forests of India. Indeed, elephants are so intimately associated with India

that no globe-trotter considers his tour of India complete without an elephant ride. Thus, we can safely conclude that piil is a native Sanskrit-Hindi word and was borrowed by Arabic as fiil, at least as early as 14c. AD when Ibn Battuta visited India. True, when it was borrowed, its form was slightly modified, but the meaning remained unchanged.

For the sake of completing the itinerary of fiil as of now, let us add that it seems to have been borrowed back in this form, slightly modified though, into some of the dialects of Hindi spoken today. Here is an evidence of this. There is a disease called "elephantiasis" in English. It is a disease in which a human's leg swells and becomes fat like the legs of an elephant also the skin turns rough and thick like that of an elephant. The name of this disease in Hindi is "phiil paaw," this word consists of two parts, "phiil" meaning elephant (notice the similarity with the Arabic "fiil"), and the second part "paaw" means foot in Hindi. That is to say the translation of the English word "elephantiasis," in Hindi now is "phiil-paaw" and not "piil-paaw" meaning elephant's foot.

It should be clear that Hindi has now come to possess, besides "piil," "phiil" as well, which is very similar to the Arabic "fiil". We can account for the presence of "phiil" in Hindi as an instance of borrowing from the Arabic language.

Let us recall our conclusion recorded earlier that Arabic "fiil" meaning elephant is a loan-word from Sanskrit-Hindi. This conclusion receives support from one or two other examples. For instance, there is an Arabic word "fil-fila" (فيل) called pepper in English and the Sanskrit word is "pippli." even a Greek word "peperi" meaning a 'pungent aromatic condiment.' Now it is true that the Arabic "fil-fila" does not exactly refer to the same referent spice, as Sanskrit "pippli" does, but it is very close. It is so close that the slight displacement in the referent cannot invalidate the argument and the conclusion based on it that Arabic "fil-fila" has been borrowed from Sanskrit with the change of the p- sound into the f-sounded the addition of a second l- sound.

Still another example comes to mind at this point. There is a Sanskrit-Hindi word "karpuur," and an Arabic word "kaafuur" (كافور). The two words refer to the same material. The only difference between the two that concerns us here is the correspondence of the Sanskrit-Hindi (p) and the Arabic (f) on the basis of their correspondence between the three lexical items we have considered, namely, Sanskrit-Hindi "piil" and the Arabic "fiil", Sanskrit "pippli" and the Arabic "fil-fila"; the Sanskrit-Hindi "karpuur" and the Arabic "kaafuur", one is tempted to tentatively formulate a general sound correspondence rule that, at an earlier stage Arabic tended to replace the Sanskrit-Hindi p-sound by its f- sound, whenever it borrowed a Sanskrit-Hindi word. At an earlier stage, because now the native speakers of Arabic tend to replace the Hindi p- sound most often by their b- sound. For example, Patna, the name of a city in India is revealed in Arabic as Batna (بنتة) and kafil, the name of a person is rendered in Arabic as (قافل).

This is not surprising at all, in fact it is universally acknowl-

edged that whenever a language borrows a lexical item from another language, it tends to modify the original item, radically or slightly and adjust its sound and meaning to its own system of sound or meaning. Even if the meaning is preserved, the sound is almost always modified. In this regard let us consider another pair of words: Sanskrit-Hindi "chandan" = English "sandal" and Arabic (صندل); in English it corresponds to "sandal" meaning 'scented wood of the Santalum species.'

The ch- sound, like the initial and final sound of the English word "church," in borrowed words is normally replaced in Arabic by a sound similar to (sh) resembling the initial sound in English "ship." Accordingly to the ch- sound in Sanskrit-Hindi "chandan" is replaced by the sh- sound in Arabic, and the final n- sound is dissimilated to l- sound giving rise to the word "shandal" (Arabic صندل).

From Arabic the word has been borrowed into English as "sandal", the word by which the world today knows this kind of scented wood. Although, the wood grows in India, the world calls it by its Arabic name. You can take "sandal" as you please, as the measure of the closeness of relationship between words and things, Arabic and Hindi. Indeed, most Indians are quite unaware of the fact that the name of the soap marketed and used all over the country, "sandal" soap, ultimately derives from the

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Sanskrit-Hindi word "chandan". This brief description of the travels of words between India and Arabia, it is hoped, throws some interesting light on the nature and extent of the historical bond between the speakers of Hindi and Arabic today.

Intellectuals, But Not Heroes

It is self-evident that educated people in any society are its torch-bearers and the source of enlightenment. In other words, they are expected to serve as role models in the life of their people in changing it to the better.

Thus, whenever society falls into an impasse or undergoes any adversity or predicament, it is these elites who seek to bring back peace, harmony and life. Their role - particularly in economic, political and social upheaval - is indispensable and vital. History stands witness to the fact that thinkers and luminaries did a lot for their nations. They led many revolutions against tyranny and oppression. What the early American did is a good example. They breathed revolution into their society.

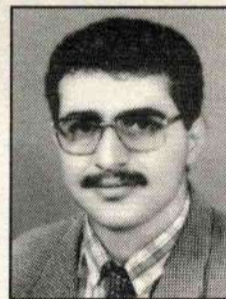
A Passive Role

But unfortunately, for Yemen nowadays, the situation is entirely different. Our elite want the easy way out, they want to make it easy on themselves. Thus most of Yemen's thinkers and luminaries have little to do with their society. In fact, their role in the life of their people is very passive.

Yemen now lives in a critical and crucial time in its modern history, particularly with regard to its ever deteriorating economic conditions. This makes it necessary that our intellectuals should play a more visible role in shaping the opinion of the common people. Unfortunately, it seems that they have their own special world wherein they have fortified themselves. They are completely oblivious to the affairs of their society.

Types of Intellectuals

We can divide our luminaries into



two groups. The first group has been influenced by material gains and thus has forgotten something called "poor or oppressed people". In short, they have sold their hearts to the kingdom of money and personal interests.

The second group of our intellectuals is in bad terms with the political regime. Therefore it is always ambushed, or at least cornered. Some keep on their clashes and conflicts with the powerful politicians and suffer a lot as a result. Out of frustration and disappointment, some of them fall easily in the grip of heart-attacks, a common disease in our country today. Others have decided to abandon ship, and have left the country. But some people in this group are strong enough to resist the pitfalls and stand up to the challenges and stream against the tide. They face their trials and tribulations bravely and stand alive. The regime tries to polarize and/or luring them. But when this way proves useless and futile, they turn to spreading rumors against them and bad-mouth so as to ruin their reputation among the public. They are described by many titles like treacherous, unpatriotic, and so on.

We Need Heroes

Regardless of the above classifications of our enlightened figures, their role is still passive yielding no fruits at all except for a select few.

- How many university professors do we have in Yemen?
- Over a thousand!
- What have they done for the interest and welfare of the people?
- Nothing.

The recent violent incidents that occurred in Yemen are a good

indication of the absence of our intellectuals from the scene. They did not issue even a statement on the events.

Change should start from universities and the university professors should provide inspiration for a new vision. That is the least they should give back to society which paid for their education. If these guys are not able to do such a badly needed service in such crucial moments, who will do it? Unfortunately, I think our intellectuals will fail us. Then, it will be up to the illiterate masses to do this job and serve as a catalyst for change. They will educate the educated people of their rights and how to protect them.

This is because our intellectuals are busy in reading and publishing books which will never fill an empty stomach. This doesn't, however, mean that I am against reading and publication of books. To the contrary, what I want to say is that books become futile and purposeless when people are hungry. People nowadays need someone of heroic spirit to defend their rights in having a good standard of living. People need someone to say it bravely that these people can't afford this economic hardships any more for they have already sacrificed a lot. They need someone to criticize the wrong deeds and appreciate the good ones.

If our intellectuals keep like this, corrupt politicians will continue devouring everything good in our life. Our intellectuals should realize the reality of the situation. They should read the book on the tragedy of the people. It might wake them up.

Then, and only then, they might be able to at least join their people. They have to be intellectuals as well as heroes. Will they wake up and do it?

By: Mohammed H. Al-Qadhi,
Assistant Managing Editor,
Yemen Times.

Yemen Energy Sector & Economy: CHALLENGES & POTENTIAL

Dr. Hisham Khatib (Jordan)
Honorary Vice Chairman -
World Energy Council

Yemen is a country of limited natural resources, particularly water. It has however some mining wealth in oil and gas. The per capita income in Yemen is low, even by developing countries standards, it also has one of the highest population increases in the region and faces challenges in every aspect of human development.

Development of the oil and gas potential of Yemen has become very essential for the future of the country and enhancing its economic development as well as improving the standard of its oil resources.

Yemen's energy sector also involves the electricity sector. Electrical services in the country are still limited, the majority of Yemenis do not have access to any electricity supply of any reliable value. Development of the electricity supply has till now been handicapped by shortages of financial resources and inefficient management of the sector. Availability of a reliable electricity supply that extensively covers the country is essential not only for economic, but as well as human development of this country.

This article covers the three main energy products: oil, gas and electricity. It evaluates their statistics, status and their contribution to the economy of Yemen and their future potential economic contribution to Yemen's economy. The Yemen energy sector is almost totally government owned and controlled, at least as far as commercial energy (oil, gas and electricity) is concerned.

The oil and gas sector is controlled by the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources and

the electricity sector by the Ministry of Electricity and Water. The private sector is involved in non-commercial energy supplies, mainly wood and charcoal, as well as in the bottling and distribution of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) which is increasingly being used in Yemen to replace the traditional wood fuel supplies which were used for cooking and heating.

Yemen's present commercial energy consumption in 1997/97 amounts to almost 5 million tons, i.e. 100,000 barrels of oil per day. Therefore, almost one quarter of the oil production is eaten up by local consumption.

Over the last few years, commercial energy consumption grew at an average of 7% annually. Such a very high growth rate was mainly caused by economic growth and the low past basic consumption and proliferation of oil and LPG supplies, also by subsidized price of oil products and lack of energy conservation and efficiency measures.

Recently the government, at the urging of World Bank and the IMF, increased the prices of oil products and electricity. However, in the absence of demand side management, the consumption of oil and LPG will continue to rise rapidly and will gradually swallow an increasing proportion of the country's valuable oil production.

There is still a lot of non-commercial energy consumption in Yemen, mainly in the form of wood fuel as well as animal and agricultural waste. Wood fuel was obtained at the expense of the country's limited fortress wealth and was threatening it.

To overcome this serious environmental challenge, the government of Yemen (GOY) assisted by funds from the Global Environ-

mental Facility (GEF) was successfully able to prevent further erosion of Yemen's forest wood wealth by assisting in publicizing the use of LPG instead. It is not possible to exactly estimate Yemen's dependence on non-commercial energy supplies, they are still substantial, but are gradually being replaced by commercial energy.

According to the Arab Unified Economic Report (1997), Yemen's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was US \$5840 million in 1996. These figures are higher than the World Bank estimates. Even then it implies on average a GDP of US \$356 per capita, which is low by developing country's standards and Arab standards (US \$ 2200 per capita). Even when Yemen's income is presented in real purchasing power parity dollar (ppp\$) it amounts to less than US \$1000 per capita compared to US \$ 3000 for developing countries and US \$6000 average world capita income in (ppp\$) in 1996.

Because of its limited and poor resource base, Yemen's economy has become increasingly dependent on oil exports. Of the \$5840 million GDP in 1996, up to 30% were made up by crude oil exports. With the dwindling expatriate remittances, as a consequence of the 1991 Gulf war, oil exports has become the main foreign currency earner for Yemen.

The fact that the Yemen's economy has become mainly dependent on the export of a single commodity (i.e. oil) whose price is volatile and whose

quantity is limited, indicates the narrow base and vulnerability of the Yemen's economy. The GOY, realizing all this, tried to overcome this vulnerability through the introduction of LNG exports as will be explained later. In 1998, prices of crude oil tumbled.

Yemen, in spite of slightly increased oil exports, is going to suffer more than its neighbors from the decreasing prices due to its heavy dependence on oil exports for income and foreign currency. Unless improvements in oil price take place, as well as new major oil discoveries in Yemen and improved world LNG market prospects, Yemen's economy is going to suffer, in the short term at least. Such prospects are going to be accentuated by the growing local oil consumption which is now competing with exports.

The Oil Sector Contribution Potential and Challenges

Yemen is moderately endowed with crude oil resources. It is not possible to exactly estimate the crude oil potential of the country since extensive explorations are still taking place. However present proven crude oil reserves are estimated, by the world oil industry at 4 thousand million barrels and present production rate is 400 thousand barrels per day. Indicating that reserves will suffice for 35-30 years at the present rate of production.

