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A KURDISH FESTIVAL AT THE ZENITH

ON 21 May, to celebrate the start of the third millennium, the Kurdish Institute organised a Kurdish musical festival at the famous Paris concert hall, the Zenith.

As a symbol of Kurdish unity, the festival called on all sections of the Kurdish diaspora to participate, without any exclusions. Side by side with singers already well known in France, such as Sivan Perwer and Temo, it brought together musicians famous in their countries of origin, like Ahmet Kaya, elected best musician of the year in 1999

in Turkey. Women performers were particularly well represented with the singers Bessê, Fatê, Leila Fariqi, Shahla and Xezal.

Singers from other cultures, like the Assyro-Chaldean Linda George, the Franco-Tunisian Amina, the Portuguese Bevinda, the Moroccan Azzedine Alaoui and the Kabyle Ferhat also wanted to show their sympathy for the Kurdish people by taking part in this festival, to which they gave an intercultural character

Kurdish aspirations to unity and

freedom, after a century so laden with injustice and tragedy for their people, was the dominant theme of this Kurdish artistic event. Despite their divergences and conflicts, the principal Kurdish organisations insisted on showing their support for this festival of unity. The President of the Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party, Massoud Barzani, sent a personal message of support and friendship. The Iranian KDP and the Iraqi PKK also sent messages signed by their European representatives, who were, respectively Khosrow Abdullahi and Murat Karayilan, while the Turkish Kurdistan Socialist Party sent a solidarity message signed by its representative, Ziya Acar. The HADEP

and the Peace and Freedom Party (DEP) also sent messages as well as many societies and organisations of the Kurdish diaspora.

Many public figures, including Laurent Fabius, Minister of the Economy and Finance, Jack Lang, Minister of Education, François Hollande, First Secretary of the French Socialist Party, Robert Hue, National Secretary of the French Communist Party also sent messages of support and sympathy.

In a brief speech, the President of the Kurdish Institute called on Kurdish organisations that talk about unity and democracy to show their tolerance of others and to build the necessary

Kurdish unity through dialogue and persuasion. For her part, Mrs. Mitterrand also addressed the audience to say that the Kurds now had many friends across the world but that, to succeed they must overcome their quarrels and splits and become friends of one another. Otherwise nothing could be done for them. Success would only be possible at the cost of a firm and persevering commitment to the path of inter-Kurdish dialogue and cohesion she concluded amidst loud applause from the hall.

The festival, planned to last from 3 to 8 p.m. in fact went on till 11 p.m., with any thousands taking part, including many non-Kurds.

Officials of various NGOs also took part in the symposium: Dr. Kendal Nezan, President of the Paris Kurdish Institute, Antonello Attardo, representing the Minority Rights Group, Osman Baydemir, Vice-President of the Turkish Human Rights Association (IHD) and Michele Fournier, Middle East officer of Amnesty International. Different themes were reviewed: *"The Kurds in the light of existing Constitutions"*, *"Human Rights, freedom of expression, cultural and language rights"*, *"The issues at stake and the role of civil society in Kurdistan"*, and *"Perspectives and solutions: autonomy, federalism, independence"*.

The holding of this symposium in the French National Assembly buildings, with the participation of M.P.s of the Left (socialists and Greens) and the Right (UDF), of one Minister in office (Jack Lang) constitutes a significant step towards France's taking of account of the Kurdish question, and this only a few weeks before the French Presidency of the European Union, due to begin on 1st July. Thus this is the first time, since the Paris Kurdish Conference of October 1989, that all the Kurdish parties have met, in the same hall, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance.

Moreover, on 30 May, the German Green Party organised a symposium in the Bavarian Parliament building on the Kurdish question and Turkey's entry into the European Union. In the absence of the Kurdish mayors, invited but forbidden by the Turkish authorities to leave the country, representatives of local NGOs (the Diyarbakir Bar Association, the Human Rights Association) came to testify as to the conditions for the Kurdish population since the PKK's suspension of armed struggle. Other Kurdish (Kendal Nezan, Sertay Bucak), Turkish (İgden Akkaya) and German (Dr. Roland Bank, of the Max-Planck Institute) participants raised the effect of Turkey's application for

A SYMPOSIUM ON THE KURDISH QUESTION AT THE FRENCH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

ON the initiative of the Green Members of Parliament Noël Mamère and Marie-Hélène Aubert and with the help of the *Fondation France-Libertés*, a major symposium took place on 31 May, in the Victor Hugo Hall of the French National Assembly round the theme: *"The Kurds in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria: realities and perspectives"*. A number of public figures took part in the symposium, which was started by Mme. Danielle Mitterrand, followed by Henri Emanuelli, President of the Finance Commission and former Speaker of the National Assembly. Several other French Members of Parliament, including Christian Martin, Bernard Cazeneuve, who had supported the project of a Kurdish Festival at Cherbourg, Jack Lang, Minister of National Education, Alima Boumedienne-Thiery, Member of the European Parliament and François Loncle, President of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the French Parliament, expressed their wish to see an equitable

and just solution to the Kurdish question. Thus the M.P.s affirmed that a study group on the Kurdish question would be created in the near future in the National Assembly and that they would personally work in it.

Kurdish public figures, representing the different Kurdish political parties were also present at the symposium to evoke the situation in the different parts of Kurdistan: Mustapha Amin, Assistant General Secretary of the KDPI, Mesut Bestas, spokesman for HADEP, Kemal Burkay, President of the Kurdistan Socialist Party, Havin Guner, spokesman of the Kurdish People's Democratic Party, Dr. Saadadin Malla, representative in Sweden of the Kurds of Syria, Barham Saleh, US representative of the PUK, as well as Dr. Rôj Nouri Shaweiss, President of the Kurdish Parliament, Member of the Central Committee of the KDP and İsmet Cherif Vanly, President of the Kurdistan National Congress (CNK).

membership on the European Union, on the Kurds and on the Turks.

Bavaria is one of the most conservative

Lander in Germany, in which the Greens in which the Greens intend, by this sort of symposium, to push public opinion forward on the Kurdish question.

CANNES: KURDISTAN IS WELL REPRESENTED AT FILM FESTIVAL

TWO films, shot in Iranian Kurdistan and showing the life of Kurds living on the Iranian-Iraqi borders, enjoyed a marked success at the 53rd Cannes film Festival, and won prizes.

Takhté Siyah (The Blackboard) by the young (20 year old) woman film director Samira Makhmalbaf was greeted as a real revelation by the critics and awarded the Jury's Special Prize. The film tells the story of about a dozen primary school teachers without any pupils who, like educational peddlers go from village to village with their blackboards on their backs trying to exchange their knowledge against board and lodging. Two of them survive the ups and downs of the Iraqi-Iranian war raging in the Kurdistan mountains. One of them joins a band of Kurdish children smugglers and busies himself teaching them his lessons while they pursue their dangerous activities. Another meets a group of wandering old Iraqi Kurds, thrown onto the roads to exile by the war. the film follows this headlong flight, through short and violent events and, over and above the horrors of war, the pains of total exile and impossible love.

Interviewed by the Kurdish daily *Ozgür Politika*, the young director of this powerful and striking film stated, in particular, : "*Kurdistan is not an exotic and foreign country for me. I have often come shooting with my father* (the film director Mohsen Makhmalbaf) *in the villages of Kurdistan. The facial expressions of the Kurdish children and*

the majestic stature of the Kurdistan mountains have greatly affected me. The mountains spoke to me. When I was a little girl, my father would talk to me about Kurdish history and the Kurdish way of life. And when I compared all this with what I'd seen, a very interesting film subject formed in my mind. (k) This film is the result. One could say that the scenario of Takhté Siyah was written after the shooting. The mountains are speaking, in this film, nature is speaking, The topography of Kurdistan explains everything. I think that, with the peasants in this film, we have communicated a serious message. But, like in a poem, it must be lived, the film must be seen. And, above all, I would like it to be seen by Kurds. (k) I consider myself part of the Kurdish people. I have tried, in this film, to let the mountains, the smiling faces of the Kurdish peasants, speak for themselves. I conceived this film as a poem".

The other cinematic event of the Festival was "*Un temps pour l'ivresse des chevaux*" (A time for the

intoxication/exhilaration of horses) by the Kurdish film director Bahman Ghobadi, shown in the *Quinzaine des réalisateurs* (Directors' fortnight). The film was shot in the same Kurdish region straddling the Iraqi-Iranian border and its director had one of the leading roles in the *Blackboard*: it also shows Kurdish children smugglers against a background of a terrifying, but virtually invisible, war. The whole film is hinges around a single urgent issue — the efforts of a young boy to save his brother suffering from dwarfism. Through the equestrian odyssey of these children, the film shows and reflects on the tragic and precarious destiny of the Kurdish people, devastated by war, torn apart by artificial borders, reduced to destitution. The capacity for survival of these children smugglers, their extraordinary solidarity in trying to save the weakest amongst them, give the film a poignancy and power that won it, deservedly, the Golden Camera prize of the jury of the *Quinzaine de réalisateurs*.

Photographer and reporter with the Iranian Kurdistan television, Bahman Ghobadi, a graduate of the Teheran Cinema School, in an interview given to *le Monde* on 11 May, said he was "proud to have brought to Kurdistan in the last two years Abbas Kiarostami, who filmed there "*The wind will carry us away*" and the Makhmalbafs — both father and daughter.

CHERBOURG: A KURDISH CULTURAL FESTIVAL

FROM 9 to 26 May, major Kurdish cultural festival took place in the town of Cherbourg and the neighbouring townships of Octeville, Tourlaville and Flottemanville, on the initiative of the *Association identités*, with the backing of the Kurdish Institute and the *Fondation France-Libertés*.

In the course of this festival a series of exhibitions took place in various public and private places, including painting (Remzi Rasa, Namo, Himat M. Ali), photos (Sebastiao Salgado, Krista Boggs, Ch. Kutschera, A. Adlig Reza) sculpture (Temo) and handicrafts.

Well known Kurdish musicians — Sivan Perwer, Fatê, Dilshad, Cané, Issa, Rezan,

Temo, Koma Zozan gave a series of concerts, offering the local public a broad sample of Kurdish music. The Cherbourg cinemas programmed showings of "A song for Beko", "Dream Smugglers", "Going towards the sun", while two Kurdish stage plays were performed — *Azady* (Freedom) and *Mem û Zin*.

One of the highlights of the Festival was the official reception given at the Cherbourg Town Hall where the mayor of Cherbourg-Octeville, the local M.P. Bernard Cazeneuve, Mrs. Mitterrand, Kendal Nezan and Suayip Adlig, President of the *Association Identités*, spoke to stress the importance of this festival in promoting a better knowledge of the Kurds in France and close ties between the French and Kurdish peoples. Then the various public figures present went to inaugurate "The Kurdish Village" set up near the port to provide a background for some of the artistic events. Symbolically, it was the former Mayor of Diyarbakir, Mehdi Zana, in exile in Europe, who welcomed the French public figures to his "Kurdish Village".

In the course of the Festival, round tables, lectures and debates were organised at the Cherbourg IUT (equivalent to the UK "Polytechnics") on the state of the Kurds and their language. The 27th Linguistic Seminar of the Kurdish Institute also took place at Cherbourg which thus, for two weeks, became the Cultural Capital of the Kurds.

The Town Council even carried its courtesy so far as to decorate the whole town with Kurdish, French and European flags "so that the Kurds should feel really at home", which gave rise to a hostile demonstration by about twenty Turkish nationalists on 20 May. The local media devoted considerable space to this festival, supported by the local councils, the Regional Council, the

Ministry of Culture, the European Parliament as well as a number of

Cherbourg organisations, hotels, cafes and pubs.

ANKARA: AHMET NEJDET SEZER ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE TURKISH REPUBLIC ON THE THIRD ROUND



AFTER the unequivocal refusal of the Turkish Parliament to prolong Süleyman Demirel's term in office, Ahmet Nejdîet Sezer, President of the Turkish Constitutional Court was elected to the Presidency of the Turkish Republic on 5 May 2000. However, though official candidate of the tripartite coalition government, he only secured election at the third round, with 330 votes out of 550.

More than 200 Members of Parliament did not vote for Mr. Sezer. Some irritated by the fact that a public figure from outside parliament had been imposed on them, some, like certain islamists, refusing to elect the man who had presided the hearing of the Constitutional Court that had decreed the dissolution of the Prosperity Party (RP) and some dyed in the wool conservatives which had been unable to swallow his speech in favour of democratic reforms and cultural rights for the Kurds in his opening speech at a Constitutional Court celebration on 26 April 1999.

The presidential elections have seriously damaged the authority of the political leaders over their parties. The M.P.s showed marked recalcitrance to following the voting instructions of their leaders — and this despite open threats. A consequently a settling of accounts within the coalition parties can be expected.

Largely unknown to the public, Ahmet Nejdîet Sezer, 10th President of the Turkish Republic, has aroused hopes of change both in Turkey and abroad.

Forgetting that he had been appointed to the Constitutional Court by the former military regime and that, on the bench of that Court he had ratified a number of freedom-stifling measures ordered by the National Security Council (MGK) running from the banning of a dozen political parties (including Refah, HEP, DEP, etc.) and had lifted Parliamentary immunity from the Kurdish M.P.s of the Party for Democracy (DEP), public opinion, largely influenced by the official media's panegyrics, believes in his recent stands in favour of a State of Laws and public freedom.

By raising the necessity for granting cultural rights to the Kurds, the new President has even won the sympathy of Kurdish organisations in Turkey and Iraq, which sent him messages of congratulations (see the Press Review further on).

Other observers remain cautious, recalling that the Turkish regime, over the last few decades has often known how to renew its window dressing without altering the basic structures of its powers or its nationalist ideology. The memory of Mrs. Tansu iller, "modern, secular, American educated" speaking of the "necessary democratisation of the country" and of the Basque model for settling the Kurdish question in Turkey is still alive. She, also, had aroused many hopes in Europe and the United States — and all the while, behind that attractive facade, the Turkish Army engaged in the destruction of thousands of villages and the deportation of millions of Kurdish civilians.

Judge Sezer, elected President at a time when Turkey has been admitted to the European Union's waiting room, when speaking to Europeans holds a discourse in keeping with their wishes. However,

the essentials of power still lie with the National Security Council, itself controlled by the Army High Command. The moment of truth will not be long in arriving.

However, the conservatives, who continue to hold the essential levers of power, do not appear ready to accept the verdict of the ballot boxes. They are setting about limiting Parliament to the role of a mere consultative assembly by censoring any laws that run counter to their interests and by harassing the media and political figures close to President Khatami by means of "the Judicial Powers" that they control.

THE EUROPEAN COURT WILL DELIVER ITS VERDICT ON THE CASE OF THE IMPRISONED KURDISH M.P.s IN AUTUMN

The European Human Rights' Court, appraised of the case of the imprisoned Kurdish Members of Parliament, has just appointed a reporter who, on the basis of the defence's and Turkish Government's memoranda, as well as the European Human Rights' Commission's conclusions, will prepare a draft verdict for the Court. The latter will give its ruling "in the autumn of the year 2000" at a still unspecified date.

The European Human Rights' Court, which has frequently condemned States for their excessive slowness in administering justice, will thus have to take over six years to rule on the case of the Kurdish M.P.s incarcerated in Ankara since March 1994 and sentenced to 15 years jail for "crimes" of opinion.

Before Parliament had even met, the Council for the Protection of the Constitution and the Assembly for Judging the Regime's Interests, both controlled by the conservatives, had banned Parliament from any right to oversee or investigate 90% of the State organs which, according to them, were only answerable to the Guide (Ayatollah Khamenei) and the Judicial Powers. The trial of strength between the two camps looks like being a long drawn out, bumpy ride whose outcome is uncertain. The election, on 30 May, of *hodjatoleslam* Mehdi Karubi, representing the Khomeini-ist old guard, is considered a temporary compromise between the two camps.

IRAN: THE SUPPORTERS OF PRESIDENT KHATAMI COMPLETE THEIR ELECTORAL VICTORY

After many ups and downs and confrontations, the second round of the Iranian General Elections finally took place on 5 May. The supporters of President Khatami carried 70% of the still available seats, thus completing their sweeping victory in the first round, which took place on 18 February last year.

Revolution and the President's programmes may take effect calmly, with due respect for the law".

In all, they now hold 200 of the 290 seats in the Iranian Majlis (Parliament). This success confirms and increases the Mohammed Khatami's Presidential Election victory in 1997. In the words of Mr. Reza Khatami, the President's brother and leader of his supporters: *"these results are the reply of the reform movement to the closing of newspapers and arrests and other illegal or pseudo-legal methods used by the conservative institutions in recent weeks to try to suppress these advances by the reformers. It is to be hoped that now each will accept the people's vote so that the pure ideals of the Islamic*

EVEN as the Turkish authorities unceasingly promise improvements in matters of Human Rights, Kurdish political and media circles continue to suffer Turkish political repression. Thus, Ahmet Turan Demir, President of the People's Democratic Party (HADEP - pro-Kurdish) is sentenced to one year's jail by the State Security Court for "separatist propaganda". Mr. Demir is the latest in a long list of Turkish political leaders sentenced by these Courts. After numerous condemnations, including that of its first President, Murat Bozlak,

HADEP is now itself threatened with being banned by the Constitutional Court.

Furthermore, the HADEP mayors, elected during the last General Elections (Editor's Note: HADEP won 35 municipalities) find they are increasingly subjected to arbitrary bans and prohibitions. The latest are Sahabettin Ozaslaner and Emrullah Cin, respectively mayors of Van and of Viransehir. Invited to take part in a meeting of the US Congress's Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe SCEC, taking place in the United States on 6 June, the two mayors were forbidden to leave the country by the

TURKEY: ONE YEAR'S JAIL FOR THE PRESIDENT OF HADEP, PROHIBITION TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY FOR THE HADEP MAYORS

Prefect (Local Governor). In Mr. Cin's case the authorities raised the question of the municipal debt and for Mr. Ozaslaner "the inappropriate nature of the journey". "Are there any municipalities in Turkey that do not have debts? (k) I have only been mayor for the last 14 months, and we have already repaid 52% of our debt (k) Moreover, last month I visited Switzerland at the invitation of the Bern municipality, And our debt was even greater then k" stated Mr. Cin sceptically. In the same strain Mr. Ozaslaner added "From what we have learnt, the fact that the Kurdish question is one of the subjects that will be raised at the Congress meeting was somewhat displeasing k I: is presupposed that we will tarnish Turkey's image (k)" Yasemin ongar, US Correspondent of the Turkish daily *Milliyet* queried these decisions in the 5 June issue: "The latest

step showing the State's 'embarrassment' over the 35 HADEP mayors, which party was only prevented from being represented in Parliament by the level of the national threshold, but which had won (k) up to 62% of the votes in Diyarbakir, the largest town in the region, in the April 2000 General Elections. Has this improved Turkey's image?"

In fact, the Turkish authorities are trying to convince themselves and Western public opinion that "now that terrorism has been defeated, there is no longer any Kurdish problem in Turkey, and all those who claim otherwise are allies of the PKK". In this context, they cannot tolerate the idea that legally elected mayors be able to address Western public opinion, particularly American, so as "not to politicise the South-Eastern question".

AS WELL AS...

MAY DAY BANNED IN THE KURDISH PROVINCES. May Day celebrations took place under the strictest surveillance of the Turkish security forces — and were completely banned in the Kurdish provinces. In Istanbul, over 27,000 police were assembled, and about fifty arrests were made. Observers noted that, very often it was the fact of making a V (for Victory) sign that led to detention. According to the English language daily, *Turkish Daily News* of 2 May, there were more police than workers on the May Day march.

Other gatherings took place at Mersin, Adana, Trabzon, Gaziantep bringing together the main Trade union organisations. In Diyarbakir since the police even refused to allow the holding of a press conference, protests were heard.

May Day demonstrations have often been the scene of serious and violent disturbances in Turkey. In 1996, in Istanbul, three demonstrators were killed and dozens of police and demonstrators injured. In 1997,

37 demonstrators were killed in Taksim Square, in the very centre of Istanbul.

WORLD PRESS DAY: TURKEY PIN-POINTED. On the occasion of World Press Day, on 3 May, the organisation *Reporters sans Frontières* made public its report on violations of the rights of journalists throughout the world. Turkey was, once again pin pointed for the number of violations of the freedom of expression and opinion.

According to the report, "one journalist was killed, four others tortured, 7 arrested, 87 held in detention and 26 others beaten up" in Turkey in the course of 1999. 80 journalists are said to be imprisoned, but the organisation remarks that as the reasons given for the arrests and sentences are confused it is hard to clearly attribute them to their journalistic work as such. *Reporters sans Frontières* also takes into account sanctions by RTUK (Editor's Note: The Turkish audiovisual control body) namely 2, 378 days (a total of 6.5 years!) of interdictions to broadcast delivered to radio

and TV networks. Yerel Radyo Fon, Ozgur Radyo, Mozaik Radyo, Radyo Safak and national networks like Kanal 6, ATV, Show TV were subjected to 365 days of interdiction. The organisation denounced the farcical pretense of a trial of the police officers implicated the murder of the journalist Metin Göktepe and points out that there has still been no verdict issued in the cases of Ugur Mumcu and Abdi Ipekci and in cases covering the assassination of 20 journalists there has not even been any enquiry opened.

The organisation also welcomed the passing of law 4454 of 28 August 1999 enabling the proroguing of the trials and sentences of publications and publishers and, in this context, the release of six journalists, including Ismail Besiki and Dogal Güzel. However, it stresses that this law obliges journalists to practice self-censorship since, in the event of another "offence" of the same kind in the course of the following three years the journalists would find their cases and brought back before the courts. *Reporters sans Frontières* draws attention to the seizure of the book by Nadire Mater "Mehmedin Kitabı" and calls on the authorities to abrogate law 3713 and Articles 7/2 and 8 of the Anti-Terrorist Act which are serious infringements of the freedom of the press.

On the other hand, Menaf Avci, publication coordinator of the paper *Ozgur Bakis*, stated that the 370 issues published had given rise to 124 legal proceedings, 131 banning orders, and 263 billion Turkish lire in fines. He also pointed out that on its 20th day of publication, the paper was banned throughout the State of Emergency region (OHAL) without any apparent reason. Weeklies like *Azadiya Welat*, banned in the OHAL region since October 1998, *Pine*, a satirical weekly consisting mainly of cartoons and caricatures, banned from these regions a few days ago as well as the daily *Evrensel*, banned in the OHAL region for the last 485 days, all denounced the manifest violations of Press rights in Turkey, and in particular in the Kurdish regions.

May 1, 2000
New York Times

A Fresh Voice for Turkey

Editorial

Turkey's Parliament can send a hopeful signal about the country's political future by electing Judge Ahmet Necdet Sezer as the country's next president. In Turkey's political system, the president is far less powerful than the prime minister. But he helps set the tone of political life, and Judge Sezer, who currently leads Turkey's highest constitutional court, would be an excellent choice.

In the past year Judge Sezer has become an outspoken advocate of eliminating or easing Ankara's chilling antiterror and antiseparatist laws. These have been used to jail hundreds of politicians, intellectuals and journalists, and to suppress peaceful debate on Kurdish issues. He has also called for allowing appeals of military court rulings and permitting the teaching of the Kurdish language. Such changes would go far toward making Turkey a healthier democracy as it prepares for future membership in the European Union.

Judge Sezer's public opposition to Turkey's restrictive laws is relatively recent, but apparently heartfelt, and his candidacy has stirred hope among Kurds and other victims of legal persecution. Judge Sezer has been backed by all major party leaders, but he fell short of the required two-thirds majority in a first round of voting last week. Turkey's legislators should give him a winning margin in today's second round.

Quatre rebelles du PKK et un soldat tués dans des combats dans l'est



DIYARBAKIR (Turquie), 2 mai (AFP) - 13h28 - Quatre rebelles kurdes du Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK) et un soldat turc ont été tués dans des affrontements dans la province de Bingöl (est), a-t-on indiqué mardi de source de sécurité locale à Diyarbakir (sud-est).

Les affrontements se sont déroulés lundi près de la ville de Genc, a-t-on précisé de même source.

Les opérations de l'armée turque se poursuivent dans la région, a-t-on ajouté.

Le dernier accrochage en date entre maquisards du PKK et forces turques remonte au 10 mars dans cette même province.

Après la condamnation à mort de son chef Abdullah Ocalan en juin 1999, pour trahison et séparatisme, le PKK avait annoncé fin septembre qu'il mettait fin aux quinze ans de lutte armée pour la création d'un Etat kurde indépendant dans le sud-est.

Depuis, la région vit une atmosphère de détente et les affrontements y ont quasiment cessé.

Pioneer Planet
Kevin Mc Kiernan
Guest Columnist
May 2, 2000

U.S. needs to exercise 'gun control' on exports to Turkey

McKiernan, a St. Paul-born filmmaker, produced a documentary on the Kurdish war entitled "Good Kurds, Bad Kurds."

June 15 may be a record pay day for Bell Textron, the Texas-based company that makes helicopter gunships. By that date, Turkey is expected to award a \$4 billion contract for 145 attack helicopters, one of the largest single arms deals in history.

International competition for the lucrative contract has been fierce, with five companies including Boeing Aircraft and Bell Textron submitting bids. Last month, Turkey eliminated Boeing's Apache helicopter from consideration, and now Bell's King Cobra is the odds-on favorite to win the award.

About 80 percent of the Turkish arsenal already is U.S.-made, and the Turkish army has relied on Sikorsky Blackhawks and both Apache and Cobra helicopters to win the long (and under-reported) war with Kurdish rebels in the country's southeast.

In 1997, the Clinton administration granted Boeing and Bell market licenses to build the attack helicopters, brushing aside human rights objections from Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch about Turkey's abuse of its ethnic population.

Since President Clinton took office in 1992, more than \$6 billion in U.S. weaponry has been

delivered to Turkey. If Bell wins the helicopter contract, as expected, the administration may again override human rights concerns and, in effect, broker the sale to Turkey by granting export licenses.

American-made helicopters are well-known to the Kurds. I have often encountered refugees from destroyed villages in southeast Turkey whose only English were the words "Sikorsky" and "Cobra." Villagers know that the soldiers who burn their houses arrive in Blackhawk helicopters, the troop transports that are made by the Connecticut-based Sikorsky company. And they easily recognize the rocket-equipped Cobras, which are manufactured at the Bell Textron plant in Fort Worth.

Turkish Kurdistan is a rugged, mountainous region, and helicopters have proved essential in the army's scorched-earth campaign.

So far, more than 3,000 Kurdish villages have been burned, depriving the guerrillas of vital logistical support. Estimates of civilian Kurds displaced by the war range from 500,000 to 2 million.

It has been a dirty war, and both sides have been guilty of atrocities.

The Kurds are a large and diverse group, and their numbers spill across the borders of Iraq, Turkey, Iran, Syria and parts of the former Soviet Union. With a combined population of 25 million to 30 million, they represent the largest ethnic minority in the world without their own state.

The first Kurds I met were in Iraq, where I was shooting television news at the end of the Persian Gulf war. At that time, the networks had an appetite for stories of Saddam Hussein's abuses (the Iraqi dictator had destroyed thousands of Kurdish villages), and I had lots of work.

But when I started covering the Kurdish uprising a few miles away in Turkey, I found I couldn't give the stories away. I got taken to lunch, patted on the back and told the Turkish-Kurdish war just "wasn't on the radar."

Last year, after Turkey captured rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan, tried him for treason and sentenced him to death, it looked as if the 15-year-old uprising might fade away. Ocalan told his fighters to quit, and they eventually issued a declaration to end the armed struggle and to work for Kurdish rights "within the framework of peace and democratization."

But Turkey has repeatedly rejected such overtures. Earlier this month, Ankara dispatched U.S.-made F-16s to northern Iraq to bomb rebels who had withdrawn from Turkey.

Last December, the European Union, after years of rejection, voted to consider Turkey for EU admission, but only on the condition that it clean up its human rights record.

Now the EU may be having second thoughts. For more than a month this spring, Turkey blocked an EU delegation from visiting Leyla Zana, the imprisoned Kurdish member of the

Turkish Parliament who has received the EU's peace prize. Then a Kurdish educational foundation was indicted on criminal charges of "inciting separatist propaganda" because it advertised a scholarship for students who could "read and write in Kurdish."

The government recently ordered a CNN television affiliate off the air for 24 hours because a reporter asked a guest if history might one day regard Ocalan as a Turkish version of the South African revolutionary Nelson Mandela.

A few days later, Turkey arrested the Kurdish mayors of three cities on vague charges of separatism. There are 37 elected Kurdish mayors, and many observers hoped that their political leadership would provide a nonviolent alternative to the bloody civil war in Turkey that since 1984 has taken 37,000 lives, most of them Kurds.

Turkey already has hired a stable of former leading members of Congress to pave the way for licensing the King Cobras. The lobbyists include former House Rules Committee Chairman Gerald Solomon, R-N.Y., and former Rep. Stephen Solarz, D-N.Y. Best known is former House Speaker-designate Bob Livingston, R-La., who reportedly won a \$1.8 million contract to lobby for Turkey.

While Turkey is a valuable ally, what U.S. exports need at the moment is "gun control." If Bell Textron gets the green light from Turkey, the Clinton administration ought to hold up the \$4 billion in gunships until Ankara shows a willingness to deal democratically with its own citizens.

Kurdish Region Plans Eighth Phase 986 Projects

Brayati (Arbil) 01 May 00

[FBIS Translated Text] The head of Kurdistan regional government and the coordinator of humanitarian affairs in Kurdistan held a meeting. A report of the meeting was published on the front page of Brayati newspaper yesterday [30 April]. The meeting discussed government projects for the eighth phase of Resolution 986. We highlight here some of the government's projects and plans:

Sami Abd al-Rahman, deputy head of Kurdistan regional government, accompanied by Sa'd Abdullah, Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation; Fakhir Mar'an, Deputy Minister of Humanitarian Aid and Cooperation, and Dr. Sherzad Najjar, advisor of the higher education committee in the Council of Ministers visited the UN Office of Humanitarian Coordination for Iraq in Ankawa at 1800 on 29 April. The visit followed discussions and talks in the higher committee of Resolution 986 at the chairmanship of the Council of Ministers.

During the meeting they discussed the Kurdistan government's projects and plans for the eighth phase of Resolution 986. They also discussed several important service and reconstruction projects in different fields. The main topics of the meeting were:

1. Agriculture and irrigation 2. Education and higher studies 3. Health and social affairs 4. Removal of mines and to help the victims of mines 5. Industry and energy 6. Municipalities 7. Reconstruction and improvements 8. Transport and communication 9. Public works and housing.

Also, food and medicine, which will be dealt with separately.

The higher committee of Resolution 986, experts in ministries and the directorates general, has laid down these projects after full discussion in order to offer the best service to the people of Kurdistan and to reconstruct the cities, towns, and villages of Kurdistan.

It is worth mentioning that these projects include a number of important service projects, among which are:

1. Several small irrigation projects, construction of new hospitals, installation of a power station of 10 megawatts in Soran and Aqra, and the establishment of several food industries.
2. Paying particular attention to the capital, Arbil, and allocating a considerable amount of money for repair of the sewers, and several other projects to clean and tidy the city.
3. Laying down another water pipe from Chambarakat for Dohuk. Repairing main roads and shortening the distance between cities.
4. Building a large number of houses for the refugees who have returned from Iran and displaced people, and reconstructing the borderline areas, which have not yet been reconstructed.
5. Paying attention to communication projects, including external and internal telephone lines.
6. Building and reconstructing large numbers of schools in modern style to end three session schools so that all Kurdish children have schools everywhere in Kurdistan.
7. Establishing and repairing several buildings for Salah al-Din University, institutes, and colleges. Purchasing computers and laboratory equipment for the university and building houses for university teachers in Zanko village.

These plans and projects have been prepared for the eighth phase of Resolution 986. They will start at the end of June. The overall cost of these projects is \$250 million, which is equal to about 5 billion Iraqi dinars (Swiss print).

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Turkey's EU Liaison Faces a Tough Sell

By Douglas Frantz
New York Times Service

UNITED NATIONS, New York — On the wall behind Ambassador Volkan Vural's desk at the Turkish mission here is a reproduction of a 1923 Time magazine cover featuring Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who forged modern Turkey out of the wreckage of the Ottoman Empire.

This summer, Mr. Vural is scheduled to return to Ankara to take up a post that presents a challenge almost as daunting. His job will be to convince the European Union that Turkey merits membership and to convince his countrymen that joining the club is worth the painful admission price.

"This will be a tough job," said Mr. Vural, who will need his closeness to Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit and a combination of persistence and patience. "We have to convince Parliament, the ministers and the political parties to support the process of change."

After two years at the United Nations and three years as ambassador to Germany, Mr. Vural has developed personal relationships with many of the European diplomats who will be involved in the membership negotiations. But in an interview, he was cautious and would not make any promises about timing, saying only that the goal was to be ready for formal talks by 2004.

Even the timing on his new job is uncertain. While Mr. Vural has been traveling to Ankara often in recent weeks to discuss European Union issues, the position of secretary-general for EU affairs has not yet been formally created by Turkey's Parliament.

Right now, Turkey's enthusiasm for membership is at an all-time high. After EU leaders agreed in December to let Turkey become a candidate for full membership, a poll taken for NTV, a Turkish television network, found that two out of three Turks favored joining and only one in six opposed it.

But Mr. Vural, 58, a former journalist and director of Turkey's state-owned radio and television network, is well aware that public opinion can change and support may ebb as Turkey confronts the political and economic changes required to meet EU standards.

Membership offers tantalizing prospects for prosperity and economic stability, but the costs will be high. For instance, 45 percent of Turkey's work force is engaged in farming, a number that must be slashed by half or more to be competitive. Overall economic growth, which surged last year, is expected to decline this year as the country battles double-digit inflation.

Further, the often fractious Parliament will have to completely overhaul half of the country's laws and regulations to

mesh with those of the EU in areas ranging from strengthening environmental rules to abolishing restrictions on free speech.

The primary obstacles are not economic ones, according to European diplomats, but instead are Turkey's wobbly democracy and the treatment of its Kurdish population. European leaders are troubled by the influence of Turkey's military in the government and by its army-backed crackdowns on Kurdish and Islamic politicians.

While acknowledging there is room for improvement, some Turkish leaders complain that EU demands threaten to interfere with internal matters that are vital to national security.

They also argue that the membership bar is higher for Turkey than for Eastern European countries that may be less prepared. Though Turkey's membership application has been pending since 1987, countries that applied more recently have been moved ahead of it in line.

At a conference in Washington last month, Turkish officials and business leaders were generally upbeat about prospects for membership. But they expressed concern that, even if Turkey met the EU's goals, membership might remain outside its grasp.

"Whatever Turkey does appears to be not enough," İltis Turan, president of Bilgi University in Istanbul, said.