Yemen's reserves are minor when compared to world oil reserves. They represent only 0.4% of the

world's 1000 thousand million barrels reserves and only 1.5% of neighboring Saudi Arabia reserves.


No doubt the oil discovery by the US Hunt Oil company was a major boost to Yemen's economic fortunes. Although the Yemen-Hunt production sharing agreement (PSA) was not very favorable to Yemen, however the discovery attracted many of the world class oil exploration firms, from whom Yemen was able to extract more favorable PSA terms.

After the first oil discovery, the Yemen Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Rescues was able to gradually market the country to oil exploration firms. Yemen was divided into 53 separate blocks, some of them offshore. Early in 1997, seventeen of these blocks were already marketed to 14 different oil companies.

No doubt there is more oil in Yemen than has been discovered. This is obvious from the increasing number of companies willing to undertake PSA. But with the population increasing at the rate of 4% annually and local oil consumption rising up by an average of 5% - 7% per annum, the prospect of oil continuing to buttress the modest Yemen's economy does not look very promising.

There is need to manage demand for oil products in the local market to enhance export prospects. There is also need to attract more oil exploration firms. Most of Yemen's blocks are still not allocated and the country's potential not fully exploited. Therefore Yemen is trying to market its promising oil and gas potential through offering better terms and attracting more companies through a conference on prospects to invest in Yemen's oil ad gas to be held in Sana'a early in Autumn-1998.

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Mohsin Al-Mohdar, Chairman, Mohdar Corporation

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Also, appreciable quantities of medicines are smuggled into the country every year. "The need for more drugs in Yemen is increasing because many diseases are rife and the wrong usage of medicines has created many strains of bacteria resistant to old drugs," explained Mr. Mohdar. "But this market is still not very well regulated."

Stop Smuggling!

He went further in calling for a national policy where joint committees are formed consisting of people from the Ministry of Health, medical doctors and pharmacists' syndicates, the police, customs authority, to deal with the problem of smuggling. "The media must also play a central role in raising people's awareness to refrain from using cheaply smuggled medicines. Brands of fake and expired medicines smuggled into the country must be specified and showed on TV and newspapers so that people. Also, the control mechanisms must be well regulated to monitor the quality of locally produced and officially imported medicines."

Smuggled medicines usually do not have the name of the local sales agent on them, neither do they have a proper batch number. "Thus, people may be able to distinguish between the legally imported and the smuggled drugs. The same applies to medicines that are internationally declared as obsolete or having harmful side-effects."

Expired Drugs

Expired medicines at Mohdar Corp. are collected and stored in special warehouses. Then a committee from the Ministry of Health, the Tax Authority, and municipal representatives are called to officially witness destroying the old medicines. "Every thing is officially recorded: quantities, dates, brands, etc."

Proper Storage

Mr. Mohdar said: "Each medicine needs special

storage conditions. It is very important that medicines are kept away from direct sun light and humidity, and be stored at room temperature (25-30°C). Other medicines need to be stored at below 8°C in special refrigerators. Mohdar Corp. takes extra care in observing to a very accurate degree the required storage conditions for each drug."

Choosing Sales Agents

Mohdar very carefully chooses its local sales agents around Yemen. "We have to make sure first the would-be agent has the appropriate storage facilities, a good distribution network, a reasonable number of customer pharmacists." Mohdar conducts regular inspection visits to its agents around the country to make sure that they keep to the company's high standards.

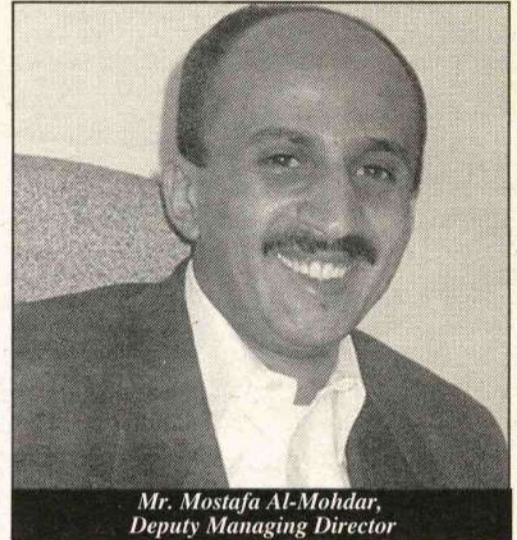
Top-Quality Medicines

"Mohdar is very particular in importing top-of-the-range medicines that are made according to the most strict international standards. We never import obsolete or dud medicines. Only medicines that are proven as suitable for their purpose in their own country of origin are imported by Mohdar." The only possible loss that Mohdar may incur emanates from the fact that some medicines expire have to be destroyed. "Other losses, estimated at tens of millions of riyals every year, are indirectly caused by smuggling. Last year alone, Mohdar lost around YR 30 million due to smuggling inferior brands, which uninformed people buy."

New Drug for Diabetes Symptoms

The new drug imported by Mohdar Corp. treats a harmful effect of diabetes, namely neuropathies. A special seminar was held to launch this new medicine into Yemen. "The well-known specialist, Dr. Abdullah Al-Jonaid was at hand during the seminar to explain to the present doctors and pharmacists the benefits and effects of this new drug," said Mr. Al-Mohdar. "His lecture was truly beneficial."

Methycobal, the new medicine, has been in use in Japan for a long time. "It has been fully tested and proven its positive effects beyond any scientific doubt. Methycobal is also prescribed by doctors in many European countries." Methycobal will be available in Yemen by the end



Mr. Mostafa Al-Mohdar, Deputy Managing Director

of this month, through Mohdar Corp.

Other New Drugs

Mohdar is very keen on importing all good and newly released medicines from all over the world. "Before being imported into Yemen by Mohdar, every new medicine has to have been fully tested and cleared by international pharmaceutical organizations and research centers," announced Mr. Al-Mohdar.

Call On Minister

Mr. Mustafa Al-Mohdar has this to say to the Minister of Public Health, Dr. Abdullah Abdulwali Nasher: "I sincerely hope that the Ministry of Public Health will seriously look into the field of medicines and conditions of the Supreme Pharmaceuticals Authority. Appropriate and logical policies should be put into action for medicine management and control in Yemen. There should be a transparent association between medicine importers and the Ministry of Health."

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam, Yemen Times.

Mohdar Corporation for Pharmaceuticals and Medical Appliances was first established 35 years ago in Aden under the name Mohdar Pharmacy, expanding later on in Taiz and assuming its current name. Headed by Mr. Mohsin Al-Mohdar, chairman of the board, Mohdar Corp. is the sales agent for several European and American drug and medical supplies companies and has branches in Sanaa, Taiz, Hodeida, and Aden. With a large distribution network covering all Yemen, Mohdar employs more than 62 people. "We are always keen on supplying our clients with best quality medicines at very competitive prices more in line with the average income in Yemen," declared Mr. Mustafa Abdullah Al-Mohdar, Deputy Managing Director.

Expanding Market

He indicated that the medicines market in Yemen is quite large. In 1990, the total cost of imported medicines reached \$60 million. Today the number is far bigger. "There are no accurate statistics," he added.

Newly Launched!

A Remedy for Peripheral Neuropathies

Methycobal[®] Cap./Tab.

How does Methycobal[®] repair the damaged nerve fibers?

- Transported at a high level into organelles of nerve cells
- Enhances synthesis of nucleic acids and proteins in nerve cells through the process of transmethylation
- Accelerates axoplasmic transport
- Promotes myelination
- Stimulates axonal regeneration
- Accelerates early recovery of synaptic transmission

Composition: Each capsule and tablet contain 250 µg and 500 µg of mecobalamin respectively

Indications: Peripheral neuropathies (for example, diabetic and alcoholic neuropathy, drug induced neuropathy, lumbago, entrapment neuropathy, intercostal neuralgia, and diabetic retinopathy).

Dosage and Administration:
Capsules: Orally administer 2 capsules 3 times a day (1,500 µg Mecobalamin).
Tablets: Orally administer 1 tablet 3 times a day (1,500 µg Mecobalamin).

General improvement in Peripheral nerve disorders
Jap. Jour. Clin. & Exp. Med. 49, 241, 1972

Group	Improved (%)	Not improved (%)
Placebo	53.3	46.7
DBCC	57.8	42.2
Methycobal	77.3	22.7

P < 0.05

Mecobalamin (CH₃-B₁₂) is the major fraction of naturally occurring vit. B₁₂ in the blood. Its effectiveness in the improvement of the subjective and objective symptoms has been confirmed from the controlled double blind studies.

Further information is available on your request

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Clinical Characteristics and Chronic Complications of Diabetes Mellitus in Yemeni Patients



the time of diagnosis up to 50% after 25 years.

World Picture:

Diabetes mellitus is a disease leading to elevation of glucose in the blood, and is associated with certain clinical symptoms such as increased thirst, frequency of urination, and general feeling of weakness and fatigue.

According to the World Bank, there is rising concern over the ever-increasing incidence of diabetes mellitus. Several reports have indicated a high prevalence of diabetes. Many communities now face the double burden of both infectious and chronic non-communicable diseases. The estimated global prevalence of diabetes for 1994 was 110.4 million, and by the year 2010, the total number is projected to double worldwide.

Yemen Story:

Based on a joint study by Abdullah A. Gunaïd, et al, (1997), the prevalence and characteristics of Insulin-Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (IDDM) and Non-Insulin-Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (NIDDM) in Yemen has been documented. IDDM usually affects children and adolescents and NIDDM affects older age patients. Such factors as obesity, genetic characteristics, and social class strongly affect susceptibility and gravity of the disease. There are

additional factors, including gender.

Complications:

It has been noted that all those quantifying with glycemic criteria are at risk of complications. The most visible complications are:

- Diabetic patients show a higher prevalence of hypertension, which greatly increases the risk; accelerates the course of atherosclerosis, cardiovascular disease, stroke, nephropathy, and retinopathy.
- Diabetes mellitus is known to bring with it a substantially increased risk for large-vessel disease (lvd). Lvd includes history of angina pectoris or myocardial infarction, the presence of intermittent claudication, and the presence of hemiplegia.
- The development of microvascular complications of diabetes is believed to be related to both chronic hyperglycaemia and some genetic predisposition.
- Peripheral and autonomic nerves are significantly affected by the abnormal metabolism of diabetes mellitus, resulting in pathological change, functional disturbance and clinical morbidity. The prevalence of diabetic neuropathy is duration-dependent; ranging from 8% at

Conclusions:

- NIDDM was the clinical type diagnosed in most patients investigated.
- Nonobese NIDDM was the main form of NIDDM observed, with male predominance as a special feature.
- Earlier age at diagnosis of NIDDM (<45 years) was another special feature. This age and sex pattern of NIDDM may have a serious impact on future productivity of Yemen's labor force.
- NIDDM was found to be relatively more frequent among higher social classes.
- Moderate genetic susceptibility to NIDDM was noted with significant familial clustering among first-degree relatives.
- Inadequate glycemic control has characterized the majority of diabetic patients leading to microvascular complications and neuropathy.

Dr. Abdullah A. Jonaid, Associate Professor, Medical College, Sanaa University.

BEGGING: Driven by Easy Money or Need?

The Republic of Yemen is a poor country, by whatever yardstick you take it. The per capita GDP is less than ONE US Dollar a day. That is one side to the story. The Republic of Yemen is a traditional country. This means that extended family relations are still important. Second, third or fourth. kins still live together, but more importantly share food from the same bowl. But, with time, given economic difficulties, the duty towards one's extended kins is getting weaker and weaker. At the same, modern social welfare systems have not yet developed. There are no unemployment benefits, no old age benefits, no support for the poor. Finally, in the Republic of Yemen, unemployment is high, touching on 40%.



A very old woman: Then there is the old woman who can remember the Turkish days in Yemen. She walks the streets of Sanaa on her own. "I'm very ill. My sons died in a car crash while on their way to Hodeida, and my husband died ages ago. I receive 1,000 riyals from the social security. This is not enough for food, let alone the medicines I need." She only earns about 100 riyals a day. "I know many people who don't need to beg, but they do it out of habit. This makes people think that all of us are not worthy of their help."



Those factors have resulted in a high number of vulnerable people. Begging has become their 'only' recourse. Thus, the number of beggars in Yemen has achieved the highest growth rate in the land, especially in large cities.

To look into this problem, Ahlam Al-Mutawakkil of Yemen Times took to the streets of Sanaa. Here is what she found.