PKK withdrawing from Tunceli region

May 3, 2000
Ankara - Turkish Daily News

Hamili Yildirim, who has been leading a group of renegade members of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in the Tunceli region, has reportedly been seriously wounded in a shootout in the course of the ongoing operation in the region in which some 15,000 soldiers are taking part.

According to reliable sources in the region, Yildirim managed to get away after being wounded, and contacted the terrorist organization's leadership council, which is the sole remaining authority in the organization since the capture of the PKK chieftain, Abdullah Öcalan. He told the leadership council that he needed medical treatment, and that if he were given medical treatment abroad he would, in return, end the intra-organizational rebellion he had started with some 200 armed renegades.

The PKK leadership council has reportedly accepted that offer and Yildirim, who calls himself the "top official responsible for the provincial state of Dersim [meaning the Tunceli region]," has by now left Turkey.

Intra-organizational rebellion over

Left without a "head," the 200 militants in question have started leaving Turkish soil in groups, complying with the call the leadership council had issued to this effect after Öcalan's capture. Thus the intra-organizational rebellion has come to an end.

When the leadership council urged PKK members to end armed attacks and to leave Turkey, Yildirim opposed this decision, opting to join up with "Partizan," another illegal group operating in the Tunceli region.

Six Turkish soldiers were killed in an attack made jointly by these two groups, including a major and a lieutenant. Significantly, the attack took place on the day when

the coalition leaders were to hold a summit meeting to decide whether the death sentence awarded to Ocalan by Ankara State Security Court should be enforced immediately.

At that time some anti-PKK Kurdish intellectuals saw that attack as an attempt to bring about Ocalan's immediate execution.

After the PKK's departure the "Partizan" group will find it hard to remain in the region on its own.

Local people happy with the situation

In Tunceli people are relieved to see the end of the clashes. A source in Tunceli says that even before Yildirim was shot, people had begun to say, "Enough is enough," expressing their discontent over the fighting in a loud voice. Since Yildirim and his followers have departed people have become more hopeful about the future, said the source in question.

Meanwhile, civilians in the region have reportedly not been adversely affected by the army operations in the region. The operations take place mostly in mountainous areas whose settlements had already been evacuated in the past.

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Why Kurdish deputies say 'No' to Demirel

May 3, 2000

Ankara - Turkish Daily News

The people who reacted most against the constitutional amendment package, submitted to Parliament by the coalition leaders and which was intended to allow Demirel a second term in office, were the Kurds. Dengir Firat, Virtue Party (FP) deputy for Adiyaman, said at the time that if the Constitution were amended and no serious opponent to Demirel came forward, then he would stand against him. Sebgetullah Seydaoglu, Motherland Party (ANAP) deputy for Diyarbakir, said that not a single deputy from the Southeast would vote for Demirel, him included.

The constitutional amendment package was not passed by Parliament, and Demirel lost his chance of becoming president for a second time. Now that there are various candidates and voting for the president is in progress, we asked deputies with Kurdish ancestry why they rejected Demirel.

FP deputy for Istanbul and the grandson of Sheik Sait, Fuat Firat, said: "While Demirel was in office both as prime minister and president, some 4,500 as yet unsolved murders were committed. That is why I said 'No'." Dengir Firat, for his part, said that Demirel was obstructing the path to democracy and a lawful state and that this is why he voted against.

Democratic Mass Party (DKP) leader Serfettin Elci explained his thoughts on why the Kurds were opposed to Demirel: "Demirel stands for the status quo. He is closed to change and development." Politicians of Kurdish descent had more to say about Demirel.

Responsible for 4,500 unsolved murders

FP Istanbul deputy Mehmet Fuat Firat:

"Demirel, with his nonprogressive and gutless attitude, remained a constant obstacle to the resolution of the Kurdish issue. In addition to this, while he was prime minister and the president, over 4,500 as yet unsolved murders were committed, predominantly in the East and Southeast. I'm not saying Demirel is directly responsible for these murders, but he is indirectly responsible because as the head of the administration he did nothing to prevent these murders or to ensure the culprits were caught.

This is the reason behind the reaction of those deputies of Kurdish descent. Whenever the subject of these murders was brought up, and whenever claims were made to the effect that state officials were implicated, he would always say, 'You cannot make me say that these were state-sanctioned murders.' Just as he said, 'You cannot make me say that right-wingers are committing murders' before the coup on Sept. 12. Yet it was proven in court that those murders were committed by right-wing activists calling themselves Idealists. In addition, Demirel supports the status quo. Rather than getting them solved, he contributed to covering them up. Look into it. Not a single entrenched issue was ever solved in his time."

He obstructed democracy, the lawful state

FP Adiyaman deputy Dengir Firat:

"Rejection of the constitutional amendment was the choice of a large body in Parliament that believes in democracy. The main characteristic shared by all of them was their being democrats. I think they opposed the 5+5 'Demirel draft' because they saw it was contrary to democracy and the principles of a lawful state. When we look at the behavior of those Democratic Left Party (DSP) and Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) members that voted for it, and the line they have taken to date, we see they are not democratic. The fact that they mortgaged the will of deputies in the name of party discipline is indicative of this.

Another justification for saying 'No' to Demirel is Demirel's personal anti-democratic attitude in the past. For example, however much it is said that Demirel was merely the regulator of the February 28 process, in actual fact the main architect of those events was none other than Demirel himself. The main obstacle holding up democracy and the development of the lawful state was Demirel's behavior. On occasion, Demirel has been seen as a democrat.

He only supports democracy and upholds the law when he feels the need to do so. I do not consider the resistance to Demirel as a Kurdish deputy matter, but more as the reaction of everyone in Parliament who is democratic. This number even includes some DSP and a few MHP members. Deputies of Kurdish descent naturally feel a strong need for a democratic president when they see the anti-democratic practices being applied to their constituencies and constituents."

Demirel closed to change, development

DKP leader Serafettin Elci:

If we take into account his time as director general of the State Water Works (DSİ) before 1960, Demirel is well known in society for his work for the state, both as a civil servant and a politician. If you ask my personal opinion, I have never criticised Demirel, but there is one thing I want to say:

If Turkey is to keep pace with this new world order, it needs to change rapidly. Yet Demirel is known by everybody as a stick-in-the-mud, unable to accept change or development. Yet Turkey needs an administration and leaders who can keep pace with the modern world. That's what I'm talking about, not a criticism of Demirel. We need new political leaders who are dynamic and supportive of change and

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Christian Science Monitor
3 May, 2000
by David Aquila Lawrence

Iraqi Kurds enjoy a de facto state

Iraq's Kurds now have their own government, currency, and most prosperous era in 20 years.

On the map it still says Iraq, but that's where the similarity ends.

The school children in the tiny village of Dal da Ghan stand up every morning and sing a Kurdish national song, then sit down to study textbooks printed by the Kurdish government in the Kurdish language. They've heard of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein from their parents, but in their short lives they've never known his rule.

"We're not afraid of anybody here - because our land is under our hands," says Saida Bassi, a young mother, who fled here from Iraqi government territory two years ago. Her husband is out tending sheep in the green pastures that carpet the landscape.

For almost a decade, three provinces in northern Iraq have been the de facto state of Kurdistan. They use their own currency, patrol their own borders. Paradoxically, the United Nations embargo that has helped devastate the economy of Iraq has provided Kurdistan with its greatest economic boom in 20 years, and its highest-ever level of personal freedom.

"Ten years ago when Kurdistan was controlled by Saddam I was a child," says Hajar Arif, an English major at Suliamaniya University. "Now I appreciate this freedom and it's like food to me - saying, writing whatever you think."

The Kurds who farm here in Dal da Ghan, which means "refuge of chieftains," deserted the village in 1987 - like thousands in the region - during the height of the Iraqi government's

campaign to "Arabize" Kurdistan.

Now, with funding from the UN, hundreds of villages are rebuilding. Meanwhile, about 40 Kurdish families each week arrive from the Iraqi government territory - some forcibly evicted and others looking for freedom.

There are some 22 million Kurds in the Middle East, perhaps the world's largest ethnic group without a country. The Iraqi Kurds, who still officially live under the Iraqi government, today enjoy more autonomy than the Kurdish populations in Turkey, Iran, and Syria.

And along with autonomy has come prosperity. Ironically, the same UN sanctions which hit the Iraqi economy hard, have helped the Kurds' region.

"For the first time we're getting a share of our petroleum. It's used for rebuilding what was destroyed by the Iraqi dictatorship," says Jalal Talabani, the leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), one of two Kurdish factions in Northern Iraq.

The US State Department and the Kurds both claim that this prosperity proves that the oil-for-food program, when administered by the UN as it is in the north, is adequate for the people to survive and even thrive. The health problems in the south, they say, are evidence that the Iraqi government is manipulating food and medicine in order to turn world opinion against the sanctions. They point to a UNICEF report released last summer showed that while infant mortality in the center and south has doubled in the last 10 years, the rate has fallen slightly in the Kurdish zone.

But UN officials administering the program have a different explanation for the prosperity.

"There is a higher per capita of money and a cash component in the north to employ local people or buy local goods like cement or vegetables. There is simply more cash floating around," says George Somerwill, spokesman for the UN office for humanitarian coordination in Iraq.

The three Kurdish provinces contain 13 percent of Iraq's population and therefore get 13 percent of the supplies under the UN oil-for-food program. But the rest of the Iraq's population gets only 53 percent from the oil sales, since the UN deducts money for war reparations and its own operational expenses.

The autonomy is also having an impact on other aspects of Kurd society. They have now taken control of their own airwaves.

"It is a great time for the Kurdish people because the world is open to them," says Ali

Abdullah, a journalist at Erbil's KTV Television. "I have three children. When I watch the TV with them and they see a Kurdish film or cartoon, they are very happy - sometimes dancing."

There are at least eight independent TV stations now broadcasting in Iraqi Kurdistan and many more radio stations. While access to the media is absolutely controlled in the Iraqi government areas, here the Kurds watch satellite television from Europe. Many of the stations capture American films and programs from satellite feeds and then dub or subtitle them in Kurdish.

"I had nothing like this," says Mr. Abdullah, "most of the TV programming was in Arabic. (The regime) broadcasted their ideas and it affected our culture - especially for the children."

Oil is another source of the region's prosperity and also the main source of strife between the Kurdish factions. The porous borders with Turkey and Iran bustle with trade as Iraqi oil is smuggled out and consumer goods come in.

"We have been solving a lot of daily problems," says Sami Abdul Rehman, head of the Kurdish Democratic Party. politburo, "and we hope it will continue. Three years with no fighting - this is an achievement."

Kurds are also pondering what the future holds for them. "Since the UN is here I'm not afraid, but when they go Saddam is coming back and they will destroy us again," says Ms. Bassi.

Turk Parliament Commission Says Torture Widespread

May 4, 2000

ANKARA (Reuters) - Torture is widespread in Turkish police stations, where sanitation and treatment fall far below international standards, according to a parliamentary commission in Turkey, which is seeking to join the European Union.

The Human Rights Commission report, obtained by Reuters on Thursday, describes in grim detail dirty cells and dilapidated toilets where it says suspects are beaten, sprayed with high-pressure water and given electric shocks.

While the report's contents show that Turkey is still far from meeting the human rights standards for European Union membership, some will see the fact that it was conducted at all as a sign of growing political will for reform.

Members of the commission carried out late-night spot checks on five police stations in the city of Istanbul earlier this year, selecting the stations at random from 32 against which allegations of torture had been made.

"The commission reached the opinion that maltreatment and torture are a widespread practice in police stations and identified some methods and equipment used in this practice," the report says, complaining of efforts by some police staff to obstruct full inspection of their stations.

It called for senior officials such as prosecutors and governors to be held responsible for what takes place.

"It is not very difficult to solve human rights problems such as maltreatment and torture that sometimes take place in ... detention centres, prisons and police stations. It is enough to identify those who are really responsible and expose them without obstruction to the public," the report said.

Human Rights organizations such as Amnesty International have long said Turkish police are rarely prosecuted for rights violations and call for officials to be held accountable.

Turkish officials acknowledge human rights shortcomings but trials of policemen accused of human rights abuse generally end in tiny jail sentences for the officers.

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REUTERS

vendredi 5 mai 2000,

Turquie: le nouveau président veut davantage de démocratie



[agrandir la photo](#)

alliés occidentaux d'Ankara.

ANKARA (Reuters) - Elu à la présidence du pays le magistrat réformiste Ahmet Necdet Sezer, exhorte la Turquie à s'engager davantage dans la voie démocratique.

"La tradition de la démocratie n'a pas été établie (en Turquie). Le fondement de tous les problèmes de la Turquie réside dans la tendance à ne pas respecter les règles et dans le manque d'institutions", déclare le nouveau chef de l'Etat, qui était le candidat désigné du Premier ministre Bulent Ecevit.

Sezer a recueilli 330 voix sur 550, alors qu'il lui suffisait d'en obtenir 276 pour accéder à la tête de l'Etat, a indiqué le président du parlement, Ali Ilksoy.

Bien que le chef de l'Etat turc ne dispose pas de pouvoirs exécutifs, Sezer s'est fait l'avocat d'une réforme de l'appareil judiciaire et son élection à ce poste influent devrait être bien accueillie par les

Il prendra ses fonctions le 16 mai, date à laquelle expire le mandat du président sortant Suleyman Demirel.

L'élection du magistrat laïque au troisième tour de l'élection présidentielle est de nature à stabiliser la situation politique intérieure en Turquie et à favoriser le succès du programme économique triennal du gouvernement (4 milliards de dollars), appuyé par le FMI.

IRAN

La déroute des conservateurs

Les Iraniens sont des électeurs entêtés qui ont horreur de se déjuger. En dépit de la rude contre-attaque conservatrice de ces dernières semaines, ils ne se sont pas démobilisés et ont confirmé, lors du second tour des élections législatives du 5 mai, le triomphe réformateur du 18 février. Sur 66 sièges en lice près d'une cinquantaine ont été remportées par les partisans du président Khatami dans différentes circonscriptions de province. Tabriz, Shiraz et les villes du sud ont dit un non massif aux

tami et le ministère de l'Intérieur ont beau s'indigner et faire part de leur « *légitime impatience* », l'instance de contrôle des élections menace toujours d'annuler ce premier tour téhéranais. Le Conseil a ordonné un quatrième recomptage afin de sauver le siège de l'ex-président Rafsandjani. Les leaders réformateurs s'étant tous présentés à Téhéran, une annulation leur interdisait de porter leur tête de liste, le frère de Khatami, à la présidence du nouveau parlement qui doit se réunir « *normalement* » le 28 mai.



Le président Khatami avec Saïd Hajjarian

conservateurs. A l'occasion de ces deux tours la droite religieuse a perdu les trois quarts de ses sièges, passant de près de 180 députés sur 270 à une cinquantaine sur 290.

Le feuilleton électoral n'en est pas pour autant terminé. Trois mois après le premier tour, le très obstiné Conseil des Gardiens poursuit ses manœuvres d'obstruction et se refuse, prétextant des fraudes considérées à gauche comme imaginaires, à valider les trente sièges de Téhéran. Le président Kha-

tami et le ministère de l'Intérieur ont beau s'indigner et faire part de leur « *légitime impatience* », l'instance de contrôle des élections menace toujours d'annuler ce premier tour téhéranais. Le Conseil a ordonné un quatrième recomptage afin de sauver le siège de l'ex-président Rafsandjani. Les leaders réformateurs s'étant tous présentés à Téhéran, une annulation leur interdisait de porter leur tête de liste, le frère de Khatami, à la présidence du nouveau parlement qui doit se réunir « *normalement* » le 28 mai.

Dix autres partielles provoquées par des invalidations doivent être organisées d'ici... à six mois. Les trois journaux réformateurs ou modérés rescapés de la récente vague d'interdiction – « *Bayan* », « *Hammikan* » et « *Hamchahri* » – ne sont plus seuls. Le quotidien « *Bahar* » lancé avec le concours d'anciens journalistes de « *Sobh-é-emrouz* », journal suspendu, a été mis en vente le 7 mai dans les kiosques de Téhéran. De nombreux directeurs de journaux interdits affirment avoir leur licence pour faire paraître sous un autre

nom de nouveaux quotidiens. Mais ils préféreraient attendre la tenue de la nouvelle Assemblée qui aura les moyens d'invalider les récentes « *lois scélérates* » anti-presse pour reparaître. La guerre de l'information n'est donc pas près de s'arrêter.

Enfin une bonne nouvelle venue d'Iran : Saïd Hajjarian, qui, le 12 mars, a été victime d'un terrible attentat, vient de sortir du coma et de l'hôpital. Ce « *miracle* » redonne espoir aux réformateurs.

Gilles Anquetil

TURQUIE

Un sage à Ankara

L'élection à la présidence turque de Ahmed Necdet Sezer, 59 ans, ancien chef de la Cour constitutionnelle, confirme l'espoir d'une réforme démocratique qui s'inscrirait dans le processus d'intégration à l'Europe. D'abord parce qu'elle est le résultat d'un compromis entre le Premier ministre Bülent Ecevit, ses deux partenaires de la coalition gouvernementale (l'Anap de Mesut Yilmaz et le MHP d'extrême-droite de Devlet Bahçeli), et les chefs de l'opposition. Or le remplacement de Suleyman Demirel à la tête de l'Etat n'était pas évident. Car il comportait non seulement le risque d'un

éclatement de la majorité mais aussi celui d'une nouvelle période d'instabilité politique. Et dans une Turquie où les désaccords institutionnels ont souvent débouché sur des violences politiques, puis sur une intervention militaire, il faut souligner cette maturité inédite des politiques. Ensuite, l'espoir tient aussi à la personnalité du nouveau président qui affirme, comme l'exigent les Européens, que la Turquie doit se conformer aux normes universelles en matière de droits de l'homme et réviser une Constitution rédigée en 1982 sous la dictée de l'armée. Bien sûr, nul ne peut s'attendre à des bouleversements immédiats à propos des Kurdes ou des partis islamistes. Mais l'arrivée du juge Sezer a au moins le mérite de lever certains tabous.

H. G.

Prince Reza II Pahlavi: Kurds certainly had their place in the highest levels

KurdishMedia - May 4, 2000

"... Let me remind you that, in the past, Kurds certainly had their place in the highest levels of government; they served as ministers, ambassadors, governors, high-ranking military officers, and as various dignitaries [in Iran]. Compare this to the horrific treatment of Iranian Kurds during the Iran-Iraq War, specifically the Halabcheh genocide, and later, the treatment of Iraqi Kurds after the Kuwaiti crisis, in Iraq proper. ..."

[Excerpt from Prince reply]

Dr Gurgur Garrusi from Kurdish Media has initiated a dialogue with Prince Reza II Pahlavi the son of Iran's last king.

Gurgur's letter and the reply from Prince Reza II Pahlavi show two different biases in which the national interests of Kurds with a collective entity deep rooted in history are contrasted with the interests of Iran, a political entity that governs over 25% of the Kurdish population. The prince does not point out his solution for the remaining 75% of Kurds or the Baloch who are not living in Iran and their interests and the need for a union in the region that covers all the people sharing Iranian culture or speaking Iranian languages from Balochistan and Afghanistan (in the east) to Kurdistan (in the west).

Kurdish Media hopes that this will be a catalyst for a dialogue between Kurdish and Iranian community and leadership to change the mindset of both parties in order to come up with a formula that can be introduced in the security arrangement of the region and that can safeguard the interests of Iranian speaking people in the region in addition to the outsider's interests. The text of Gurgur's letter and the reply from the Prince (also available on Reza Pahlavi webpage) is included.

Dear Sir,

Let me take the opportunity to initiate a dialogue on the issue of Kurds and Kurdistan in Iran (and in the region), hoping that it encourages a wider dialogue that can be reflected for a wider Kurdish audience in Kurdishmedia.com.

The Kurdish issue has been a very sensitive issue, and despite its importance, it has not been addressed by you and the Monarchists recently. Just recently there were attempts by the Iranian regime to initiate a dialogue with the Kurdish parties in Iran, and Kurdish parties in Iran invited the people to participate in the last parliamentary elections.

We are all aware that lots of injustice have been committed against the Kurds by different regimes in Iran and other neighboring countries, and Kurds have been manipulated in the past for short term gains with no regard for their cultural and national interests.

We are all aware of the track record of execution and assassination of Kurdish nationalist and religious leaders, and we are also aware of the fact that Kurdish education is only allowed in Iraq among countries in which the majority of Kurds live.

One should also be reminded of the ancestors of the Kurds who created the first Indo-Iranian civilizations of Mittani and Medes in the region.

In a region where Turkic and Arabic unions are forming, what is the prospect of an isolated Iran (regardless of the regime ruling it), and what is your view on Kurds and Kurdistan and the need for an Iranistan union in the region that has been feared by your late father?

All the best,
Dr. Gurgur Garrusi

Dear Dr. G:

First of all, I have always communicated my availability to discuss any issue related to the Kurds with their leaders and representatives. Most have responded, and have been in contact with me from the beginning, and certain groups opted not to have contact.

Second, to my knowledge, there have been many comments made by monarchist groups about this national issue.

Third, Kurds, just like Baluchis, Lurs, Turkmans, Ghashghais, etc., are ALL members of the Iranian nation, regardless of their cultural and religious backgrounds. Therefore, as equals under the law of the land, no one should expect to receive any preferential treatment. Indeed, within a democratic system, everyone in the country would be considered equal - no Iranian should be persecuted for any reason, or be subjected to any kind of discrimination. I am, together with the majority of my compatriots, a staunch believer of the principles embedded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Furthermore, many Kurds I have spoken to, have often proudly stated the fact that they considered themselves the first and most patriotic of Iranians - therefore, except for a handful who flirt with the idea of separatism, or as you state, "Iranistan", the majority see no need for the isolationism you seem to advocate.

Fourth, your statement about a disregard of Kurdish cultural interest is inaccurate. As far as their "national interest" is concerned, as IRANIANS, they share the same aspiration as the rest of us do! Let me remind you that, in the past, Kurds certainly had their place in the highest levels of government; they served as ministers, ambassadors, governors, high-ranking military officers, and as various dignitaries. Compare this to the horrific treatment of Iranian Kurds during the Iran-Iraq War, specifically the Halabcheh genocide, and later, the treatment of Iraqi Kurds after the Kuwaiti crisis, in Iraq proper. Let me also emphasize that, in the past, Kurds were not deprived of their rights to exercise their cultural identity. Furthermore, I do not believe that there is, or ever will be (under a democratic system), any problems for a group of our citizens to have the ability to freely educate their children in their regional and local culture and dialect. In fact, I believe that what contributed to our country's rich civilization is precisely the diversity of ethnicities, and their respective cultures and religions. None of this could have existed if our nation had not vividly demonstrated its capacity for tolerance and peaceful co-existence throughout the ages. Iran is, after all, the birthplace of the first declaration of human rights. Sadly, the ineptitude of the current regime, and the consequences of its policies resulting in a general weakening of Iran seems to have prompted some opportunist circles to exploit Iran's current plight, and redraft our regional map - somehow, the word "Persian" is deleted from the name of "Gulf". Next thing you know, Iran, and not just the Kurdistan province, will become "Iranistan". Incidentally, this was not just my father's nightmare: it is the worst fear of all nationalist Iranians - Kurds included. May I also point out that, unlike our neighbors, Iran did recognize its Kurdish population, and has always called their province, "Kurdistan".

Fifth, your "independent" Kurdistan would be far more isolated than your claim about Iran's isolation! Just because the current regime has been incapable of addressing the country's true needs, one should not conclude that, tomorrow, a responsible government will not be able to competently deal with such issues. Your statement: "(regardless of the regime ruling)", is not only offensive and insulting to Iranians, it is also condescending in the sense that it implies that even the due process (parliamentary and/or legislative) will not be able to address such important issues.

Sixth, Iranians are and will always be committed to our national and territorial integrity. I assure you that, contrary to your opinion,

countless Kurds will be the first in line in defending their homeland, IRAN.

Seventh, in my upcoming book, you will find in the annex section, the text of a document written by me several years ago, in which points are made in reference to your concerns.

And finally, any domestic issue related to the concern of any group in our society will have to be addressed in the future parliament. To ensure the best outcome and resolution, a genuine democracy will have to prevail. Since we are not there yet, I believe that such issues will have to remain on hold until then. Please remember that I do not consider myself as someone who is in charge of formulating the future policies of the country, and responsible for governmental decisions. However, I am always ready, and will be glad to offer my opinion on related issues with Kurdish representatives at any time.

Sincerely,
R. P.

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INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, SATURDAY-SUNDAY, MAY 6-7, 2000

Turkish Justice Elected President

ANKARA — The Parliament elected Ahmet Necdet Sezer as president Friday, raising hopes that the staunch defender of democratic rights would nudge legislators toward broadening democracy and reforming laws that curb freedoms.

Mr. Sezer, the chief justice of the Constitutional Court, was elected with 330 votes in the 550-member Parliament. He will be the fourth civilian to hold the post of president. Mr. Sezer's post is largely symbolic, but there are hopes that as president he will help guide Turkey toward carrying out democratic reforms.

At his first press conference after the election, Mr. Sezer spoke of reforms. "An understanding of democracy has not developed in social and political life and a tradition of democracy has not been created," he said. "Democracy and democratic values have to be inserted into our legal system in line with the state of law." (AP)

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New Turkish President Urged to Improve Human Rights

NEW YORK, May 5 (Reuters) - Turkey's newly elected President Ahmet Necdet Sezer is in a position to make progress on human rights and to improve freedom of expression, a human rights group said on Friday.

"Turkey has a chance to make real progress in human rights under this new president," said Holly Cartner, executive director of Europe and Central Asia division for New York-based Human Rights Watch (HRW).

"But he needs to move quickly before the momentum is lost," Cartner said in a statement.

Reformist judge Sezer, who was elected Friday as Turkey's next president -- a largely symbolic, but influential post -- immediately called for more democracy.

"In society and in politics, democracy is not sufficiently developed. A tradition of democracy has not been established," Sezer told reporters in his first comments after his election.

Turkey for decades has been trying to enter the European Union. Sezer's election may be welcomed by Turkey's Western allies because of his support for more freedom of speech.

"Sezer has been surprisingly frank about the need for more freedom of expression," Cartner said, adding that HRW hopes "that he follows up that rhetoric with some real action as president."

Sezer also pledged not to allow political Islam to encroach upon Turkey's secularism nor to allow Kurdish separatists any ground.

Human Rights Watch said Turkey should use the relative calm now in the conflict in the Kurdish southwest to make progress on human rights, including Kurdish issues.

PROCHE-ORIENT



Le 25 avril, à Téhéran. Une étudiante brandit un quotidien interdit et un portrait du président Khatami.

Radicalisation à l'iranienne

L'interdiction des journaux modérés pourrait n'être que le prélude d'une vaste offensive des durs du régime contre les khatamistes

De notre correspondant

En moins d'une semaine, les conservateurs, qui contrôlent une partie du pouvoir judiciaire, ont interdit « jusqu'à nouvel ordre » tous les journaux modérés qui avaient vu le jour depuis l'élection du président modéré iranien, Mohammad Khatami. C'est un coup par-

ticulièrement rude pour le président, qui voit ainsi effacer les acquis de ces trois dernières années. Si les 14 premiers journaux fermés avaient plus ou moins des affinités avec ce que l'on appelle l'opposition libérale, les deux derniers, les quotidiens *Mocharekat*, organe du Front de la participation, qui a

remporté les dernières élections législatives, et *Sobh-e Emrouz* sont des journaux khatamistes. Le premier était dirigé par Mohammad Reza Khatami, frère du président, et le second par Saïd Hajjarian, son principal conseiller politique, qui se trouve toujours à l'hôpital après un attentat. Mais la question est de savoir si l'offensive des durs du régime ne va pas s'étendre au-delà de la presse. Dans la ligne de mire des ultraconservateurs, il y a bien sûr le nouveau Parlement. Va-t-on vers un scénario à l'algérienne, avec l'annulation des résultats des élections législatives pour empêcher les partisans du président Khatami de prendre le contrôle du Parlement ? En effet, les réformateurs ont obtenu la majorité absolue dès le premier tour des élections législatives, le 18 février dernier. En principe, le second tour doit être organisé le 5 mai. Mais tout est encore possible. Car le Conseil de la surveillance de la Constitution, dominé par

les conservateurs, n'a toujours pas approuvé les résultats des élections pour la capitale, où, sur les 30 sièges, 29 ont été remportés par les modérés. Le trentième étant l'ancien président Ali Akbar Hachemi Rafsandjani, qui pourrait revenir sur le devant de la scène. « Les réformateurs paient aujourd'hui leur victoire, mais aussi la tactique qui a consisté à attaquer de front l'ancien président Rafsandjani, l'un des hommes clefs du pouvoir islamique », affirme un journaliste iranien. Est-il en train de prendre sa revanche ? Le 28 avril, il a réaffirmé son soutien aux conservateurs. C'est dans ce contexte que le 1^{er} Mai une attaque au mortier contre le QG des forces de sécurité de Téhéran a été revendiquée par les Moudjahidine du peuple. On peut craindre que cet affrontement politique et cet attentat n'alourdissent encore le climat autour du procès des 13 juifs accusés d'espionnage au profit d'Israël. ●

Slavosh Ghazi

● L'EXPRESS 4/5/2000

IRAN

Rien n'arrêtera le courant des réformes

Interdit quelques jours après quatorze autres publications, le quotidien réformateur *Sobh-e Emruz* analyse, dans son dernier numéro, les récents événements, en militant de nouveau pour un pouvoir "laïque".

SOBH-E EMRUZ

Téhéran

Dire que la tentative d'assassinat de Saïd Hajjarian [directeur du journal *Sobh-e Emruz*] visait à porter un coup au moral de ceux qui ont soutenu le projet des réformes n'est que le constat d'une simple réalité. Affirmer que les manipulations récentes des résultats des élections parlementaires [le 18 février], les retards pris pour arrêter la date du second tour des législatives [prévu en principe le 5 mai] et l'invalidation des résultats de certains bureaux de votes sont autant de signes d'un refus d'accepter les résultats du vote populaire n'est aucunement extraordinaire. De la même manière, si nous parlons de la ratification de la nouvelle loi sur la presse, qui est destinée à réduire au



silence des médias qui reflètent une partie des revendications de la société,

▲ Sur le capuchon du stylo : Presse. Au sol : "Le sabre est plus tranchant que l'écriture." Dessin de Kahil paru dans *Ashraq al-Awsat*, Londres.

ce n'est qu'un simple constat. Enfin, si nous disons que l'interdiction des quotidiens et des revues est un acte illégal qui sert des intérêts politiques spécifiques, nous ne faisons que témoigner d'une simple réalité. Les questions politiques dans notre pays sont finalement assez simples, bien que tragiques et douloureuses.

Toutes ces mesures qui tirent la confrontation politique vers un point de rupture visent à anéantir les réformes qui ont été faites dans le cadre de la légalité. Il nous semble qu'à ce stade la voix de la raison a peu de chance d'être entendue par ceux qui cherchent aujourd'hui la crise. Mais peut-on réellement parler de la fin du projet de réformes ? Ce projet repose sur deux principes. Le premier est de résoudre enfin la question de la légitimité du régime, en renforçant le caractère républicain. Une république fonde sa légitimité sur la volonté de la majorité du peuple. Cette forme de pouvoir agit à travers des lois et est mise en œuvre par des institutions élues par le peuple. Le

sort qu'on réserve aux réformateurs actuels est enfin secondaire par rapport à cet acquis principal.

Le second principe est de renoncer au caractère de "sainteté" du pouvoir terrestre [la suprématie du religieux sur le politique à travers le concept du Guide religieux]. Les institutions sont créées par des êtres humains vivant sur Terre, et leurs actes peuvent être critiqués et réformés. L'acte religieux ne doit pas intervenir

dans le mécanisme des institutions politiques. Plus que le devenir des réformateurs, ce sont les réformes qui doivent se maintenir. En Iran, les réformes ne font que démarrer, et on ne pourra pas les jeter aux oubliettes. La pensée réformatrice s'est enracinée parmi les plus jeunes, même si les réformateurs actuels ne sont pas en mesure de dépasser leurs propres contradictions. La jeunesse trouvera des moyens nouveaux pour actualiser cette pensée et la transformer en stratégies efficaces. Les réformateurs paient le contrecoup de la vague de revendications à laquelle les structures actuelles du pouvoir sont incapables de répondre. On ne peut pas effacer ces revendications de la scène actuelle du pays. Les réformateurs proposent des voies légales et pacifiques d'évolution de ces structures afin de les rendre efficaces. Ceux qui pensent pouvoir éliminer les réformateurs sont responsables du lourd tribut que "les autres méthodes" feront subir au peuple. ■

LIBERTÉ D'EXPRESSION

Un kiosque à Téhéran

■ Le dernier numéro du quotidien *Mosharekat*, avant son interdiction, fait état des rassemblements spontanés de lecteurs avides devant les kiosques à journaux. Stupéfaits par les interdictions en chaîne des titres réformateurs, ils réclament les quotidiens alternatifs et en profitent pour débattre avec d'autres clients sur les raisons et les conséquences de cette censure. Un vendeur de journaux s'inquiète du sort qui est réservé à tous ceux qui, comme les journalistes et lui-même, se trouvent du jour au lendemain sans travail.

La nouvelle stratégie des conservateurs iraniens

AL HAYAT
Londres

Après une période de calme relatif, le conflit entre les réformateurs et leurs opposants religieux conservateurs est de nouveau parvenu au point critique. La décision rendue par un tribunal religieux spécial de fermer seize organes de presse et d'emprisonner un certain nombre de journalistes laisse penser que ce conflit ouvert n'est pas une simple revanche psychologique des conservateurs après leur défaite lors des dernières élections. Cette attaque cache vraisemblablement des buts politiques plus ambitieux : elle prépare le terrain à une confrontation majeure, dont les conservateurs espèrent qu'elle débouchera sur un retour à l'équilibre qui prévalait avant les résultats du premier tour des élections législatives [18 février 2000].

Ce qui semble confirmer cette analyse, c'est le moment subtilement choisi par le courant conservateur pour lancer son attaque, alors que le Guide suprême, l'ayatollah Ali Khamenei, choisit de dénoncer la presse iranienne, qui se serait, selon lui, "transformée en foyer des ennemis de l'islam". Tandis que l'on prête à Khatami le désir de former un gouvernement purement réformiste, qui serait chargé d'exécuter sa politique sur les plans

intérieur et extérieur, les événements actuels montrent que les conservateurs ne sont pas prêts à accepter leur éviction d'un quelconque nouveau cabinet. Le courant religieux, qui se considère comme l'héritier légitime de la révolution khomeyniste, de son legs politique et religieux, ne peut tolérer de laisser si facilement le champ libre à des hommes qui n'ont jamais été des compagnons de Khomeyni.