Samira: Samira is a little girl of about 11 with her 5-year-old sister. She refused to talk at first, but I managed to coax her with a small handout. Her father has a spinal injury because of his work selling scrap metal, and her mother is pregnant and is always busy doing the household chores. "I have 9 brothers and sisters, 4 of us go out begging in the streets," she explained with a tearful smile.



casting her eyes to the ground. "Altogether, we earn between 200 and 600 riyal a day, which all go towards the house rent (5000 riyals), food, clothing, etc." Samira has been begging for the last 3 years. "I hope I'm able to go to school," lamented Samira. People's response to her varies. Some tell her to go home; while, teenage boys in flashy cars ask her to go for a ride. Other people are more sarcastic, saying that she is like a mosque speaker - distributing prayers for people, in reference to her incessant calls for God to favor the people who give her money. Few passers-by are more sympathetic, giving her small alms.

Hassan: At the other end of the scale is Hassan, a blind old man who has been begging for the last 3 years. Hassan's family - his wife and 9 children - are in their village in Reima. He is led in the streets by his 6-year-old boy. "My wife sometimes comes to Sanaa for the sole purpose of begging," said Hassan, matter-of-factly. "We beg for the sake of our children, we want to send them to school." Hassan has several brothers, but they never bothered to help him after the death of their father. He gets about 100 to 300 riyals a day.

Mohammed: Originally from Hodeidah, Mohammed is disabled. He is married with 7 children, and has recently arrived in Sanaa to beg in the capital's more promising streets. "Since I can't work because of my disability, my brother used to help me but he died 6 years ago, leaving to take care of a huge family," said Mohammed ruefully. Begging in Sanaa earns Mohammed about 300 riyals a day, most of which he send to the village to support

his extended family. **Hajj Ali Saleh:** This man has a wholly different story to tell. "I have to go out begging in order to help my daughter-in-law, who has undergone a very complicated and expensive surgery at Al-Jumhuri Hospital," he explained bitterly. A farmer for Mahweet, Hajj Ali carries with him all the hospital invoices to prove that he is sincere. "She needs further treatment, more x-rays, more lab tests, for which we don't have any money." Does not farming provide good income for Hajj Ali and his family? "We plant corn, not as profitable as qat. The little income we get is just not sufficient. The Ministry of Agriculture always promises to provide us with water projects, etc, but they don't keep their promise."



Qahtan Ali: He is a blind man, and walks the streets with his little daughter. "I have to feed and clothe my wife and 6 children and pay the 6,000-riyal rent," he says, "and begging is the only way out." From Qahtan's point of view, begging is a "skill and some people are just luckier than others in this trade." Qahtan and his family receive 1,000 riyals per month by way of social security! They used to get some food supplies as well. Now even that has stopped. "We need at least 500 riyals a day to keep us going," he explained. "My wife always nags me asking for more money. I try hard to raise as much as I can by changing begging spots."

Amina: Amina is an old woman from Ibb: "I only have to beg to obtain a fare to go back to my village. I came to Sanaa for medical treatment after falling from a high place. My son disappeared during the civil war, now a benevolent man is supporting me and my son's family. I don't really need to beg."

Life As We Know It



Introduction: How can we describe the meaning of life? I'd say life is a continuous responsibility, think of it as employment. We're born, and not long after we immediately have a job to do, it's called life. We stop, look and listen, we gather information from our parents and the people around us. Obviously as children, we're most vulnerable to all that is around us. It's up to the adults to treat us wisely and set a good example.

As we grow older, we have enough knowledge and courage to fend for ourselves, or so it seems. All human beings are constantly under pressure. We observe many failures, we're always being reminded to do our best, but what is our best? We're all different, yet we fear the same, we hope the same, we all have the same dream. We dream of peace and harmony, as God intended. Our job is to look after ourselves and our loved ones. Yet this seems incredibly hard when we think of poverty, sickness and oppression. For example, I've observed how some Yemenis live. They're struggling to stay alive, but at the end of the day, they still have the power to remain faithful. I do actually admire and respect the Yemeni people. Life is what you make it, not what you expect from it. For example, I may expect happiness, but it doesn't mean I'll get it though. Life is a circle of trials and tribulations. Here are a few of the most important factors affecting our lives and the world as we know it.

Starvation & Greed As God made us all equal, why should one be greedy while another is hungry. Also, if God created this world fully equipped with all that we need, then why is one country dying of starvation, while another country is over fed? We're meant to live together in harmony, it is better to give than

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to receive. The word "sharing" is something we should all contemplate. Have you ever heard the story of the Good Samaritan? If not, then you should. Why not share our goods? Food is not going to run away, a small difference can really save a person's life, these people are poor but loyal. Don't worry if you share your resources, you're not going to die instantly! I can not simply sit back and watch this suffering continue, but what can I do without the support of others? Some people are in despair, while others have all they could wish for. But while all of this is going on, there is something else to consider... Satan! After Satan fell down from heaven, His intentions were to cause continuous turmoil on earth. So, do you think that some people are being influenced or even brainwashed by the devil, so much so, that the people in control are the ones actually causing these problems? Who or what is behind this horrifying aspect of starvation and greed?

War & Destruction: War, a small word yet means so much. Just look at Palestine and Israel for example, or Northern Ireland. It's a sin, it is simply not a matter of "winner takes all", or "who dares wins". Again, if a child were to ask you "why are you fighting?" and you replied "I have no relevant reason" then again the child would simply say "well don't". Another fast and simple solution, there is a simple but effective phrase which we should all take into consideration, "fight war, not wars".

Conclusion: Is it true that our country needs us? Or is it the fact that our government needs us? Because, lets face it, without the "ordinary" people, the government will cease to exist. What advantages do we have in this world? Is there actually a perfect system? God said it is wrong to idolize or worship anybody other than Him. So why do some people worship authority? Actually being forced to, this is called oppression. For as long as we live, we will watch OUR world being over-ruled by war and starvation, and we feel helpless, who would even listen to us? After all, we're considered "ordinary".

Anarchy is unspeakable here, because we've been oppressed yet once again. Of course, there is an endless list of problems facing this world, and we're responsible, we're the ones who are being led into ignorance. Ignore the phrase "every man for himself". We're together, whether we like it or not. Just stand up and speak, fear not.

Our desires are more respectable than the people who actually ignore us. In my opinion, the word "leaders" does not mean anything. Nobody has the right to lead anyone against their will. They're not God, it's not their world, it's OUR world. I don't mind if people refuse to take this matter into serious consideration. Although I can just easily say, "Well on your own head be it." But remember this, time is running out.. So just think about it, PLEASE!

Racism & Fascism: Why do we feel we have the right to hate? If somebody hated me for some irrelevant reason, then obviously I would be distraught. If somebody is different from you, well then so what? What difference does it make, we're all human beings. If it's fine by God, then it's fine by us.

Why should somebody of "great importance" have many advantages, while somebody of "little

*By Waffa Alawi Nasser,
Yemen Times*

What Future... Our Students?

Universities are considered to be power houses providing students with energy and creativity. They build minds that will undertake the responsibility of development for a better tomorrow. Unfortunately, our universities are not doing their job properly. Here in this article, I would like to focus on some of the difficulties and problems hindering our students and weakening their spirits. Let me now enumerate some of these problems.

Lectures

Secondary-school graduates feel really shocked and frustrated when joining university. This is because their dream castles come to ashes. They don't find any difference between the school and university. They become like an antenna: receptive rather than productive. The university teachers have made the students very unproductive because they just deliver their lectures, and the role of the student is to reproduce them in the exams. In this way we are producing parrots rather than scholars.

The university teacher should have the faculty of creating and researching new ideas in the arena of knowledge and science exposing his students to this world of innovation. That is, he shouldn't cling to outdated methods of teaching. Universities are meant to produce scholars and researchers. But because our teachers have become bored with teaching, they don't try to keep themselves abreast with the world. They just copy hand-outs (Malazem) from books, asking students to buy them. The exams don't measure the student's creativity but his ability to memorize the hand-outs and nothing more. This is actually one of the reasons behind the breakdown of our university education. This very way of teaching makes our students slothful and dependent.

Libraries & Books

Generally speaking, we notice that reading is pretty rare among the general people. The reason is the little amount of books available and the low income of the people. But it is quite necessary for the university students. But what to read and where?

The library of Sanaa University, for instance, is full of books but most of them are very old, not in accordance with the new issues and developments occurring in the world. Another point is that the books written by Yemenis are very few. Life is stagnant and people are sleeping. Both of our teachers and students are unpro-

ductive.

If you visit the library of Sanaa University, you will find the titles of many books but a few books. Where are all the books? They are lost! This irresponsibility has to be stopped. Some of our libraries are not kept in order and become like fish markets, especially during the exams. The library of Sana'a University is very small and unable to provide facilities for a good number of readers. Light is also another problem making the atmosphere improper for reading.

Researches

We find that the researches the students are asked to do are traditional in their approach and lacking field work. In other words, the teacher himself becomes the sole reference of the his students. The students are asked to do research only at the end of their academic study. That is, they don't have any experience in working out such researches. So, it becomes very difficult for them to do such a job.

Another thing is that most of the research the students are asked to do does not deal with new issues. But they are based on researches made by senior students. The students just copy them and give them to the teachers. Moreover, the students are often given one topic to work on, which restricts the students' abilities. This is actually a pointer of the teachers' inability to supervise many students working on different topics.

Unfortunately, some holders of Ph.D. degrees don't know the essential principles of researching. This becomes very clear when asked by their students questions of how to proceed in their research. They, moreover, ask the students to make plans of their research. Some students work very hard, but they get very shocked to see their teachers disheartening them and underestimating their abilities. Indeed, they try to make them a laughing stock either inside or outside the class. This happened to me when I was a student.

University Activities

A few years back, Sanaa University was full of activities that are very important to explore the students' dormant faculties and skills. There used to be societies in every department elected by students. The role of these societies was to carry out some activities like issuing bulletins, organizing graduation ceremonies,

etc. They also used to organize sports competitions between departments and colleges like football, basketball, etc.

The Gawalleh societies used to do a lot of things to the students. They protected order in the university and organized trips to different places. During these trips students learnt many skills like cooking, orating, etc. Artistic exhibitions and summer camping gathering students of different colleges from different governorates were organized by these societies.

The students found in these activities a good way for exploiting their energies. But now everything is upside-down. The university has canceled all these types of curricular and extra-curricular activities. There are no graduation parties and games competitions. Indeed, university life has become dull.

Male & Female University Students

Of course, when students move from schools to universities, they expect a big difference between the two institutions. They think that they have moved into another world where they can find open-minded and highly educated people to deal with.

But because we are very conservative in Yemen, we find that we are not able to break the outdated social conventions that draw us backward. The girl is looked at as an alien creature. She is brought up to be an obedient person and never has the right to express herself. Everything she does, even her voice, is shameful, anti-traditional and against the social norms.

So, when such a kind of people go to the university, they become entirely different. Some girls feel very afraid of their male friends and may spend the whole academic years without having the courage to break this silence. This is actually due to the fossilized conventions she has been taught.

The other group of female students go to the extreme in their open-mindedness. They begin to disclose their repressed feelings and emotions thinking that in the university they are free to do whatever they like. They have found in the university their salvation. Their behavior is a reaction against the way they have been brought up. But this is not right for it leaves a very bad impression about every university girl. But there are some girls who do really understand what a university is. It is for them an institution where people can meet and share their views openly. They talk with their male colleagues and discuss their problems together. They try their best to educate themselves and participate in all types of activities. But they respect our conventions. The same thing is applied to male university students.

The university has to play a very important role in creating a healthy atmosphere where students come in contact with each other. It has also to bring them together in some activities where they can build good relationships based on cooperation and friendship. This is because the university can build these mentalities and frame them the way it serves the interest of the country. It should produce creative and productive people. The purpose should be to produce scholars rather than certificate holders.

Teachers & Students

It is supposed that the relationship between the teacher and

the student should be based on mutual understanding and cooperation. But it is the reverse in our country. The teacher sometimes comes to deliver his lecture and goes home. Some teachers feel unhappy to see some of their students brilliant and hard-working. The reason maybe their lack of confidence.