Mais il est un autre but primordial que les conservateurs essaient d'atteindre : briser les reins à la presse, qui s'est imposée dernièrement comme le principal soutien des réformateurs. Les conservateurs se sont toujours appuyés, avant comme après la révolution, sur les mosquées et les prêches du vendredi comme principaux vecteurs de leur propagande afin de toucher l'ensemble de la population. Mais les réformistes, qui n'ont pu s'imposer dans les mosquées, ont réussi à transformer la presse en un vecteur médiatique tout aussi efficace que les lieux de culte. La meilleure preuve en est que la diffusion des deux quotidiens réformistes *Mosharekat* et de *Sobh-e Emruz* a atteint dernièrement 2 millions d'exemplaires vendus par jour.

LE COURANT RELIGIEUX MARQUE DES POINTS

Ce qui pousse véritablement les conservateurs à déplacer la bataille sur le terrain de la presse, c'est que des batailles de ce type trouvent un

certain écho auprès de larges franges de la jeunesse rurale, des couches sociales les moins éduquées, des pas-darans [Gardiens de la révolution], des conscrits, des forces de l'ordre et de la police secrète. Il serait peut-être difficile de convaincre tous ceux-là de s'opposer à des réformes économiques ou politiques, mais il est certain que les persuader de se lancer dans une bataille contre la presse, la liberté d'opinion et d'expression, et les courants cultivés sous le prétexte de leur supposée opposition à l'islam et aux préceptes religieux est une manœuvre particulièrement aisée. Ces secteurs de la population ressentent en effet une profonde aversion pour tout ce qui est "culturel", "moderne" ou lié à l'éducation.

Si l'on prend en compte l'arrière-plan de ce tableau, on peut craindre que le courant religieux ne remporte une large victoire dans cette bataille contre les réformistes. On peut même penser que les leaders du mouvement réformiste, et en premier lieu le président Khatami lui-même, devront accepter des compromis, comme de céder aux conservateurs la présidence du Parlement, ainsi qu'un certain nombre de portefeuilles ministériels dans le prochain cabinet. Mais les partisans du changement sont loin d'être affaiblis en Iran, et il ne sera pas possible de les éradiquer aussi facilement...

Sami Shawrash

Turquie: 7 Kurdes et un ex-dirigeant local tués



DIYARBAKIR, Turquie (Reuters) - L'armée turque a tué sept rebelles kurdes au cours d'un accrochage intervenu dans la nuit de jeudi à vendredi dans le sud-est du pays, a rapporté un responsable de la sécurité. **5 mai 2000**

Les soldats ont attaqué des éléments du Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK) dans la région de Dicle (province de Diyarbakir) après avoir été informés de leur présence, a-t-il précisé sans faire état de victimes dans les rangs de l'armée.

Des représentants de la sécurité ont d'autre part découvert les corps de deux rebelles kurdes tués par balles près de la ville de Hasankeyf. On ignore qui les a tués.

Par ailleurs, toujours dans le Sud-Est, l'ancien chef d'un parti d'extrême droite local, Seyfettin Ozbulten, a été abattu jeudi soir d'une seule balle à la tête alors qu'il sortait de sa voiture pour rentrer chez lui, a rapporté la police. Selon des médias, ce meurtre porterait la marque du groupe islamiste armé Hizbullah, responsable de dizaines d'assassinats dans la région à majorité kurde depuis le début des années 1990.

Ozbulten est décédé à l'hôpital. Il avait quitté voilà deux semaines la direction de la branche régionale du Parti de l'action nationaliste.

Turkish Party Delegation Visits KDP Political Bureau

Iraq Report
Radio Free Europe
5 May 2000

A group from Turkey's Peace and Democracy Party (PDP) met with the Kurdistan Democratic Party's (KDP) Political Bureau in Salah al-Din to discuss the current situation in Kurdistan and relations between the KDP and other parties. The PDP delegation was headed by Yilmaz Camli, according to a report in the Sorani Kurdish newspaper "Brayati" of 27 April. They were met by Jawhar Namiq Salim, secretary of the KDP political bureau. The PDP is in Kurdistan on an official visit. (David Nissman)

KRG Representative Meets With French Officials

Saywan Barzani, representative of the Kurdistan Regional Government in France, met with the the French Foreign Ministry official responsible for Iraqi affairs to discuss the positive impact UN Security Council Resolution 986 on the Kurds of Iraq, according to a report in the Sorani Kurdish newspaper "Brayati" on 18 April.

He urged the French government to continue its support for the people of Kurdistan and take their needs into consideration during discussions and reviews of Resolution 986. The Kurds have emerged as a major group of influence in France in recent years. In the early 1970s, there were perhaps a dozen Kurdish students in France, but now there are some 120,000 Kurds living in France. (David Nissman)

Kurds To Receive Cultural Autonomy In Russia

A conference on establishing a federation for Kurdish cultural rights in the Russian Federation appears to be receiving widespread government support. The pro-PKK journal "Ozgur Politika" published a report on the conference which was republished by the "Kurdistan Observer" on 2 May. The PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) has also expressed its support for the federation.

The conference, "A Cultural Autonomy Federation for Kurds in the Russian Federation", was held in the conference hall of the Russian Ministry for Nationalities. Among the topics discussed were a federation for the autonomous cultural units in Russia, support at the state level for the cultural rights of the Kurdish people, the development and establishment for national rights in accordance with Russian laws, and the official adoption of a Cultural Development Program for the Kurds of the Russian Federation.

"Ozgur Politika" sees indications of government support by the attendance of Mikhail Belousov, Deputy Chairman of the Russian government's Presidential Council, and Nikolay Bugay, of the Minorities Department of the Ministry of Nationalities.

Nikolay Bugay is also co-author of the work, together with T. M. Broyev and R. M. Broyev, "Sovetskiye Kurdy: Vremya Peremen", a work detailing the history and present status of the Kurds of the former Soviet Union and of contemporary Russia. It was published jointly by the Institute of Russian History of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Center for Kurdish Culture, and the Kurdish 'Unity' Front in 1993. Bugay has been a tireless activist for Kurdish rights in Russia.

The proposed federation will be an umbrella organization for the some 300,000 Kurds living within the Russian Federation, concentrated in Moscow, Saratov and Krasnodar. It is bound to have a great impact on other parts of the world inhabited by Kurds who are or have been deprived of cultural rights, such as Turkey, Iran and Iraq.

Also speaking at the conference was Vasili Safranchuk, Chairman of the Committee to Defend PKK Chairman Abdullah Ocalan, and Professor Yacheslav Aldonasyov, who said in his speech that the "international conspiracy against PKK chairman Ocalan was at the same time a conspiracy against Russia. Kurdish National Congress member Nadir Nadirov stressed that the development of the Kurdish Culture Federation was not merely a cultural activity, but was also a political effort. (David Nissman)

Kurdish Islamic Meets With Iranian Delegation.

The Kurdish Islamic League [Yekgirtu], represented by members of the Political Bureau Muhammad Rauf and Hadi Ali, its Central Consultative Council and its Foreign Relations Bureau received a high-ranking delegation from the Islamic Republic of Iran headed by Sardar Masjidi, commander of the Ramazan military base, at the Yekgirtu political bureau headquarters on 13 April, according to a report in their newspaper "Yekgirtu" published in Irbil in Sorani Kurdish. The two sides discussed the situation in Kurdistan, the peace

process, and relations between the people of Kurdistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. (David Nissman)

Turkoman Front Activity Increases.

The Turkoman Front, recently criticized by officials of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), has been launching an intensive lobbying effort among other political groups in Iraqi Kurdistan and outside.

The Front was accused by a Turkmen minister of the KRG of pretending to represent the Turkmen in Iraq, the implication being that they are taking orders from either Baghdad or Ankara (cf. RFERL Iraq Report, 30 April 2000). The Sorani Kurdish newspaper "Gulan" on 6 April and the Irbil Sorani newspaper "Khabat" on 7 April claimed in the words of the latter that the Front's leadership had been "condemned by the people of Kurdistan" and that it was basically challenging "the integrity of Iraq". "Khabat" went on to say that "it is impossible to allow these suspects, who call themselves the Turkoman Front and put themselves above the law and work against the supreme interests of the Kurdistan people, to exist anymore."

These KDP-inspired attacks on the Turkoman Front (ITF) have galvanized the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) into action. Jalal Talabani, leader of the PUK, has held a series of meetings with the leaderships of other political parties which flourish inside the "no-fly" zone (cf. RFERL Iraq Report, 24 April 2000). And the PUK sent a delegation to the Turkoman Front relations office in PUK-controlled Sulaymaniyah on 9 April. Led by Mustafa Chawrash, head of the PUK relations office, that group was received by Samir Demirbash, head of the ITF relations office. According to a report in the Irbil newspaper "Turkoman Ali" on 16 April, the two sides discussed the most important political developments in the area. They asserted that the "historical relations between the Kurdish and Turkmen peoples will not be disturbed, and stressed the need to "strengthen bilateral relations in the public interest".

The next day Demirbash received a group from the Islamic Unity Movement, headed by Dara Muhammad Amin, a member of the Movement's political bureau. Among other items, they reaffirmed that the "language of dialogue dominates our era." A few days earlier, on 6 April, Demirbash had also received a delegation from the Kurdistan Conservative Party. In their discussions, they also emphasized the importance of enhancing bilateral relations between the Turkmen and the Kurds.

A report in "Ozgur Politika" of 27 April cites sources in Ankara who have demanded that the United States put pressure on the KDP to grant the Turkmen Front its rights. Safin Dizayi, the KDP's Ankara representative, claims that the KDP is exerting its utmost efforts to establish good relations with the Turkmen. He adds that "they even have a militant force which consists of 500 people. If this is not democracy, I do not know what democracy is. We live under very unique circumstances and no one expects total democracy to be established in this part of the world. Despite all this, there are thirty parties in north Iraq and all operate freely." (David Nissman)

Kurdish Area Government Publishes Official Journal

Khabat (Arbil) 05 May 00

[FBIS Translated Text] Justice Minister Hadi Ali Abd al-Karim attended a ceremony to mark the publication of the first issue of 'Kurdistan Events', the official newspaper of the Kurdistan regional government. During the inauguration ceremony, the minister delivered a speech in which he referred to the importance of this newspaper with respect to legal matters. The newspaper will be concerned with publishing laws, decisions and instructions issued by the National Assembly of Iraqi Kurdistan, the Council of Ministers and Kurdistan regional institutions.

The first issue included a number of decisions issued by the parliament recently and Instructions List No. 1 for the year 1999 issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation. We hope that 'Kurdistan Events' and its editorial staff will be successful in their march to spread legal awareness in the community and support the principle of the rule of law in Kurdistan. The director general of justice also attended the ceremony.

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Government Studying Proposal on Talks With Kurdish Opposition Parties

Sobh-e Emruz (Tehran) 06 Apr 00

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Political Staff Report--The Islamic Republic of Iran has so far sent no letter through an intermediary regarding talks with Kurdish opposition parties.

Dr. Abdollah Ramazanzadeh, the governor general of Kurdistan, announcing this yesterday in an interview with a Sobh-e Emruz correspondent added: It is these Kurdish opposition parties who have proposed talks with us. We are studying the matter at present.

Regarding why the two groups, Democrat and Komeleh, have submitted separate proposals for talks he said: This becomes clear when studying their internal group analyses. They have come to the conclusion that the people of Kurdistan have completely rejected their armed movement.

Dr. Ramazanzadeh cited a phrase used by one of the Komeleh officials to the effect that "the people have run ahead of us and we have to catch up with them," and added: Free elections and an open climate in Kurdish regions have caused some of the groups favoring armed policy to reach a deadlock.

The governor general of Kurdistan went on to say: It is worth pointing out that in some of the towns some of the Sixth Majles candidates raised slogans more extremist than those by the two groups. But they did not win votes. The interesting thing is that the people voted for reformists. Re-emphasizing the fact that the question of Iran's proposal to the Democratic Party of Kurdistan was the concoction of that same group, he revealed: This proposal was raised two months ago at a meeting I had with Jalal Talebani, the secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Iraqi Kurdistan [ettehadiye-ye mihani-ye kordestan-e iraq].

In another part of the interview Dr. Ramazanzadeh also announced: The Islamic Republic of Iran's position is clear, and those groups that have accepted or are willing to accept the Constitution are free to operate, and we are also duty-bound to operate on that basis. The governor general of Kurdistan added: Of course it has nothing to do with the government if an individual has committed a crime and a private litigant is involved. Matters of this kind would be pursued through judicial channels.

In answer to the question as to whether external pressures had influenced the change in the positions of the Democrat and Komeleh groups, Dr. Ramazanzadeh said: One has, in this connection, to refer particularly to the Democratic party which is inclined to join the Socialist International Congress. One of the policies of this congress concerns peaceful methods. Thus that group is under enormous pressure to alter its defeated armed method.

In conclusion, he said: In addition, bearing in mind President Mohammad Khatami's popularity in the world, the current policy of those two groups does not have support. Of course they would not say openly that it was they who proposed negotiations. This is because they are also under pressure from other groups like the Rajavi's mini group. Thus, but for those pressures they would have declared their positions openly.

It is worth noting that recently the Komeleh and the Democratic party of Kurdistan implicitly proposed negotiations with the Government, and that they have always stated they support negotiations. Nevertheless they have claimed that the proposal for negotiations had come from Iran.

* * * * *

Effects of Hajjarian Assassination in Kurdistan

Viewed Mosharekat (Tehran) 06 Apr 00 by Jalal Jalalizadeh

[FBIS Translated Text] One of the shocking news stories that made the people of Kurdistan quite surprised in these recent years was the news of the [attempted] assassination of the intellectual mind of the reforms, Sa'id Hajjarian. When on Sunday the news of the assassination was heard by the people, the telephones of Participation Front and Sirvan weekly started to ring, and the lovers of reforms were anxiously asking for information about the condition of Hajjarian, and with their hearts full of hatred they condemned such an obnoxious action and with full modesty prayed to God to grant him health.

Of course the people of Kurdistan have been familiar with the word assassination for years and understand the obscene meaning of this word that has cast its shadow over their lives in the course of many years. From this point, when they hear this word they show reaction wholeheartedly to prevent the growth of such thorns in the field of their dreams and goals. They have frequently witnessed this thorn injuring the bodies of their most beloved associates and thorns have caused flowers to wither in their land and each of these flowers could fill the air with its aroma.

Jalalizadeh, Shebeli, Tariff, Farsad, Rabiei and even individuals outside the borders have become victims of the wildness and savageness of those launching this seditious phenomenon. Therefore, the assassination of Hajjarian reminded them of their old wounds and spread an air of hatred toward the agents of this assassination and thus undermined the wishful thoughts of these agents who imagined they could make the society indifferent and lose conformity through this assassination. But we saw that the assassination of Hajjarian was contrary to what they imagined, revealed the lack of insight in terrorists' minds and watered the tree of reforms, justice, and freedom. It made the lovers of this tree gather under its shadow and determine to safeguard this huge tree so that no one would dare to think of cutting it.

We witnessed the same in Kurdistan. People from different walks of life, including the religious men, university professors, people of the Bazaar, farmers, teachers--they all raised their hands toward God, begging and praying for the health of Hajjarian. And hence, the newspapers of 2 Khordad have done a good job, thanks to the government of reform, and it is because of them that there is such unity prevailing in our multi-ethnic society that cannot be damaged.

But the reformers should not consider the assassination of the top figure of reforms unlikely because they can do nothing else. The reform is the opposite of corruption and is not compatible with humility, blind obedience, slaughtering of the boys and girls and keeping the masses in hunger and fear. They must indeed fear the melting away of the snowman of power and shattering of the shallow palace of their thoughts and defend them in any possible way. But if thoughts and minds could be removed by assassination, there would be no sign of Imam Hussain, Hallaj Nafs Zakieh, Seyed Ghotb, Hasan Albana, Mottahari, etc. Undoubtedly the assassination of Hajjarian will have no effect on the process of reforms, and they will find their way slowly and become more dynamic and powerful each day and remove the trivial from their way.

The assassination showed that Hajjarian is not alone, but every Kurd citizen and every Sunni considers himself as his closest, most sincere friend and supporter and would announce that similar to their role as the guardians of the country and the Islamic land, today they also use all their ability and power to defend Khatami and people like Hajjarian against the enemies.

Le juge Ahmet Necdet Sezer a été élu président de la Turquie au troisième tour de scrutin

Soutenu par le premier ministre Bülent Ecevit, il succède à Süleyman Demirel pour sept ans

Le dixième président de la République turque, le juge Ahmet Necdet Sezer, a finalement été élu, le 5 mai, au troisième tour de scrutin. Il succède

ainsi à Süleyman Demirel. L'Assemblée nationale, monopolisée depuis de longues semaines par cette élection présidentielle, va enfin pou-

voir se remettre au travail : de nombreuses réformes sont en attente, et le processus d'adhésion à l'Union européenne s'essouffle.

ISTANBUL

de notre correspondante

Le premier ministre Bülent Ecevit ne cachait pas sa satisfaction après l'élection de son candidat, le juge Ahmet Necdet Sezer. La coalition gouvernementale a frôlé la crise au cours de cette course à la présidence, et le chef du gouvernement lui-même s'est vu asséner un avertissement par l'Assemblée nationale qui, malgré ses efforts, a refusé d'accorder un second mandat à Süleyman Demirel. Celui-ci quittera donc la présidence après sept ans, le 16 mai. « Il n'y a aucun problème que nous ne pouvons surmonter en faisant des compromis à la base », a annoncé M. Ecevit, désormais rassuré sur l'avenir de son gouvernement.

Le long processus politique qui a mené à l'élection de M. Sezer a néanmoins causé des remous profonds au sein des partis politiques. Le fait que le gouvernement ait op-

té pour un candidat ne venant pas de l'Assemblée nationale a irrité de nombreux députés : les résultats démontrent en effet que, bien que les chefs des cinq partis politiques représentés au Parlement aient officiellement soutenu la candidature du juge, plus de 200 membres du Parlement n'ont pas voté pour M. Sezer, ce qui n'a pas empêché celui-ci d'obtenir 330 voix, alors que 276 auraient suffi.

UNE ÈRE NOUVELLE

Certains islamistes, au sein du Parti de la vertu, profondément divisé à l'approche d'un congrès qui verra s'opposer réformistes et traditionalistes proches de Necmettin Erbakan, ont rechigné à voter pour l'homme qui avait présidé à la dissolution, en 1998, du Refah (Parti de la prospérité), préférant leur propre candidat, Nevzat Yalcintas, qui a obtenu 113 voix au troisième tour. D'autres, notamment les ul-

tranationalistes, n'approuvent pas les discours libéraux de M. Sezer. Certains conservateurs ont d'abord préféré le président de l'Assemblée, Yildirim Akbulut, un membre du Parti de la Mère patrie (ANAP), qui s'est retiré après le second scrutin.

Jusqu'à présent, les dirigeants de partis régnaient généralement en maîtres sur leurs formations politiques, mais les semaines écoulées ont démontré une volonté nouvelle de la part des parlementaires de rejeter les décisions imposées par les chefs de partis. Des règlements de comptes sont dès lors attendus au sein des partis. Un remaniement ministériel est également probable.

L'élection d'un juge sans expérience politique marque également le début d'une ère nouvelle en Turquie. La Constitution introduite après le coup d'Etat de 1980 a octroyé des pouvoirs importants au

président : le premier occupant du palais de Cankaya, après le retour à la vie civile, a d'ailleurs été le général qui avait dirigé le putsch, Kenan Evren. Lorsqu'il a accédé à la présidence en 1989, son successeur Turgut Özal, premier ministre pendant de nombreuses années, a usé de ses pouvoirs pour influencer les actions du gouvernement. Son grand rival, Süleyman Demirel, l'a à l'époque souvent critiqué mais, devenu président après la mort soudaine de Turgut Özal, il a, lui aussi, fait de la présidence une plate-forme politique importante, notamment dans le domaine des affaires étrangères.

Ne disposant pas des contacts qui faisaient la force de ses prédécesseurs, sans connaissance particulière de la politique extérieure du pays et ne parlant pas de langue étrangère, Ahmet Necdet Sezer devra d'abord développer son propre style et se forger une base solide. Contrairement à M. Demirel, Ahmet Necdet Sezer est un homme discret, qui parle peu et évite les caméras.

Avec l'arrivée de ce président au profil inhabituel, les équilibres politiques, entre les députés et leurs chefs de parti, entre le gouvernement et le palais présidentiel, et enfin, entre le chef de l'Etat et l'armée, qui demeure un acteur important de la scène politique turque, devront être redéfinis.

Une autre inconnue de cette équation politique est le rôle que jouera M. Demirel qui, à soixante-quinze ans, semble peu enclin à prendre sa retraite et pourrait venir inquiéter les dirigeants des partis conservateurs, Mesut Yilmaz, du Parti de la Mère patrie et surtout Tansu Çiller, qui a pris sa place à la tête du Parti de la juste voie (DYP) en 1993.

PROFIL

UN HOMME DISCRET ET INDÉPENDANT

Ahmet Necdet Sezer, le dixième président de la République turque, demeure largement méconnu du grand public, dans son propre pays comme à l'étranger. Né à Afyon en 1941 d'un père instituteur, M. Sezer a étudié au même lycée que son prédécesseur Süleyman Demirel. Travailleur acharné, il obtient une place à la faculté de droit de l'université d'Ankara. Juge en province pendant plusieurs années, Ahmet Necdet Sezer accède ensuite à la cour d'appel en 1983, avant d'être personnellement choisi par le président Kenan Evren - le général auteur du coup d'Etat de 1980 -

pour entrer à la Cour constitutionnelle en 1988, dont il prend la direction dix ans plus tard. Partageant avec les militaires un attachement fervent aux valeurs républicaines et laïques, M. Sezer a notamment présidé à la dissolution du Refah (Parti de la prospérité, islamiste) en 1998. Mais il a néanmoins démontré son indépendance d'esprit à plusieurs reprises.

Dans un discours, désormais célèbre, prononcé en avril 1999, M. Sezer a plaidé en faveur de réformes démocratiques, notamment la levée des restrictions à la liberté d'expression. Il a également suggéré que les décisions du Haut-Conseil militaire, qui congédie chaque année sans appel des dizaines d'officiers suspectés de sympathies islamistes, soient soumises au processus judiciaire.

Peu après l'annonce de sa candidature, M. Sezer a déclaré qu'il jugeait excessifs les pouvoirs octroyés au président de la République. Mais ceux qui pensaient qu'il jouerait un rôle largement cérémonial ont dû être surpris par son premier discours : « La pratique qui consiste à ne pas appliquer les règles et le manque d'institutionnalisation sont à la base de tous les problèmes de la Turquie », a-t-il estimé. Ces premières déclarations ne manquent pas de réjouir les Européens, qui attendent de la Turquie des progrès dans le domaine de la démocratie et des droits de l'homme. Mais, sans expérience politique, Ahmet Necdet Sezer aura la tâche difficile de convaincre les politiciens de le suivre.

N. P.

Nicole Pope

New Projects at Kurdish Region Technical Institutes

Brayati (Arbil) 07 May 00 by Hawzin

[FBIS Translated Text] The information office of the Technical Institute

The scientific institutions of the Kurdistan government continuously aim to meet scientific needs and open new sections and buildings. As part of this aim, Dr Kawsar Aziz Galali, the head of the Technical Institute's Committee yesterday welcomed at her office delegations from several organizations. During the meeting they discussed the plan to begin a number of computer and language courses and to construct a new building for the pathology section at the Technical Institute in the region's capital. They also discussed the needs of the technical institutes in Arbil, Dohuk and Sulaymaniyah which are to be included in the eighth phase of the food for oil resolution.

-- New Oxygen Supply Project at Kurdish Hospital Brayati 01 May 00

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr Jamal Abd al-Hamid, the Minister of Health and Social Affairs, in the presence of the Director General of Arbil Health Department, directors, doctors and the staff of the maternity hospital, inaugurated a project to regulate and supply oxygen. It is worth mentioning that Dr Abbas Abd al-Qahar Rabati is the originator and instigator of this project, which provides a great service to the hospital, and eases the burden on the staff. --

Report on Provision of Clean Water in Kurdish Region Brayati (Arbil) 30 Apr 00

[FBIS Translated Text] Providing clean water for citizens is an important service. Water is the main element and requirement for daily life, as the proverb says "water means life". This report examines how clean the water we use is.

Continuous attempts to provide clean water

The Kurdistan regional government always aims to provide clean water for its citizens and pays great attention to water. The Arbil water and sewage directorate has expanded water projects such as artesian wells, has dug more than 250 wells within districts in Arbil, provided chlorine and chloride equipment for the wells and established water networks for the citizens.

Citizens' comments

With regard to clean drinking water, citizen Husayn Majid from Ta'jil district says: "In fact the water networks are old and committees responsible for analysing water should inspect drinking water daily in old districts, particularly those of Araban and Ta'jil. We know that citizens are responsible if holes appear in water pipes, but the main reason is water shortage and we can spend a whole night collecting water."

Citizen Fatima As'ad from Araban district says: "Because of water shortage in our district, we have no choice but to hollow out water pipes in order to provide drinking water. We suffer daily from water shortage and we have to go to the relevant teams to come and check our water. We hope that inspection committees visit these districts daily and alter the water networks so as to prevent clean and dirty water mixing."

Citizen Khalid Umar says: "In fact inspection teams do analyse water samples but they should expand their work to prevent clean and dirty water mixing."

Clean water in Arbil

Abd al-Rahman Gaznayee, the director of water and sewage in Arbil says: "The Arbil water directorate does significant work for citizens. The water used by citizens is very clean and carries no risks. Our inspection department inspects water samples every

day. Water becomes contaminated if there is network damage mixing clean and dirty water. For this reason our teams inspect the water whenever they have doubts over its purity and we tackle the problem immediately in order to avoid it spreading." With regard to artesian water, the director said: Artesian water is purified and then chlorinated before it reaches citizens.

Regarding well water he said: "Underground water is clean, but we chlorinate it to ensure it reaches citizens in a clean state. All water wells have equipment to carry out this process. I would like to assure citizens that 90 per cent of Arbil water is clean. If citizens notice a damaged pipe, they can contact us so that we can prevent clean water mixing with dirty water. Our laboratory inspects the water sample immediately. We do our best to provide clean water for citizens."

Laboratory section and its role

We visited the laboratory and met its head Ma'ruf Hasan Muhammad. He says: "This laboratory consists of two sections, one for repairing and cleaning equipment and the other for water inspection. The inspection process comprises two stages, which are bacteriology and chemical. We take samples from artesian water projects or well water. We have three mobile teams who bring water samples and inspect them. The second section is responsible for repairing and cleaning equipment and machines. Sometimes old water networks and water shortages hinder our work. The chemical treatment deals with turbid water and with its pH. Generally, our water is acidic and this causes no harm. Arbil water is clean and we inspect it several times. We experience some problems when networks are very old or pipes are damaged. Therefore we ask citizens to report any damage. --

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Diyarbakir Mayor Calls for Education in Kurdish

Hürriyet 10 May 00 by Pinar Turenc

[FBIS Translated Text]

I interviewed Mayor Feridun Celik, 33, in his office in Diyarbakir. Considering the lawsuit brought against him, we tried not to discuss several issues in detail. Recalling the traffic accident he was involved in 2 years ago, he said that he is still unable to fully use one of his legs. He also said: "I am still banned from traveling to a foreign country. So, I am unable to receive medical treatment abroad."

Celik stressed that he has drawn up many projects for Diyarbakir, which has fraternal relations with Texas. He wants to visit the United States to broaden his views and receive medical treatment. However, he has decided to concentrate on solving his problems and avoid thinking of traveling to that country for the time being.

Celik was elected Mayor with the support of the 63 percent of the electorate a year ago. He asserted that he maintains a very careful approach and noted: "No one can imagine how much I try to avoid making a mistake."

Celik had a grievance. He asserted: "I have to deal with many issues. However, I do not allow them to become a problem. Even the ordinary policemen do not respect me. The officials do not even allow me to use the VIP lounge at the airport. There are times when we are confronted with intolerance. I try to solve our problems through a dialogue."

Considering what he said, I asked:

- The people in the area seriously suffered until a short time ago. Some of the officials might have lost their relatives in the incidents. That might be the reason. Is it not true that the people continue to suffer?
- I am not the person to be blamed for the suffering. Is there anyone who has not suffered? We are trying to establish a dialogue. We are trying to persuade the people to be tolerant. All the people have suffered. Some 3,000 murders were committed in Diyarbakir. None of them has been brought to light. We want to forget what happened in the past.
- Can you comment on how the situation has changed?

- The people want peace. We do not want arms to be used anymore. Why should the people support the use of arms? We must adopt new policies. We are moving in the right direction now.
- A group of people wanted to have their own flag and territory until recently. They even caused bloodshed to achieve their objective.
- The struggle was wrong. Some of the people were involved in it. But the majority of the people are opposed to division and fragmentation. They only call for democracy. The mistake that was made is now in the past.
- Can you compare the demands of your fathers and grandfathers in the past and those of the young generations in the new century?
- The people only want cultural freedom. They want to freely use their own language. Otherwise, would they have joined the war of liberation to fight in the Dardanelles, Izmir, and Usak? Anatolia was united in the past. It is united at the present time. However, the policies adopted by the Government after the republic was established must be carefully studied. What is important is tolerance and goodwill.
- Can you explain what you have in mind for Diyarbakir and its people?
- We are trying to attract international attention. We have found foreign credits for the city's infrastructure installations. The city was neglected for 35 years. We are trying to improve the situation. Some 50 percent of the people are unemployed. Education and health services have been neglected for a very long time.
- You mentioned education. Do you mean schools which provide education in Kurdish?
- The children learn Turkish when they are 8 years old. We have drawn up projects to change and improve the situation. Turkey must not fear education in Kurdish while it makes an effort to open to the world. I want the people to decide for themselves. If education in Kurdish is banned, they will not be able to establish whether it is right or wrong.
- How will the people catch up with the rest of the world through education in Kurdish?
- Let us adopt a more flexible approach on the matter. Education in Kurdish must not be feared. The problems will be solved without difficulty. Economy is important in the world now. So, let Kurdish schools be opened and Kurdish television stations be established. Let us see what will happen then.
- The Workers Party of Kurdistan [PKK] is pronounced in Kurdish as PE KE KE. Why do you insist on separation?
- I graduated from the Dicle University Law Faculty. When we began to learn the alphabet many years ago, we were taught to pronounce the name PKK as PE KE KE.
- Have you studied English?
- I regret to say that I have not. I realize now how important it was for me to learn the language.

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SAMEDI-DIMANCHE,



JOURNÉE MONDIALE DE LA PRESSE :

LA TURQUIE MONTRÉE DU DOIGT

À l'occasion de la journée mondiale de la presse le 3 mai, l'organisation Reporters sans frontière a rendu public son rapport sur les violations des droits des journalistes dans le monde. La Turquie a été une nouvelle fois épinglée pour les nombreuses violations de la liberté de l'expression et de l'opinion.

Selon le rapport, "un journaliste a été tué, quatre autres torturés, 7 arrêtés, 87 placés en garde-à-vue et 26 autres passés au tabac" en Turquie en 1999. 80 journalistes y seraient emprisonnés mais l'organisation précise que la raison des arrestations et condamnations étant troubles il est difficile de les imputer clairement à leur travail de journalistes. Reporters sans frontière prend en compte les sanctions du RTUK (NDLR : équivalent turc du CSA), soit 2 378 jours (6,5 ans) d'interdictions d'émettre contre les radios et télévisions. Yerel Radyo Fon, Ozgur Radyo, Mozaik Radyo, Radyo Safak et des chaînes nationales comme Kanal 6, ATV, Show TV, ont eu d'un à 365 jours d'interdictions.

L'organisation dénonce les simulacres de procès menés contre les officiers de police impliqués dans le meurtre des journalistes. Tout en notant la condamnation des six policiers accusés d'avoir torturé et tué le journaliste Metin Göktepe, elle précise qu'il n'y a toujours pas eu de verdict dans l'affaire d'Ugur Mumcu et d'Abdi Ipekçi et que dans l'assassinat de 20 journalistes il n'y a même pas eu d'enquête ouverte.

L'organisation s'est d'autre part réjouie de la loi 4454 du 28 août 1999 permettant de proroger les procès et les condamnations de la presse et des éditeurs et salue dans ce cadre la libération de six journalistes dont Ismail Besikçi et Dogal Güzel. Cependant, elle souligne que cette loi pousse les journalistes à l'auto-censure étant donné qu'en cas d'infraction de même nature dans le délai de trois ans, les journalistes encourent la reprise devant les tribunaux de leur affaire. Reporters sans frontière a attiré l'attention sur la saisie du livre de Nadire Mater "Mehmedin Kitabı" et a invité les autorités turques à abroger le loi 3713 et les articles 7/2 et 8 de la loi anti-terreur qui portent gravement atteinte à la liberté de la presse.

D'autre part, Menaf Avci, coordinateur de la publication du journal Ozgur Bakis a déclaré que sur les 370 numéros publiés, 124 procès ont été ouverts, 131 interdictions et 263 milliards de livres turques d'amende ont été décidés. Il a également précisé qu'au 20ème jour de publication, le journal a été interdit dans les régions sous état d'urgence (OHAL) sans raison apparente. Des hebdomadaires comme Azadîya Welat, interdit dans la région OHAL depuis octobre 1998 et Pine, hebdomadaire satirique contenant une majorité de caricatures, interdit depuis quelques jours dans ces régions, mais aussi le journal Evrensel, interdit depuis 485 jours toujours dans l'OHAL, ont dénoncé les violations manifestes des droits de la presse en Turquie et particulièrement dans les régions kurdes.

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, MAY 8, 2000

Iranian Reformers Seal Majority in Parliament

By Howard Schneider
Washington Post Service

TEHRAN — Iranian reformers allied with President Mohammed Khatami won more than 70 percent of the 66 parliamentary seats decided in runoff elections Friday, according to results released by government officials and a coalition of reform groups.

The outcome — with between 47 and 52 of the 66 seats contested in the runoffs going to reformers, according to pro-democracy groups — seemed to cement a reformist majority in the new Parliament opening later this month and was seen as a rebuff to a recent conservative campaign to silence the re-

formist press and jail reform activists.

The voting here has been watched closely by Western and other governments that are encouraged by Iran's growing moderation in domestic and foreign affairs but are uncertain whether the trend will continue.

Mr. Khatami, a moderate cleric, won a landslide presidential victory in 1997 and remains widely popular. But much of Iran's political and economic power still rests with conservative clerical groups and institutions such as security services and the judiciary, which answer to the unelected supreme religious leader, Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei.

Adding the runoff gains to its victory in the first round of voting Feb. 18, the

reform coalition will now take clear command of Parliament. The new 290-member Parliament is due to convene May 27.

A majority for the reformists will mark the first time since Iran's 1979 revolution that the legislature will not be dominated by conservative clerics and other supporters of hard-line Islamic rule.

On Sunday, attention turned to Iran's conservative Guardian Council, which must certify the results of the runoff vote. The six-member, hard-line council said a recount that it had ordered in the capital, Tehran, after February's first round of voting had shown unspecified discrepancies in more than 10 percent of about 88 percent of the ballot boxes counted.

"The council does not want to draw any conclusions at this time but to learn the situation of the rest of the boxes in order to discover the truth and act within the requirements of the law," state-run Tehran radio quoted a council statement as saying.

Thirteen of those February races have been overturned by the council, with

some of the seats awarded to conservatives because of alleged voting irregularities and others suspended until another election can be held.

The treatment of the 30 Tehran seats is being watched with particular interest because the apparent winners included some of the reform movement's more influential figures, including the president's brother, who also published one of the now-banned newspapers.

But after the voting Friday, with as many as 200 of the 290 parliamentary seats in their hands, reformers would be free to pass laws that further Mr. Khatami's goals of expanding social freedoms and making government institutions more accountable. Their influence also could foster a political environment that would permit Mr. Khatami to pursue his stated aim of improving ties with the West, even including the United States.

As in the vote in February, the reformist trend was strong nationwide in the runoff. Reform candidates captured three of four seats in the northwestern city of Tabriz, for instance, and eight of nine in the province of Khuzistan.

Vowing to add legislative substance to the social, political and judicial reforms Mr. Khatami has pursued with only moderate success because of conservative opposition, incoming legislators say the runoff vote re-emphasized that Iran was a changed and changing society.

Mohammed Reza Khatami, the president's brother and a top vote-getter in February, said the results were the reform movement's response to newspaper closures, arrests and other "illegal means and seemingly legal pretexts" that conservative institutions have used in recent weeks to try to suppress its progress.

"It is hoped that everyone would now bow to the vote of the people so that the pure ideals of the Islamic revolution and the programs of the esteemed president will be materialized under national unity and calm, and within the law," Mr. Khatami told the state-run Islamic Republic News Agency.

It may not be so easy. After the first-round vote demonstrated the sustained popular appeal of reformist ideas, conservative "power centers" — some formal, some freelance — responded with what many viewed as a coordinated effort to provoke a showdown. An assassination attempt was made on a leading reform strategist Saeed Hajjarian, 16 reform publications were closed, several apparent reformist parliamentary victories were nullified and several leading activists were arrested.

A Dangerous Crisis in Iran's Unstable

WASHINGTON — The fate of President Mohammed Khatami's mildly reformist regime in Iran has become the most urgent question that U.S. policymakers have put to their military and intelligence experts in recent weeks. A sense grows in official Washington that the ongoing Iranian revolution is in fundamental crisis.

Some U.S. experts see a creeping coup d'état by hard-line mullahs that will soon weaken or topple Mr. Khatami. Others think that the democratically elected president is rapidly being overtaken on his left by the demand for greater personal freedom that brought him to power nearly three years ago. Few think that he can long contain the present political turmoil.

But Mr. Khatami has become the Muhammad Ali of Iranian politics: He survives by pursuing a rope-a-dope strategy, taking the hard-liners' best punch as he falls away from it, hoping to exhaust them for the decisive moments of the fight. His top priority at the moment is survival, not enforcing the mandate for sweeping change that his followers won in recent parliamentary elections.

Conservative vigilantes shut down 16 pro-democracy publications, shot and wounded the journalist Saeed Hajjarian, an important Khatami ally, and flagrantly tampered with election results in Tehran. They seemed to be trying to provoke protests and the kind of street violence that often settles revolutionary power struggles.

But Mr. Khatami has refused to play. He told his followers not to take to the streets, labeled his foes anti-revolutionaries and gave speeches emphasizing that he has the support of Iran's supreme spiritual leader, Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei, often ranked with the hard-liners.

Mr. Khatami's last point seems to be true, and vital for understanding where the Iranian revolution, which turns 21

Revolution

this fall, is likely to go.

Ayatollah Khamenei, who controls the police and army, the judiciary and state television and radio, has not thrown decisive support to the conservatives. He is giving President Khatami enough room to impress the virtues of self-censorship and restraint on a young urban population restless for change.

He needs Mr. Khatami and the reformists to ride the tiger of popular discontent and to balance the Islamic vigilantes, now led by former President Hashemi Rafsanjani.

In office, Mr. Rafsanjani was secretly courted by the Reagan administration as a potential moderate who would make peace with the Great Satan. Out of office and humiliated by a poor showing in February's first round of voting for Parliament, he has dispelled all doubt about his political identity: He is an opportunistic thug, who would do in both Ayatollah Khamenei and Mr. Khatami if given a chance.

Extended, multiphase revolutions throw up such conflicts and characters. Iran may still turn to a Stalin or a Bonaparte to settle the fragmenting consensus of the elite that originally seized power. The history of the French and Russian revolutions, which Iran's political transformation now resembles, suggests that such outcomes are at least as likely as an orderly consolidation of power by reformists.

The new internal tumult has already helped thwart U.S. hopes for immediate improvement in relations with Mr. Khatami and his subtle, knowledgeable foreign minister, Kamal Kharrazi. Mr. Kharrazi has yet to respond to the pistachio branch extended by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright when she lifted U.S. bans on Iranian luxury imports

By Jim Hoagland

seven weeks ago.

In Tehran's supercharged atmosphere, Mrs. Albright's conciliatory March 17 speech was scrutinized under political microscopes. Her use of the term Gulf instead of Persian Gulf and her factual reference to the ayatollahs' control of the judiciary were seen as serious impediments to a quick and measured response by Mr. Kharrazi.

Tehran is in fact determined not to engage in any serious dialogue with Washington as long as the United States pushes Central Asian countries and international companies to bypass Iran with oil and gas pipelines. The U.S. strategy, which flies in the face of economics, is seen as politically insulting and strategically threatening by Tehran, and adds to the long list of U.S.-Iranian conflicts.

President Khatami treads carefully on foreign issues that could inflame the domestic struggle — except on Israel, where he takes as dogmatic a line as any hard-liner. The current repulsive show trial of 13 Iranian Jewish men in the city of Shiraz on espionage charges is a grim reminder of how little has changed on that front, and also of how uneven change continues to be in revolutionary Iran.

The president zags as his foes zig, leaving the experts in Washington arguing over who will be devoured by whom and how to position American policy as a result. The revolution rolls on, looking for a new balance if not a new direction, and a new set of winners and losers.

The Washington Post.

INTERNATIONAL
Herald Tribune

MONDAY, MAY 8, 2000

UN aid coordinator visits Iraqi Kurdistan

BAGHDAD, May 7 (AFP) - The new UN humanitarian aid coordinator for sanctions-hit Iraq, Tun Myat, travelled to the Kurdish-held north of the country on Sunday, a UN official said.

The official, who asked not to be named, told AFP that Tun Myat would spend five days in Iraqi Kurdistan to meet with UN agencies operating in the region and Kurdish leaders.

Under the aid programme headed by Tun Myat, the World Food Programme is in charge of food distribution in northern Iraq, which since 1991 has been controlled by Kurdish factions in defiance of Baghdad.

The oil-for-food programme allows Iraq, which has been under embargo since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait, to export crude in return for essential goods. Government agencies, under UN supervision, distribute the goods in central and southern Iraq.

Tun Myat of Myanmar took up his post on March 30, replacing Hans von Sponeck who resigned in protest at the continued sanctions and the hardships suffered by Iraq's 22 million population.

Talabani to address Kuwait forum on ties with Baghdad

KUWAIT CITY, May 7 (AFP) - An Iraqi Kurdish leader, Jalal Talabani, is to address a seminar in Kuwait on its future ties with former occupier Iraq, organisers said Sunday.

The Kuwaiti parliament is organising the three-day symposium, which opens on May 13, and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah is to address the opening session, MP Abdel Mohsen Jamal told AFP.

"The symposium is to study the political changes in Iraq and its implications for future Kuwaiti-Iraqi ties. It will then issue recommendations," said Jamal, a member of parliament's foreign relations committee.

US, British, European and Arab academics will also address the symposium, while the leader of the Iran-based Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq, Mohammad Baqer al-Hakim, is to send his brother Abdel Aziz to represent him.

Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait in August 1990 and occupied it for seven months before being driven out by a US-led multinational force in the 1991 Gulf War.

The oil-rich emirate has since maintained a tough line in refusing to deal with President Saddam Hussein, but remains concerned about the unpredictability of events in Iraq.

Oil Minister Sheikh Saud Nasser al-Sabah last year warned against civil war in Iraq if Saddam was overthrown. "A civil war could create disorder in the region," Sheikh Saud said.

Kurdish writer on hunger strike against Turkish censorship

AFP
May 8, 2000

Exiled Kurdish writer Mahmut Baksi went on hunger strike Monday in Stockholm to protest against Turkish censorship of his two most recent books, the Swedish news agency TT reported.

The two works, written in Turkish, have been banned by Turkey's state security court for being "terrorist propaganda and a threat to the Turkish republic," while those already printed have been seized, the writer said in a press statement.

"People who write about the Kurdish question are still being sentenced and imprisoned, whatever language they write in," said Baksi, who called on the Swedish government to submit a list of Kurdish writers banned in Turkey to the European Union.

The Turkish government, which has been battling the Kurdistan Workers Party's 15-year armed campaign for self-rule in southeastern Turkey, does not officially recognise the Kurdish language. In one of his two banned books, entitled "Each bird has its own way of flying," Baksî attacks "the political inhumanity of Turkey" with regard to the Kurds.

The writer has said that he will only end his hunger strike if Sweden takes up his case at the European Court of Human Rights.

But he has also asked for his coffin to be draped in the Swedish flag when he is buried next to his parents in Kurdistan.

Election of 25 Kurds to Iran's Majles Viewed

Kurdistan Satellite TV
8 May 00

[FBIS Translated Text]

In the second round of the Iranian Majlis elections, held last Friday, where the reformists managed to gain the majority of votes, Iranian Kurds gained 25 seats. On the effectiveness of the role of the reformists in Iran to achieve the aims of the Iranian Kurds and the future of relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran with Iraqi Kurdistan region and its neighbours, we contacted Baram Weledbegi, the editor of the weekly 'Awyar' magazine in Sanandaj. He said:

The second round of elections was held last Friday. In the elections, people from 15 Kurdish cities elected their representatives. Kurds now have 25 representatives in the sixth Majlis. The victory of Mr Khatami's supporters in the sixth Majlis will have a direct impact on the internal and external affairs of Iran.

Externally, if Mr Khatami and the sixth Majlis manage to reform Iran's foreign policy and diplomacy, they will benefit from dealing with world countries. However, if Iran's diplomacy stays as it was in the past, these [relations] will stay the same. It is more probable that the first scenario will take place. This change should take place.

On diplomatic dealing with the Iraqi Kurdistan, we sincerely hope that these reforms influence the relationship with Iraqi Kurdistan positively and view it as a neighbouring country. Surely, the Kurdish deputies in the Majlis will be able to have an influence on building a political and diplomatic bridge between the Islamic republic of Iran and the government of Iraqi Kurdistan.

Internally, and with regards to the Kurdish issue in Iran, it is obvious that our issue is linked to the internal situation of Iran. This means that if the reforms had a positive impact, we, the Kurds, will benefit from that. I think that with electing of 25 representatives of the Kurds, provided that there is no division between them and they understand the protocols and political system of this country, they can create an influential block and present people and officials with new concepts of the Kurdish issue. Through the Iranian constitution and the reforms, they can achieve the aspirations of their people.

In conclusion, all people of Iran are waiting to see how the sixth Majlis will influence Mr Khatami's new cabinet and the situation inside and outside Iran. We hope they can have many valuable achievements.

Ankara condamné à Strasbourg pour une disparition au Kurdistan

REUTERS

mardi 9 mai 2000

STRASBOURG (Reuters) - La Cour européenne des droits de l'homme a condamné la Turquie pour violation du "droit à la vie", en jugeant le gouvernement d'Ankara responsable de la disparition de Mehmet Ertak, en août 1992, dans la région du Kurdistan, en proie à des troubles séparatistes.

Dans un arrêt rendu à l'unanimité, les juges condamnent la Turquie à verser 15.000 livres sterling (environ 165.000 francs) pour dommage matériel et 20.000 livres sterling (220.000 francs) pour dommage moral à la veuve et aux quatre enfants de la victime.

Le père de Mehmet Ertak, Ismail, qui avait porté plainte devant la Cour européenne des droits de l'homme, qui dépend du Conseil de l'Europe, obtient 2.500 livres sterling (27.500 francs) pour dommage moral et 12.000 livres sterling (132.000 francs) pour frais et dépens.

Il affirmait, sur la foi de plusieurs témoignages, que son fils avait disparu après avoir été interpellé avec une centaine de personnes, lors d'une opération de police faisant suite à des troubles survenus à Sirmak (sud-est de la Turquie) du 18 au 20 août 1992.

Les autorités administratives de la région avaient refusé d'ouvrir une enquête pénale en contestant que Mehmet Ertak eût jamais été arrêté. La Commission européenne des droits de l'homme, chargée jusqu'en 1998 d'instruire les dossiers de la Cour, avait dû mener sa propre enquête en Turquie.

Se fondant sur ses conclusions, la Cour estime dans son arrêt "qu'il existe des preuves suffisantes permettant de conclure, au delà de tout doute raisonnable, que Mehmet Ertak, après avoir été arrêté et détenu, a été victime de graves sévices non reconnus et a trouvé la mort alors qu'il se trouvait entre les mains des forces de l'ordre".

Elle juge que la Turquie a manqué de ce fait au respect de l'article 2 de la Convention européenne des droits de l'homme qui garantit le droit à la vie.

Cet arrêt rendu par une chambre de sept juges deviendra définitif dans trois mois si aucune des parties ne demande le renvoi de l'affaire devant la grande chambre de la Cour.

La Turquie dit avoir tué 53 Kurdes dans le nord de l'Irak

REUTERS

DIYARBAKIR, Turquie (Reuters) - L'armée turque a tué 53 rebelles séparatistes kurdes au cours d'une nouvelle opération dans le nord de l'Irak, a-t-on rapporté de source militaire. **10 mai 2000**

Un responsable militaire en poste à Diyarbakir, capitale régionale du Sud-Est turc à majorité kurde, a déclaré qu'environ 10.000 soldats appuyés par des avions s'étaient retirés du Nord irakien au terme d'une offensive engagée il y a quatre jours.

Dans la journée, le principal parti kurde légal de Turquie avait condamné une opération de l'armée turque menée selon lui contre des rebelles du Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK) dans l'enclave kurde du nord de l'Irak.

"L'opération que nous avons lancée voici quatre jours pour neutraliser les activistes de l'organisation terroriste a atteint ses objectifs", a dit à Reuters le responsable militaire, qui a requis l'anonymat. Il a ajouté que l'armée n'avait pas subi de pertes.

Selon ce responsable, les troupes turques étaient appuyées par des peshmergas du Parti démocratique du Kurdistan, l'une des factions kurdes du nord de l'Irak. Les forces d'Ankara avaient effectué une opération similaire dans la région début avril.

L'armée turque intervient fréquemment dans le Nord irakien contre le PKK, au grand dam de Bagdad qui y dénonce une atteinte à sa souveraineté. Deux factions kurdes sont établies dans cette région montagneuse qui échappe au contrôle de Bagdad depuis la fin de la guerre du Golfe (1991).

Les combats ont pratiquement cessé entre soldats turcs et combattants du PKK en territoire turc, d'où les seconds se sont retirés à l'appel de leur chef emprisonné Abdullah Ocalan, qui a demandé au PKK de mettre fin à la lutte armée et de se transformer en force politique. Beaucoup d'activistes du PKK se sont réfugiés dans les montagnes du nord de l'Irak.

PKK tissue of lies

11 May 2000, Copyright © Turkish Daily News

- It has been determined that the PKK is still directing the movements of an active terrorist despite their so-called Executive Committee denying any relation with him

Ankara - Turkish Daily News

It has been determined that the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) terrorist group is still directing movements of an active terrorist despite their so-called Executive Committee denying any relation with him, the Anatolia news agency reported yesterday.

It appears that the PKK is still controlling the activities of Hamili Yildirim, whom the PKK's so-called Executive Committee had claimed they no longer had any ties with since he had made the decision not to leave Turkey following the cease-fire announcement and would carry on fighting for the terrorist organization's cause.

Terrorist experts have pointed out that following the PKK announcement, the PKK was going to abandon Turkey and its armed struggle. Some terrorists fled to Iraq and Iran but some did not; they stayed on in Turkey and said they would continue the armed struggle.

They mentioned two names known to the public as having decided to continue the fight: Orhan Ilbay and Hamili Yildirim. Ilbay was killed by security forces some time ago but Yildirim is still at large and leading a band of about 40 terrorists in and around Erzincan and Tunceli. This band is responsible for the deaths of six members from security forces.

Experts say that captured terrorists' confessions coupled with intelligence gathered from intercepting PKK radio transmissions all go to show that the PKK Executive Committee has been leading people on and that they have not in fact disassociated themselves from active terrorists.

Radio interception

A conversation was intercepted between Yildirim and Cemil Bayik, a PKK commander, on April 29 in which Yildirim said his men were exhausted and need to be relieved, adding that they had lost eight men already. He told Bayik that he believed his group would surrender to the next military unit they saw as they could not go on. Yildirim also asked that promises to help their families be fulfilled. In reply, Bayik told Yildirim that he would be sent reinforcements but not relieved. Bayik also added that he would do what he could to live up to those promises.

United Nations camp in Iraq used by PKK

Terrorist experts have said that the United Nations refugee camp set up in Makhmur, Iraq, has become a recruiting and training ground for the PKK and that the United Nations has been reduced to mere observers rather than camp administrators.

Many of the terrorists who fled into Iraq following the PKK cease-fire announcement, the experts said, have settled in the Makhmur camp and are allegedly continuing their training there. The Foreign Ministry has reportedly warned the U.N. mission in Ankara of PKK activities at Makhmur and has informed them that much of the food and medicinal supplies sent by the United Nations and various European and American aid agencies are hijacked by PKK members upon arrival and sent to other PKK camps.

10 May ,2000, Copyright © Turkish Daily News

People in the Southeast have forgotten what it is like to live a normal life

- Hakkari deputy Parlak's reproachful message to the government

Ankara - Turkish Daily News

Recalling that the Southeast had been placed under the very restricted regulations of Emergency Rule (OHAL) and martial law administrations for the last 22 years, Hakkari independent deputy Evliya Parlak said that people 30 to 35 years old have almost forgotten what it is like to live a normal life.

Parlak asserted that there was no reason to continue with OHAL in the region any longer as terrorism had ended and stability and tranquility had been restored. Parlak went on to say: "Under the present circumstances, there is no sense in extending OHAL any longer. I keep wondering why the restrictions are still imposed on people, and come up with no reason whatsoever."

Parlak further explained that when the Ministry of Interior demand to extend OHAL was received last March, he took the floor in Parliament and questioned the reason for the request, adding: "I was not given a satisfactory response to my question in Parliament either. Only a representative from the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) gave the ongoing operations against the Hizbullah terror organization as justification for the extension. But there is no logic in that either. If that was the case, OHAL should continue in Batman and Diyarbakir as well, since those are the areas where Hizbullah predominantly continues with its illegal activities. On the contrary, not even a single Hizbullah activity was ever recorded in the Hakkari region."

Parlak also explained that despite his efforts he had received no rational response from any government representatives on why OHAL should continue in Hakkari, and continued; "If the reason for sustaining OHAL in the region is a state secret, then a secret assembly should be held in Parliament to clarify the reason, so that deputies could cast their votes accordingly when the request for extension by the Ministry of Interior is debated in Parliament."

Blaming eastern and southeastern deputies in Parliament for not giving adequate support for his endeavor to have the burden of OHAL on the local populace lifted, Parlak said Tunceli deputy Kamer Genc was the only person to request OHAL be discontinued.

Danielle Mitterrand pour l'ouverture du festival "Identités"

Danielle Mitterrand a ouvert hier à Cherbourg le premier festival "Identités", consacré au peuple kurde. Pendant une semaine, musique, théâtre, cinéma, danse et photographie vont prouver la vitalité d'une culture qui ne veut surtout pas disparaître.

« Les trente millions de Kurdes du Proche-Orient constituent la plus grande communauté humaine sans état ni structure reconnue », a rappelé Kendal Nezan, président de l'Institut kurde de Paris, pour planter le décor de ce premier festival baptisé "Identités" et consacré aux cultures en péril. Les Kurdes en sont donc les premiers invités. Un peuple écartelé depuis que les tractations d'après guerre mondiale ont morcelé le pays entre les états voisins. Un peuple qui n'a plus droit de parler sa langue, dont les livres ont été brûlés, dont la culture est menacée... Un peuple persécuté et emprisonné en Turquie, dont les villages ont été détruits en Irak. Mais un peuple qui résiste.

« Une résistance culturelle et spirituelle, un combat que tous, en exil, ont à cœur de poursuivre », a souligné Kendal Nezan lors de l'inauguration, hier à l'hôtel de ville de Cherbourg-Octeville, du festival "Identités". Citant Jean Jaurès et François Mitterrand. « Ce n'est pas parce que la nuit est noire qu'il ne faut pas allumer une bougie. Et c'est ce que vous faites aujourd'hui. »

Si l'Institut kurde de Paris est cette année l'un des principaux partenaires de l'association "Identités" présidée par le Cherbourgeois d'adoption Suayip Adig, son plus ardent défenseur est la fondation France Libertés de Danielle Mitterrand.

Un message qu'avec gentillesse et beaucoup de détermination, elle est venue en personne délivrer à Cherbourg hier. « A l'heure de la mondialisation financière, il faut donner à ces peuples et à ces communautés - les Kurdes, mais aussi les indiens d'Amérique latine et les Tibétains - des possibilités d'épanouissement et d'échanges, dans le respect de leur spécificité naturelle pour lutter

contre l'uniformisation et la mort. Sans prôner le repli frileux de chaque peuple sur son identité et ses frontières, défendre l'identité des peuples, source de richesses pour l'humanité toute entière, est pour nous un souci permanent », insiste l'épouse de l'ancien chef de l'Etat. En ajoutant, avec un sourire : « Les Kurdes m'appellent leur mère... »

Cet esprit d'accueil, de tolérance, d'ouverture sur le monde, c'est aussi celui que veut défendre le maire de Cherbourg-Octeville, Jean-Pierre Godefroy. Il en veut pour preuve l'aide apportée au Tchad, les manifestations pour les femmes algériennes et contre les massacres en Tchétchénie. « C'est notre petite part à nous. Mais votre présence, Madame, conforte notre action », explique-t-il à l'intention

de Danielle Mitterrand. Des propos prolongés par le député Bernard Cazeneuve : « Il n'y a pas un endroit où l'on ne doive pas dénoncer ces atteintes aux droits de l'homme. C'est une question essentielle. Partout résister et dénoncer, ouvrir les cœurs... Des messages souvent portés par la France. »

Des discours très politiques qui ont ensuite laissé place à des aspects beaucoup plus culturels.

Sur la plage verte, un village kurde a en effet été planté et accueillera plusieurs manifestations du festival. Un village inauguré par Danielle Mitterrand aux côtés de Mehdu Zana, ancien maire du village kurde de Diyarbakir. Tentes traditionnelles, objets artisanaux, tapis et costumes y sont présentés.

Sous chapiteau, on a aussi pu découvrir hier quelques uns des artistes les plus représentatifs et les plus flamboyants de la culture kurde : la chanteuse Canê, le groupe de danseurs de Koma Komkar, le violoniste Said Dalshad, Adnan et ses musiciens, Feqîye Teyra...

Une superbe entrée en matière.

J. L.



Inauguration du village kurde, sur la plage verte, par Danielle Mitterrand et le maire d'une ville kurde, condamné à 15 ans de prison pour avoir parlé sa langue avec ses administrés.

« L'Europe a eu tort de renvoyer Occalan »

Dénoncer les atteintes aux libertés et aux droits fondamentaux, soutenir ceux qui résistent à la fatalité de l'arbitraire, la torture ou la misère est la raison d'être de la fondation France Libertés. Porte-parole des "sans voix", Danielle Mitterrand a ainsi pris fait et cause pour les kurdes. Elle s'en explique.

La Presse de la Manche : l'association que vous présidez s'est donnée une vocation humaniste. Comment définissez-vous son action ?

Danielle Mitterrand : C'est le fruit d'une longue expérience, d'une profonde réflexion. Lorsque j'ai créé la fondation France Libertés en 1986, il s'agissait de reprendre l'actif des associations dans lesquelles je m'étais investie auparavant. Il y avait en effet une convergence entre toutes ces actions : les droits de l'homme, c'est de la politique aussi bien que de l'économie, de l'éducation... La réflexion se poursuivant, je me suis aperçue que les gens qui faisaient appel à la fondation, qui témoignent de leurs difficultés à vivre qui proposent des projets, ne demandaient pas une action humanitaire, mais des actes citoyens. Notre vocation, c'est donc de construire l'avenir par des actes citoyens, plutôt que de réparer les dégâts de politiques qui créent tant de misères.

P. M. : votre présence à Cherbourg témoigne d'un engagement en faveur du peuple kurde. Pourquoi cet engagement ?

D. M. : Une rencontre fortuite : j'avais un jour reçu le témoignage de gens qui soutenaient Mehdi Zana. Cet ancien maire de Diyarbakir était emprisonné en Turquie pour avoir parlé kurde à ses administrés. Nous nous sommes immédiatement révoltés contre ce motif d'emprisonnement. Nous avons suivi son procès, lui évitant peut-être ainsi la peine de mort... Quand on s'intéresse de la sorte à une population, on commence par apprendre, puis les témoignages se font plus nombreux, et l'on finit par épouser sa cause. C'est ce qui s'est passé avec les Kurdes. Et ils m'ont épousée aussi.

P. M. : la question kurde, le grand public la connaît surtout au travers des actions du PKK contre le pouvoir turc. On se souvient du procès de leur leader, Occalan. La lutte armée est-elle donc nécessaire pour les Kurdes, ou pour d'autres peuples aussi opprimés ?

D. M. : Non, et la fondation n'a jamais soutenu aucune cause armée. C'est une façon de résister, de se défendre dont je suis bien placée pour parler puisque j'ai fait partie de la Résistance pendant la guerre...



Jean-Paul BARBIER



Danielle Mitterrand, ici aux côtés de Bernard Cazeneuve et de Jean-Pierre Godefroy. « Construire l'avenir par des actes citoyens ».

En France aussi nous déplorons aussi des actions de violence. Mais aussi longtemps que des mouvements utilisent les armes pour se défendre ou se faire connaître, nous ne les soutenons pas. Mais dès que les Kurdes ont parlé de paix, de négociation, nous nous sommes faits leur porte-parole. C'est ainsi que nous avons engagé une campagne avec l'appel des prix Nobel de la Paix pour une résolution pacifique du problème kurde en Turquie, dont j'ai porté le message à la tribune de l'ONU... A

chaque fois qu'un pas est fait vers la paix, nous soutenons cet effort. Lorsque Occalan est venu en Europe, en Italie - c'était d'ailleurs la première fois que je l'ai rencontré - il manifestait son désir de déposer les armes. Je crois donc que l'Europe a fait une grosse erreur, une erreur morale en tous cas, en le renvoyant à ses bourreaux.

P. M. : pensez-vous que la parole, cette voix des "sans voix", soit une arme efficace ?

D. M. : L'humanité est la seule espèce à être douée d'intelligence et de parole. Pourquoi a-t-elle besoin des armes de gens frustrés, de fauves, de brutes, pour évoluer et se faire entendre ? L'humanité a pourtant toutes les armes pour vivre en paix. Et je constate heureusement que cette réflexion prend de plus en plus d'importance, surtout dans les jeunes générations.

Propos recueillis
par Jean LAVALLEY

Cherbourg Kurde pendant une semaine

Le festival Identités a été inauguré par Mme Mitterrand, que les Kurdes appellent leur « mère ».

Un jour, une femme Kurde m'a dit: parlez de nous, car le silence nous tue.» Depuis qu'elle a écouté cette supplique, Danielle Mitterrand a épousé la cause kurde, qu'elle défend au sein de sa fondation, France Libertés. «**Depuis, j'ai beaucoup d'enfants, car les Kurdes me surnomment leur mère.**» Samedi à Cherbourg, c'est avec plaisir et émotion que la veuve du président François Mitterrand est venue inaugurer le premier festival des cultures en péril, baptisé Identités et dédié cette année au peuple Kurde.

Interdit jusqu'en 91

Musiciens, peintres, comédiens, photographes, artisans... ces hommes et ces femmes sont venus à Cherbourg pour témoigner des souffrances et de l'intolérance dont ils ont été victimes.

Pour avoir prononcé une phrase en langue kurde devant ses concitoyens, cet ancien maire a passé quinze ans de sa vie en prison. Pour avoir dit à la télévision qu'il souhaitait enregistrer un album dans sa langue natale, ce chanteur populaire a dû quitter son pays sous peine d'être emprisonné lui aussi. «**L'usage oral de la**

langue kurde en Turquie était interdit jusqu'en 1991 et son enseignement l'est encore», rappelle Kendal Nezan, président de l'Institut kurde de Paris.

Pendant une semaine, Cherbourg va donc vivre à l'heure kurde. Un village a été installé sur la plage verte, composé de tentes traditionnelles. Sous chacune d'entre elles, la culture kurde se dévoile timidement: objets d'artisanat, costumes, chapeaux. Il faut se pencher pour voir sous les tentures, rien n'est exposé ostensiblement. «**L'exil est un dur métier**», confie Kendal Nezan. Pour chaque visiteur qui s'arrête et



Danielle Mitterrand et Kendal Nezan, président de l'institut kurde de Paris, ont inauguré le village du festival Identités à Cherbourg.

regarde, un sourire et un remerciement sont la récompense. «**Ce que vous faites pour nous est fantastique**», assure Temo, joueur de luth. Son plus beau moment de la journée fut sans nul doute ces deux chansons interprétées pour Danielle Mitterrand, lors de sa venue au village.

Un village sur la plage

Jusqu'à samedi prochain, concerts, pièces de théâtre; projections de films et conférences se succéderont sur le village et dans différents endroits de la ville.

Une ville pavoisée de drapeaux verts et rouges avec un

soléil jaune au milieu, un petit coin de Kurdistan dans un bout du monde où l'on sait ce que le mot fraternité veut dire. «**Vous êtes ici chez vous**», a simplement confirmé le maire de Cherbourg-Octeville, Jean-Pierre Godefroy. Au nombre des invités, à noter aussi la présence d'un représentant du peuple tibétain. «Nous souhaitons que notre festival soit bis-annuel. En 2002, nous accueilleront le Tibet», a rappelé Suayip Adlig, cet ancien photographe kurde devenu restaurateur, organisateur du festival

Jean-Philippe GAUTIER.

ouest
france

14 mai 2000

festival "Identités"

« LA PRESSE DE LA MANCHE », dimanche 14 mai 2000

A découvrir aujourd'hui...

Le village kurde, planté sur la plage verte, sera ouvert aujourd'hui à partir de 11 h. Un village qui présente certains aspects de la vie au Kurdistan, les tentes traditionnelles, l'artisanat ou les costumes. Plusieurs animations seront également proposées.

A 17 h à la salle communale de Flottemanville-Hague, c'est une lecture d'œuvres d'auteurs kurdes traduits en français, des "paroles interdites", qui sera présentée. Des textes d'espoir présentés par la compagnie lyonnaise "Marche au vol", sur une musique de Issa avec les voix de Sophie Durand et Nicolas Vol.

Deux films seront en outre projetés au cinéma Club 6. Le premier, à 14 h 30, est "Passeur de rêves", racontant l'exil d'un couple jusqu'à un village arménien, une sorte de cour des miracles où se retrouvent des exilés en attente d'un départ improbable vers l'Europe. La projection sera

suivie d'un débat avec le réalisateur, Hiner Saleem. Le second film, à 20 h 30, est "Un chant pour Beko", dont l'histoire se situe en 1988 à l'époque des persécutions des kurdes d'Irak par Saddam Hussein. L'expression du souvenir de la culture d'un peuple en perpétuel exil. La séance sera également suivie d'un débat avec le réalisateur, Nizamettin Aric.

On n'oubliera pas non plus les très belles expositions proposées durant le festival : les photographies avec deux grands : Salgado dans les galeries du théâtre et Reza à l'arthotèque, sans oublier Krista Boggs à la salle Gandhi d'Octeville, Chris Kutshera à l'IUT et Suayip Adlig à l'hôtel Quality et au bar Le Diapason. A la mairie de Tourlaville sont également présentées des peintures de Namo, Himat M. Ali, et des artistes locaux tels que Gwezeneg, Brécard, Dufour et Janladrou, ainsi que des sculptures de Temo.



La musique au cœur de la culture kurde.

Kurd Refugees Return to Turkey from Iraq

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey, May 13 (Reuters) - More than 100 Turkish Kurds returned to Turkey from refugee camps in Iraq on Saturday after fleeing the conflict between Turkish troops and Abdullah Ocalan's Kurdish rebels in the early 1990s. Turkish officials said 132 Turkish citizens had entered Turkey assisted by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. They had been staying at the Gergevro refugee camp in northern Iraq, an area controlled by Iraqi Kurdish groups. Some 8,000 Kurds fled Turkey between 1992 and 1994, saying they had been forced out their villages by Turkish security forces clamping down on Ocalan's Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK).

Most of them settled in the Atrush refugee camp in northern Iraq. Turkish authorities say they were forced to migrate there not by Turkish forces but by the PKK guerrillas.

Fighting in Turkey between the army and PKK militants has largely died down since Turkey's capture of PKK leader Ocalan last year and his call for his fighters to end the conflict.

More than 30,000 people have been killed since the PKK began its fight for Kurdish home rule in 1984. Ocalan now advocates cultural rights for Turkey's 12 million Kurds.

Kurdish Party PUK Responds to KDP Criticism

Kurdistan Nuwe (Suleymaniya) 14 May 00

[Report on interview with Dr. Kamal Fuad, the official in charge of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, PUK, political bureau executive council, replying to Sami Abd al-Rahman: "What we heard is nothing new"; and interview with Adil Murad, the official in charge of the PUK information centre: "Kurdistan Workers' Party, PKK, forces do not exist in our regions and the PUK does not fight against the Kurds"; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Regarding the criticism that Mr. Sami Abd al-Rahman [member of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, KDP, Political Bureau] has made against the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan for having established a court of appeal and for appointing a regional president, Radio Free Iraq held an interview with Mr. Kamal Fuad, the official in charge of the PUK political bureau executive council. He said:

"The criticism we have heard and which has been made by the brothers at the KDP is not new, and their repetition has become something ordinary. We explained [to the KDP delegation] during the meetings of the higher peace committee that in order to protect citizens' interests we were obliged to appoint a regional president and establish the court of appeal because citizens' affairs could not be solved and were getting complicated."