Appointing Bright Students

Some students work very hard in

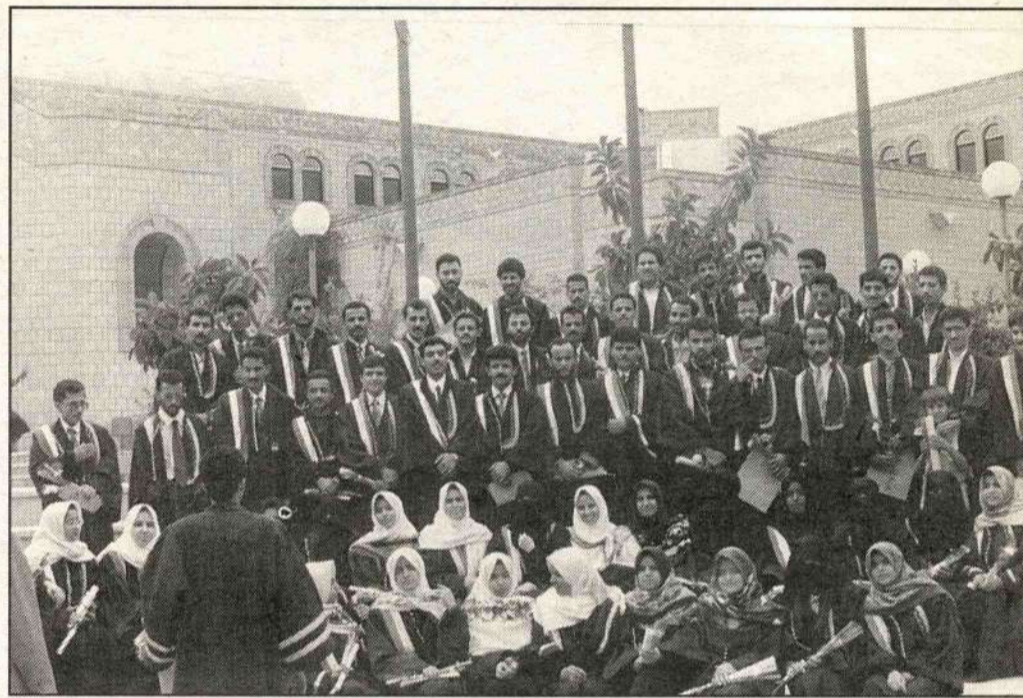
their academic study in order to achieve their goals in life either inside or outside university. Some students want to be appointed as demonstrators. This academic post is, in my opinion, a real reward for hardworking students.

The university law states that the first student in his batch should be appointed as a demonstrator directly. But what happens in our universities is irresponsible. Demonstrators are very often appointed on the basis of nepotism, favoritism and the power of money. In other words, if you do not know VIPs like

businessmen, military officials, deans and rectors, and the like, you will get lost even if you are the best student in the world. Can you imagine this farce happening in our universities.

In this way, unqualified people are brought to the most important institution in the country. What would be the result do you think? Of course, the loss of our future generations. It is actually an unpardonable crime, isn't it?

By: Sana Qannan, Sanaa.



URF: Exquisite Judicial System

Introduction:

Naturally there should be many laws to organize relations within a society. Modern societies have written codes and laws. However, some societies are subject to not only the written codes, but also to some of the customs and traditions for working out many of their differences and ways of life. In our country, such unwritten 'codes' are called Urf.

Urf:

We need to define the word "Urf" so that we can get a more complete picture. Linguistically, Urf (عرف) is derived from the Arabic verb "Arafa" from the root "ma'arifah" meaning knowledge. In other words Urf is knowledge well-known to everybody as to how to behave or go about things. In a country ruled by tribal authority and influential groups of people in the society, this knowledge is immensely useful and vital.

However, urf also aims at working out any discord that may occur among people. Thus, urf is defined as a collection of rules and principles passed on from generation to another.

Now let us see how urf works:

Let us assume a person committed the crime of personal contempt, name-calling, etc. When disagreement between two or more individuals take place, and someone is insulted, people surely may complain to the police and get a redress. But that would mean a long process, especially in a country like Yemen. Urf provides an alternative through "waslah" or "hajar". Waslah means that the offending party knows he/she has made a mistake, takes some friends respected by the offended party, and goes to the home of the offended person. His/Her going there is a symbol that he/she has

made a mistake and is willing to make amends. Hajar means something similar, but the offending party also incurs financial expenses to please the offended party, such as buying a sheep and offering it at the doorstep of the offended person. This is a way out of the problem, and of long procedures.

Of course, the indemnity varies with the crime that is being redressed. But by following steps of urf, crimes are absolved easily, quickly and amicably.

Urf Replaces Court Proceedings

When a person is in a big problem, he/she can cut off the legal procedures by following waslah. That is to say, the person resorts to influential people of his tribe, calls on them to stand by him and even go with him to the offended party. These chosen people agree with the aggrieved party on the day of waslah.

Those people then go to the injured people bringing with them qat, money, sheep and so on. The gifts depend on the gravity of the crime. For instance, in cases of personal affairs people may bring with them good quality qat, sheep, money and so on. In the case of a murder, people may go to the victim's family with more qat, a bull, diyah (blood money), etc. In case of financial grievances, the waslah may involve taking the deeds to a piece of land, a house, etc. It is different from one case to another, and from one region to another.

Halfway through the qat session, the two parties would start negotiating. First, the offending party will start by apologizing and by submitting to the demands of the aggrieved. In most cases, the injured or victimized party would say that they forgive the guilty party. Then details of compensation are worked out. The

aggrieved party is under pressure not to exploit the situation by exaggerating its demands, otherwise, people will consider him/her as being lowly and cowardly. They may sever social relations. Moreover, they will never stand by him if he were involved in any problem.

People pull out of the court's proceedings to urf because they are tired. Widespread corruption in the courts forces most people to go back to urf and find it a good and easy way out to satisfactorily conclude their legal as well as personal differences.

Urf & Corruption

But for Urf to be effective and put an end to difference, it has to be managed by mediators who have the ability to resolve problems. Reconciling people, especially when they are hurt, requires a lot of persuasion. That is why senior tribal leaders and respected public figures - sometimes including the President of the Republic - are called upon to intervene. Only these figures have sufficient intuition and tactfulness in putting forth solutions to work out disagreements.

The quarreling parties may also be asked to put in writing an authorization for the mediators which specifies that they agree in advance to the solutions to be decided by the mediators. This is called "tahkeem".

In conclusion, for urf to succeed, mediators need 3 things: knowledge of the customs, integrity of character, and firmness and insight in decision-making. Although there are more and more courts in Yemen, urf will remain at least as an "back-up treatment", which can rescue the "patients" quickly.

By: Haifa Yahia Qanber, Taiz

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Letters to the Editor

Unheeded Advice

Dear Dr. Al-Saqaff,
I read your point of view in the issue of 28 June; if it is followed it will be really the cure of all our problems. But you know that president Ali Abdullah Saleh does not listen to you or even to us, the people, he only listens to the corrupted officials of the regime.
You know Ali Salim Albeedh cooperated in achieving the Yemeni unification. Consequently, he had a good reputation among the people, and his name would be written in history. But when he announced separation all the good things he did have gone and is now considered as a traitor.
The president has gained a good reputation among the people since he fought against the secessionists and kept the Yemeni unity, but by supporting or flattering the corrupted senior officials in the regime, at the cost of the people, his credibility and reputation have declined. If the president does not listen to the people, follow advices like yours and acts immediately to regain people confidence, I predict that he will be disregarded and deported just like his friend Ali Salim Albeedh. But as a corrupted president like SUHARTO, by then there will

be no time to regret and to regain the lost reputation.
Finally, I hope that the president should listen to us, the people in the streets who love him and will support him, but not to the corrupted officials that gain from him at the cost of his reputation.
Thank you Dr. Saqaff. We really need people like you in the government.

Mansour Alhakeemi
A student in the UK.

"AGONY"

I feel locked up inside a cage,
With emotions called depression and rage.
What good is all the wisdom,
When a man has no freedom.

To me the place of my birth does not matter,
And being looked down upon does not flatter,
Why can't they treat all parts of pearl fair?
They turn us away here, there and everywhere.

Is it time to eat our flesh,
As nothing left in the rubbish?
Why must there always be this fight,
Between dark, dawn and daylight?

That's the reason for our strikes,
For being oppressed is something no-one likes,
So you too will see in our everyday,
Rainbow is a major problem in our way.

By: Hamoud M. Kadha

Community Center For Refugees

While I was reading the 27th issue of the "Yemen Times", on July 6th, 1998 I was surprised to read an article written by the former manager of the Refugee Community Center in Aden.
As a volunteer working at the center, since the inauguration of the center at the middle of march 1998, I'm so happy that now exists community center for refugees. Where people can spend useful time and learn very good things, it is a chance for refugees to meet and discuss their problems.
The major activities in the center are divided into several sectors which are: education, culture, arts, games and sports. Many people participate in these activities. Who wants to see these activities can visit the center and he will see by his own eyes more

than what I wrote in this article. If one or two chairs were broken, that does not mean all the center is not useful. You can see the children spend school holiday playing different games in the center. Before, they used to spend their time in the streets.
I wrote this short article only to explain the truth and what I feel and many refugees also feel. I want to thank the UNHCR and TRIANGLE to think about refugees and open such places for them in Yemen.

By Kamal Ismael Ali

Reform Program

Our financial and administrative reform program is taking place in a very serious and hard manner. Its main steps are:
1. Supporting bribery; when the employees are not well paid, they resort to bribery and such illegal ways to earn money.
2. Make the country subject to taking loans, a system which, indirectly, becomes bank accounts abroad for our officials.
3. Make the revenues of petrol products available to serve the additional needs of the officials' cars and estates.
4. Supporting the useless factories and companies from the public treasury instead of punishing the people directing them.
5. Collecting taxes from fixed-income people while companies and factories don't pay.
6. Elevating the prices of water and electricity services and the petrol products, making lower and fixed income people suffer more.
7. Supporting the rich people and officials by gifting them more cars and houses and by sending their families abroad for medical check-ups.
8. Neglecting the agriculture sector and offering fertilizers and other facilities to qat planters.
9. Supporting manufacturing goods of low qualities such as milk and juices, and neglecting manufacturing, construction and planting materials, clothes, and medicines.
10. Sending more diplomatic missions to countries in which we do not have any Yemeni communities.
11. Allowing armed people to wander in the cities with impunity which makes crimes more common.
12. Letting criminals go without punishing them or even taking any legal action against them.
13. The spread of many infectious diseases because of sewage overflow and garbage.

Important Figures

According to some international studies, Yemen comes at the 123rd place concerning the level of development and people's living. The following figures do prove this fact:

1. The poor people in Yemen are 3 million. The people who benefit from social insurance are only 2,00,000. Every registered needy family gets only 1,000-2,000 rials per month.
2. There are 3 million Yemenis infected with hepatitis. Some of them suffer from cancer and heart and kidney problems.
3. The disabled in Yemen are 1.5 million persons. Only 10% of them are taken care of.
4. Half of the amount of medicines sold in Yemen are not of the proper quality or coming by smuggling.
5. The expenses of treatment abroad given by the government to people are YR 250 billion. All this money goes actually to the officials who use it for travel recreation.
6. The expenses of studying abroad are YR 3 million a year. This money is spent for theoretical studies.
7. The total amount of the government salaries is YR 2 billion given to the officials, and YR 10 billion given to the ordinary employees every year.
8. The total value of imports is YR 3 billion per year, YR 2 billion of them are spent on importing goods which can be manufactured inside the country.
9. Only 20% of the money collected by taxes and customs goes to the government treasury.

Mohammed Ali Al-Yemeni

The Angry Wound

O, alas the Dove has no wings
To reach the moon, with thee weeps and sings
Do not immigrate and wonder how to lose,
The angry wound still drops without pause,
Days are a witness that I am the same as when,
Our paths through flowers and as on snows.
Yet, a painful truth, why not then?
Our souls sway high,
From fancy settled there,
Upon Glasgow both fly,
And breathe thy air,
Yet I do swear,
I would vanish and be aware.

By: Abdullah Shomlan
Sana'a

Note

Letter writers are requested to write their letters clearly or get them typed, preferably in English.