During the course of the interview to Radio Free Iraq and regarding replies to these critics, Mr. Kamal Fuad said: "As the PUK is keen to achieve peace, it will not enter a media war [with the KDP] and will not reply to these critics in the same way. Both sides' political bureaus meet regularly, and responding in this same way will create an obstacle in front of the peace process and the implementation of the terms of the Washington agreement. Mutual accusations will generate revilement and do not serve the peace process, which is a fundamental issue of our people."

During the course of his answers to the questions from Radio Free Iraq, Mr. Kamal Fuad said: "If Mr. Sami Abd al-Rahman has a real devotion to peace we can find a settlement for the issues that he has raised and criticised in his article."

He also stressed that the PUK has, several times, reaffirmed the necessity of working together for the creation of a coalition government, in which all the political sides can participate, and the establishment of a temporary council, replacing the parliament, until free and democratic parliamentary elections are held. If these issues are settled, the court of appeal [on both sides of the region] will be easily reunified. He also pointed out that it is better to focus on the main issues and not the secondary ones. He added that the PUK insists on the achievement of peace and implementation of the terms of the Washington agreement.

At the end of the interview he urged the KDP to take -- along with the PUK -- real steps in this direction, in order to work together for these issues in order to serve the interests of the Kurdish people, which is above all other interests.

On another occasion, in an interview with Radio Free Iraq and UPI regarding the [reported] participation of PUK forces in the fight against the PKK, Mr. Adil Murad, the official in charge of the PUK information centre, stated that PUK forces have not been involved in any fighting against the PKK and said that these reports are not true. He also pointed out that despite there being some differences between the two sides, the PUK will not enter into these kinds of conflict. He also stressed that there are no PKK forces in PUK controlled regions, and our forces have not been involved in any fighting with the PKK, because this party has no forces in the regions under our control.

At the end of the interview he said: This report has been fabricated in order to disfigure the reputation of the PUK, which is always keen to achieve peace and tranquillity all over Iraqi Kurdistan and to establish normal relations with neighbouring countries in such a way that they convene the interests of the Kurdish and Iraqi peoples and all the peoples in the region.

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Un président civil et soucieux du droit pour la Turquie

POUR la première fois en 77 ans, la Turquie vient de se doter d'un président qui n'est issu ni de l'armée ni du sérail politique. Elu par l'Assemblée, le 5 mai, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, cinquante-neuf ans, dixième président, est un magistrat peu connu du grand public et le quatrième civil à occuper ce poste. Sitôt élu, M. Sezer a affirmé son attachement à « la suprématie du droit », critiquant les lacunes de la démocratie turque, « insuffisamment développée (...) non ancrée dans nos traditions ». Candidat du consensus – il fut accepté par les cinq partis représentés au Parlement sur proposition du premier ministre Bülent Ecevit –, l'ancien président de la Cour constitutionnelle sera-t-il l'homme du changement ? Celui qui emmènera son pays vers l'adhésion rêvée à l'Union européenne ?

Si son élection traduit la volonté du pouvoir de s'ancrer à l'Europe, elle signe l'échec de la classe politique traditionnelle, divisée, corrompue et prouve que l'institution militaire, gardienne des valeurs kémalistes, loin de sa pratique éprouvée des coups d'Etat (1960, 1971, 1980), a compris la nécessité des réformes. « Depuis le processus d'Helsinki [la reconnaissance par les Quinze le 13 décembre 1999 de la candidature turque à l'Union européenne], la Turquie est entrée dans un processus de transformation », écrivait récemment Leyla Zana, députée kurde condamnée à quinze ans de réclusion depuis 1994 pour délit d'opinion, dans un message à l'adresse du Parlement européen. Pourtant, « le spectre du coup d'Etat militaire du 12 septembre 1980 rôdait dans les esprits » ces derniers mois, alors que le Parlement peinait à se mettre d'accord

sur une candidature, rappellent de nombreux observateurs de la vie politique turque, dont Rusen Werdi, de l'Institut kurde de Paris.

A l'époque, les militaires n'avaient-ils pas justifié leur intervention par l'incapacité de l'Assemblée à élire un président ? C'est alors que le nom de M. Sezer fit surface. Le Parlement, qui avait préalablement rejeté sans appel la prolongation du mandat du président sortant, Süleyman Demirel, accepta ce candidat tombé du ciel mais ne l'adouba qu'au troisième tour, menacé d'une dissolution au quatrième selon la procédure usuelle. Etrangement, les islamistes du Parti de la vertu (Fazilet) n'ont pas ménagé leurs éloges à l'endroit de M. Sezer. « La Turquie est entrée dans une ère nouvelle », s'est enthousiasmé le député islamiste Abdullah Gül, décrivant le nouveau président comme une personne « qui est au fait des standards internationaux, s'est prononcé en faveur des libertés (...) ».

C'est pourtant M. Sezer qui, quelques jours à peine après avoir été promu à la tête de la Cour constitutionnelle en janvier 1998, vota et prononça le réquisitoire sur l'interdiction du Refah, le parti islamiste dont le Fazilet est l'héritier. « Nous préférons regarder vers le futur que revenir sur le passé », a expliqué pour sa part Recai Kutan, le numéro un du Fazilet. Si les députés islamistes ont voté pour le candidat de leur formation le jour du scrutin crucial, les déclarations de quelques-uns de leurs chefs disent leur désir d'apparaître sous un jour nouveau et non plus comme la « bête noire » du régime. Il faut rappeler que le Fazilet est sous le coup d'une procédure d'interdic-

tion devant la Cour constitutionnelle. Cette volonté d'apaisement pourrait être partagée par les militaires et plus particulièrement par le Conseil national de sécurité (MGK). Cette instance – composée de représentants du pouvoir civil et du haut commandement de l'armée et dont les décisions sont incontournables –, tout en demeurant intransigeante sur le respect de la laïcité, ne peut que chercher à éviter la division entre éradicateurs laïcs et tenants de l'islam politique.

LA QUESTION KURDE

Pour être un partisan farouche de la laïcité, M. Sezer, alors qu'il était magistrat, s'était ému de la pratique qui consiste à évincer régulièrement de l'armée des officiers soupçonnés de sympathies pro-islamistes avec des méthodes dignes de l'Inquisition. La sélection ayant été faite, dans quelques cas, sur la foi de photos des femmes de militaires, afin de repérer celles qui nouaient le foulard de la mauvaise façon. En revanche, il batailla ferme contre le port du voile à l'université. Devenu aujourd'hui le principal interlocuteur des militaires au sein du Conseil national de sécurité, de quelle marge de manœuvre va-t-il disposer ? Continuera-t-il à souligner que certaines des lois édictées par cette instance contredisent la Constitution ?

L'arrivée au pouvoir de ce magistrat discret à l'extrême va peut-être permettre de dénouer le cas du chef kurde Abdullah Öcalan, condamné à mort en juin 1999, mais dont l'exécution a été gelée dans l'attente de l'avis de la Cour européenne des droits de l'homme. Si le Parlement se prononce pour l'exécution d'Apo – ce qui est probable, une majorité de

députés, tous partis confondus, y étant favorable –, le président de la République pourra, en dernier ressort et selon une de ses prérogatives, commuer la peine. N'étant lié à aucun parti, il aura les coudees franches, ne craignant pas les réactions de l'électorat, plutôt pour la pendaïson.

Pour le reste, si M. Sezer s'est prononcé sur la nécessité de donner des droits culturels à la population kurde de Turquie (entre 12 et 16 millions), ira-t-il jusqu'à reconnaître aux Kurdes une représentation politique ? Pour l'instant, le parti kurde, Parti démocratique des masses (DPK), a été interdit en février pour séparatisme, le Parti démocratique du peuple (HadeP), soupçonné de liens avec le Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK) dont M. Öcalan est un des fondateurs, est sous le coup d'une procédure d'interdiction pour le même motif. Par ailleurs, l'état d'urgence demeure dans cinq provinces du Sud-Est à majorité kurde (Diyarbakir, Hakkari, Sinak, Tunceli, Van) et les arrestations pour appartenance au PKK se multiplient.

Unanimentement saluée, l'élection de M. Sezer inspire l'espoir – « c'est un compromis intelligent », explique le député Vert européen Daniel Cohn-Bendit – mais laisse entière la question de la persistance du rôle des militaires dans la vie politique. « Tant que le Conseil national de sécurité [MGK] impose ses décisions au pouvoir civil, il est difficile de parler d'une véritable démocratisation », dénonce Muteber Yildirim, militante de l'Association turque des droits de l'homme (IHD) à Istanbul.

Marie Jégo

Un mort et quatre blessés à Bagdad L'Irak accuse l'Iran

Une enfant a été tuée et quatre personnes blessées dans une attaque à la roquette, dans la nuit de vendredi à samedi, à Bagdad qui a attribué ce « crime hideux » au régime iranien.

Mais le principal mouvement de l'opposition chiite irakienne a revendiqué, hier depuis Koweït, l'attaque qui selon lui avait visé un palais du président Saddam Hussein.

L'attaque, menée à l'aide de lance-roquettes, s'est produite vendredi soir peu après minuit dans une zone résidentielle de la capitale irakienne, a indiqué un porte-parole du ministère de l'Intérieur irakien.

« Des agents à la solde du ré-

gime iranien ont tiré à 0h25 locales huit roquettes de calibre 122 mm contre le quartier résidentiel d'al-Karkh », a affirmé le porte-parole, cité par l'agence officielle INA.

L'attaque s'est soldée par « le martyr de Zahra Mohammad Hamid, âgée de 3 ans et de quatre personnes blessées, qui ont été transférées dans des hôpitaux à Bagdad », a-t-il ajouté.

Le porte-parole a rendu « le régime iranien entièrement responsable de ce crime hideux », affirmant que « ce crime ne passera pas sans punition ».

« Cet acte lâche n'entamera pas la résistance légendaire de notre vaillant peuple sous la direction du bâtisseur de sa splendeur, le président Saddam Hussein », a ajouté le porte-parole.

Des journalistes emmenés

sur le site par le ministère de l'Information à Karradat Myriam dans la partie dite al-Karkh de Bagdad, ont pu voir la maison de la famille Hamid en grande partie détruite par la chute d'une roquette.

Un énorme cratère dans la maison

« Nous dormions quand le missile iranien a éventré la maison et semé la panique », explique le père de famille, Mohammad Hamid, un marchand de quatre-saisons de 52 ans.

« J'ai vu des tas de débris sur le lit de ma fille Zahra et je me suis dépêché pour la sauver mais elle était déjà morte », explique M. Hamid, les larmes aux yeux.

La roquette a provoqué un énorme cratère dans la maison

dont les vitres ont été soufflées et les portes arrachées. Les modestes meubles étaient éparpillés à même le sol.

« Allah Akbar, Allah Akbar » (Dieu est le plus grand), crie la mère de Zahra en apprenant la mort de sa fille à son retour de l'hôpital où il a été admise après l'attaque.

A Koweït, un responsable de

Assemblée suprême de la révolution islamique d'Irak (ASRII), opposition basée en Iran) a affirmé que ses combattants avaient tiré huit roquettes Katioucha contre le palais de la République à Karradat Myriam.

Abdel Aziz al-Hakim, frère du chef de l'ASRII l'ayatollah Mohammad Baqer Al-Hakim, a affirmé que l'attaque était « une

riposte aux atrocités commises par Saddam contre les chiites en Irak ».

« Selon nos sources à Bagdad, de nombreuses ambulations ont été vues en train d'évacuer des morts et des blessés, » a ajouté M. Hakim, qui participe au Koweït à un symposium sur l'avenir des relations entre Koweït et l'Irak.

Il s'agit de la deuxième attaque à la roquette à Bagdad après celle du 1^{er} mai, où huit civils avaient été blessés, dont six membres d'une même famille, dans la chute de roquettes sur un quartier de réfugiés palestiniens de Bagdad qui avait également accusé Téhéran de cette attaque.

La douleur absolue de l'exil, aux confins de l'Iran et de l'Irak

Le Tableau noir. Le deuxième film, imprévisible et bouleversant, de Samira Makhmalbaf, réalisatrice iranienne

âgée tout juste de vingt ans, montre un sens magnifique du détail, de la composition et aussi un courage peu commun

Sélection officielle/En compétition. Film iranien de Samira Makhmalbaf. Avec Saïd Mohammadi, Rahman Ghobadi, Behnaz Jafari. (1 h 25.)

Il arrive, heureusement, qu'on soit séduit, ou intéressé (et parfois les deux) au cinéma. Il est rare qu'on soit véritablement surpris. Avec le deuxième film de Samira Makhmalbaf, on est sidéré. Pas une fois, sur un « coup » ou une astuce, mais en permanence, du début à la fin de ce film comparable à rien, imprévisible absolument, dans sa tonalité, sa construction dramatique comme dans ses thèmes. Sidéré, on le sera plus encore si on s'attend à un film de « jeune fille » parce que cette réalisatrice a vingt ans, ou au nom d'une certaine idée du cinéma iranien contemporain construite par les films de Kiarostami, de Makhmalbaf père, de Jalili, ou même du premier film – splendide – de Samira, *La Pomme*, présenté à Cannes en 1998. *Le Tableau noir* ne ressemble à rien de tout cela.

Il emprunte un chemin aussi escarpé et dangereux que celui sur lequel on découvre, aux premières images du film, un étrange équipage : une dizaine de tableaux comme on en trouve au mur des écoles se carapentent sur une trace

de montagne. Ceux qui les portent sur leur dos, mais que d'abord on ne voit pas, sont des instituteurs sans élèves qui, tels des colporteurs d'éducation, s'en vont par les villages tenter d'échanger un peu de savoir contre le gîte et le couvert. Soudain, il leur faut se cacher, un



« Le Tableau noir » : une tension de fuite éperdue engendrant un chant âpre.

hélicoptère rôde, ces montagnes arides sont celles de la frontière entre Iran et Irak, à l'époque de la guerre.

FLAMENCO D'IMAGES BRUTES

Bientôt ne restent que deux maîtres d'école dont les chemins se séparent et dont on suivra les tribulations. L'un, sur les crêtes, rencontre des enfants hostiles, chargés de lourdes caisses, contrebandiers auxquels il se joint contre leur gré, leur serinant ses leçons tandis qu'ils poursuivent leur périlleuse activité. L'autre rencontre d'abord un vieillard qui lui demande de lui lire la lettre de son fils, prisonnier de guerre en Irak. L'instituteur ne peut

pas lire ce qu'on devinera être du kurde ; il invente des bonnes nouvelles dont l'autre, pas dupe, fera mine de se contenter.

Cette scène étrange, d'une totale simplicité, est magnifique par ce qu'elle comporte de sous-entendus, mais aussi de convention dramatique. Elle s'élargit aussitôt au film dans son entier et à la manière de regarder : *Le Tableau noir* a des clés

« Locales » qui concernent la situation ethnique, linguistique et culturelle complexe, donc éminemment politique, des minorités nationales dans la région. Les aborder de front, comme ici, relève d'un courage peu commun. Mais pour tous ceux auxquels ces considérations seraient

lointaines, le récit reste compréhensible, tant l'enjeu dépasse de loin ces circonstances particulières. Notre second instituteur rencontre ensuite une troupe errante de vieillards. Ces Kurdes irakiens ont traversé par mégarde la frontière et cherchent leur village, où le plus mal en point d'entre eux veut rendre son dernier soupir. Immense tribu décatie, rude, effrayante. Flanquée d'un tout petit garçon, une femme très belle en fait partie, à laquelle « Tableau noir » – l'instituteur rebaptisé du nom de son accessoire – décide de se marier.

Tout se passe dans une tension de fuite éperdue. La succession d'événements brefs et violents qui

composent le film, la dureté des éclats sonores, la brutalité du passage d'une situation à l'autre engendrent un chant âpre, prenan, un flamenco d'images brutes qui disent la douleur d'un exil absolu,

au-delà de la guerre, de l'amour impossible, des villages perdus dans la brume. Avec un sens implacable du détail, de la composition par le cadre et le montage et de la suggestion, parfois d'une ironie mordante, Samira Makhmalbaf construit ce

film percutant et troublant. On y trouverait sans peine de nombreuses métaphores, critiques des institutions et méditation sur l'appartenance à un lieu, à un groupe ou à un idéal. La puissance de ce film est loin au-delà de ses décryp-

tages possibles, là où on massacre des enfants, là où porte le regard insondable d'une femme au milieu d'un chemin de montagne.

J.-M. F.

Authorities Continue Arabization Policy

Al-Ittihad (Sulaymaniyah) 15 May 00

[FBIS Translated Text] A special report from Kirkuk centre [subhead]

The Iraqi authorities are continuing the policy of forced displacement of Kurds and Arabization of the Kurdish areas under its control through various means and strategies. Every day the regime conceives different weak excuses and pretexts to justify the policy of removing the Kurds from their ancestral lands, particularly in Kirkuk, Khanaqin, Tuzkhurmatu, Jalawla and other Kurdish cities.

Currently, the regime in the Kurdish city of Kirkuk is engaged in drawing up lists of names of Kurdish families in preparation for deporting them by force to the liberated areas of Kurdistan or to central and southern Iraq. Heading these lists are the Kurdish families who refused to fill out what are called forms for correcting nationality, in another words changing their nationality to Arab.

The agents of the regime carried out a similar campaign in Al-Hweja, Tuzkhurmatu, Daquq and Dubiz for the same purpose. The security organs of the regime arrest and harass the Kurds for no reason to force them to leave their areas.

The higher authorities of the regime issued instructions to the military recruiting department in Kirkuk asking it to count the names of the Kurdish people who live in Kirkuk whose records are kept in Sulaymaniyah, Arbil and Dohuk governorate. These instructions stipulate that plots of residential land of 200 square meters should be granted to those who were members of the ruling party before the uprising in 1991, provided they build houses on these lands within one year, otherwise the lands will be confiscated.

Meanwhile, 400 dignitaries from Kurdish families of the Kakayees who were forced to leave their areas in Iraqi Kurdistan to reside in Al-Ramady governorate, submitted a memorandum to the relevant authorities of the regime to grant them permission to return to their areas. The regime instantly refused their demand confirming that their areas have been given to new Arab settlers who are loyal to the regime.

The regime informed 2000 Kurdish families in the Al-Iskan area of Kirkuk to make preparations to leave the area. Al-Iskan police station will evaluate their houses and properties.

Reports say that the party and security organs of the regime in Kirkuk, Tuzkhurmatu, Daquq and Dubiz are currently engaged in collecting information about the Kurdish and Turkoman families who have sons living abroad or in the liberated areas of Kurdistan and about their political affiliation in order to displace their families. According to letter No. 8/1102 of 9th April 2000 from the Ba'th Party leadership sent to the ruling party branches in Al-Ta'mim, Kirkuk and Tikrit, the relevant authorities are urged to complete the inventory of Kurdish and Turkoman families in order to displace them as soon as possible either to the liberated areas of Kurdistan or to central and southern Iraq.

At the same time, the regime has distributed the lands of Kurdish farmers in Qaraj and Makhmur plains to new Arab settlers from the Al-Laheb and Al-Jibur clans. The regime called on these deceived people to go to agriculture offices in Mosul governorate to register these lands, which were stolen from Kurdish farmers, in their names.

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53^E FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DU FILM



Cinq frères
et sœurs
orphelins
s'efforcent à
sauver la vie
de l'un d'eux.

QUINZAINE DES REALISATEURS. «Un temps pour l'ivresse des chevaux», de l'Iranien Bahman Ghobadi, bouleversante odyssée enfantine et équestre.

KURDE EN PLEIN CŒUR

Un temps pour l'ivresse des chevaux (Iran)
de Bahman Ghobadi, avec Nezhad Ekthiar-Dini, Amaneh Ekthiar-Dini, Madi Ekthiar-Dini. 1h20

Quarante-huit heures après le *Tableau noir* de Samira Makhmalbaf, le cinéma iranien a de nouveau survolé Cannes, avec un film de Bahman Ghobadi. Etrange ef-

fet de famille puisque, une nouvelle fois, l'intrigue nous égare à la frontière Iran-Irak, en pays kurde, et ce avec d'autant plus de trouble que le réalisateur, kurde iranien, jouait un des rôles principaux dans le *Tableau noir* et que, par ailleurs, un de ses documentaires, *Vivre dans le brouillard*, a fortement inspiré le scénario du même *Tableau noir*. Cet

écheveau dont il est très compliqué de démêler les fils ne nuit pourtant pas à la singularité de *Un temps pour l'ivresse des chevaux*, bien au contraire puisque le film de Ghobadi sort indemne, voire renforcé de la comparaison obligatoire avec le film de Samira Makhmalbaf.

Enfants cabossés. Par un effet de feuilleton involontaire,

nous voilà donc dans le deuxième épisode des mêmes aventures: de nouveau des enfants contrebandiers, de nouveau ce sentiment de guerre d'autant plus effrayante qu'elle reste quasiment invisible. Tout le film est tendu du point de vue d'une seule urgence, celle d'un jeune garçon qui veut sauver la vie précaire de son frère, atteint de nanisme, toute

libération

15 MAI 2000

petite poupée souffrante qu'il promène à sa hanche comme un baluchon et dont il est impressionnant d'apprendre, au virage d'un dialogue, qu'il est son aîné, âgé de 15 ans. Ce malaise physique n'effrayera que ceux qui ne savent pas regarder en face le merdier du monde et qui ne verront pas, du coup, que cet enfant cabossé a les plus beaux yeux de l'univers. Autour de ce monstre archaïque, ce sont toutes les forces, d'une microcommunauté familiale qui s'arc-boutent, comme si la survie du plus faible d'entre eux était la seule preuve possible de leur existence à tous. Cinq frères et sœurs orphelins qui s'échinent dans des petits boulots de bazar: emballleurs de verres, manoeuvriers de colis plus lourds

qu'eux, pourvoyeurs en pneus de tracteurs.

Pas d'exutoire. Ces enfants kurdes font ricocher le regard vers d'autres enfants: dealers de Bogota, jeunes putes de Bangkok, gitans de Vukovar, *Olvidados* de Buñuel, au point de leur ressembler physiquement,

couverts des mêmes bricolages

de vêtements, maquillés par la même misère, unifiés par l'ordre d'être adultes avant l'âge. Mais cette internationale de la damnation reste ici singulière par une volonté de fer de l'incarner dans une précarité autochtone: survivre au jour le jour. Sans que jamais le malheur ne soit un spectacle apaisant ou un exutoire à mélo. On ne pleure jamais, c'est beaucoup trop grave. Même quand la petite sœur, championne olympique de la gentillesse, enlace son frère malingre en le couvrant de «N'aie pas peur, mon petit chou, ça va aller». Ou alors si, on pleure, mais en suivant le magnifique précepte de Simone de Beauvoir: «Quand je pleure ce n'est pas sur mon sort que je verse des larmes, mais sur celui du genre humain.»

Parce que les médicaments sont hors de prix et que le médecin du village diagnostique que la survie du frère ne tient plus

On ne pleure jamais, c'est beaucoup trop grave. Même quand la petite sœur, championne olympique de la gentillesse, enlace son frère malingre en le couvrant de «N'aie pas peur, mon petit chou, ça va aller».

qu'au fil d'une opération de la dernière chance, la bande d'adolescents fomentent un complot humanitaire en forme de suicide collectif. La fille aînée se vend en mariage à une famille d'Irakiens et, avec le mulet qui sert de dot, le frangin démerdard, en quête d'un hôpital pour le malade, se joint à une caravane qui tente de franchir clandestinement la frontière.

Commence alors une longue scène qui suffirait à faire la splendeur du film. L'ascension d'un col enneigé où l'expression «chargé comme des baudets» n'est pas du tout une métaphore. De plus, les muletiers ont soulé leurs bêtes pour qu'elles résistent au froid. Mais cet antigel a été surdosé et voilà

les mules qui titubent sur le verglas, vautrent leur viande ivre dans les congères sans que les coups de poings qui pleuvent sur elles ne parviennent à les remettre sur pieds.

Espoir. On est dans l'état de ces bêtes affolées, rouées par les coups de cœur d'un film

qu'on voudrait tellement aider à avancer.

Et, en même temps, parce que la mitraille des gardes-frontières menace, hypothéquant l'entreprise de sauvetage du petit handicapé, ces animaux qui refusent d'être domestiques exaspèrent. C'est pas le moment de faire chier avec des états d'âme alcoolisée. C'est une question de vie ou de mort où on n'a plus le temps de barguigner avec la souffrance des animaux. Quand, soudain, la mule du frangin se redresse. D'un seul coup de rein, c'est tout l'espoir du monde qui marche de nouveau sur ses jambes. Il y a un temps, en effet, pour l'ivresse des chevaux. Et un temps pour passer outre.

Voilà le genre magnifique de ce film secouant qui nous ouvre à une nouvelle définition du cinéma engagé. A Cannes, comme dans la vie, il faut choisir son camp. Détecter les films ennemis et se démenier pour dénicher où est le film de mon ami. *Un temps pour l'ivresse des chevaux* est un nouvel ami ●

GÉRARD LEFORT

Turkey Looks to Leader Who Espouses Reform

Inauguration Climaxes an Extraordinary Year

By Stephen Kinzer
New York Times Service

ISTANBUL — The inauguration of a reform-minded judge as Turkey's 10th president on Tuesday will cap a year of extraordinary change here.

Ahmet Necdet Sezer, who had been chief justice of Turkey's highest court, favors the repeal of laws that limit free speech. These laws have been used to imprison journalists and politicians who voice what are considered subversive views. Mr. Sezer has also called for an end to the ban on teaching and broadcasting in the Kurdish language. He wants every government agency, including the military, to submit to what he calls "the rule of law."

These views have made Mr. Sezer a hero to Turks who want to modernize their country's political system. They hope that he will use his platform to push Turkey toward full democracy.

But the choice of Mr. Sezer is a turning point not only because of his own opinions. It is also the latest in a series of events that, taken together, suggest Turkey may be ready for political reform.

Turkey was in crisis as recently as 1997, when military commanders pushed an Islamic-oriented prime minister out of office because they feared he was leading the country toward religious fundamentalism.

During that period, political parties and their leaders were at each other's throats. War against Kurdish rebels was raging in eastern provinces. The inflation rate approached 100 percent annually. And the European Union refused even to consider Turkey's application for membership.

Much of that has now changed. Last year, Bülent Ecevit formed what has proved to be a remarkably stable government, pulling the country out of political chaos. He persuaded the International Monetary Fund to support a \$4 billion stabilization program under which state enterprises are being privatized and the inflation rate has begun to fall. He pushed the program through Parliament despite protest from groups that had benefited from lavish subsidies.

Soon afterward, Mr. Ecevit announced to a stunned nation the capture of Abdullah Ocalan, the leader of the Kurdish rebellion. At his trial, Mr.

Ocalan called on his rebels to stop fighting. Nearly all have done so, ending a 15-year war that killed tens of thousands and deeply polarized Turkish society.

Mr. Ocalan was sentenced to death, but the sentence has not been carried out. Mr. Ecevit resisted demands for a quick execution, persuading his compatriots that the satisfaction of hanging Mr. Ocalan was not worth the outrage it would stir abroad.

Soon after Mr. Ocalan's capture, western Turkey was struck by a devastating earthquake for which the government proved unprepared. But scores of grass-roots civic groups sprang into action, and they have since greatly invigorated civil society and attracted thousands of dynamic citizens into the political process.

Bill Clinton's visit to the earthquake zone, and the enthusiasm with which the U.S. president embraced victims and empathized with their plight, led many Turks to wonder why they, too, could not have young and vigorous political leaders. His example may have led indirectly to growing dissatisfaction with President Süleyman Demirel, 75, who failed in his attempt to change the constitution so that he could run for re-election.

Relief workers from Greece were among the first to come to Turkey's aid after the earthquake, and when a quake struck Greece a few weeks later, Turks flew there to return the favor.

Then, in a turnaround, the European Union reversed itself and agreed to accept Turkey as a candidate for membership.

Unique candidat à sa propre succession

Elections truquées, présidents à vie, absence de libertés... Et pourtant nombre de dirigeants arabes n'ont que le mot "démocratie" à la bouche.

AL HAYAT
Londres

Les médias rapportent que les "élections" législatives en Irak [le 27 mars 2000] se sont soldées par la victoire d'Oudai Saddam Hussein, le fils du président irakien, avec 99,99 % des voix. Ce modeste score a été obtenu en dépit du fait que le "candidat" Oudai n'ait pas voté pour lui-même, mais qu'il ait préféré offrir sa voix à une autre liste. Il n'y a rien de nouveau dans ces élections et, en dépit de l'absurdité du cas irakien, elles ne représentent aucunement une exception : elles ne sont que l'illustration la plus aboutie et la plus violente d'un système qui a cours partout dans le monde arabe.

"Seul candidat à sa succession." Cette expression éloquente qualifie d'une manière si précise et si concise la pratique de la démocratie dans les pays arabes qu'on pourrait y voir une sorte de devise. Cette "démocratie" repose en fait sur un système plébiscitaire. Le vote populaire, dans cette logique, n'est pas un mécanisme permettant la transmission du pouvoir, mais une mise en scène justifiant le maintien à vie d'un président, selon une formule que les pays arabes aiment à appeler "démocratie". Et pourtant, les pays qui fonctionnent ainsi font preuve d'une singulière insistance pour que la "démocratie" et la "liberté" demeurent des références suprêmes...

LES PARTICULARITÉS DE LA "DÉMOCRATIE ARABE" RÉSISTENT À L'HISTOIRE

Un président arabe, unique candidat à sa succession, était interrogé dernièrement à la télévision officielle de son pays. On lui demandait ce qu'il pouvait répondre aux citoyens qui ne veulent pas participer aux élections puisqu'ils en connaissent par avance le résultat. Et le président d'affirmer, avec un étonnement confinant à la stupéfaction la plus profonde : "C'est incroyable, les gens demandent à participer et exigent la démocratie et, quand ils ont une chance de donner leur voix, ils s'abstiennent !" Et, lorsqu'une chaîne américaine lui demande jusqu'à quand il va demeurer en poste, il répond avec une grande spontanéité : "God knows" [Dieu le sait].

Les particularités de la "démocratie arabe" résistent ainsi au temps et à l'Histoire. La première exigence de ces démocraties est que le score du seul candidat à sa succession ne descende jamais au-dessous de 90 % des voix. La deuxième, qui n'est pas moins fondamentale, est que le candidat de l'armée sorte vainqueur



▲ Dessin d'Ali Forzat paru dans Al Watan, Koweït.

■ L'Inamovible Assad

"Dans une démocratie, tout est fonction des élections ; dans une dictature, tout est fonction de la biologie", note Newsweek pour expliquer l'exceptionnelle longévité du règne de Hafez el-Assad en Syrie. En trente ans, les Etats-Unis ont connu cinq présidents qui ont eu à négocier avec l'Inamovible Assad.

Sa santé déficiente, les troubles dans le pays, le conflit avec Israël, la présence de ses troupes au Liban n'ont pas réussi à le fragiliser. A sa mort, son fils Bachar lui succédera, inaugurant ainsi ce que la presse arabe appelle ironiquement les "républiques royales".

des élections. La troisième règle est que, vers la fin de son mandat, le président annonce son désir de ne pas se représenter, afin de laisser le champ libre à du sang neuf et à de nouveaux visages, qui auront, après lui, à assumer leurs responsabilités. Le président annonce alors qu'il s'agit d'une décision irrévocable. Mais la volonté de Dieu est trop forte, et le Parlement se réunit aussitôt en session extraordinaire. Les députés

rédigent sur-le-champ une motion appelant le président, au nom de la nation, à revenir sur sa décision "en ce moment critique", puis suit un "vote", qui désigne le président en exercice comme le seul candidat.

On est en droit de se demander ce qui pousse les dirigeants de ces pays à prétendre à une démocratie dont ils sont conscients qu'elle n'existe pas et à laquelle personne ne croit. Chacun sait que le chef de l'Etat, dans un pays arabe, ne quitte ses fonctions que les pieds devant. Pourquoi impose-t-il alors aux caisses de son Etat des centaines de millions de dollars en "campagne électorale" truquée ? Le pire est que cela se produit dans des pays dont le PNB par habitant ne dépasse pas les 3 500 dollars [24 500 FF] par an...

Démocratie, droits de l'homme, liberté ne sont dans la culture politique arabe que des

mots avec lesquels jouent les intellectuels et le pouvoir. Et si ces concepts occupent une place aussi réduite dans notre culture, cela signifie qu'il n'y a pas de réelle demande populaire exigeant la mise en place de la démocratie. Dès lors, une question se pose : pourquoi les régimes actuels insistent-ils autant dans la mise en scène, pour le bénéfice de leurs peuples, de cette tragi-comédie qui les dessert, eux et leur souvenir ?

REDORER LE BLASON DU RÉGIME AUX YEUX DE L'OPINION INTERNATIONALE

Il y a encore peu de temps, le président d'une République arabe – surtout si elle appartenait au "camp progressiste" – se maintenait au pou-

voir toute sa vie au nom de principes "de gauche", car la "démocratie politique" devait attendre que se réalise la "démocratie sociale". En attendant que soit résolue cette équation, les exigences de la lutte imposaient que le président demeure à la tête de la nation sans qu'on vienne troubler sa quiétude. De nos jours, avec le recul des idéologies, le concept de démocratie politique conditionnée à la démocratie sociale a laissé place à une conception plus bourgeoise du terme – la démocratie inconditionnelle, en quelque sorte. Ce n'est plus la lutte qui justifie le maintien au pouvoir à vie du président, c'est l'"agenda" ou, en d'autres termes, le programme, les projets, la vision que le président prévoit de mettre

en œuvre. Et, comme cet agenda est généralement assez chargé, il se doit de rester en poste jusqu'au moment où il décidera de lui-même que tout a été mené à bien. Par ailleurs, le "réveil islamiste", accompagné du "terrorisme", ne vise – selon les régimes en place – qu'à s'emparer du pouvoir. Puisque certains se servent de la religion et que d'autres s'agitent au nom d'idéologies totalitaires surannées, le pouvoir doit agir au nom de la "pure" démocratie. Mais, en tout état de cause, les concepts évoqués sont destinés à redorer le blason du régime aux yeux de l'opinion internationale. On le saisit parfaitement en écoutant les présidents arabes en visite à Washington ou à Londres ces derniers temps.

Khaled Al Dakhil

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Speculation mounts as to whether Ankara will push button against Iran

May 13, 2000 by Lale Sariibrahimoglu & Selcuk Gultasli

Ankara - Turkish Daily News

As Turkey has been awaiting concrete evidence that will come from the Interior Ministry and the Prosecutor's Office over Iran's connection with the 1993 murder of senior Turkish columnist Ugur Mumcu, there has been speculation that Ankara might push the button against Iran to force Tehran to end its support for the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the Turkish Hizbullah.

Tehran supports both the PKK and the Turkish Hizbullah. A senior Turkish diplomat speaking to the Turkish Daily News stated that before devising various strategies on how to handle Iran in the latest crisis, Turkish authorities should first complete and deliver their evidence concerning Iran's links with the Mumcu murder case. After that, Turkey's strategy on how to handle Iran will become crystal clear.