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Orbit Weekly Programs

America Plus
July 31, 1998
1300 Movie - Newsies
1600 Oldest Rookie
1700 Boy Meets World
1730 Flash Forward

27 July 1998
1800 Drew Carey
2000 Moesha
2200 Homicide

28 July 1998
1300 Sunset Beach
1600 227
1900 Drew Carey
2000 Chicago Sons

29 July 1998
2000 Mighty Jungle
2100 Melrose Place Year 6
2200 ER

30 July 1998
1600 227
1830 Murphy Brown
2030 Working

31 July 1998
2000 Union Square
2030 Cosby
2100 Spin City
2200 Beverly Hills 90210 Year 8

The Disney Channel
July 27, 1998
1500 Sinbad
1725 Goof Troop
1930 Boy Meets World
2000 Movie - Hero in the Family

July 28, 1998
1130 Ducktales
1475 Goof Troop
1905 Zorro
2230 Dinosaurs

July 29, 1998
1600 Dinosaurs
1840 Gargoyles
2200 Sidekicks

July 30, 1998
1430 Mickey Mouse & Friends
1830 Sinbad
2130 Home Improvement

Orlando, Florida Live 2300
Extreme Games

August 01, 1998
2200 ATP Tour
Tennis 1998
General Open
Semifinal High-
lights, action from
Kitzbuhel, Austria

Fun Channel
27 July 1998
1430 The Mask
1500 Pinky and the Brain
1525 Reboot
1550 Beast Wars

28 July 1998
1120 Underdog
1340 Merry Melodies
1550 Beast Wars

29 July 1998
1145 Green Animation
1200 Happily Ever After
1430 The Mask
1500 Pinky and the Brain

30 July 1998
1945 Field Trip
2200 Roadrunner Show
2440 Kate & Allie
2205 Too close for comfort

31 July 1998
0920 New Gumby
1330 Merry Melodies
1730 Animated Classic Hero

01 August 1998
1525 Reboot
1730 Batman
1915 Cattanooga Cats
1705 Police Academy

02 August 1998
0700 New Adventures of
Superman
1405 The Flintstones Comedy
Show
1525 Reboot
1755 Beatlejuice

1525 Reboot
Prepare yourself to
experience some
of the best
graphics around
and join in on an
exciting new ultra
cool computer
animated cartoon.

Hollywood Channel
27 July 1998
1230 Cooking Secrets of the CIA
1600 Globetrotter
1730 Model TV 97

28 July 1998
1200 Super Collectors
1330 Family Business
1630 Preview Theater
2130 True Hollywood Stories:
Mia Farrow

29 July 1998
1300 Slim Cooking
1530 E! FYE
2230 Media TV

30 July 1998
1030 Body Moves
1730 Fashion Emergency
2100 An Evening with: T.H.S
Grace, Caroline and Stephanie

31 July 1998
1300 Arthel & Fred
1400 E! Gossip Week-End
1500 E! Extreme Close UP

01 August 1998
1730 Fashion TV
2330 Late Show with David
Letterman

02 August 1998
1100 Super Collectors
1600 Travel America
1700 E! Extreme Close Up

0900 Pictionary
Actor Alan Thicke
hosts this game of
two teams
consisting of two
celebrities and one
contestant. Word
up... on
Hollywood!!

Music Now
27 July 1998
1700 Dandana
2100 Awtar
2300 Arabic R.s.v.p.

28 July 1998
0900 Retro
1330 Musabaqa
1500 Cosmix
1700 Dandana

29 July 1998
1900 Mediterranean
2100 Awtar
2300 Sahretna

30 July 1998
1300 "360" Degrees Simple Minds
1500 Conversation With Simple
Minds (Premiere) / Chain
Reaction#2 1700 Musabaqa

31 July 1998
1700 Dandana
1900 Mediterranean
2100 Arabic R.s.v.p.

01 August 1998
1430 Freeze Frame Depeche
Mode/Chain Reaction #2 1500
Cosmix
7400 Dandana
1900 Mediterranean

02 August 1998
1700 Dandana
1900 Mediterranean
2100 Awtar

Videos at 17:30 GMT
29 July 1998
1430 Movies, Games & Videos
1500 Hunchback Of Notre Dame -
2V
1470 In Pursuit Of Honor - 2V
1900 Who's That Girl? - 2
30 July 1998
1500 3 Men And A Baby - 2
2100 Earth Girls Are Easy - 2S
2300 Dead Ringers - 3SL
(Premiere)

31 July 1998
1230 E! Coming Attractions
1700 Amazing Panda Adventures
- 1
1830 Movies, Games & Videos at
15:30 GMT 1900 Major League 2
- 2L

01 August 1998
1500 Music Box - 2L
1900 Little Giants - 1
2100 The Body Snatchers - 2SVL

02 August 1998
1500 The Stars Fell On Henrietta
- 2
1830 E! Behind The Scenes at
15:30 GMT
1900 Short Time - 2L

On Hollywood 2 August 1998
1700 E! Extreme close-up
E! chooses a star and moves in
for an extremely close-up
interview on this half-hour show.

NBC NEWS
29 July 1998
2000 NBC Dateline
2100 ABC 20/20
2200 American Journal
2230 ABC Nightline

30 July 1998
2000 ABC Primetime
2100 CBS : Public Eye w/B.
Gumbel
2200 American Journal

31 July 1998
1300 CBS Morning News Live
1330 NBC News at Sunrise
Live
1400 NBC The Today Show
Live
1600 CBS This Morning

01 August 1998
1400 NBC Weekend Today
Show Live
2230 Wall Street Week
2300 NBC Dateline

02 August 1998
1000 ABC World News
1800 ABC Good Morning
America
2300 NBC Meet the Press

Super Movies
27 July 1998
1430 E! Behind The Scenes
1700 [Starts at 14:10] The
Witches - 2
1900 Larger Than Life - 1

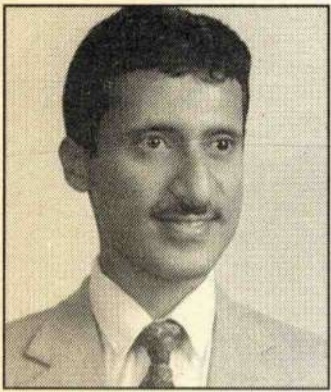
28 July 1998
1500 The Quest - 2V
1700 The Positively True
Adventures Of The TEXAS
Cheerleader- Murdering Mom
- 2L
1900 Dennis The Menace - 1
1730 Movies, Games &

Orbit News
27 July 1998
1800 ABC Good Morning
America
2000 NBC Dateline
2230 ABC World News Live

28 July 1998
0900 CBS Up to the Minute Live
1400 NBC The Today Show Live
1600 CBS This Morning

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A Madman vs Farahat's Republic



Luxun's "A Madman's Diary" (1918), and Yusef Idris' "Farahat's Republic" (1954), are short tales which have in common the absolute universal theme of "hope" invested in a utopian dream. It is the dream and hope which calls for transformation of the present into a new and promising future. Both literary works represent the vision of modern transition, a transition from a feudal system into a capitalistic system in both economy and politics. It is also a transition that calls for a "constant change" which certainly makes it anti-traditional. Luxun and Idris are mainly concerned about the social and psychological effects of this modern transition. Luxun's "A Madman's Diary" is a Chinese tale which presents the disconnected notes and perceptions of a madman in illusion of the real world around him. He, in utter intensity, believes that he is a "victim" to the madness of those who are around him. He believes that his own people, either disguised or bold-faced, are ready to eat him. The story has a "duality" in which the madman operates at a realistic level to expose feudalism as fundamentally "barbaric cannibalism", and ultimately, his only hope is to

save the children from the madness of this system. The children must be saved from being disconnected to know their (shocking) past and at the same time, from being annihilated by the madness of the present. Moreover, the children must have a safe future in which they will not be involved in the act of cannibalism. In this respect, the temporal universal theme in this Chinese tale is historically determined as the act of cannibalism which is presented metaphorically in this story. But the real subject is about the exploitation of man by man under the feudal system. Thus, there is a moral aim to the story. The process of transition, from a feudal into a capitalistic set-up, provokes madness which is one of the serious and obvious symptoms of modern society. Being faced with this critical momentum in history, the madman can only release this imposed tension through dreaming utopian dreams in which he alters his perception of his shocking past, and present, hoping to obtain a more promising and safe future. Similar to Luxun's "A Madman's Diary," Yusuf Idris' Egyptian tale, "Farahat's Republic" embodies the same absolute universal theme of "hope" against the temporal universal theme of the madness of modernity. The title of Idris' short tale apparently promises a hope, a utopian dream in which Farahat excitedly dreams of his idealistic Republic. As an old duty officer, Farahat is physically in the police station, but mentally he is in his own utopian dream. Once he becomes fed-up with the mad atmosphere at the police station, his mind shoots off into his idealistic Republic. His whole dream, as a fictional film, is based on an "Indian rich man" who loses a

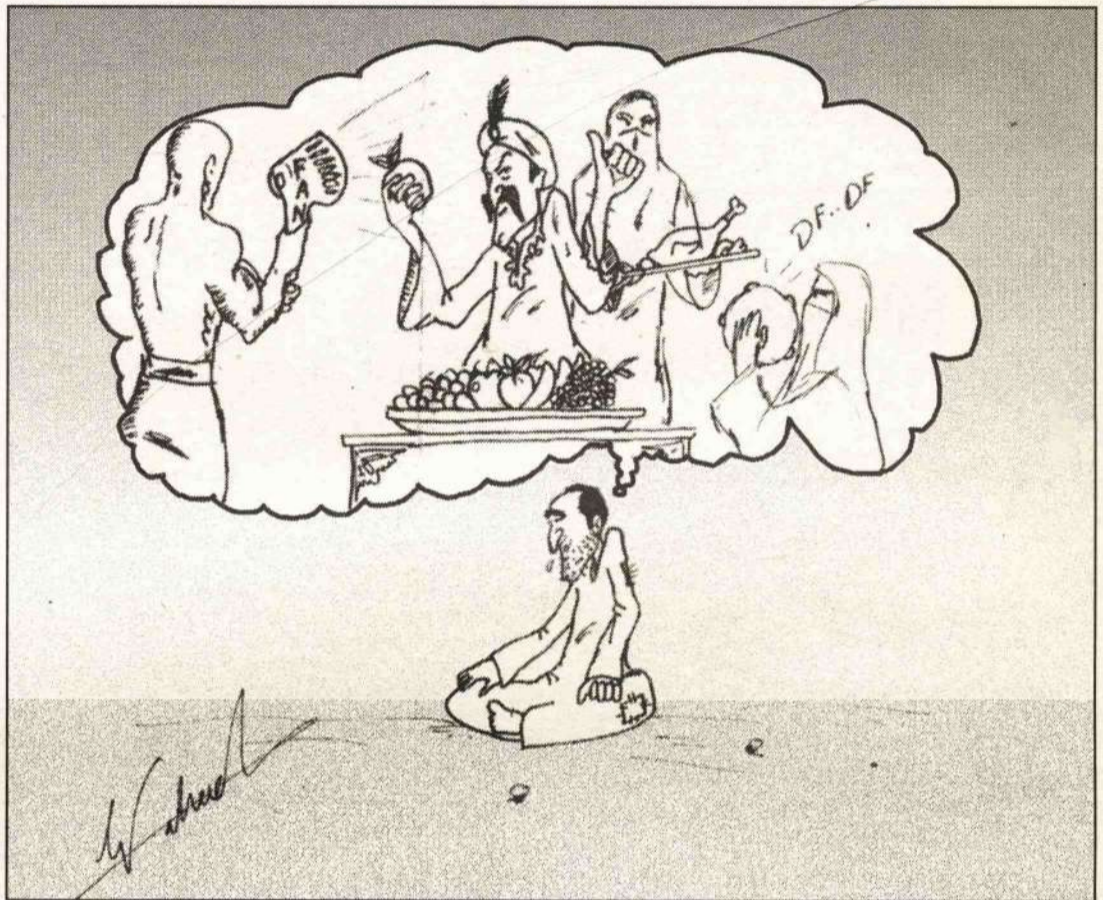
diamond, and a poor villager finds it and returns it to him. In return, the rich man insists on compensating the poor villager generously. As a result, the poor man becomes a very rich civilized businessman who has maximized his profit by expanding one industry after another, creating an idealistic society all around him. And to show a gesture of gratitude towards the rich Indian, the Egyptian, in his own idealistic society, enforces the importance of going to cinemas since Indian movies are globally so influential in the entertainment field. In brief, it's all linked to the Indian's (diamond) fortune in which Farahat creates and bases his utopian dream. Whereas the madness in "A Madman's Diary" is historically determined as the act of cannibalism, the madness in "Farahat's Republic" is historically determined as a different act from cannibalism. The temporal universal theme of madness in "Farahat's Republic" is criminality. Being a day and night investigator of many serious and absurd crimes, Farahat has been submitted to the conviction of people that have gone mad. He believes their (crime) madness is not made intentionally, but rather is imposed upon them by the modern day system. The madness in Farahat's situation is certainly less severe than that of the "madman's." Words such as "eat humans," "man eaters" and "cannibalism" in "A Madman's Diary" suggests the severe atmosphere of madness in which the

madman is seriously mad, and at the same time, his hopeless hope to survive it. Comparably, Farahat's last roaring cry was: "Say something, you animal!" emphasizes the same world of the "madman," a world where the struggle for survival is only meant for the most powerful animal in the jungle, a world where human values and morals are unattainable. In fact, the last roaring cry made by Farahat constitutes the anti-climax of "Farahat's Republic;" whereas, the anti-climax of "A

Madman's Diary" occurs on the outset. Luxun tells the reader from the outset that the madman ended up becoming a cannibal himself. By contrast, the climax of both works is embodied in the shared utopian dream of hope. At this point, it is essential to allude to the significance of the setting in both tales. The setting in both tales has a dialectical realization of certain universal traits. These universal traits are isolation, depression, darkness, imprisonment, etc. The village community in "A Madman's Diary" as well as the police station in "Farahat's Republic" seem to be completely detached from the outside world. If this signifies anything, it certainly expresses, as one critic states, "the seemingly hopeless situation of the Third World

intellectual in this critical historical period." The setting, in both literary works, most importantly, embodies the thematic conflict of tension between the past and the present. In conclusion, one can infer that there is a universal sense of betrayal that exists in the past. This is the main reason for a present life exhibiting fully universal madness, darkness and destruction. Consequently, for both Farahat and the Madman - and presumably for the reader - the only way out of this (mad house or iron house) is to share the same one-way through the same utopian dream where ecstasy is a common sentiment.