"We will then be able to see the whole picture and the exact extent of the Iranian connection in the Mumcu case," stressed the same diplomat. Though ruling out that the revelations of Iranian connections in the Mumcu murder are part of a strategy designed to force Iran to end its support of the PKK, another Turkish diplomat said that if the Foreign Ministry was supplied with concrete evidence over the latest crisis, then Tehran may be pressured to end its support of the PKK as well.

Turkey makes a distinction in its treatment between Syria and Iran. The Turkish military's threats against Syria supported by foreign policy instruments in 1998 forced Syria to kick Abdullah Ocalan, the leader of the PKK, out of the country while pledging an end to its support for the terrorist organization. In the case of Iran, however, taking into consideration a much more complex relationship with Tehran, Ankara appears to have been more cautious in using military means against this country. It is also speculated that the military wants to finish off the PKK's affiliation with remaining neighboring countries before the government can properly address the problems of the Southeast. Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit on several occasions blamed Iran for giving support to the PKK, stressing Ankara's uneasiness.

Khatami factor in Iran

In its policy considerations Ankara has also been assessing whether Iran's support of the Turkish Hizbullah organization as well as the PKK have also been advocated by moderate factions led by Iranian President Mohammad Khatami. One emerging idea is that if Iran's Khatami regime accepts its connection with PKK terrorism as well as with other activities in the past and if Tehran displays a determination of real cooperation with Ankara, then handling Iran will perhaps be easier. Minds in Turkey are confused in general over to what extent Khatami's moderate messages he has been sending the world may turn into reality. Some diplomatic sources say the basic parameters of the Iranian Islamic Revolution are not expected to change much under Khatami, despite the messages of moderation that he has been sending. Again a wide range of strategies against Iran that vary from

imposing visas requirements on Iran to recalling Turkey's ambassador in Tehran will depend on the documents that will come from the Turkish security authorities.

No visit to Iran at the moment

A high-level Foreign Ministry diplomat told the TDN that it was out of question for a Turkish diplomat to go to Iran with a dossier including details of Iranian involvement in the Mumcu murder and many other killings that have not been solved yet since the investigation was still going on. The same official said a visit to Iran by Ambassador Faruk Logoglu, undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry, is not planned. Press reports earlier said that Logoglu would be going to Iran to convey Turkey's unhappiness over the allegations.

The same source said it should be the Iranians who should come to Turkey and listen to Ankara's complaints rather than a Turkish diplomat going to Tehran to convey a message.

The Turkish diplomat said President-elect Ahmet Necdet Sezer would be informed about an invitation to the summit Economic Cooperation Organization summit that would be held in Tehran next month when he was sworn in and that it was up to him to attend the summit or not. In the event of his attendance, the source said it was quite natural to have talks with Iranian officials over Turkey's complaints. But Sezer's visit to Iran will also depend on the outcome of the investigation on Mumcu murder case and the degree of Iranian involvement in the case.

Minister: Reconstruction Proceeding Slowly

Brayati (Arbil) 16 May 00

[FBIS Translated Text] Reconstructing destroyed villages in Kurdistan is essential for establishing a strong economy in our country which will lead to displaced villagers starting to return to their ancestral lands in towns and cities.

The Minister of Reconstruction and Development in the Kurdistan regional government met Robin Wright, head of the Middle East department in the British Ministry of International Development. Details of the meeting were published in Brayati newspaper on 14th May. During the meeting the minister said that implementation of reconstruction projects in Kurdistan within the framework of Resolution 986 is not satisfactory. They are carried out within routine programmes and the process is very slow. Fifty per cent of all projects have not yet been completed.

In an interview conducted by Nasrin Mustafa Sidiq with the minister, he said: "If we count all the villages within the borders of Arbil, we find that 300 villages out of 1120 have not yet been reconstructed. In Dohuk there are still 360 empty villages, in addition to dozens of villages in both governorates that have not been reconstructed and have not been provided with any kind of service. These villages need services such as schools, health services, roads and water projects. For instance, the villages in Arbil need more than 1000 schools and more than 300 health centres, the same for Dohuk. These villages also need water projects, as they have suffered from drought over the last two years. These projects and services will encourage villagers to return to their villages. The amount of money allocated under Resolution 986 is not enough for reconstructing and developing Kurdistan. The process of carrying out projects is very slow. For example, only the projects from the first three phases have been completed in both governorates so far. Seventy per cent of the projects in phase four, 45 per cent in phase five and 20 per cent in phase six have been completed, while none of the projects in phase seven and eight have been carried out. The amount of money allocated for projects in phases one to six in the two governorates is not enough. During the final stage of phase six, the amount of money was increased after oil prices went up in the world markets. Thus, the amount of money allo-

cated for reconstruction projects in both governorates in phases six, seven and eight has been increased. This has given us hope."

He added: "According to our information, Kurdistan still requires further reconstruction work in order to encourage villagers to return to their villages. These villages should become the main pillars for establishing a strong economy, because the

Kurdistan economy mainly depends on agriculture. We must reconstruct all villages and towns in order to revive the infrastructure of the Kurdistan economy. The above mentioned projects are carried out on a routine basis and if this remains the case it will take more than 10 years to complete all of them. The only solution is to increase the amount of money allocated to reconstruction projects, which is 8 per cent of the amount, and to draw up an urgent and modern programme to speed up the projects. As I mentioned before, although we are now in the eighth phase, 50 per cent of the projects have not yet been carried out. We must reconstruct and develop Kurdistan completely. We are looking forward to having a reconstructed, wealthy and developed Kurdistan through rebuilding the villages which are the main factor in establishing a strong economy".

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Iranian film-maker Makhmalbaf: "I'm part of the Kurdish people"

Ozgur Politika May 17, 2000

by ZUBEYİR ARSLAN/CANNES (Translated KurdishMedia)

Samira Makhmalbaf, who has become the focus of attention at the 53rd Cannes Film Festival due to her young age and the topic of her film, spoke with OZGUR POLITIKA. The young film-maker said that "I feel myself to be a part of the Kurdish people."

A 20-year-old director has suddenly come onto the agenda of the world's media at this year's 53rd Cannes Film Festival, the first international film festival of the 21st century. Samira Makhmalbaf, the youngest film-maker at the festival, made her first press statement after her film was shown to OZGUR POLITIKA. Makhmalbaf, who has attracted attention with her film "Takht-e Siyah" ("The Blackboard"), made the film in villages of Iranian Kurdistan along the border of Iraq which had been bombed by Iraqi aircraft. The film, which she made together with her father, well-known Iranian film producer Mohsin Makhmalbaf, tells the story of Kurdish villagers who have been driven out of their homes by the bombing, and of the efforts of a teacher who seeks to educate the children with a blackboard. We spoke with Samira Makhmalbaf at a reception for Iranian film-makers on the beach at "La Croisette."

Samira, You're 20 years old, and now the whole world is talking about you. Can you tell us why you selected Kurdistan to make your film?

Kurdistan is not an exotic location for me. It's a region where I've lived and traveled. I've frequently done film work with my father in the villages of Kurdistan. What most attracted my attention during those filming sessions, and which forms the topic of my film, was the material that the teacher there tried to teach to his students with his blackboard. In addition, the facial expressions on the Kurdish children, and the majestic stance of those mountains of Kurdistan affected me greatly. The mountains spoke with me there. When I was a little girl, my father had spoken to me of Kurdish history, and the Kurdish experience, and when I compared all that with what I saw myself, a really interesting topic suggested itself. After we finished our filming in Kurdistan, my father gave me a four-page scenario relating to the film we had shot. When I combined that with the notes that I had taken myself, this film was the result. That is, we can say that the scenario for "Takht-e Siyah" was written after the filming.

Is "Takht-e Siyah" your first film?

Actually, I made my first film two and a half years ago. I participated in the Cannes festival in 1998 as well. Then I was only 17 and half a year old. So this is really my second film.

Are you aware that you're the youngest director-actor in the festival this year?

Oh yes... I learned it from the television.

What was the message that you tried to convey in the film?

I'll leave that to the film. Those who watch it will easily understand. I don't want to explain it before people have seen the film. Because the mountains also speak in "Takht-e Siyah". Nature has taken on the ability to speak. The topography of Kurdistan will explain everything. I believe that, with the Kurdish peasants in the film, we've conveyed a serious message. But just like with a poem, you have to experience it, you have to watch the film...

How long have you been involved with the cinema?

Well, as you know, my father Mohsen Makhmalbaf is a fairly well-known producer in Iran. As a result, I naturally grew up in the world of cinema, whether I really wanted to or not. In other words, it became a part of me. Thanks to my father, naturally.

I want to thank you for talking with us, Samira...

Actually, I'm grateful to you. This interview has excited me just as much as the film itself. I'll not forget that I was first interviewed by a Kurdish newspaper at Cannes.

Do you have any message that you'd like to convey to the Kurdish people by way of our newspaper?

I want Kurdish people above all to see this film. I believe that we've conveyed some major messages in it. Just like a poem. I consider myself to be a part of the Kurdish people. I tried to portray the speech of the mountains of Kurdistan, and the smiling faces of the brave Kurdish villagers, in the film. It's the Kurdish people who will best be able to interpret the film.

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European Parliament Discusses PKK 'Peace Project'

Özgür Politika

18 May 00 by Huseyin Elmali

[FBIS Translated Text] - The press and members of parliament have paid great attention to the conference on "Democracy and Peace for Turkey, and the Rights of the Kurdish People," which was held yesterday and was organized by the European Parliament's [EP] Committee on the Peace Initiative. More than 60 parliament members, the EU's reporter on Turkish affairs, Philippe Morillon, Felekna Felekna Uca, and Ozan Ceyhun all attended the conference.

Speaking at a press conference held prior to the convention, Louisa Morgantini, the chairman of the Committee on the Peace Initiative, said, "We consider it important to see representatives of the Kurdish people on this platform today. We believe and hope that this will have a positive effect on the development of the peace process and will contribute to it greatly."

Morgantini said, "This meeting will contribute to focusing even more attention on the Kurdish issue, which is already on the agenda. At a time when Turkey's EU candidacy is under consideration, we should definitely not ignore the Kurdish issue." Morgantini, who delivered the opening speech of the conference, said, "We saw an example of this in South Africa."

Riza Erdogan, one of the European spokesmen for the PKK [Workers Party of Kurdistan] who attended the conference, explained the Peace Initiative of the PKK as follows: "This includes the Kurdish issue within the periphery of Turkey, the recognition of the Kurdish people's rights as equal to the rights of the Turkish people on the constitutional level, the clarification of this in all the statutes, and the abolition of the death penalty." Erdogan also made it clear that "if the EU, Turkey, and the Kurds would collaborate, they could solve the Kurdish issue."

Mentioning Turkey's recent military operations in southern Kurdistan, the PKK spokesman said, "These operations are completely fruitless. They were launched against our forces, which did not present any danger, since they were retreating after we put a complete end to the war. About 80 people, including eight of our guerillas, were killed. We are undergoing a strategic change. This was officially confirmed in our 7th Congress. According to this strategy, we gave up waging an armed struggle; our main struggle will be in the form of a political struggle. If they recognize these possibilities, our future struggle will follow this line. The recent developments that have occurred in Turkey and the presidential election arose out of the PKK's Peace Project. We are hopeful for the future, but Turkey, the Turkish people, the Kurds, and Europe in particular are facing great responsibilities. The EP has called for this several times in the past. The PKK is ready to reply to these calls even more than before."

The former Diyarbakir mayor, Mehdi Zana, who could not attend the conference due to illness, sent a letter. In a statement he made to our newspaper by telephone yesterday, Mehdi Zana said that he was very sorry that he had not been able to attend the conference due to his illness.

Mehdi and Leyla Zana's son, Rona Zana, who attended the conference, noted in his speech, "The EP has called on Turkey many times, has reached a decision, and has made visits. But it would be incorrect to say that this has been effective in any practical sense." In the speech he delivered at the conference, Mehmet Ali Dogan, the secretary of the Akdeniz Human Rights Center, noted, "As an association, we believe that the changes and improvements that are said to have occurred in Turkey are superficial. The form and not the content has changed, as can be proved by the following examples: The closure of the Diyarbakir branch of the IHD [Human Rights Organization] without providing any reasons, and bringing the Ozgur Bakis newspaper to such a position that it can no longer continue its publication."

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Iraq Calls For Full Diplomatic Ties With France

Agence France Presse 19 May 00

[FBIS Translated Text] Paris, 19 May (AFP): The speaker of the Iraqi parliament, Sa'dun Hammadi, proposed on Friday the re-establishment of "full and complete" diplomatic relations between his country and France "at the ambassadorial level."

"It is necessary to strengthen our bilateral relations by setting up full and complete diplomatic representation," he said, adding that it would be "useful" to raise the rank of the heads of the interests sections of both countries "to the ambassadorial level."

"A step in this direction would help in a practical way to erode the sanctions against Iraq," Hammadi said during a lecture at the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI).

Early in 1991, Iraq broke off diplomatic relations with France and the other countries in the alliance that fought against it after the invasion of Kuwait. But for the last five years, the two countries have retained an interests section in each other's capital.

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Sanandaj Branch of Azad University Launches Kurdish Course

IRNA May 20, 2000

Sanandaj, Kurdistan Prov., IRNA -- The Sanandaj branch of Islamic Azad (Open) University has officially launched a course on Kurdish language and literature. Bahram Valad-Beigi, an official of the Islamic Azad University, said here on Saturday that 300 students constitute the first batch of students to take up the course. According to the same official, Iranian Kurds living in this western region of the country have welcomed the new initiative.

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Turkey's Village Guards Await a Peace Dividend

By Stephen Kinzer
New York Times Service

MADEN, Turkey — Sipping tea in the sun and looking down from their clay bunker at a placid field full of wildflowers, Irfan Ozay and his cousin Remzi should be happy. With their help and that of 95,000 other village guards, the Turkish Army has finally won its war against Kurdish rebels.

But like many other village guards, the Ozay cousins are worried and becoming angry. They fear they will soon be demobilized and find themselves without jobs or prospects. What to do with these village guards is one of the most urgent questions that confront Turkey now that peace has broken out.

The Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan was captured last year and remains in a Turkish prison under sentence of death. At his trial he said he now favored peaceful change and asked his guerrillas to stop fighting. Nearly all have done so.

The guards, who served as the first line

of defense against the guerrillas, have spent years carrying rifles. Many have become accustomed to rough lives. Some have been convicted of using their quasi-military authority to commit crimes.

"The village guards around here will be peaceful, but I can think of other places where they might start trouble or form gangs," Irfan Ozay mused from his hilltop perch near Maden, which overlooks a strategic highway 1,225 kilometers (765 miles) east of Istanbul. "The state needs to come up with a solution for us. Otherwise a lot of people will be upset, and that's dangerous for everybody."

Although Mr. Ozay is a veteran of eight years as a village guard, he is just 26 years old and still has a few sheep from which he might build up a herd.

His cousin, though, is 40 and has nowhere to start. "I realize they don't need us any more," Remzi Ozay said, "but I don't have any business or land to go back to. What do they expect me to do?"

Families in this part of Turkey are

large, and by one estimate a total of 1 million people here rely on salaries paid to the 95,000 village guards. The base salary is the equivalent of just \$115 a month, but in a region where war has brought almost all productive activity to a halt, that is a valuable sum.

One senior member of Parliament, Salih Yildirim, has proposed that village guards over the age of 55 be allowed to retire with benefits. Younger ones, he said, should either be offered jobs as security guards or helped to find work as farmers or herders.

"The problem involves a great number of people," Mr. Yildirim said. "We must integrate these people into the region's economy."

But unfortunately, no real economy exists in eastern Turkey. Before the war, most people here herded livestock on remote mountains, but for years the army has forbidden them to enter the highlands. Many live as impoverished refugees in swollen cities. All of this strikes hard at men such as the two cousins who have spent years standing watch outside their lonesome bunker here.

"We were hired to help the state destroy an enemy and win a war," Remzi Ozay said. "We succeeded. So why are we being thrown away like this?"

Iran's Lottery: Not Gambling, Just Helping the Poor

By Howard Schneider
Washington Post Service

TEHRAN — The piles of money, tumbling lottery numbers and breathless announcements that greet Iranian television viewers before the nightly 9 o'clock news might seem untoward for this Muslim society, governed as it is by the rules of a religion that largely forbids gambling.

But in this Islamic version of the lottery game, the emphasis is on charity, not risk; on benevolence, not greed. Players buy tickets to help flood victims. They buy tickets to help orphans and the poor. Sometimes they utter a religious phrase — "to be closer to God" — as they buy their tickets.

Players can win mountains of the local currency — 50 million rials (\$28,500) was the top prize in the drawing last month, for which a ticket cost about 25 cents. But the cash, sponsors say, is at best a secondary motivation here in the Islamic republic.

"Our main intention is to help poor people, so the clergy allowed it," said Golamreza Ansari, president of the Welfare Organization of Iran, which uses profit from the lottery to fund counseling centers and provide grants to nongovernmental organizations working on social welfare issues.

In the two years since the drawings began, Mr. Ansari said, his agency has cleared about \$2.5 million and hopes to do better through improved marketing.

"People really want to help others," he said. "They are not gambling. It is not some sort of match or race. There is no win or lose."

In the West, the image of Iran after the 1979 Islamic revolution might seem strict and unyielding, and in the early days of Islamic government here, the reality matched the perception. But in recent years, the country has begun to demonstrate a capacity for innovation within the confines of its religious structure, showing results on issues ranging from local development to population control.

Immediately after the revolution, for example, religious authorities encouraged citizens to have large families as Iran fought an eight-year war with Iraq. But when officials realized their original pronouncements had worked too well, they brought the country's soaring birthrate under control by instituting aggressive family planning programs, offering free vasectomies and opening a condom factory. Literacy and education rates are rising, and women account for more than half of the people taking the yearly university entrance exam.

Drug addiction and AIDS are discussed with relative candor. And, whereas girls who get pregnant or fall out with their families in some of its Islamic neighbor countries may face ostracism or physical harm at the hands of male relatives, Iran has set up a mediation program that has proved effective in reconciling girls with their parents or helping them build independent lives, Mr. Ansari said.

In addition to innovative approaches to some social problems, the country is displaying independent ideas on some economic problems. Though oil-rich, Iran is pursuing other means of power generation, from hydroelectric dams to wind turbines.

With a government particularly sensitive about its independence and identity after deposing Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, who was backed by the United States, the country continues to manufacture its own brand of car, the Peykan, and to produce its own cola drinks — Noushab, Parsi and Zamzam. In one rural province, there is even a plan afoot to offer camel insurance.

These and other programs, Iranians say, point up a central misunderstanding of their country in the West — one that the country's supreme leader, Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei, addressed last week in a speech to students of the Koran.

Iran wants to match the technological progress and material comforts of Western countries, he said, but the authorities are concerned about how to do that while maintaining the country's autonomy and avoiding what he called the "spiritual and ethical problems of the Western communities."

Diplomatic officials note, for example, that Iran still imports billions of dollars a year in wheat and other staple foods, even though it could probably be self-sufficient in food if it

were to allow a dose of foreign investment, technology and management. Concerns about foreign influence over the economy and culture have blocked the legal and constitutional modifications needed to bring in such assistance.

But increasingly, some here say, even once off-limits subjects are being opened to debate and analysis — and to solutions as unforeseen as an Islamic lottery.

Too Fast in Turkey

Turkey, site of numerous ancient Greek and Roman cities, can boast of antiquities that are among the finest and most abundant in the world. But now Turkey is mocking its rich cultural inheritance by heedlessly flooding what may be one of the world's richest collections of Roman mosaics before the world has a chance to see them.

In the last few months, archaeologists have been urgently excavating the ruins of an ancient city that flourished in southern Turkey 2,000 years ago, against the day only weeks from now when it will be inundated by the rising waters created by a dam project. The ancient city, Zeugma, was a base for the Roman Legion at the eastern edge of the Roman Empire.

It was a thriving center for the Silk Road trade on the banks of the Euphrates River, comparable in size and wealth to Pompeii. Rich traders decorated the floors of their villas with exquisite mosaics depicting scenes of Greek mythology.

The city is believed to have suc-

cumbed to invasion, fire and an earthquake in the third century, and has been covered by layers of dirt and rubble ever since. Archaeologists began concentrated excavation this past winter, after belatedly discovering that it was an important site that was soon to disappear under water.

The dam that threatens the site is part of an ambitious multibillion-dollar economic development plan. Most of its gates were closed only at the end of last month to begin creating a large artificial lake to be used for power generation. No one disputes Turkey's need for electricity, but surely a way can be found to postpone the destruction of an invaluable archaeological find. Archaeologists working at the site have said that in four months they can collect and preserve mosaics comparable to the region's finest, while in two years they could surpass even the world's greatest collection, in Tunis. These are not onerous delays for a long-term energy project.

In recent years, Turkey has objected

to the plundering of its antiquities by thieves and foreigners, launching an aggressive campaign to repatriate artifacts that it says were taken out of the country illegally. In 1993, New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art agreed to return the so-called Lydian Hoard, a cache of some 200 treasures dating to the sixth century B.C. that had been removed from Turkey in the early 1960s.

Countries like Turkey have a legitimate interest in seeking to reclaim their cultural patrimony, but they also have an obligation to protect that patrimony. In this case Turkey is betraying its own history by allowing a site of priceless value to be destroyed. Cultural institutions around the world may doubt Turkey's claim to value its cultural inheritance if it sacrifices so rich a treasure.

It is not too late for Turkey to work with archaeologists to find a realistic timetable that will save these treasures from extinction.

— THE NEW YORK TIMES.

KDP Statement on Meeting

Brayati (Arbil) 18 May 00

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Between 15 and 17 May, the central committee of the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] held its periodical and ordinary meeting in the presence of KDP leader Mas'ud Barzani and all the central committee members and acting members, at the headquarters of the political bureau in Salah al-Din. Following is the text of the final statement issued at the end of the meeting:

[Passage omitted: date and place of the meeting and its opening ceremony by KDP deputy leader Ali Abdullah and recitation of Koranic verse]

After a welcoming speech, the leader Barzani explained the political situation in Kurdistan, the reality of our democratic experience, the role of our party -- the KDP -- and our historical responsibilities and duties. He stressed the necessity of concentrating all our energy and force for the sake of the consolidation of this political experience and its development, in a way that will serve the course of construction and development of the spirit of brotherhood, love, and tolerance, and to continue working with resoluteness under the light of the program, decisions, and recommendations of the KDP 12th party conference. In this respect he particularly focused on the importance of the respect of legitimacy, the role of the institutions of the Iraqi Kurdistan regional parliament and government, the sovereignty of law, commitment to the principals of human rights, giving impetus to the social reforms in a way that would embody justice and equality, and respect of the role of women and their rights in a way that moves with the reality of our society in Kurdistan.

Later on he talked about the peace process, the regular meetings of the higher peace coordination committee [between the KDP and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, PUK], the steps towards normalization of the political situation on the basis of the Washington peace agreement, and the role of Kurdistan and Iraqi political forces and national organizations and personalities [played in this respect]. He also pointed to the regional and international situations and the new political changes and the relations of the KDP at these two levels. He emphasised KDP central policy regarding the claim of federalism within a united, demo-

cratic, and pluralistic Iraq.

Afterwards, the participants debated the reports of the party branches and centres, which were presented to the meeting. Later on, opinions were exchanged on different submitted subjects.

Despite the internal situation and its difficulties, the participants expressed their full satisfaction regarding the continual progress in different aspects of the KDP inner situation, the development of democracy, the steps made towards institutionalisation, the continual expansion of KDP bases, the impetus given to the activities and roles of [KDP] mass organizations and professional syndicates. They also expressed their satisfaction towards the conditions of organization, training, and development of the Kurdistan army.

The central committee assessed the way the parliament functions and stressed the necessity to apply its laws and decrees as the source of legitimacy. The central committee meeting has also assessed the achievements of the fourth cabinet of the Kurdistan regional government, its continual attempt for the sake of consolidation of security and tranquillity and expansion of reconstruction, its service offering and attempts to ensure a better life for the various social classes of Kurdistan society, particularly for people with lower revenue, and its following up of the implementation of UN Resolution 986, which in all respects has particular importance in improving the situation of the country and its citizens. The meeting debated at great length the peace process, the implementation of the Washington agreement, and works and decisions taken by the higher coordination committee. While the meeting stressed the unchanged stance and principles of leader Barzani and the KDP leadership regarding the importance of internal peace and the settlement of the differences through dialogue and polling ballots, we renewed the KDP's commitment to the terms and spirit of the Washington agreement and its implementation. The participants have acknowledged this policy of the KDP, and what has so far been achieved in this domain. They have also positively assessed the role and efforts of the higher coordination committee, the Iraqi and Kurdistan political forces, patriotic organizations and personalities, and the friends of our people.

The meeting considered that peace can be achieved on the basis of the full implementation of the terms of the Washington agreement progressively, for the sake of holding the second election of the Iraqi Kurdistan national assembly, which is one of the most urgent duties and necessities at this stage, and which is at the top of our party's priorities. The achievement of peace, normalization of the political situation, and the organization of new general elections are all set out in the Washington agreement, which is the best instrument to obstructing the danger that threatens our people and the achievements carried out, so far, for the interests of our cause and its future. The meeting has also stressed that the achievement of peace and normalization of the situation cannot be achieved unilaterally, but this task requires common responsibility.

The meeting has also debated the conditions, suffering, and requirements of the people who have been displaced as a result of the internal fighting. While the participants have highly assessed the principal stance of the central committee, they recommended that it is necessary to take steps towards easing their suffering and improving their lives and living conditions in a way that would convene the level of the struggle and sacrifices that they have made.

The meeting saluted the return of the Iraqi Kurdish refugees to the homeland from Iran after long years of exile.

The meeting has highly assessed our party's stance at regional and international levels, which is based on the respect of others common interests and non-interference in internal affairs, which contribute to impose and consolidate security and tranquillity in the region. The participants expressed their satisfaction regarding the level of our party relations in these two respects and their continual development. The participants emphasised the continuation of this policy by the KDP.

The participants studied the reports that were presented by our party centres and branches with a great deal of attention. [words indistinct] Later, in a speech, leader Barzani expressed his gratitude to the participants and his satisfaction regarding the subjects and axis that have been discussed and the climate of the meeting.

[Passage omitted: Barzani's recommendations on commitment to the KDP tradition, principals, and internal rules]

At the end Mas'ud Barzani wished success and [word indistinct] for all.

Kurdistan Democratic Party Central Committee 17 May 2000

Turkish Major General Isik denounces JDW over Karayilan interview

Ankara - Turkish Daily News April 18, 2000

Major General Atilla Isik, Secretary-General of the Turkish General Staff, blamed the U.K.-based Jane's Defence Weekly (JDW or Jane's) for running biased and baseless information when it carried an interview with a member of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) terrorist organization. A letter of Isik to that effect along with a reply by JDW was published in the latest issue of JDW dated April 16-19. Isik's letter was in response to an interview in the April 5 issue presenting PKK member Murat Karayilan as the "Chief of Staff" of the PKK to JDW's readers.

JDW in its reply to Isik's letter said that Jane's has never endorsed the views, goals or methods of the PKK or, for that matter, those of the Turkish government. "Jane's has never made accusations concerning the conduct of Turkish forces during operations against the PKK and it is unfair to accuse the article's author of doing so or of supporting terrorism," the letter stated. The following is Major General Isik's letter which prompted the JDW reply:

"It appears that the writer (who made the interview) has no idea about Turkey, the Turkish legal system, the PKK terror organization or terrorism. The writer has given biased and baseless information to your readers. We believe that your magazine is one of the leading press organizations in the world and has a lot of Turkish subscribers. Despite this, your introduction of a cruel PKK member as a 'Chief of Staff' and 'the most senior PKK commander' does not comply with press and publication ethics and shows clearly that you have given false information to your readers. The PKK is accepted as a terrorist organization by the USA and many other countries.

The Turkish armed forces [TSK] respect the principle of complying with legal rules and human rights principles in all its activities in Turkey where priority of law is accepted as a main principle. As it is known very well by local and foreign experts dealing with this issue, struggling with terrorism is very difficult. The Turkish armed forces have managed the difficulties in distinguishing the terrorists and blameless people from each other during the struggle with the PKK (which murders teachers, children and other innocent people). The Turkish armed forces have always shown the legendary compassion of Turkish people and soldiers to the surrendering terrorist groups. As in all democratic countries, surrendering and arrested terrorists are sent to independent courts and if found guilty according to laws, they are convicted. Just as the head of the PKK has been judged by Turkish independent courts and sentenced to death.

It is not ethical that you are introducing the Turkish armed forces as an organization that disobeys legal rules and human rights and you are portraying the PKK as an organized army with your false information. It is not possible to understand why your correspondent, who lacks the knowledge to distinguish the contradiction in Karayilan's statements about the alleged ceasefire and the peace, supports the terrorism which is the utmost problem of the 21st century. Your false article unfairly accuses the Turkish armed forces -- forces that provide security and peace to the people and protect the unity of the country. "

JDW, meanwhile, made the following points: "JDW's policy has been, and continues to be, to cover international defence and security issues from all viewpoints, without fear or favour, to any government or international organisation. JDW carries out its function by providing open-source intelligence on all forces on the international scene -- good and bad -- and this sometimes means speaking with 'guerrillas' and 'terrorists.' We believe that the JDW interview with Murat Karayilan was conducted to journalistic standards. Indeed, the JDW interview format does not merely quote the interviewee but allows the reporter to inject analysis throughout.

JDW agrees that there is a contradiction in Karayilan's statements about a ceasefire and about resuming the conflict -- which is why the interview was published. It provides a useful insight into the current thinking of the PKK leadership and adds to the information available about that organisation. It is our view that the intelligence gleaned from the interview is of great interest to the readership of JDW, including our Turkish readers, and that the careful editing of our interviews minimises any possible propaganda value to the PKK."

KDP Reiterates Pledge To Normalize Ties with PUK

Al-Sharq al-Awsat 19 May 00

[FBIS Translated Text] London, Al-Sharq al-Awsat -- Mas'ud Barzani's (Iraqi) Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] has said that its central committee held a series of meetings last Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday at its political bureau's headquarters in Salah-al-Din, and reiterated its pledge to normalize relations with Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

In a statement of which Al-Sharq al-Awsat received a copy yesterday, the KDP said that, during the opening meeting, Barzani reviewed the political situation in Iraqi Kurdistan, and stressed the "importance of respecting the legitimacy and role of the institutions in the parliament and government of the province of Iraq Kurdistan and the sovereignty of law and order, as well as the need to abide by the principles of human rights and to carry out social reforms."

The statement added that Barzani "reaffirmed our party's central policy with regard to a federation within a democratic, pluralistic, and united Iraq." The statement added: "The meeting decided that the peace and the consolidation of its foundations on the basis of the full implementation of the Washington agreement signed with Talabani in 1998 in the US capital with regard to resolving peacefully the disagreements between the two main Kurdish parties, holding new legislative elections in the province before holding elections for the second session of the National Assembly of Iraqi Kurdistan (the local parliament), are part of the urgent tasks which are needed at this stage, and which are among our party's priorities, given that establishing the peace, normalizing the situation, and holding the next elections within the context of the Washington framework is the best way to protect our people against the threats facing them."

* * * * *

PUK's Saib: PUK creates buffer zones against PKK; KDP Threatens

May 20, 2000 Selcuk Gultasli
Ankara - Turkish Daily News

The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) has been creating buffer zones against the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in northern Iraq in a bid to stop PKK terrorists infiltrating Turkey.

PUK authorities told the Turkish Daily News that since late April the PUK has started building buffer zones to prevent PKK terrorists from using PUK-controlled areas as a base for attacks on Turkey and other neighboring countries. Emphasizing that the buffer zones were necessary for security in northern Iraq, PUK officials said Ankara was satisfied with the recent attitude of PUK as it has been further distancing itself from PKK.

The PUK's representative in Ankara, Shzad Saib, told the TDN that they had always promised the Turkish side that they would not let anyone use their land to stage terrorist attacks against Turkey or any other neighbor. "We need stability in northern Iraq and we cannot let the PKK spoil this atmosphere of stability and security. Because we do not believe in terror activities doing any good, we have started to create buffer zones to block the PKK. Ankara is satisfied with the PUK's position towards PKK. This will help to build better relations," said Saib.

KDP threatens PUK

Saib has argued that the KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party) has started to threaten the PUK recently and this had the potential to damage the stability in the region. Saib said Sami Abdurrahman, the deputy prime minister of the KDP in northern Iraq (a title used by the KDP but which disturbs Turkey) had publicly declared that the PUK was against peace in the region. Saib said official KDP newspapers have written articles calling for military solutions to resolve disputes with the PUK.

* * * * *

IRAN

La fermeture des journaux n'a pas empêché la victoire des réformateurs

Le tout nouveau quotidien réformateur de Téhéran répond aux calomnies des conservateurs sur le rôle de la presse dans la vie politique iranienne.

Les résultats du second tour des élections parlementaires (du 5 mai) ont confirmé le raz de marée des candidats réformateurs, qui ont recueilli 70 % des voix. Seuls vingt députés du camp conservateur ont pu retrouver leur siège au sein du Majlis (Parlement). Au vu de ces résultats, il est clair que les conservateurs rencontrent de sérieux problèmes pour mobiliser leur électorat. Certes, on ne peut pas analyser les résultats de ces élections sans mettre en avant le rôle de la presse libre. D'ailleurs, une partie des conservateurs accuse cette presse d'être à l'origine de leur échec électoral depuis plus de quatre ans. Ils prétendent que la presse libre, grâce aux méthodes journalistiques les plus modernes, a su manipuler la population. Au cours des derniers jours précédant le second tour des

élections, seize journaux soutenant les réformes ont été fermés. Au même moment, les organes de presse et les médias nationaux conservateurs se sont investis dans une attaque massive contre les fondements et les personnalités du courant réformateur. La tendance antiréformatrice espérait, grâce à cette tactique bruyante et à des accusations sans fondements, réduire au silence une presse qu'elle considérait comme l'avant-garde du mouvement réformateur. Mais la nouvelle composition du Majlis montre bien aujourd'hui l'échec cuisant des opposants aux réformes. Ne s'agit-il pas d'une erreur de jugement grave, d'une incapacité de comprendre la volonté des électeurs ?

Même les plus sceptiques ne peuvent que constater que ce n'est pas la presse libre qui fait naître le processus des réformes : elle en est plutôt la conséquence, puisque les réformes sont désormais enracinées dans l'ensemble de la société. Cette vérité doit être prise en considération dans les stratégies des réformateurs tout autant que

par leurs opposants.