By: Khaled Ghaleb Alsharai,
Demonstrator of ESP,
Faculty of Languages,
Sanaa University.



Young Learners Get Benefit of Computers



"The multi-media center comprises nine computers, so we have 2 students at a time at each computer. The necessary software was purchased, which is specially designed for teaching English for young learners, aged between 6-16. So this means anything from just learning the alphabet to those who are able to handle quite complex things.

"This is not a multi-media computer course, it is an additional feature which we use to motivate the young learners to learn. We know children love computer games, so the language programs are like games. Children learn while they're enjoying the language games. "We use all aspects of teaching; videos, language games, quizzes

and puzzles. So we do not teach only through computers, because this would not be appropriate. This is an additional aid, but a very important feature of the British Council of which we're very proud. I think that we're the only school in Yemen to have such a good multi-media service. "The children are generally very motivated and interested in these

aspects. I believe it's the way they are being taught. We use modern methodology, not traditional teaching methods. We involve the students actively. "We will be constantly updating our computer software, which we get directly from the UK. Our teachers regularly go on training sessions in the area of teaching

children which is very specialized, it is completely different from teaching adults. "Our teachers here really enjoy teaching our young learners, and I think we have achieved an excellent result. One of our aims is to cultivate the love of learning English. That's why we try to make it more enjoyable so that when they go back to school they take with them an enthusiasm to learn English in their normal school."

Anwar Al-Sayyadi,
Yemen Times



In a ceremony held at the British Council on the morning of Wednesday, July 22, 87 young learners received their certificates after successfully completing a 5-week course of computer-assisted multi-media language learning. The children learned for 1 and a half hours everyday, 5 days a week. There will be another course in August. Mrs. Heather Henderson, wife of the British Ambassador to Yemen, was at hand to give the delighted children their certificates. Students studied at 3 levels: Alphabet recognition and writing, primary, and secondary. Ms. Coralyn Bradshaw, acting teaching center manager at the British Council, had this to say about the course and the students: "The Young Learners Center was opened in the Summer of 1996. For the first time, we have incorporated into the courses programs from the mass media center which was opened recently.

Congratulation

Mr. Ahmed Barhage's colleagues and friends highly congratulate him for achieving a 1st class Honour Master Degree in English Literature from Glasgow University in Britain for his seminal work titled "Women in the Short Stories of the American Schtienzuge Literature

Dr. Abdulaziz Tormoum
Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf,

خالص التهاني والتبريكات للاستاذ القدير
بومدين العباسي
بمناسبة زواجه الميمون.
المهنؤون:

الاستاذ فريد غالب فارح، الاستاذ فهد عبدالله بن سبأ،
رويدا علوي السقاف، نسرین محمد غالب الفقيه،
إيمان الشرجبي، فديم عبدالرحمن العريقي،
جمال بدر الأغبري، عاصم محمد ثابت،
خالد أحمد القطاع، هاني بدر الأغبري

Sheba's Land

Just a scrawny, pint-sized pensioner he was; an animated dwarf with wrinkles as ancient as the land he lived in; yet here he was, standing 10 feet tall, skinny body aquiver, white beard bristling, glaring imperiously down his little hook nose, staring me down.

I mumbled an apology and doubled my offer - please take 100 riyals for the photograph; please sir. This tiny old man, the self-appointed guardian of the 850-year-old Mosque of Queen Arwa in the historic town of Jiblah, mid-way between Aden and Sanaa, had me feeling half his size.

Judi and I arrived at Jiblah, the capital of Yemen in the 11th and 12th centuries when revered Queen Arwa held sway for fully 70 years, by hired taxi from Sanaa and then on foot. We had come especially to see the mosque, one of the few in Yemen reputed to allow infidels to enter.

But, as we trudged up a steep, cobbled path dodging laden donkeys, fully-veiled women, grinning, pointing youngsters and hurrying men in flowing white robes, all with ornate curved daggers at their waists and many with ugly AK47 rifles slung over their shoulders, we began to wonder: would we be allowed out again?

Not to worry; old Yousef was there. No sooner had we approached the main door of the mosque than he grabbed my arm and hustled me down the side of the massive alabaster building ignoring Judi and Mohamed, our taxi driver-guide, and cluster of children who had joined us.

I thought he must be showing me, the male visitor, the way in and leaving Judi to wait outside. But as I began to protest, Yousef rounded a corner and halted, suddenly assuming a striking pose, drawing himself up to his full five foot nothing and staring far-sightedly into the distance while pointing first at his pigeon chest and then at my camera.

It was obvious: he wanted me to take his photograph!

Once I hastily obliged, he grasped my arm again and raced me back to a bemused Judi and a more relaxed Mohamed. Then the bargaining started.

Yousef, who still had not spoken a word, held out his hand, not in greeting but in the universal 'you pay, mister.'

I pulled out a 20 riyal note, to be taken aback by the reception. There was a frigid silence, a compelling glare, then a haughty look away to a far-distant point beyond my right shoulder. Yousef's right foot stamped in anger.

I tried 50 riyals and a muttered 'sorry.' No change, not even a glance at the crumpled note. Stamp!

When the 100 riyal note appeared, Yousef's expression softened a fraction. The note was suddenly snatched from my hand and, literally in a puff of

children were notably respectful.

If we thought we had seen the last of Yousef, we were mistaken.

Ten minutes later, after we had traipsed the narrow lanes of Jiblah's souk (market), Mohamed stopped to buy some slices of goat cheese. While he haggled, Judi and I took respite from the 35degC noonday heat in a nearby tea shop, enjoying the scalding sweet tea that is a great refresher in such hot places.

Mohamed joined us, offering salted and unsalted cheese as a snack. As we ate and drank, who should pause outside amidst a small group of elderly men but little old Yousef. He, in an excitable state, was waving a plastic bag of qat, the mild narcotic leaves that all Yemeni men, and many women and children too, chew daily to achieve a kind of constant high.

Quite obviously, Yousef was telling the tale of a foreigner he had conned into paying for the treat he and his mates were about to share.

Mohamed called out to him. That was Yousef's second big moment. He looked up, saw us three, spoke a brief aside and then hurried over, making an elaborate show of shaking and holding hands all round to ensure his cronies knew how well connected he was with foreign devils, and how well regarded.

We all had a great laugh, Yousef and friends included.

While Yousef's Jiblah and Queen Arwa are icons within Yemen, it is because of another female ruler that this little-known, male-dominated Islamic nation has a far wider and more historic profile - Bilquis, the Queen of the mighty kingdom of Saba, or Sheba.

Saba, in southern Arabia to the north of Jiblah, was astride the ancient trade routes from India and Africa to the Mediterranean. For 14 centuries from about 1000 BC it was the strongest power in the region. Saba is first mentioned in the Old Testament description of the visit of its Queen Bilquis, the Queen of Sheba who controlled the southern end of the frankincense road, to King Solomon, keeper of the northern gate.

The mission was successful, the presents exchanged drawing excited comment in the Bible. Solomon and Sheba married, tradition having it that their son, Menelik becoming the ruler of Aksum, today's Ethiopia. Menelik's ancestry was subsequently claimed by all Ethiopian leaders up to the 20th century's Haile Selassie.

Saba's strategic value was matched by its great agricultural wealth, based on what could have been considered the eighth wonder of the world, the famous dam at Marib, built in the 8th century BC and which stood for more than 1000 years.

Marib sits on the edge of the Ar-Ruba Al-Khali desert, the Empty Quarter. The land of the Bedouin, it is hot, dry, dusty, sandy, rocky, virtually a wasteland. It surrounds today offer 20th century companies valuable oil and archaeologists hidden treasures; but 10,000 years ago this desert was the fruit and vegetable bowl of Arabia.

The metamorphosis then followed the building of a 680m long dam of sand, mud and gravel, strengthened by lava rocks and limestone, that eventually grew 16m high. This remarkable feat of early engineering resulted in the gradual creation of a huge lake behind the dam, which then channeled the waters over 10,000 hectares of valley and terraces stretched below.

For 10 centuries, the irrigation system sustained a population of 30,000-50,000 people. Even palm plantations flourished. Agriculture and taxes collected from caravans on the incense route caused Saba to boom.

The dam was finally washed away in 570 AD and the region, by then ruled from Ethiopia, reverted to obscurity for almost 1400 years. Today, oil exploration is on the rise, and the Yemeni government has just completed a new dam a few kilometers from the still-visible remains of the old, allowing agricultural development to resume.

Old Marib is now a collection of tumble-down mud-

brick 'skyscrapers' of ancient vintage, some still inhabited, some with Sabean ornamentation faintly visible on basement stones. Nearby are the remains of the throne of Bilquis, or the Queen of Sheba's seat, also known as the Temple of the Moon.

The remains include six stone pillars, one broken off, which are said to remind believers of the five undisputed pillars of Islam - the creed, performance of prayer, giving of alms, observance of fasting and the performance of pilgrimage. The sixth disputed pillar, jihad, means both 'holy war' and 'striving in the way of God,' depending on the believers fanaticism.

Archaeologists disagree, claiming the pillars once belonged to a temple consecrated to the moon god.

Other temples and sites of great archeological interest abound around Marib, but encroaching desert sands and the hostility of local tribes people are hindering the investigations. Nevertheless, the region of Saba makes for a fascinating, if long and tiring, soldier-escorted, four-wheel-drive side trip from Sanaa.

If Marib is old, Sanaa, the mountain-city base for our 10-day holiday in Yemen, is truly ancient. Yemeni folklore has it the city was founded by Shem, the son of Noah, on one of the first sites of human settlement in the world. Shem had come to Yemen from the north, seeking somewhere to settle, and choose the place shown to him by a bird. His name is reflected still in Sanaa's nickname 'Sam City.'

Judi and I quickly discovered that midwinter temperatures in this biblical city are not the comfortable mid-20 highs our Lonely Planet guidebook suggested, but 10-15 degrees hotter. Credit cards are unheard of, except in the up market Sheraton and Taj Sheba hotels, which we only visited once (for the decadence of an ice-cream sundae), and life moves still at the comforting speed of a donkey cart.

The people, as we have found in all Muslim countries, are delightful. Huge grins, hearty handshakes and welcoming gestures would follow our smiles, *alaykums* (hellos) and *shukrun* (thank yous) in halting Arabic; *shai* (tea) would be produced incessantly; veiled women would peer shyly from their *chadors* (veils); children would wave and shout in greetings but rarely in cheekiness.

Our accommodation was interesting. The Al-Ikhwa Hotel, of the 'two-sheet' variety (so named because both sheets are changed daily; 'one-sheets' get weekly treatment, 'no-sheets' speaks for themselves), provided a clean, basic room, rather smelly bathroom facilities and, wonder of wonders, ample hot water. We even had a tiny sunporch with a view of the street four floors below, and all for about YR 3900 a night for the two of us.

This was an up market local hotel, old but clean. Its lift groaned frighteningly when in use; through the night the lift would keep us awake, sometimes causing us to burst into laughter as its groans rumbled away like a rolling fart in a bathtub.