Les réformateurs devront également comprendre que le mouvement populaire des réformes est entré dans une phase nouvelle : son existence n'est plus nécessairement liée à celle de la presse. Il faudrait réviser les théories qui liaient la survie des réformes à la liberté ou à l'interdiction de la presse libre. Les conservateurs ont eu suffisamment de temps pour méditer sur l'absence de relation entre l'interdiction de la presse libre et l'expression de la volonté populaire. Ceux parmi eux qui pensent à l'avenir devront bien peser le danger d'un débordement social incontrôlable et destructeur en l'absence d'une presse libre. Car cette presse, responsable et consciente des intérêts nationaux, ainsi que des rouages de la vie politique, permet de canaliser la volonté populaire et empêche les débordements. Nous espérons que les opposants aux réformes corrigeront leur lecture des réalités en cours. A eux de relever ce défi.

Vahed Moddaber, Bahar, Téhéran

Reform on March / 'Freedoms Are Found in Islam'

In Iran, Even the Clerics Back Liberalization These Days

By Howard Schneider
Washington Post Service

KHALKHAL. Iran — The riot started one evening last month, just after the nightly news. Residents of this remote northwestern village had learned that the reformist candidate they thought they had chosen in the parliamentary elections in February had been disqualified. Instead, conservative authorities in Tehran had awarded the seat to a local cleric who has held the office for 16 years — an establishment figure, in the voters' eyes, if ever there was one.

Hundreds gathered in the town center. Many stood in quiet protest at the nullification of their vote, but others began smashing the windows of government buildings and banks. Cars belonging to the local administration were wrecked. Homes of some local officials were set on fire. Even the local seminary was torched, a potent symbol of the faltering hold that conservative Islamic authority has on this country's imagination.

From its urban seat in Tehran, the reform movement led by President Mohammed Khatami seems fueled by the young, bulging population of Iranians in their late teens and 20s who are politically engaged and who are using the country's 16-year-old voting age to push for a freer lifestyle in this strict but changing Islamic republic. Yet it is apparent from the people of Khalkhal, a town of about 30,000 in the

mountainous region west of the Caspian Sea, that the movement runs far beyond the capital and deep into middle age and the middle class as well.

In a dozen interviews, students, middle-aged workers and business owners shared similar frustrations about Iran's system and similar desires for a society that would allow them to speak more freely and have more say over their lives. Living in a rural region — a place where goatherds tend flocks in the countryside and laborers congregate in the town — their feelings demonstrate what reform supporters and diplomatic analysts in Tehran have concluded: Short of a determined crackdown by ultra-conservatives, the ultimate success of Mr. Khatami's drive to liberalize Iran and introduce the rule of law may be less of an issue than its speed and sweep.

Despite what appears on the surface to be a seesaw battle in which momentum swings between Mr. Khatami's supporters and their hard-line rivals, key institutions are gradually being brought under more open and rationalized management. Abuses by hard-line security agents and others are being more vigorously policed, and political victories such as the recent reformist takeover of Parliament appear to be taking place without crippling interference.

Although the election in Khalkhal was one of a dozen in which Islamic authorities rejected apparent reformist victories, Parliament is apparently on track to convene this month with a solid reformist

majority intact, giving Mr. Khatami the legislative support he has been denied since he was elected on a reform platform in 1997.

Here in Khalkhal, it is easy to understand the reformist sweep. It is not only supported by college students; army veterans who battled Iraq in the 1980s are behind it, too. Heads of households want a local movie theater as much as teenagers do, and they were just as offended, they say, when the Friday prayer leader persisted in denying it. Business owners are as upset about the economy as unemployed youths are, frustrated over a system that creates ward heelers out of theologians and seems to place politics above merit in the distribution of jobs and state loans.

"The freedoms that we want are freedoms found in Islam," said a member of a group of men in their 30s and 40s who gathered to discuss the election. "Here, we don't even have that."

He added, "If I say something, they are immediately going to tell me I'm against" the system of Islamic government.

"Eighty percent of the people here are the supporters of Khatami," said the man, who like others in the group did not want his name used because of the heavy police presence here after the riot. "People like his policies."

The trends set in motion by Mr. Khatami show up in ways both obvious and subtle:

- A court has ruled that possession of "illicit" — i.e., Western — movies, music and even pornography is not illegal, a decision that should help keep people's homes off-limits to security officials.

- Administrative changes have stripped the Intelligence Ministry of its independent funding sources and encouraged early retirement by its old guard.

- The head of a major government foundation has been replaced by a man who has ordered more relaxed social rules for the popular Caspian Sea vacation resorts it owns.

"Socially, politically, things are good," said Hamidreza Jalaie-Pour, editor of a number of reformist dailies that have been ordered closed over the years. His latest publication, *Asr-e Azadegan*, was among 16 closed recently under court in-

structions, and he faces charges for attending a conference in Germany that conservative authorities felt insulted the Islamic system. Such setbacks, however, are not impeding the underlying trend toward more political and social freedom, more open and accountable institutions and stronger civil government, Mr. Jalaie-Pour said.

President Mohammed Khatami, whose drive to liberalize Iran is visible in ways both obvious and subtle.

His opinion, although widely echoed in Iran, is qualified by the fact that conservatives still control important economic and political power centers, such as the Revolutionary Guards and the state radio and television system. Short of a potentially convulsive action, such as removing the president or blocking the inauguration of the new Parliament, however, the conservative wing "has no lawful or legitimate way" to reverse Iran's new direction, he said.

THAT OUTLOOK is rendered all the more credible by the fact that change is taking place with the support of a large body of pro-reform clerics who believe in a more flexible interpretation of Islam and feel that Iran's Islamic system must change to survive. That is a view most visibly embodied by Mr. Khatami himself, who carries the midlevel clerical rank of *hojatolislam*. But reformers and many diplomats here feel it is a view also shared by the country's supreme religious leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Ayatollah Khamenei inherited the supreme leadership after the death of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, but not the full personal sway of that towering figure, who carried the rarely bestowed title of grand ayatollah and helped overthrow Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi. Although his rhetoric is often harsh and seemingly old guard, diplomats and reform advocates here say that behind the scenes Ayatollah Khamenei is helping the reform trend in significant ways, supporting the president at key junctures and trying to prevent a harsh backlash.

LE MONDE / SAMEDI 20 MAI 2000

■ PROCHE-ORIENT

■ **IRAK-FRANCE** : Bagdad rejette « dans sa forme actuelle » la résolution 1284 du Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies, a déclaré, jeudi 18 mai, le président du Parlement irakien, Saadoun Hamadi, qui était en visite à Paris. « Cette résolution contient des points très négatifs, et n'est pas applicable dans sa forme actuelle », a-t-il dit. Qualifiant de « floue » cette résolution, M. Hamadi a notamment déploré en particulier le fait qu'elle ne mentionne pas explicitement la perspective d'« une levée de l'embargo » contre l'Irak, ne reconnaît pas les progrès accomplis par Bagdad et perpétue l'inspection de l'armement irakien.

■ **IRAN** : le Conseil de surveillance de la Constitution a annoncé jeudi 18 mai que les résultats de l'élection législative à Téhéran seraient rendus publics d'ici samedi à la suite d'« une demande expresse dans ce sens » du Guide de la République islamique, l'ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Dans une réponse à une lettre du Conseil l'informant qu'il n'était pas en mesure de valider les résultats, en raison « de multiples cas d'irrégularités », l'ayatollah Khamenei l'avait en effet sommé de « proclamer définitivement les résultats de Téhéran compte tenu de l'état actuel des choses ». Le Guide a également demandé « à la justice de poursuivre les auteurs des irrégularités électorales ». — (AFP)

Le nouveau président turc promet de renforcer « l'Etat de droit et la démocratie »

Le magistrat Ahmet Necdet Sezer succède à Süleyman Demirel

Favorablement accueillie par les observateurs européens et l'opinion publique turque, l'investiture, mardi 16 mai, pour sept ans, du magistrat

Ahmet Necdet Sezer à la présidence va-t-elle permettre à la Turquie d'améliorer son bilan en matière de droits de l'homme et du respect des

minorités ? Ces conditions ont été émises par l'Union européenne comme préalable à l'ouverture de négociations d'adhésion.

APRÈS SEPT ANS passés à la tête de l'Etat turc, le président sortant Süleyman Demirel a transmis, mardi 16 mai, le pouvoir à son successeur, le magistrat Ahmet Necdet Sezer. L'arrivée au pouvoir du nouveau président, partisan déclaré d'une plus grande liberté d'expression, va-t-elle ouvrir une ère de réformes en Turquie ? Acceptée en décembre 1999 par le conseil européen de Helsinki au statut de pays candidat à l'intégration, mais stigmatisée par la Commission pour ses « graves lacunes » en matière « de droits de l'homme et de respect des minorités », la Turquie va-t-elle s'engager plus avant vers le laborieux processus d'intégration à l'Union européenne ?

Pour l'instant, aucun calendrier de négociations n'a encore été fixé. Dans un entretien accordé récemment à l'hebdomadaire allemand *Der Spiegel*, le commissaire européen à l'élargissement, Günter Verheugen, envisageait l'adhésion à l'UE de dix pays candidats (dont la Slovaquie et Malte) « d'ici à 2005-2006 », mais il est resté muet sur le cas de la Turquie. Le

premier ministre turc, Bülent Ecevit, s'est élevé contre le « retard pris dans le processus de "screening" » (vérification de la conformité de la législation avec les textes de l'UE) de son pays. Un débat est en cours en Turquie sur les amendements à apporter à la Constitution, qui prévoiraient, entre autres, l'abolition de la peine de mort, l'attribution de droits culturels aux Kurdes, le règlement du problème de Chypre et la diminution du pouvoir du Conseil national de sécurité (MGK, organe décisionnel composé de militaires et de civils).

DISPARITIONS

En réalité, malgré la bonne volonté affichée par l'actuel gouvernement, de graves manquements subsistent. Certes, depuis avril 1999, le juge militaire présent dans chaque cour de sûreté de l'Etat (DGM) a été remplacé par un civil, les inspections de commissariats sont plus fréquentes et les sanctions pénales pour tortures ont été alourdies. Mais rares sont les affaires portées devant les tribu-

naux. Un rapport du département d'Etat américain pour 1999 remarque que « plusieurs affaires vieilles de quelques années sont encore en appel » : le procès d'officiers de police soupçonnés d'avoir tué en 1996 le journaliste Metin Göktepe pendant sa garde à vue, les faits de tortures au commissariat de Manisa sur seize enfants en 1995, le décès de dix prisonniers, battus à mort lors d'émeutes à la prison de Diyarbakir en 1996.

« La rareté des inculpations, la légèreté des peines encourues et le climat d'impunité restent le plus gros obstacle à la prévention de la torture », dénonce ce rapport, tout en rappelant que « les exécutions extra-judiciaires, les décès violents pendant les interpellations ou les morts en détention se sont poursuivis » en 1999. Le nombre de personnes disparues après leur interpellation est plus élevé en 1999 (36) qu'en 1998 (29), selon la Fondation des droits de l'homme (HRF). Cette ONG locale, dont la principale raison d'être est la réhabilitation des victimes de la torture, voit son personnel soumis à

un véritable harcèlement des autorités, une série de procès devant s'ouvrir en juin. Pourtant une loi a été votée en 1999 qui prévoit une aggravation des sanctions pénales envers le personnel médical minimisant les mauvais traitements.

Le rapport américain dénonce aussi « les limites à la liberté d'expression ». Vingt-cinq journalistes emprisonnés pour leurs écrits ont bien été élargis à la faveur d'une loi votée en août 1999. Mais celle-ci ne fait que suspendre leurs peines et ils restent, pendant trois ans, sous la menace d'un réemprisonnement en cas de récidive. L'article 8 de la loi antiterroriste (propagande séparatiste), toilé en 1995, n'a toujours pas été aboli. Le parti islamiste Fazilet (Parti de la vertu) et le Parti démocratique du peuple (Hadeş, pro-kurde) sont sous le coup d'une procédure d'interdiction. Enfin, l'état d'urgence subsiste dans cinq provinces du Sud-Est, majoritairement peuplé de Kurdes (Diyarbakir, Hakkari, Sinak, Tunceli, Van).

M. Jé.

Daniel Cohn-Bendit, président de la délégation du Parlement européen à la commission UE / Turquie « Le problème de la Turquie est de passer à une nouvelle génération politique »

« Comment accueillez-vous l'élection du nouveau président turc, Ahmet Necdet Sezer ?

— Le principal problème de la Turquie est celui du passage à une nouvelle génération politique. A l'heure actuelle, tout est bloqué. Bülent Ecevit [le premier ministre turc] et d'autres, ont fait à la Turquie le cadeau de la candidature à l'adhésion mais, encore une fois, il faut une nouvelle génération. Ça n'est pas simple. Le pays se trouve dans une « période tampon ». L'échec de l'opération Demirel [lorsque les députés ont refusé de prolonger le mandat du président sortant] montre qu'il n'est pas possible de continuer avec la vieille génération. L'élection d'Ahmet Sezer est comme un parapluie qui pourra permettre à autre chose de se développer.

— Il s'agit donc d'un changement décidé en haut lieu ?



DANIEL COHN-BENDIT

— Il s'agit d'un compromis intelligent. Le nouveau président a donné des signes de sa volonté de réformes et d'ouverture et en même temps, en tant qu'ex-président de la Cour constitutionnelle, il offre de solides garanties aux militaires. Il a tout de même dit que l'actuelle Constitution était illégitime car issue du coup d'Etat militaire de septembre

1980 [elle fut rédigée en 1982 par les auteurs du coup], il est allé loin dans la critique mais que va-t-il en faire maintenant qu'il est président ? Va-t-il procéder à des réformes ou non ? On n'en sait rien.

— L'avantage c'est d'être arrivé à un compromis. Le risque c'est qu'il fasse du sur-place. Quant aux militaires, je ne pense pas qu'ils forment un bloc homogène. La science militaire turque, c'est un peu comme la kramlinologie d'autrefois ou comme la science des militaires algériens. Qui décide quoi ? Dans ce type d'Etat opaque, c'est difficile à dire.

— Qu'en est-il du chantier des droits de l'homme en Turquie ? Aucune date n'a encore été fixée pour les négociations d'adhésion, cela signifie-t-il que les efforts sont insuffisants ?

— La Turquie est dans un va-et-vient permanent : un pas en

avant, un pas de côté. La société est divisée : les modernistes poussent, les traditionalistes freinent. Mais qui est pour les réformes et qui pour la tradition ? Ça dépend des sujets. L'actuel premier ministre, Bülent Ecevit, est considéré comme un partisan des réformes, un humaniste mais il est extrêmement rigide sur la question kurde. Dans ce domaine, Mesut Yilmaz [chef du Parti de la Mère patrie, ANAP, centre droit] et İsmail Cem [ministre des affaires étrangères, membre du Parti démocratique de gauche, DSP, social-démocrate, de Bülent Ecevit] sont plus ouverts, c'est une autre génération.

— On dit que l'adhésion de la Turquie n'est pas pour demain. Quel est votre sentiment ?

— Je constate au Parlement européen que de nombreux députés sont contre l'adhésion de la Tur-

quie avant tout pour des raisons culturelles. D'autres prétendent que la Turquie n'est pas un Etat européen car une partie seulement de son territoire se situe en Europe. D'autres encore considèrent que si la Turquie est européenne, la Russie l'est tout autant. Je pense que nous avons raté le débat sur l'Europe et l'élargissement, juste après l'effondrement du Mur. Il y a aujourd'hui danger de voir surgir une Europe des nations. Le risque, c'est que les institutions communautaires deviennent des bureaux de liaison, avec des bureaucrates qui exécutent les décisions politiques du Conseil et

avec un Parlement devenu une Chambre où se réunissent de temps en temps des représentants nationaux. Si l'on refuse cela, il faut repartir sur un projet de Constitution et on se posera là, pour la première fois, le problème des frontières.

- L'Europe doit elle se faire sur des critères géographiques ? Sur des critères religieux ?

- Vraisemblablement ni sur l'un ni sur l'autre. Les critères fondamentaux se déclinent autrement. Comment intégrer la Turquie tout en maintenant le fonctionnement des institutions communautaires ? Comment ne pas faire une Europe des nations. Dans dix

ans, la Turquie comptera 80 millions d'habitants. Elle aura alors le plus grand nombre de députés européens, loin devant l'Allemagne ! C'est un argument répandu, non seulement chez les conservateurs, mais aussi chez les sociaux-démocrates allemands. Ceux-ci expliquent que la perspective d'adhésion de la Turquie à l'Union européenne fait basculer une partie de l'électorat social-démocrate dans le camp démocrate-chrétien.

- Qu'est-ce que la reconnaissance de la candidature turque a changé ?

- La candidature de la Turquie oblige ce pays et l'Europe à mon-

ter ensemble des structures communes pour voir dans quelle mesure la Turquie est compatible avec les institutions européennes. Cela permet de commencer à avoir un débat plus ouvert mais dont l'issue est inconnue. L'avenir de la Turquie, selon moi, c'est ou Barcelone ou Bagdad. Barcelone, c'est la fédéralisation de la Turquie qui fera du Sud-Est kurde une sorte de Catalogne à l'intérieur de la République turque ; Bagdad, c'est le centralisme intégriste kémaliste qui se maintient. »

*Propos recueillis par
Marie Jégo*

Bush Adviser Suggests 'Detaching' Parts of Iraq

By Jonathan Wright **MAY 19, 2000**

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - A policy adviser to U.S. presidential candidate George Bush suggested on Friday the United States use air power and other means to detach parts of Iraq from the control of President Saddam Hussein.

Just as the United States has helped the Kurds run an autonomous region in northern Iraq, it now should help opponents of Saddam set up an enclave in the south, said Robert Zoellick, an under secretary of state under Bush's father.

Zoellick, who was also President George Bush's deputy chief of staff, said President Clinton's policy toward Iraq had been "a debacle" which had allowed President Saddam to grow stronger and stronger. The alliance against Iraq was in tatters, no U.N. inspectors were monitoring Iraqi weapons programs and economic sanctions against Baghdad barely survived, he told a seminar organized by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

"At some point we know that Saddam will move first and at that point, as opposed to letting him get an additional step, I think for one step forward he has to get two steps back.

"That means that we essentially undermine his position within his own country, also with the Russians, the French and others, and that means slowly taking away pieces of his territory," Zoellick said.

"We have started that in the north, I believe we could do that in the south. I believe that in part this involves air power, in part it involves more," he added. Maximum Torque The United States already bans Iraqi aircraft from overflying southern Iraq, ostensibly to protect the mainly Shi'ite Muslim population there from government repression, but it has not tried hard to support southern rebels.

Leon Fuerth, national security adviser to Democratic presidential candidate Al Gore, said in response to Zoellick that his proposal overlooked the realities of the Gulf.

"The reality is that the members of our coalition are not prepared and have not been prepared to support the level of violence that is implied by your comments," said Fuerth, a member of President Clinton's Principals' Committee.

"To get what we've got from our friends and allies, we have applied maximum torque. When you get to the point where you sense that anything further will damage the position of the United States, then you take what you can get," he added.

But Zoellick said U.S. allies in the Gulf did not support U.S. proposals because they did not have confidence in U.S. leadership and expected Saddam to stay in power.

"People in the region are making plans of their own because they think Saddam Hussein will be around... They are cold-bloo-

ded, practical people," he added. The Bush adviser, echoing some congressional Republicans, also criticized the Clinton administration for its half-hearted support for the Iraqi opposition in exile.

Stiffed By Assad He said the administration had spent only \$5 million on the opposition, despite Congressional permission to give it goods and services worth more than \$97 million. But Fuerth, reflecting U.S. frustration with the Iraqi National Congress, said members were "far more prone to attack each other than to unite against their common enemy".

In one of the most bitterly partisan exchanges of a bitter debate, Zoellick and Fuerth clashed over the unsuccessful summit between Clinton and Syrian President Hafez al-Assad in Geneva in March. Clinton gave Assad Israeli proposals on a new border after withdrawal from the Golan Heights, but Assad rejected them.

Zoellick said: "I was deeply troubled to see President Clinton go to Geneva and get stiffed by Assad."

"There are times the United States gets stiffed, I understand that, but frankly that's one of the roles of the Secretary of State... There's a reason why Secretary (of State Madeleine) Albright isn't doing that job. She's been discounted in terms of power, trust and influence," he added.

Fuerth retorted: "What makes you think the president didn't know what was supposed to happen? What makes you think it wasn't Assad who for his own reasons got fickle at the last moment, past the point of no-return?"

* * * * *

Un site archéologique romain menacé par un barrage en Turquie

Des archéologues mènent une course contre la montre près d'un barrage dans le sud de la Turquie pour tenter de sauver des eaux de l'Euphrate un site archéologique romain contenant notamment une mosaïque antique dédiée au dieu Poséidon.

Le site qui recèle au total 14 mosaïques et des milliers d'objets a été découvert dans l'ancienne cité romaine de Zevgma. Il pourrait être submergé par le fleuve dans deux semaines si la Turquie ne retarde pas le remplissage du barrage voisin de Birecik. L'eau n'est déjà plus qu'à 27 mètres du site et monte de 50 centimètres par jour.

"Les mosaïques de Zevgma pourraient rivaliser avec celles des plus grands musées du monde", affirme Mehmet Onal, qui dirige les fouilles commencées en octobre, à 30 km au nord de la Syrie. Il demande que le remplissage du barrage soit reporté de quelques mois pour poursuivre ses recherches, qui ont déjà permis la découverte de 60.000 sceaux en céramique, de colonnes romaines élaborées, de fresques, d'une statue en bronze du dieu Mars et de 3.700 pièces en bronze et en argent.

"C'est juste une goutte d'eau dans l'océan", souligne l'archéologue Yusuf Yavas. "Nous avons seulement fouillé deux villas et ce que nous avons trouvé est époustouflant".

Mais le gouvernement turc ne semble pas disposé à retarder la mise en eau du barrage, qui s'inscrit dans un coûteux projet destiné à irriguer les terres, soulager la pénurie d'électricité et créer des emplois. Alors que l'ouvrage est achevé à 97%, retarder le remplissage serait difficile et coûterait 30 millions de dollars (219 millions de FF/33 millions d'euros) par mois, selon les autorités. "Je

ne pense pas que le pays peut se permettre le luxe d'un report", estime Yuksel Onaran, patron de Birecik A.S., la firme qui construit le barrage.

D'innombrables trésors devraient donc disparaître sous 15 mètres d'eau. "Un tiers de Zevgma sera submergé par l'Euphrate", souligne M. Onal.

Mais tout le monde n'est pas d'accord sur l'importance du site. "Il est peu probable que nous apprenions quoi que ce soit de nouveau ou que nous en sachions plus sur l'époque romaine", estime Toni Cross, de l'Institut de recherche américain en Turquie. Peu sensible au sort de la cité, il estime qu'il y a des sites plus importants".

Zevgma, "le lien" en grec ancien, fut jadis un avant-poste militaire dans la périphérie de l'Empire romain et, à son apogée, aurait été plus grand que la Londres romaine ou Pompéi. Les Grecs et les Romains de l'Antiquité ont régné sur la région pendant des siècles, et ont laissé dans presque tout l'Empire byzantin de nombreuses traces de leur présence. "Où que vous donniez un coup de pioche en Turquie, un trésor archéologique apparaît", affirme le ministre du tourisme Erkan Mumcu.

A Zevgma, l'ouvrier en restauration Mine Unsal couvre la mosaïque de Poséidon d'une toile adhésive, une première étape avant de l'extraire du sol pour la conserver dans un musée.

A 70 km de là, un autre barrage a déjà immergé la ville antique de Samosata, où de précieuses tablettes en bronze auraient ainsi été perdues. La construction d'un autre barrage sur le Tigre menace Hasankeyf, une cité médiévale.

SE Branches of Human Rights Organization Closed

Ozgur Politika 19 May 00 by Cemal Turan

[FBIS Translated Text]

Following the closure of the IHD [Human Rights Organization] Diyarbakir branch last week for a period of three weeks, the IHD Van branch was closed. The reason that was given by the OHAL [State of Emergency] mayor's office for the closure was, once again, that of "disturbing public order". The policemen who came to the organization's building at 1430 yesterday, notified branch leader Advocate Abdulvahap Ertan of the decision of the OHAL mayor's office to close the branch. After the policemen notified him and conducted a search of the organization's branch until 1630, they sealed the building.

Branch Leader: Illegal

Advocate Abdulvahap Ertan, the leader of the closed IHD Van branch, made a written statement and described the decision to close the branch as illegal.

Ertan assessed the decision to close the branch as unfortunate for Turkey, which is making efforts toward democratization, becoming a state of law, and joining the EU. He noted the following views in his statement: "Democratic nongovernmental mass organizations are a necessity in contemporary democracies. Despite this, Article 11 of the OHAL Constitution arranges for such organizations to be closed for a period of three months without any court decision. This decision does not accord with democratic norms."

Disapproval of the Van Democratic Platform

The Van Democratic Platform made a statement in reaction to the decision of closure. The statement noted, "For an administration that is an EU candidate, that has turned to the West, and has chosen Western norms as a way of life, to make use of practices that are against democracy is thought-provoking." It strongly condemned the closure of the IHD Van branch, which followed the closures of the IHD Diyarbakir branch and the Van YU Student Association.

Disapproval of the HADEP Van Organization

The HADEP [People's Democracy Party] Van organization made a written statement and disapproved the decision to close the IHD branches. The statement noted, "First the closure of the Diyarbakir IHD, and now the closure of the Van IHD -- these closures will prevent the development of democracy in Turkey. As members of the Van HADEP organization, we disapprove of these practices and hope that these wrong decisions will be rectified as soon as possible."

We Are Waiting for the Decision To Be Rectified

IHD Elazig branch leader Cafer Demir made a written statement and protested the decision to close the branches. Demir noted that such decisions do not agree with law, democracy, and a human rights culture and requested an immediate rectification of the decision.

The Decision Is Not in Accord With the Process

IHD Leader Ondul said: "Our Diyarbakir branch was closed last week and the Van branch, this week. These activities do not accord with the developing process.

"The current process is one in which human rights and democratic standards should be promoted. In this process, there are high expectations for these rights and standards. Therefore, there is a need to display administrative practices that are appropriate to this process, that are stable and legal. Instead of facilitating the efforts of the human rights organizations, they are doing just the opposite. We are waiting for the officials to withdraw their decisions."

President Sezer receives full support of politicians of Kurdish descent

Ankara - Turkish Daily News May 19, 2000

Based on his positive approach towards democracy, human rights and judicial state principles, politicians of Kurdish descent stated their willingness to provide full support for President Ahmet Necdet Sezer. Recalling one of Sezer's previous speeches, in which he spoke favorably about Kurds having education and broadcasting rights in their own language, the former chairman of the now-defunct Democracy Party (DEP), lawyer Feridun Yazar, former Mus deputy Sirri Sakik and the leader of the Liberal Kurdish Movement, Mehmet Emin Sever, said they were prepared to cooperate on establishing social peace in the event they receive encouragement from the president.

The following is the Kurdish politicians' evaluations of Sezer.

Sezer's election is a sign of the state's goodwill

Feridun Yazar: We regard Sezer's becoming president of Turkish Republic as the first constructive step towards peacefully resolving the problems in Turkey within the framework of democratization structured on principles based on the supremacy of law. Electing Sezer as president can be seen as a sign of goodwill by the state towards the democratization process in the country. The president's speeches have been extremely constructive and indicative of hope for the future. We wish him success in his endeavors and hereby inform him that we are prepared to provide him all the support he may need.

We can change the wind of war into the breeze of peace

Sirri Sakik: We find the statements by our new president very constructive. I believe that the winds of war that have blown in the country for many years can now be changed into a breeze of peace by these positive declarations. The sensitivity demonstrated by both President Sezer and Chief Justice of the Court of Cassation Sami Selcuk have raised our hopes of democracy for the future. A president who often emphasizes his unconditional adherence to democracy, human rights and the principles of judicial state is a great advantage both for us Kurds and for the entire country. I am sure that there will always be powers that will try to place obstacles in the way of progress. However, I firmly believe that people who wish to promote democracy must unconditionally offer their assistance and support to President Sezer. I also believe that people in all walks of life should do their utmost to uphold this constructive approach. What I would like to say here is that we are willing to do whatever is expected from us to establish social peace in the country.

This will expedite the process of Turkey's accession to the EU

Mehmet Emin Sever: We believe that Sezer's presidency is a very positive development. People who promote democracy in Turkey getting into positions such as president, prime minister, parliamentary speaker and chief justice at the Court of Cassation is extremely beneficial for the country. This will be instrumental in Turkey's accelerating the process for its accession to the European Union. Sezer's election to the presidency has given hope to those who want democracy to progress in Turkey.

His actions as president of this country will be closely observed. His attitude to defending the concept of the judicial state, rather than the police state, his positive approach towards democracy and human rights and his favorable attitude to freedom of education and broadcasting in Kurdish gives us great hope for the future.

As far as obtaining social peace in the country goes his attitude is regarded as a positive development. It will be much easier for Turkey to become a member of the EU by adhering to the framework of principles established by Sezer. Turkey is changing, and this is essential. Demirel made some good statements in his farewell speech, but it was a little too late. He should have said those words when he was in office. The statements made during his departure represent have no value. I firmly believe that President Sezer, who is a man of law, will stand behind his statements. I am very optimistic about the future, but of course optimism should be tempered with caution.

Ocalan: KDP Will Push Kurds Back 100 Years: Peace Conference must not be delayed

Ozgur Politika Translated Text (from Kurdistan Observer) May 20, 2000

PKK President Abdullah Ocalan said that the planned Peace Conference must be held as soon as possible and without any delay. Ocalan said, "This conference could bring out the basic principles of peace and democracy."

FRANKFURT

Attorneys Ahmet Avsar, Filiz Kostak, and Irfan Dundar and brother Mehmet Ocalan were at Imrali Island for their weekly visit with PKK President Abdullah Ocalan Wednesday. Attorney Avsar, from the Asrin Law Bureau, told us that they had discussed many topics with Ocalan, from the Peace Conference that has been called for to the capture of the murderers of Kislali and Mumcu. In evaluating the operation in the South, Ocalan drew attention to the dangerous stances of the KDP and PUK and said that the Peace Conference must be held without any delay.

"The KDP and PUK stances are dangerous"

PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan said that the operations in South Kurdistan could become maneuvers or similar exercises during the peace process, and drew attention to the troublesome positions of the KDP and PUK. Ocalan said that the aim of the operations could be to restrict and warn, and gave the following reasons for this view: "There are two reasons. First of all, the guerrillas are strongly based. Secondly, it seemed as if the military did not have a serious intent." Ocalan stressed that it was necessary for the KDP and PUK to evaluate the situation properly, and said, "There are serious dangers in the political styles and approaches of these two powers. Democracy can be harmed the most by feudalism and tribalism. They (the KDP and PUK) can assault the PKK today, but in the long run, they are even more dangerous for Turkey. They could decide to cooperate with each other against Turkey tomorrow. With awareness of this fact, the people of the South must develop a democratic alliance. It must be an alliance which will include the Assyrians, Turkmen, Arabs, and other peoples who live in the region. This is valid for the KDP and PUK as well. But of course, democracy cannot be left to the KDP. They must have the strength to settle democracy in place and to develop it. But the KDP is regressive; they will push the Kurds back a hundred years. As you know, the Hizbullah arose from the Habezbeni clan. The Habezbeni clan, the Barzani clan... what difference is there? They are the same in essence, they are dangerous. Turkey must understand this well. Regressive Kurds are dangerous. Either the KDP will democratize and conform to the new phase, or else everyone will realize the painful consequences."

"The Peace Conference must be approached with sensitivity"

Ocalan said that the peace conference which is planned to be held in the South must not be delayed but must be realized as soon as possible. Ocalan stressed that not only the South Kurds but the Kurds from all the regions need this conference, and continued: "This conference could bring out the basic principles of peace, the basic principles of democracy, and the rules of peace. I am calling for a Peace Conference on this basis. Without this, violence cannot be overcome. I am calling now, and the PKK cannot be blamed later. A Peace Conference must be organized quickly; otherwise, it will not be possible to overcome intensification of the war in the South. Keeping in mind the vital importance of such a conference, all intellectuals and other segments must show the proper sensitivity."

"Enlightenment of murders is a positive development"

Concerning the assertions that the murders of Mumcu, Kislali, and other unsolved cases had been solved, Ocalan said: "Even if they are now explaining the unsolved murders, they are doing it late. But it is clear that there are some political worries involved. The real damage was done in the past. These murders have come onto the agenda now partially out of tactical considerations. But, in the final analysis, it is still good that these cases are being solved and brought out into the open." Ocalan said

that the Hizbullah, Selam, and Tevhid experiments had both provoked Turkey and put Iran into a tight spot. He continued: "It is well known that the state began to make significant investment in the political right, under the name of the Turkish-Islamic synthesis project, after the 1980s. The ideological-political inclinations of the segments expressing this synthesis had significant effect on the state through the religious tarikats. They infiltrated the state to a great extent. We can start with the Nakshibendis and come to the Hizbullah, and lastly to the Tevhid tarikat; it is clear that there had been serious intertwining with the state. They operated very comfortably within the government up until the February 28 process. Now, we look and see that every day 10 or 20 people are being caught. Take a look at those who are being caught; half of them are teachers, bureaucrats, or similar state employees. In other words, most of them are officially serving the state."

Ocalan said that the groups called Tevhid and Selam had been used primarily against democratic intellectuals, but said that the Hizbullah had principally targeted the PKK. He underlined that these groups had prospered during the governments of 1993-1996, and then later again under the Refahiyol government, and continued: "The aim was to stifle and silence the Kemalist intellectuals, the democrats, and those seeking enlightenment. Once these were silenced, then there would be no criticism of the developing climate. For example, Mumcu, Uçok, and Aksoy were Kemalist democratic intellectuals. They could have had a measure of influence. The CHP also suffered its share from what happened when these people were silenced... This went as far as the fall of the CHP." Ocalan stressed that the February 28 process was a stance taken against these experiences Turkey had suffered.

"Male dominance must not be accepted"

Ocalan, saying that he was concentrating on the dimension of women's freedom, noted the following: "In my opinion, the battle of the sexes is even more important than narrow political struggles, and even more important, in fact, than the class struggle. But the reason there has been no correct understanding of this so far arises from the feminist understanding based on course imitation of men. Both work and sacrifice are needed, and male dominance must not be accepted. It is more important to develop people physically and with a free spirit than personalities founded on male dominance."

"Educate your children well"

Sending a message for children, the PKK leader stressed that youths must be educated well and said: "Let them teach the children to read and write, both Kurdish and other languages. Let them attach much importance to education. Let them not leave their children hungry, and let them pay attention to their health. I send kisses to all the children... I send my greetings to all children, especially to those in Maxmura camp, and tell them to take care of themselves." Ocalan said he had seen a photograph in a newspaper of a family with three or four children, all lined up, and that he had been very affected by the smallest child in the photo. He said that this child represented all children to him and that he must be watched over very carefully.