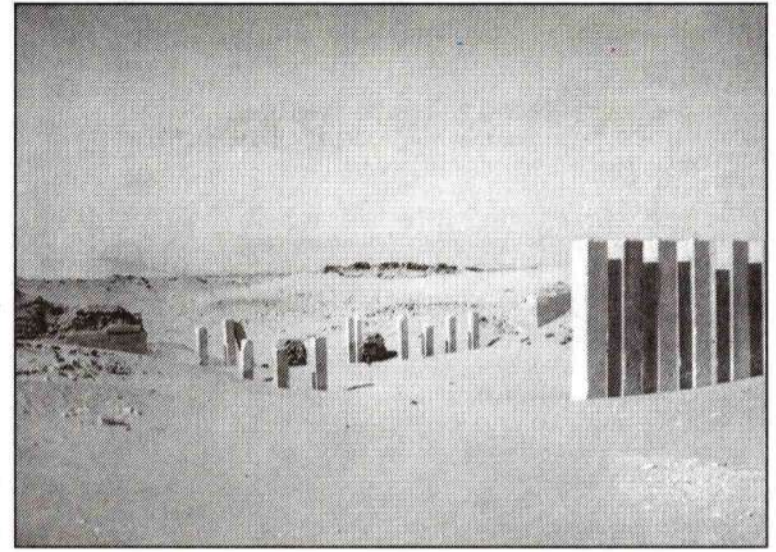
Meals were basic, but good: roast and grilled chicken and 'steak', fish, rice, fresh bread, eggs any which way . . . A grubby menu in English gave some assistance, with interesting offerings such as 'sicramen (scrambled) eggs; mashroom omelette; boild eggs, chicken allocan (?) filet minyon, rum steak, tibon steak' . . . dining was fun and cheap, about YR 800 in total for both of us, much the same as at local restaurants.

Meat, eggs, milk, bread, both leavened and unleavened, and fruit are staples for most Yemenis, with kebabs and salta, a stew of meat with lentils, beans, spices, etc and served over rice, a national dish. There was less evidence of hunger and begging than in many other Eastern countries, although the national economy and standard of living are still low.

The heart of Sanaa is the walled portion of the old city, in reality an open-air museum preserving an age-old way of living. Well off the beaten track for 1500 years, this part of Sanaa, itself described as the Pearl of Arabia Felix, is still the Middle East (almost) the way the Bible told it.

Of course, there are motor cars, electricity and television today, but deep in the heart of the wonderful souk, and in the traditional high-rise, fretwork-windowed houses around, life goes on little changed.

There are more swarthy, hawk-nosed men swag-



gering about with old .303 rifles and bandoleers of bullets than we would like; more young boys with .22 rifles and piercing eyes; more soldiers, scruffily-uniformed, with menacing AK47s and a swagger in their step; but this is Yemen today. Relations with neighboring Saudia Arabia are only lukewarm and in the country, the tribes people are still wary and wary of each other and of strangers.

Even so, the faces of these hoicking, spitting, beady-eyed bandits will suddenly break into the widest of warm grins as friends and strangers are greeted. Hugs will be exchanged, kisses swapped cheek to cheek; hands stay grasped as lovers as male friends walk together.

The souk is chock-full of such people, smells, shouts, clangs, touts, beggars, cripples, hooded women, running children, spices, potions, jewelry, carpets . . . it could be Kashgar, Karimabad, Peshawar, Marrakesh or Xian, except that Sanaa boasts the smell of burning frankincense. Granules of this ancient aromatic, obtained from the resin of Boswellia trees, and its companion myrrh, known collectively and with gold as the Gift of Kings, are on sale everywhere, usually from small sacks and offered by hooded women in chadors and shawls whose knowledge of English, unlike that of many of their men folk, seems non-existent.

Money changers are common, despite Yemen having a state-controlled currency at present. They offer perhaps 129-130 riyals to the US dollar when the banks give 125-128, so there is little incentive for the tourist to risk being ripped off.

The souk stalls display the usual array of spices, condiments, foodstuffs, silverware, tinware, brass, leatherware, huge metal safes, motor parts, tinsel decorations, electrical goods, shoes: a real hotch-potch of commerce.

Local handicrafts are relatively rare, but once found, silver bracelets, earrings and necklaces are good buys, while the obligatory curved jambiyas, or daggers, are on sale for enormously varying prices. They like a laugh in the souk. One market tout with a wheel barrow would not have been out of place in Petticoat Lane. Holding up monstrous pair of wide, white bloomers of the kind Arab men wear under their flowing dishdashas (robes), he called out with a grin, "Mister and Missus," indicating Judi and I would fit inside together.

The alleys of the souk are narrow and twisting, not long ago just tramped dirt, but today featuring tar-sealed strips just wide enough for the ubiquitous Toyota utilities to squeeze through. Yemen is indeed Toyota territory; eight out of 10 vehicles are Toyotas, the ninth is an old Mercedes taxi; the tenth could be anything from a Plymouth to a Mini. This is a huge widespread country and transport is vital.

Our Mercedes taxi, a 1969 vintage, which we hired together with friendly English-speaking Mohamed for US \$50 a day all up after strenuous bargaining, carried us almost 500km on our trip to Jiblah.

Mohamed was a real find. His usual beat was outside the prestigious Taj Mahal Hotel with a dozen other taxis, waiting for rich passengers. He latched on to us as we passed one day, then kept a fatherly eye on his new Western friends.

A father of 10 himself, he proudly showed us testimonials from other foreign passengers to his skill and attention. He kept them in a bound folder wrapped in an old checked head scarf.

Like Yousef at the Queen Arwa mosque, Mohamed was a character.

On the afternoon of our Jiblah trip, he excused himself for half an hour in the back street of an unnamed village while he went to pray, somewhat casually leaving us in the care of a handful of local children. He gave them a stern command to look after us, but did not seek our opinion on the matter. "All OK?" he inquired on eventually returning. "Should be fine. I pray to Allah in there and tell him to look after you. Even if you Christian, he OK. Allah be God over all."

Biblical King Solomon and his Queen of Sheba could not have put it better.

By Robin Charteris,
form a New Zealand newspaper



sandy dust, the redoubtable old man was gone.

Fortunately, small boys took the role we assumed was Yousef's of escorting us to several of the mosque's open doors and allowing us to peer inside. Several elderly men were sitting in a corner reading a Quran; one small boy took my camera and photographed them. For some reason, Western visitors were not permitted inside today, so we had to be content with a momentary glance.

The interior we could see was sparsely furnished, prayer mats mainly, and with evidence of several side rooms. Foot and body baths outside held fetid water but there was no rubbish or graffiti. The



AL-WAHDAMI: Sanaa weekly, 21-7-98. (People's Nasserite Unionist Organization)

Main Headlines:

- 1- Saudi forces occupy 5 Yemeni islands, and amass troops on Yemen's eastern border. Three Yemeni soldiers were left dead and an officer was captured by Saudi troops.
- 2- A leading Nasserite figure: "The ruling authority is responsible for losing Yemeni lands through its laxity and negligence in conducting border talks."
- 3- A motorcade carrying the Minister of Interior, the Minister of Local Administration, the chief of the Central Security Organization, the Governor of Al-Jawf and other officials came under heavy fire in an ambush 15km outside Al-Jawf.
- 4- A huge explosion in an ammunition dump at the Ras Abbas military barracks leaves more than 10 soldiers dead and wounded.

Article Summary: Significant Figures

- * A total of 20 ships from China and Thailand are officially allowed to fish in the Yemeni territorial waters. They were previously banned to fish near the Philippines and Somalia.
- * About 60 ships from a North African Arab country illegally caught huge quantities of fish and other marine life in the Yemeni territorial waters. Many ships are allowed to fish illegally opposite the Yemeni shores when bribes are paid to the Yemeni coast guards.



AL-THAWRI: Sanaa weekly, 23-7-98. (Yemeni Socialist Party - YSP)

Main Headlines:

- 1- Saudi Arabia occupies the third Yemeni island within 2 months. Saudi Minister of Interior, Prince Nayif says that his country is prepared to allow Yemeni troops back on the southern part only of the occupied Dowaima Island.
- 2- Clashes between Mareb tribes and the army leave 10 dead and several wounded from both sides. The government sent an army division which bombed Al-Mutoon, Mareb, in retaliation for ambushing a motorcade carrying the Minister of Interior and several other senior officials. Artillery shelling destroyed several houses and led to displacing many people.
- 3- Several RPG missiles were fired at the ruling People's General Congress branch offices in Lauder, Abyan. Security forces in the area have not yet made any reaction, and no casualties were reported.

Article Summary:

Fishermen Denied New Boats

A large number of fishermen gathered outside the branch office of the Ministry of Fisheries in Abyan. They demanded to know what became of 106 (out of 180) fishing boats with their out-board motors. The government is supposed to provide these boats as compensation for the fishermen whose boats were nationalized in the eastern and southern governorates. The process of distributing the boats was quite dubious. Each fisherman was handed a title deed with his name on it, only to discover later that the real official deed has the names of 2 or 3 other fishermen! Other boats were given to people entirely unrelated to fishing.

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AL-SAHWA: Sanaa weekly, 23-7-98. (Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah))

Main Headlines:

- 1- The President: "Our relation with Islah is a strategic one and cannot be harmed."
- 2- Sanaa Court of Appeal rules in favor of the Islah leader, Sheikh Al-Zindani, in his slander case against Abdullah Saad the journalist at Al-Shourah weekly.
- 3- Governor of Al-Jawf was injured in an ambush by tribesmen of his motorcade, which also carried 2 ministers and several other senior officials.
- 4- Seera primary court convicts and sentences 5 men to prison terms varying from 1 to 5 years in relation with the bomb explosion at the Arwa Park in Aden. A 6th man was acquitted for reasons of insanity. All men came from Taiz.
- 5- A parliamentary committee visits the fish-canning factory in Mukallah, following the government's announcement that it will be privatized.

Article Summary: Vocational Training

By: Zaid Ali Al-Shami

The few technical training establishments that exist in Yemen do not seem to be able to produce well-qualified people, who can effectively compete with foreign workers. Many of these graduates do not find work because of the low regard in which vocational training is held by public and private-sector establishments. Labor market demands should be taken into consideration when choosing the appropriate vocational training courses. Close coordination with the public and private sectors must be conducted towards that end.



AL-RAY AL-AAM: Sanaa weekly, 21-7-98. (Independent)

Main Headlines:

- 1- Yemeni and Saudi leaderships were able to contain the crisis that erupted after the Saudi attack on the Dowaima Island. Unsubstantiated reports indicate that President Saleh had made a secret short meeting with King Fahad to resolve the issue.
- 2- 370 graduates of the Oil & Gas Engineering College stage a sit-in outside the Council of Ministers offices in protest over not being provided with jobs.
- 3- Signing the GATT will harm Yemeni farmers by allowing the importing of fruits and vegetables.
- 4- Saudi opposition groups in exile have offered to pay the Yemeni government \$3 million in return for allowing them to have military bases on Yemeni soil. The Yemeni government has refused, categorically.

Article Summary:

Millionaire Transfers Money

Eng. Sheikh Al-Kaff withdrew all his money last week from his bank accounts in Hadhramaut and transferred them to Dubai, informed sources said. It is said that this comes in anticipation of being investigated by the Public Funds Prosecutor's office. Al-Kaff has been involved in highly irregular practices during his work at the Constructions and Housing office in Hadhramaut.



RAY: Sanaa weekly, 21-7-98. (League of the Sons of Yemen - RAY)

Main Headlines:

- 1- RAY and the Independent Social Congregation are to organize a mass rally in Zanzibar to protest the government's decision to raise prices.
- 2- Sewerage contaminates drinking water in the Hayil quarter, Sanaa. Waste matter was

- mistakenly pumped into the water supply network.
- 3- Foreign Minister, Ba-Jammal visits Saudi Arabia in an effort to resolve the recent crisis.
 - 4- Armed clashes between two groups of extremists over the control of the Athrab mosque in Sanaa leave 2 dead and several people injured.
 - 5- 5 people get injured in armed clashes between seminary students and a security force overseeing the demolishing of part of the Badar Center & mosque in which they study in Sanaa.
 - 6- 80% of Yemeni doctors live on subsistence level!

Article Summary:

Journalists Whipping

The Sanaa Court of Appeal, presided over by judge Mohammed Al-Wadi'i, has returned the documents of the case, in which two Shourah journalists were sentenced to 80-lashes, to the general prosecutor's office. Abdul-Jabbar Saad and Abdullah Saad were sentenced to be flogged for 'slandering' the prominent Islah leader, Sheikh Abdul-Majid Al-Zindani. In effect, judge Al-Wadi'i has refused the journalists appeal. The prosecutor is authorized to refer the case to the Supreme Court.



26 SEPTEMBER: Sanaa weekly, 23-7-98. (Yemen Armed Forces)

Main Headlines:

- 1- The President: "We are keen not to step up matters with Saudi Arabia." "Democracy is a national choice, and any attempts to undermine it will not succeed."
- 2- Council of Ministers: "The government will not be lenient with the perpetrators of criminal and subversive acts."
- 3- Official sources declare that the Dowaima Island is 100% Yemeni, and it has reverted to its past situation.
- 4- Minister of Interior announces the arrest of several men who belong to the group that ambushed his motorcade near Al-Jawf.

Article Summary: Rationalization of Policies

By: Iskandar Al-Asbahi

The state still subsidizes wheat at a rate of 85 riyals to the dollar. No consideration is given to the fluctuation in world prices of this basic commodity. Other countries like Egypt, for example, try to buy wheat when it is sold at its lowest price. Newspaper reports often refer to subsidized wheat being bought at exorbitant prices, being smuggled out of the country, used as animal fodder or simply sold on the black market. This indicates that the government subsidy is not entirely benefiting the targeted segment of the population. So the subsidy policy has to be reviewed, and subsidies can be gradually lifted.



AL-AYYAM: Aden bi-weekly, 26-7-98. (Independent)

Main Headlines:

- 1- Foreign Minister, Ba-Jammal: "We have agreed with the Saudi authorities on the basic points and the fixed principles." Saudi Foreign Minister, Prince Al-Faysal: "Disagreement on shared interests between brothers is Haram."
- 2- Police de-fuse 2 time bombs found near a mosque and in the qat market in Ataq.
- 3- Two massive bomb explosions rock the town of Moudya, Abyan.
- 4- The Egyptian Imam of Al-Hosaini Mosque in Sanaa was stabbed to death outside his home by two men, one is a Syrian national.
- 5- Opposition in Abyan condemn the breaking up of a peaceful demonstration on July 22 and the campaign of arrests that followed.

Article Summary:

Current Crisis Analyzed

By: Sheikh Tareq Abdullah

There are two factors behind the current deteriorating conditions: political and economic. Politically, the government is unable to establish a proper administrative system in the country. The constitution and laws issued after unification were not appropriate to the real needs of the people in Yemen's various regions. Foreign aid and assistance provided by donor countries and organizations could have saved the country from a real economic catastrophe. However, the 1994 war and the political upheaval that followed prevented that.

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July 27th, 1998

By: Jamal Al-Awadi

Sport Activities in Taiz

The city of Taiz this Summer witnesses a very active sports championships and contests in Taekwondo, Judo, football, and other sports. During the last week, the Taiz branch of Taekwondo Association organized a championship for juniors. Different teams from Sanaa, Aden, Taiz, and Ibb participated in this event. The championship was organized according to all the international rules for this sport. A group of young referees helped to make this tournament a success by their own hard efforts.

The Taiz branch for Judo Association also concluded the Cities Judo Championship for Juniors. The Ahli of Taiz players won the first place in the tournament. This team will participate in the Cities championship which will be held in Sanaa by the end of this month.

In addition, the scout teams in Taiz organize other sport activities in order to fill the leisure time of students.



Al-Wahda of Aden: A Surprise Comeback!

The Wahda of Aden managed a come back to the football excellent division after the fall of its level in the sports season of 1996-1997 due to administrative problems. The Club's management held an honoring ceremony for the teams members and other sports teams such as karate, athletic, body building, weight lifting, and Taekwondo to celebrate the 23rd anniversary of establishing the Wahda Club. The ceremony was attended by the governor of Aden, Mr. Taha Ghanem; the honorary president of Al-Wahda, Mr. Rashad Hayel; the Club's president Mr. Ahmed Qa'atabi and many sports officials in Aden.

Mr. Ahmed Qa'atabi thanked those who helped the Wahda Club to overcome its problems

and make a come back to the excellent division.

The Wahda of Aden came into being as a result of the merging of the clubs of the Sheikh Othman area in Aden, February 1968. At that time, three main clubs were established due to the merging process.

The Al-Hilal Club included 4 clubs: Al-Hilal, Abnaa, Al-Janoob, Tali'a and Saber. Six teams merged: Al-Ahram, Wahda, Al-Jamhoor, Al-Awlad, Sheikh Othman and Al-Shabab Al-Mohamadi, under the name of Al-Fayha. Four other clubs were merged: Al-Memdara, Al-Jazaer, Al-Nasr and Al-Shabab Al-Mutaheda within the framework of Al-Shabab Al-Mutaheda. Al-Hilal and Al-Fayha were merged under the umbrella of Al-

Hilal in July 1973, leaving Al-Hilal and Al-Shabab clubs in the Sheikh Othman area until July 18th, 1975. The sports authorities announced in Aden in 1975 the establishment of the town clubs and the merging of Al-Hilal and Al-Shabab Al-Mutaheda under the name of Wahda of Aden. Al-Wahda of Aden, thus, became a strong opponent to the Al-Tilal Club and managed to win the tournament championship for 3 seasons and the sports complex championships in 1975.

Then, the Wahda won the tournament championships for 2 seasons in 1977-1978 and then in 1978-1979. After unification, Wahda has flourished and constituted with the Wahda of Sanaa, Al-Tilal and Ahli of Sanaa, the 4 pillars of Yemeni football.

Also, the Wahda won the fifth position in the excellent division football tournament in 1991-1992 and the third position in 1993-1994. But the Wahda considerably regressed during 1996-1997 and failed to remain within the excellent division clubs. However, it made a come back to a distinguished position and managed to move up the excellent division clubs.



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National Chess Team Looks for Financing

The Yemeni Chess Association (YCA) was invited by the International Chess Association (ICA) to participate in the 33rd International Olympic Competitions which will be held in Russia between September 26th and October 13th, 1998. All teams that are members of the ICA are invited to participate in this occasion. If any team does not participate, it will have to pay a penalty of \$4,000. Moreover, the ICA will suspend the team's membership for two years.

Because of that, the YCA management asked the Ministry of Youth and Sport to support the participation of our national chess team and to provide them with all the money they will need.

Talking to the Yemen Times, Abdul-Kareem Al-Odhari, Director of the YCA, said, "The Yemeni chess team has always made a very strong impression in international championships. Despite lack of facilities, our players were able to win many medals in different sport events."

The Chess Olympics competitions that will be held in Russia in September, are held once every two years. That is why all ICA members must participate. This year, 150 countries will participate in 14 rounds. Every team consists of 5 players, one of them is a substitute player. "We asked for support from the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and are waiting for their response. We have also started a n intensive effort in search of other sponsors amongst the private sector." Al-Odhari said.

Jogging, Dogs, and Our Sports Ministry

In the past, I used to wake up at 4:00 am to go jogging. I always want to keep fit. But day by day, I discovered that jogging early in the morning is rather dangerous. Everywhere you run, you are met with rabid dogs, some of them, if they can't bite you, just keep running after you. The last time I went out for jogging, one of these dogs jumped on me and tore my tracksuit. From then on, I decided not to do my favorite exercise. I want to save my health and the rest of my tracksuit so let fitness go to hell.

This accident reminds me of the situation of the sport sector in our country. Yemeni athletes do much hard work but they do not find any support. The sports clubs have become more of a place to hang around than sport institutions. The Sports Fund does not do anything worth mentioning to improve the situation. I admit that the Minister of Youth and Sport, Dr. Abdulwahab Rawah is a good man and that he tries his best to do something for the sport sector, but nobody co-operates with him.

Some really serious steps need to be taken. We need to establish training centers, and the sports clubs need to be provided with sport facilities and equipment. The athletes need more care, moral and material support. The sport sector has to be more activated through participating in local and international tournaments. All these are the first steps and they are all possible especially with a fund of YR 450 million a year.

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Qualifications:

Education: Completion of secondary school and graduation from Hotel Management school or similar studies.

Experience: 4 to 5 years work experience in 4 or 5 star hotels at the same position. Excellent in Customer approach and follow up. Well experienced in different markets (Buyer and Seller)

Human Resources: Outgoing, Dynamic, Consistent and Determined Personality. Should be below 35 years of age. Fluent in the English language (writing, reading and orally)

Computers: Be able to use the Internet and E-mail communication systems.

2- Assistant Sales Manager

Responsibilities: Under the supervision of the Sale Manager executes all tasks related to the sales operation such as sales solicitation, sales administration and marketing in guidance and within limits of the Sales policy and procedures set within the company. Responsible for the smooth running of the department under supervision of the sales manager.

Qualifications

Education: Completion of secondary school and graduation from Hotel Management school or similar studies.

Experience: 2 to 4 years work experience in 4 or 5 star hotels at the same position. Excellent in Customer approach and follow up.

Human Resources: Outgoing, Dynamic, Consistent and Determined Personality. Should be below 35 years of age. Fluent in the English language (writing, reading and orally)

Computers: Be able to use the Internet and E-mail communication systems.

3- Sales Executive Secretary

Responsibilities: Executes all tasks related to secretarial work for the Sales Department including translation, typing correspondence, general mailing, etc.

Qualifications:

Education: Completion of secondary school and Graduated from College or similar

Experience: 3 to 5 years work experience in similar establishment at the same position.

Human Resources: outgoing personality, reliable and well organized. Should be below 30 years of age. Fluent in English and Arabic (writing, reading and orally). Must have excellent telephone skills.

Computers: Must have computer knowledge especially with Microsoft Windows and be able to use the Internet and E-mail communications systems.

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A Hard Look at Yemen's Reform Program: **WILL IT WORK?**

By Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf,
 Professor of Economics,
 Sanaa University.



The Government has dished out a lot of talk on how important is the economic reform program it is implementing. That is actually true. The reform program is very important, and its success is quite vital for the future well-being of the nation.

There is another truth. The Republic of Yemen is far worse off without this reform program than with it. In spite of the major hardships that resulted from implementation of the reforms, our people would have faced far more hardships if there was no program.

There is a third truth. By and large, the main thrust of the reform package is good and useful. These include the efforts to free the economy from bureaucratic muddling; to correct price distortions by making product and factor costs reflect their true market worth; to re-structure the laws to increase accountability, transparency, etc.; to enable the private sector to lead economic activities, through various measures, especially privatization; to remove monopolistic and oligopolistic rights and privileges in trade, labor and capital relations

leading to better terms for consumers. Having said all that, it looks weird that I should still pose my question: "Will Yemen's reform program work?" There are two worries behind my question.

1. Sweet Talk and Good on Paper:

The best way to describe the system that we have today is that its representatives or officials sweet-talk everybody. They know what the donors want to hear, and they give it to them.

As a person who sat in a few of the meetings of our senior officials with visitors, I often get bewildered, as I hear the visitors come out saying, "What a great guy!" The phoney show of our senior officials has fooled a lot of people. But now, more and more people are beginning to discover that the system does

not deliver on many of the pledges it makes. This is a tricky conclusion, because it is not exactly accurate.

There have been times when the regime delivered, in terms of biting the bullet. Aaah, but that is when the sacrifice has to be borne by people other than the men of the system. Look at the record, and you will find that most of the hardships have been passed on to the general public.

2. System Needs Overhaul:

One of the reasons why the reform program so far looks successful is that the World Bank and IMF have poured in almost a billion dollars since implementation of the reforms started in 1995. Other donors - bilateral and multi-lateral have also contributed handsomely.

With that kind of unearned inflow of hard currency, any situation can be bailed out. What the donors, especially the IMF and World Bank people should realize is that the day the financial subsidy stops, the economy of Yemen will collapse.

So, what is needed?

The system needs an overhaul. To be able to use the resources now available to Yemen in order to create a sustainable growth condition, it is important that the very system change. Our system is

like an old shirt. You can only patch up so many holes. At the end, you need a new shirt.

Most of the key people who manage our affairs today have been at it for the last thirty years. In fact, they are directly responsible for the mess we are in today. These men need to be changed. The structure of our administration needs to be change. Our value system and incentives have to be change.

I worry about the future of my country. Literally, this is a daily worry. I look at two, three, five years down the road, and I worry.

And I feel disgusted with foreign bureaucrats who appease the system while they know something serious is wrong. Biting the bullet and introducing meaningful change in a gradual manner today is far better for Yemen and for regional stability.

There are many signals that change is necessary. But the regime fails to accept, let alone comprehend the need for change. It is here that Yemen's friends can play a helpful role. Actually, Yemen today needs good advice from its friends, more than it needs their money.

In my opinion, the present reform program and the people managing it will not lead us to the results we want.


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