"I am following the progression of the Prophets"

Mentioning the books he has been reading, Ocalan said he had last read the two-volume book "Musa" (Moses) and said he was following the progression of the Prophets. Ocalan continued: "I read Prophet Mohammed and Prophet Abraham and found many interesting points. The lives of the Prophets are very important. When I say this, some people think I have abandoned socialism and turned to religion. But that's not true. It is the essence of religion and the essence of the Prophets that is important. Prophet Abraham arose from our lands. Moses was like him. I was interested in the phenomenon of religion when I was a child. In the religious sense, it is possible to oppose reactionaryism by understanding the true principles of the Prophets and opening one's soul to them." Ocalan said that he was finding quite deep satisfaction and that his spirit was being enriched by these endeavors, and added: "Practicing crass materialism under the name of socialism is wrong, just as is course liberalism and crass capitalism. It is necessary to achieve some depth in this area in order to be a socialist. That is what I am doing. The painful results of socialism gone astray have been witnessed. Those who cannot comprehend the democratic essence of socialism simply do not understand socialism. They are only deceiving themselves." Ocalan said he was not producing anything in writing on the current situation. Signaling that this was more a period for concentration, he said he wanted to compile his thoughts on democratic politics in a book. Ocalan added that he wanted to express his thoughts on the problem of freedom in an epic poem.

* * * * *

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PARIS

Musiques et chants kurdes

Organisé par l'Institut kurde de Paris (impliqué par ailleurs dans le festival culturel kurde se déroulant jusqu'au 26 mai à Cherbourg), ce concert réunit quelques-uns des plus grands noms de la musique kurde, dont Sivan Perwer, considéré comme « la » voix du peuple kurde, qui donna un récital superbe d'intensité il y a quelques

mois au Théâtre de la Ville.

Egalement au programme, d'autres artistes de premier plan, comme Ahmet Kaya, Aziz Shahrokhi ou Temo, des voix féminines (Blessé, Faté, Leyla Faroughi, Shala, Xezal) et des artistes venus témoigner leur sympathie à la cause et au peuple kurde, tels que Amina, Bevinda ou Azzedine Alaoui.

Zénith, 211, avenue Jean-Jaurès, 19^e.
M^e Porte-de-Pantin. Le 21 mai,
15 heures. Tél. : 01-48-24-64-64.

GÉNOCIDES

Ankara boycotte la célébration des 52 ans d'Israël

Les déclarations du ministre israélien de l'Éducation irritent en Turquie, où un diplomate évoque «une remise en question de la réalité de l'Holocauste»

Les déclarations du ministre israélien de l'Éducation, Yossi Sarid, sur la nécessité d'enseigner le génocide arménien dans les établissements secondaires d'Israël n'ont pas fini - loin s'en faut ! - de faire couler beaucoup d'encre. Au point de commencer à affecter les bonnes relations israélo-turques, lesquelles avaient pris une nouvelle dimension ces dernières années, avec le développement d'une coopération militaire de grande envergure.

C'est ainsi que le ministère turc des Affaires étrangères a ordonné la semaine dernière aux membres du cabinet du premier ministre Bülent Ecevit de boycotter la réception organisée mercredi 10 mai à l'ambassade d'Israël à Ankara, dans le cadre des célébrations du 52^{ème} anniversaire de l'État d'Israël. Selon le quotidien turc de langue anglaise *Turkish Daily News* (11-05), les autorités turques ne peuvent se satisfaire des assurances israéliennes concernant la continuité de la politique de l'État hébreu sur la question du «génocide arménien».

Le 24 avril 2000 avait été marqué en Israël par les déclarations du ministre de l'Éducation, Yossi Sarid, qui avait annoncé l'inclusion prochaine du génocide arménien dans les programmes d'enseignement des établissements secondaires du pays (cf. n° 313, p. 2). Le ministre israélien de la Justice, Yossi Beilin, avait abondé dans le sens de son collègue de l'Éducation, en estimant qu'il n'y avait qu'une qualification possible au drame de 1915 : le génocide.

ISRAËL TENTE DE CALMER LE JEU

Ces déclarations allaient provoquer - on l'imagine bien - un certain malaise à Ankara, qui se demandait alors si ces prises de position traduisaient un virage des autorités israéliennes sur cette question on ne peut plus sensible pour la Turquie. L'ambassade d'Israël à Ankara a soutenu dans un communiqué que les points de vues des deux ministres n'engageaient que leurs auteurs, et «ne reflétaient en aucun cas la position du gouvernement». Cela n'a guère suffi à rassurer Ankara, qui espérait en réalité une déclaration «écrite» du gouvernement israélien sur cette question.

Ce climat plutôt tendu entre Ankara et Tel-Aviv ne semble pourtant pas encore inquiéter outre-mesure les Israéliens. L'ambassadeur d'Israël à Ankara, Uri Bar-Ner, a ainsi déclaré à l'agence turque *Anadolu* qu'il ne croit pas que ces récents développements puissent affecter les relations turco-israéliennes.

Celles-ci sont «parfaites», et les deux pays agissent «conformément à leurs intérêts mutuels». Pour l'ambassadeur israélien à Ankara, les déclarations du ministre de l'Éducation Yossi Sarid sont le reflet de la «démocratie» en Israël, pays où «tout le monde peut révéler ses positions». Mais l'attitude du gouvernement est différente, souligne M. Bar-Ner, et elle est «claire». C'est pourquoi les relations turco-israéliennes «ne devraient pas être assombries» par les déclarations de certaines personnes, les deux pays attachant de l'importance au développement des relations bilatérales.

Les prévisions volontiers apaisantes de l'ambassadeur d'Israël à Ankara ne peuvent néanmoins emporter une adhésion sans réserve, d'autant qu'en Israël, les langues mais aussi les plumes commencent à se délier. Le célèbre quotidien *The Jerusalem Post* a publié un article en fin de semaine dernière, intitulé «Une tragédie qui ne peut plus être ignorée», et dans lequel il souligne qu'un million et demi des deux millions d'Arméniens vivant en 1915 dans l'Empire ottoman ont été massacrés par les troupes ottomanes durant la première guerre mondiale. Le quotidien israélien ajoute que l'attitude adoptée jusqu'à présent par les autorités de Tel-Aviv s'explique par les craintes de représailles de la Turquie.

LE PREMIER MINISTRE TURC NON-INFORMÉ DU BOYCOTT

La quiétude exprimée par l'ambassadeur israélien ne peut non plus totalement convaincre les observateurs, car la décision turque de boycotter la réception organisée à l'ambassade d'Israël a révélé un bien curieux dysfonctionnement au sein de l'appareil d'État turc.

Il apparaît en effet, selon Selcuk Gultasli du *Turkish Daily News* (12-05), que le premier ministre turc Bülent Ecevit n'a pas été tenu informé du boycott par l'ensemble de son cabinet de la réception organisée à l'ambassade d'Israël à Ankara. Des sources gouvernementales ont indiqué au quotidien turc que lorsque le décret concernant la réception est arrivé mercredi 10 mai dans l'après-midi, en provenance du ministère des Affaires étrangères, dans les bureaux du premier ministre pour son approbation, les conseillers diplomatiques de M. Ecevit n'ont pas eu la possibilité de s'entretenir avec lui, en raison de son emploi du temps très chargé. Du coup, le décret a été transmis pour approbation au vice-premier ministre Husamettin Ozkan. Celui-ci a donc signé le décret et l'a diffusé auprès de tous les ministres.

Résultat : aucun membre du gouvernement de M. Ecevit n'était présent à la réception, pas plus que les dirigeants du haut commandement militaire de l'armée turque, qui brillaient également par leur absence. Selon Lale Sariibrahimoglu, du *Turkish Daily News* (12-05), seul l'ancien chef d'état-major de l'armée turque, le général Ismail Hakki Karadayi, présent à la même réception il y a deux ans, ainsi que le conseiller militaire présidentiel, le général Nezihi Cakir, aujourd'hui retiré, furent de la réception, de même que quelques députés, lesquels quittèrent tous la salle

«aussi vite que possible». Quant au ministère des Affaires étrangères, il était représenté par le sous-secrétaire Farouk Logoglu.

Interrogé par le *Turkish Daily News*, le premier ministre Bülent Ecevit a confirmé qu'il n'était «pas informé» de cette affaire. «Mais je ferai mon enquête dès mon retour au bureau», a assuré le premier ministre. Or, selon des sources gouvernementales, si M. Ecevit avait été informé de la décision de boycott du ministère des Affaires étrangères, il aurait fait connaître son opposition à de telles mesures de rétorsion. «M. Ecevit s'est toujours montré ouvert à l'égard des Juifs dans le monde entier, et il a toujours été partisan d'établir de solides relations avec Israël, a déclaré l'un de ses proches conseillers. Il n'aurait pas aimé voir une si forte réaction vis-à-vis d'Israël, bien qu'il ait été perturbé par les déclarations des ministres israéliens sur le prétendu génocide.»

LA TOUTE-PUISSANCE DE L'ARMÉE TURQUE

L'absence des représentants actuels du haut commandement militaire de l'armée turque, à la réception organisée par l'ambassade d'Israël à Ankara, amène forcément les observateurs à s'interroger sur la signification réelle de l'incident qui a privé M. Ecevit de l'information sur le boycott. L'omnipotence de l'armée sur les dossiers hautement sensibles relevant de la sécurité nationale pose inévitablement la question du fonctionnement de l'appareil d'État turc : on est effectivement en droit de se demander si M. Ecevit n'a pas tout bonnement été court-circuité par l'armée, qui savait bien entendu que le premier ministre aurait à tout le moins émis des réserves sur le décret de boycott émis par le ministère des Affaires étrangères.

Une Turquie prête à tout, à l'évidence, pour empêcher la levée du tabou arménien. On a d'ailleurs atteint de véritables «sommets» la semaine dernière, lorsqu'un diplomate turc a confié au *Turkish Daily News* que la Turquie pourrait «remettre en question la réalité de l'Holocauste», en représailles à la déclaration de reconnaissance du génocide arménien par le ministre israélien de l'Éducation !

Une affaire qui risque fort de connaître des rebondissements dans les semaines à venir, et qui pourrait également fort bien, à la longue, placer les dirigeants israéliens dans une situation pour le moins délicate. ●



UK Weekly: Saddam Hussein in Secret Talks with Israel

The Observer 21 May 00

by Jason Burke, Paul Beaver and Ed Vulliamy, New York

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi dictator, has made an astonishing bid for peace with the West after months of secret talks with the Israeli government.

At a series of meetings held over the past 15 months, Saddam's representatives have repeatedly told the Israelis that, if Jerusalem works to end Iraq's diplomatic isolation, Baghdad will arrange for more than 300,000 Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon to be airlifted to new lives in Iraq and will tone down its hostile rhetoric towards the Jewish state.

Lebanon's Palestinian population poses the most significant security threat following the Israelis' planned withdrawal from the south of the country later this summer, and moving them to Iraq would solve a significant problem for Jerusalem. It would also mark one of the most significant shifts in regional politics in decades.

The secret discussions will embarrass the Foreign Office which supports the Americans' hardline policy aimed at isolating Iraq. Official sources in Washington, London, Amman and Jerusalem last week confirmed the contacts between the two nations and the Iraqi proposal. Senior US State Department sources told The Observer: "We know that this is being talked about. No agreement has been finalised but we are pretty confident it is going to happen."

An airlift moving the refugees - which would cost more than \$100 million (60m pounds sterling) - would be funded by Israel and its supporters overseas, the State Department source said.

On at least three occasions over the past 20 years Iraq and Israel have held talks - always when Saddam's regime has been under pressure. Israel is keen to neutralise any possible threats from other countries. However, it could merely be humouring Saddam to gain leverage elsewhere in the region.

"Saddam is the consummate pragmatist. He will talk to anyone if he thinks it will help him ... He will offer whatever he thinks they want most," said one former aide of the Iraqi dictator last week.

The Observer has established that representatives of the two countries have met at least four times. The first meeting was at the funeral of King Hussein of Jordan in Amman in February last year when a senior Israeli politician had two conversations with Taha Mohieddin Maarouf, the Iraqi Vice-President. "It was just protocol though, nothing substantive," said one Iraqi opposition source in London. The meeting in Amman was confirmed by a Jordanian official.

Later in the spring a second meeting occurred in Athens between an American businessman with strong Israeli connections and a diplomat from a Middle Eastern country supportive of Iraq. A number of issues were discussed including the lifting of specified sanctions and the translocation of the Palestinians. Late last year Nizar Hamdoun, the Iraqi deputy Foreign Minister and former ambassador to the United Nations, travelled to America to further contacts with Jewish groups and representatives of the Israeli government in New York and Washington.

At a series of meetings the question of the movement of the Palestinians to Iraq was raised though no commitments were made. Hamdoun is known as a smooth diplomat with a good reputation internationally. "He has kept himself distanced from the ugliness of the rest of the regime," said one Iraq expert.

The most recent meeting known to The Observer occurred last February in Amman though it is unclear who attended. Intelligence sources in Jerusalem confirmed last week that discussions between representatives of Israel and Iraq are continuing. Saddam's favoured son Qusay - recently appointed head of the regime's security operation - is thought to be in overall charge of the talks. The idea of moving the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon to Iraq has been raised before though this is the first time Baghdad has ever talked practically about how to execute the plan.

The current sanctions regime imposed on Iraq by the United Nations - and maintained through strong pressure from London and Washington - has shattered Iraq's economy but done nothing to weaken Saddam's grip. The Iraqi dictator is increasingly constrained by the current situation. The contacts will cause serious concern in Whitehall. Britain has doggedly followed the Americans' hardline despite increasing criticism. The diplomacy pursued by Israel will be a significant embarrassment for the Americans and the British who have repeatedly called for a united front.

Experts say there are many reasons for the contacts between Baghdad and Jerusalem. "Both governments have significant amounts to gain," said Said Aburish, a biographer of both Saddam and Yasser Arafat and a former adviser to the Iraqi regime.

IRAK Des réfugiés palestiniens l'an prochain à Bagdad ?

Derrière la campagne internationale pour la levée des sanctions contre l'Irak se cacherait le projet de faire venir des Palestiniens en Irak. Et Saddam Hussein semble approuver ce marchandage.

CAIRO TIMES

A en juger par la fréquence des visites de responsables occidentaux et orientaux au Moyen-Orient depuis la mi-avril, il semble que quelque chose se prépare. Pour ce qui est du processus de paix, il est un intervenant dont on n'a plus de nouvelles depuis un moment : l'Irak. La crise du maintien des sanctions a fait oublier l'importance de Bagdad en tant qu'acteur au niveau régional. Or l'Irak a longtemps été considéré comme l'un des plus intransigeables des Etats arabes sur la question des réfugiés palestiniens. Le parti Baas au pouvoir a bâti sa légitimité sur des revendications telles que la libération de la Palestine et la conquête de l'Etat hébreu. Par conséquent, jusqu'en 1998, l'Irak affirmait que les Palestiniens ne pouvaient se voir accorder ni citoyenneté ni droit à la propriété immobilière, pour "préservier" leur droit à rentrer en Palestine.

Il y a deux ans, cette politique a commencé à se modifier. En 1998, Saddam Hussein a accordé la nationalité irakienne aux réfugiés palestiniens. Sur le moment, cette décision a été interprétée comme un signe de la volonté de Bagdad d'accueillir davantage de réfugiés palestiniens en échange d'un soutien international en faveur d'une levée des sanctions. En mars dernier, Bagdad bouleversait un peu plus sa politique, déclarant que les quelque 60 000 Palestiniens habitant actuellement en Irak pouvaient acquérir des biens immobiliers.

Une information qui n'a pas fait que des heureux. L'"ambassadeur" palestinien en Irak, Azzam al-Ahmed, a déclaré que le secrétaire général de l'Union patriotique du Kurdistan,



◀ Saddam Hussein à l'occasion de son 63^e anniversaire.

Jalal al-Talabani, avait contacté le président palestinien Yasser Arafat pour l'enjoindre de rejeter un plan prévoyant l'implantation des Palestiniens dans les régions kurdes du nord du pays. Talabani prétend que certains réfugiés avaient déjà été transférés dans le Kurdistan irakien et que d'autres étaient attendus.

L'Irak, pour sa part, craint que l'Irak n'installe des Palestiniens dans les régions à majorité chiite le long de la frontière irano-irakienne et que cela ne provoque des affrontements entre sunnites et chiites. L'Irak a carrément poussé l'opposition irakienne, concentrée dans la zone frontalière, à lancer des attaques sur les villes à forte population palestinienne en Irak. En mars dernier, des avions non identifiés ont bombardé la localité d'Al

Baladeyyat, près de Bagdad, où vivent 10 000 Palestiniens. L'Irak a officiellement accusé l'opposition irakienne repliée en Iran d'avoir organisé ces opérations.

LE PARTI BAAS NE DÉFEND PLUS LA THÉORIE DU "PARTI UNIQUE"

Dans le même temps, la campagne contre les sanctions en Occident prend de l'ampleur. Tony Hall, représentant démocrate de l'Ohio, s'est rendu en Irak au milieu du mois d'avril pour rencontrer des responsables irakiens et constater les effets de la guerre et des sanctions. Moscou a reçu le ministre de la Défense irakien, Sultan Hashem Ahmed. Pour sa part, l'Irak tente de prouver au monde occidental que des changements sont en marche. D'après le vice-Premier ministre Tarek Aziz, le

■ **Pas de compromis**
"L'histoire politique arabe et palestinienne est l'histoire du statisme intellectuel, caractérisé par le refus permanent de toute solution médiane", explique Al Hayat. De fait, les Arabes ont refusé le projet de partition de la Palestine en 1947, si bien qu'Israël s'est agrandi de 6 000 km² en 1948. Ils ont refusé le plan Ben Gourion sur le retour de 100 000 réfugiés palestiniens, et actuellement des millions de Palestiniens demeurent sans foyer. "Le principe du tout ou rien est pourtant étranger à la politique, qui demeure l'art du possible", conclut Al Hayat.

parti Baas ne défend pas la théorie du "parti unique". Sa répugnance antérieure à autoriser une démocratie multipartite tenait aux "circonstances difficiles" dans lesquelles se trouvait le pays. Sur la scène arabe, la section chargée de représenter les intérêts irakiens au Caire émet actuellement entre 100 et 150 visas par jour pour des travailleurs égyptiens qui veulent partir en Irak. L'Égypte souhaite vraisemblablement que ses travailleurs soient bien implantés sur le marché irakien pour le jour où les sanctions seront levées.

Un pays acceptant des réfugiés palestiniens pourrait s'avérer très utile aux autres partis. Depuis qu'Israël a annoncé son intention de se retirer du Liban d'ici à la fin du mois de juillet, on s'est inquiété du risque de voir le Liban expulser certains des 200 000 Palestiniens qui vivent sur son territoire. Il y a un précédent. En 1995, Muammar Kadhafi, le leader libyen, a rejeté tous les Palestiniens qui vivaient en Libye à la frontière égypto-libyenne. Tout cela au nom de la défense de leurs droits. Israël a également laissé planer la rumeur que le Canada avait

accepté d'accueillir les réfugiés. Jean Chrétien, le Premier ministre canadien, en visite au Moyen-Orient à l'époque, démentit la rumeur, mais ajouta que le Canada pourrait en accueillir quelques-uns si l'on parvenait à une résolution pacifique acceptée par tous.

On peut interpréter de deux façons les développements au Moyen-Orient : soit tout le monde s'attend à un désastre, et essaye de se couvrir, soit le jeu de redistribution des alliances dans l'après-processus de paix a commencé plus tôt que prévu.

Saeed Okasha

May 22 2000

Iraqi opposition: Palestinian refugee deal would cause civil war

By Douglas Davis Jerusalem Post

LONDON (May 22) - A leading Iraqi opposition activist yesterday expressed bitter disappointment over reports that Israel will consider dropping its support of sanctions against Iraq if Saddam Hussein takes in up to one million Palestinian refugees from Lebanon and other Arab states. Nabil Musawi, a Shi'ite member of the central committee of the London-based Iraqi National Council (INC), told The Jerusalem Post that any such deal would lead to a full-scale civil war in Iraq.

"We will not allow a single Palestinian into the country," he said. "They played a very dirty role during the Gulf War and they were instrumental in crushing the Iraqi uprising against Saddam following the war in 1991."

Musawi added that there are currently some 200,000 Palestinians in Iraq. He also revealed that two months ago the Iraqi regime decreed that Palestinians could own property in Iraq, specifically in the northern city of Kirkuk, claimed by both the Kurds and the Turkman populations. Another Iraqi source told the Post yesterday that the decree has triggered three Katyusha rocket attacks against the mainly Palestinian district of Baghdad al-Jadida in the Iraqi capital, the latest coming just last week.

"There have been many explosions in Baghdad," said the source, "but this is the first time that a specific group has been targeted in a specific district." It is estimated that a dozen Palestinians were killed and scores injured in the three attacks. The INC, a US-backed umbrella group for opponents of Saddam Hussein's regime, is aimed at toppling the Iraqi dictator and creating a federal system giving autonomy to Iraq's ethnic groups.

According to Musawi, Arab Shi'ite and Sunni dissidents are "extremely disappointed that democratic Israel should appear to be abandoning the democratic solution being advocated by the INC."

It is understood that the United States and some Western European governments oppose such a deal, in which Israel would help end Iraq's diplomatic isolation in exchange for Iraq's absorption of Palestinian refugees now in Lebanon and toning down of its hostile anti-Israel rhetoric. Lebanese politicians blame the Palestinians for triggering the civil war there and are alarmed at the prospect of any peace agreement that leaves them in place in Lebanon. Furthermore, even if Hizbullah ceases its attacks after Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon, armed Palestinians, who oppose any deal that does not involve their return, are expected to pose a major security threat to Israel. Their relocation to Iraq, say sources, would remove that danger.

A report in yesterday's Observer of London stated that Israeli and Iraqi representatives have met four times over the past 15 months. The paper also quoted intelligence sources in Jerusalem confirming last week that discussions between Israeli and Iraqi representatives are continuing. It also stated that official sources in Washington, London, Amman and Jerusalem confirmed the contacts between the two countries, and the Iraqi proposal. Senior US State Department sources reportedly told the paper, "We know that this is being talked about. No agreement has been finalized but we are pretty confident it is going to happen."

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It's Time for Turkey's New President to Deliver on Free Speech

By Jonathan Sugden

LONDON — A year ago, the president of Turkey's highest court made an extraordinary, taboo-shattering speech. He flatly told a group of politicians and lawyers that Turkish citizens should be granted the right to speak freely. He urged that the legal system and constitution be "cleansed" and said that the "limits on language" — code for the prohibitions on the Kurdish tongue — seriously compromised freedom of expression.

Last week, the man who gave that speech, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, was sworn in as president of Turkey. The question now is whether he will follow through on the bold language that rocketed him to prominence a year ago.

Turkey is facing a happy but challenging set of circumstances this year. The conflict in the mainly Kurdish southeastern part of the country has receded. At the same time, Turkey's accession to the European Union is finally on the diplomatic table. But joining the EU will require some frank assessments of Turkey's human rights record, and addressing Kurdish grievances will also require

real, substantive, public debate. In other words, these historic opportunities cannot be met if Turkish citizens are not free to speak openly.

In Turkey, politics, religion and morality are debated fiercely in Parliament, on late-night TV shows and in the highly colorful daily press. But the debate is firmly circumscribed, and anyone who crosses the line can expect imprisonment or worse. Akin Birdal, former president of the Turkish Human Rights Association, is sitting in Ankara Closed Prison for expressing views on the Kurdish minority. Hasan Celal Güzel, a former government minister, is serving a one-year sentence for criticizing recent political interventions by the army.

So many prominent Turkish figures have spent time behind bars that a term of imprisonment carries no stigma. But conviction for an "expression offense" also carries a lifetime ban from political office and membership in any association. This is a heavy price to pay for any politician or activist. Inevitably, it stifles debate — and stifles it in the very area in which Turkey most needs to be talking.

The PKK, the illegal armed Kurdish group that fought the security forces for 15 years, has called a cease-fire and may permanently have abandoned the armed struggle. Other armed political groups have also been less active during the past year or so. There are therefore fewer of the brutal security raids on mountain villages or city slum districts that resulted in so much torture and so many "disappearances."

Yet any politician who attempts to open a broad debate on the Kurdish issue risks merciless attacks in the media and prosecution and possible exclusion from politics. When Foreign Minister Ismail Cem publicly pondered the possibility of Kurdish TV last year, he was the subject of a judicial investigation for "incitement to racial hatred," which carries a possible three-year prison sentence. Thankfully the public prosecutor decided not to file charges.

In December 1999, after years of controversy and tension between Europe and Ankara, Turkey was recognized as an EU candidate. But it must still meet the "Copenhagen criteria" for full membership. The criteria ex-

plicitly mention the protection of minorities and language rights, and these are undoubtedly going to be Europe's first and most basic expectations. The EU has made it clear that it is also worried about the army's excessive influence on political life.

The problems that the EU has identified are precisely the "no-go" areas. How can Turkey get started on its accession homework when political and community leaders are gagged on the issues? This is why the first Turkish government in two decades to be blessed with relative peace has done nothing constructive with it. Ministers have been promising constitutional and legal reform, but they are unlikely to deliver while they are unable to discuss the future freely.

The new president must do just that. An earlier president, Turgut Özal, once promised "a talking Turkey." It hasn't come to pass yet, but if President Sezer uses his unique authority to put some momentum into the stalled reform process, perhaps it can.

The writer, Turkey researcher for Human Rights Watch, contributed this comment to the International Herald Tribune.

Former MIT Agent Explains Reason for Living in US

Özgür Politika 22 May 00

[FBIS Translated Text]- Former MIT [National Intelligence Organization] desk chief Mehmet Eymur reportedly stressed that the MIT deliberately left him unprotected and said: "If I had not gone to the United States, I would have been killed." Aydinlik newspaper, in turn, claimed that Eymur became a refugee in the United States.

In a reply to a letter written to him by MHP [Nationalist Action Party] deputy Ali Gungor, Eymur stressed that the MIT did not provide security protection and a vehicle for him in Turkey, neither when he was in office and nor after he retired, and added that MIT's aim was to leave him defenseless. Eymur claimed that, as a result, he settled in the United States and added: "Even though I do not consider my life very important, I have to live in order to continue to struggle. I have to go on living for my family." Stating that if he were to stay in Turkey, he would get into great trouble, Mehmet Eymur said: "If I were in Turkey during this period, I would have been subject to a plot against me and I would have died in an accident." Pointing out that certain groups within the MIT and the state wage struggles against each other and are embroiled in conflicts, Eymur stressed that it was these sectors that targeted him.

Claiming that "illegalities" are protected by the MIT, Eymur added: "Despite this, I went beyond the boundaries allowed by the TGNA [Turkish Grand National Assembly] and the DGMs [State Security Courts] and made certain statements. I was unable to achieve any results, however."

MHP's Gungor Distorts the Truth

In answer to Eymur's claims that he was involved in the killings, Ali Gungor made use of an erroneous statement that was published in our newspaper and turned a blind eye to the fact that Nevzat Yildirim was a democratic teacher and that a suit was brought against him on this issue. Gungor said: "I was not involved in the murder of Nevzat Yildirim, the MHP Malatya deputy and a teacher. I do not know any Nevzat Yildirim who was a MHP Malatya deputy. A lawsuit has never been brought against me on this issue, and I have never been tried."

Eymur Became a Refugee in the United States

The weekly Aydinlik newspaper claimed that Eymur became a refugee in the United States. Claiming that Eymur, who has lived in the United States for the last two years, was granted "refugee" status, the newspaper noted that Turkey has opened an investigation into Eymur on charges of "disclosing state secrets" and that Eymur became a refugee in order to prevent his return to Turkey.

In his report entitled "Eymur Is Wanted Officially," published in the Star newspaper, Fatih Cekirge noted that the MIT Undersecretariat filed four separate suits against Eymur on the grounds of his actions when he was in office in the MIT. In Sabah newspaper, Sedat Sertoglu reported that the necessary steps were being taken to ensure that Eymur returns to Turkey and that Ankara will take certain initiatives in the United States to obtain that return.

Aydinlik newspaper, in turn, noted that the investigation files regarding Eymur are at the Ankara Chief Public Prosecutor's Office and continued as follows: "Eymur will not only be tried on charges of 'disclosing state secrets,' but also on charges of spying for another country. If he is caught, Eymur will also be accused of being an American spy." Within the framework of the investigation that is conducted by the public prosecutor, Kasim Hacikamiloglu, a letter was sent to the Prime Minister's Office demanding that Eymur's address be revealed.

* * * * *

Kurd rebel leader Ocalan ill in Turkish jail, says his brother

May 22, 2000

TUNCELI, Turkey (Reuters) -- A top Kurdish guerrilla leader has said his brother, the jailed rebel chief Abdullah Ocalan, was seriously ill on his island death-row cell and warned Turkey to treat the condition quickly.

Osman Ocalan told the Europe-based Kurdish satellite channel Medya TV late on Sunday the health of his brother -- the sole inmate on a remote island jail -- was deteriorating fast. Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) leader Abdullah Ocalan is awaiting a European Court of Human Rights appeal verdict against his death sentence handed down for treason and leading a 15-year-old armed campaign for Kurdish home rule.

Some 30,000 rebels, soldiers and civilians have been killed in the conflict.

"For two months the condition of PKK chairman Abdullah Ocalan has been rapidly deteriorating," said Osman Ocalan. "He has great difficulty breathing, he almost suffocates in his sleep. His eyes are bloodshot and he has lost the senses of taste and smell." Ocalan's lawyers, who regularly visit the rebel chief, blamed the illness on damp, stuffy conditions at the prison.

"He is only let out to exercise two hours a day and the rest of the time he is kept in a cell without any windows," lawyer Irfan Dunder told Reuters. Abdullah Ocalan ordered his guerrilla forces to end their armed struggle and transform themselves into a peaceful democratic force after his capture last year.

But Turkey points out the PKK rebels still have their arms and says the move is a ploy to save Ocalan from the gallows.

"Turkey is not hanging him, but wants to execute him in a different way. We will not let this happen. If something is not done there will be serious agitation," said Osman Ocalan. He did not elaborate. The younger Ocalan is one of the most influential members of a nine-person "leadership council" which has run the rebel organisation since his elder brother's capture last year.

The Kurdish newspaper Ozgur Politika said on Monday renegade rebel field commander Hamili Yildirim, who had rejected Ocalan's peace call and vowed to carry on fighting, had now rejoined the PKK's ranks.

HADEP Condemns Closure of Cultural Centers

Özgür Politika 22 May 00

[FBIS Translated Text] The HADEP [People's Democracy Party] Diyarbakir Organization responded to the closure of the IHD [Human Rights Association] branches and some cultural centers in Kurdistan by the OHAL [State of Emergency] Governor, and, drawing attention to the fact that such decisions are once again creating tension among the people, asked for an urgent lifting of the ban.

The HADEP Organization issued a written statement yesterday and noted the ongoing anti-democratic procedures that are applied against many organizations in Diyarbakir lately and said, "The repeated closure of these organizations in this era in which there is much talk about democratization, law, the EU and the Copenhagen criteria is disturbing. These anti-democratic procedures and pressures are leaving the country facing a serious difficulty."

It was noted that the arbitrary procedures are creating tension among the Turkish people again; they are damaging the image other people have of Turkey, and they create a negative impression on the EU process and the international commitments. The statement called attention to the fact that respect for human rights and freedoms and democratic organizations is an unavoidable requirement of civilization in countries with a democratic administration, and asked for an immediate opening of the organizations that were closed.

Kaya Summoned the Lawyers to Work

Gulseren Kaya, chairman of the Board of Directors of the Meteris Cultural Center that was closed, issued a written statement and called attention to the fact that organizations included in the OHAL were closed as a result of a bilateral law, and asked the President and other people who respect the law to act right away.

Kaya noted that Turkey is not going to benefit from the closure of the organizations in a process that has left behind an era of conflict in which much suffering was endured.

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Russia MPs Concerned by Punitive Operations Against Kurds

ITAR-TASS 23 May 00 By Ivan Novikov

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 23 (Itar-Tass) - Russian MPs are seriously concerned over the launching of new punitive operations against the Kurdish People's Self-defence Forces. This is said in the statement adopted by participants in the round-table conference at the State Duma on Tuesday on the topic of "New threat to peace and security in the Near and Middle East".

"We call on the United Nations, the European Union and other prestigious international organisations to take measures without delay to put a stop to military operations, pull back Turkish troops and solve peacefully the Kurdish problem," said the statement of the participants in the round-table conference.

The MPs also asked Russian leadership "resolutely to condemn the Turkish army's invasion of Iraq's Kurdish autonomous district and take the necessary steps toward peaceful, democratic solution of the Kurds problem". The Russian MPs urged the Turkish president to "rein in the military whose actions attest to utter lack of human rights and democracy in Turkey".

* * * * *

Reuters May 23, 2000 **Iran protests "mass arrest" of citizens in Turkey**

TEHRAN, May 23 (Reuters) - Iran summoned the Turkish ambassador on Monday to protest against the mass arrest of Iranians in several Turkish cities, the official IRNA news agency reported.

"This situation has strongly worried Iran and the responsibility for this inhuman act remains with the Turkish government," IRNA quoted an Iranian foreign ministry official as telling the ambassador. "Iran condemns this act and demands a halt to the arrest of Iranians in Turkey and release of those detained," he said

The official also demanded the arrest of Turkish officers "who have seized the properties of Iranians and mistreated them during their detention." IRNA said earlier Turkish police and security forces had picked up about 500 Iranians in "violent and orchestrated" raids on Saturday against their homes and hostels in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir.

But it said that about 350 of them were released after interrogation. Ankara reports earlier said Turkish police hunting Islamic rebels suspected of being responsible for the murders of secularist intellectuals in the 1990s have arrested more than 100 people in a nationwide crackdown.

No formal charges have been brought yet.

Relations between officially secularist Turkey and its Islamic neighbour Iran are often tense. Ankara accuses Tehran of sheltering Kurdish rebels and sponsoring radical Islamic groups in Turkey. Iran denies the accusations. Tehran, for its part, is angry over growing ties between its western neighbour Turkey and Israel, Iran's arch foe.

A Turkish foreign ministry official said on Monday that Foreign Minister Ismail Cem had asked his Iranian counterpart for cooperation on security issues amid a simmering row between the two countries over political killings in Turkey.

He said a letter by Cem had been delivered to Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi over the weekend. The Turkish press has recently accused Iran of involvement in political killings inside Turkey. It said the alleged killers had training and logistic support from groups in Iran.

But former Turkish President Suleyman Demirel said before stepping down last week that there was not enough evidence to accuse Iran of involvement in the killings. Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi strongly condemned the arrest of Iranians in Turkey.

"This is an ugly act outside diplomatic and international norms. It is not in line with our neighbourly principles. Iran will exhaust all its means to stop this trend," he said.

* * * * *

Prosecutors say Iran backed deadly Turkish Muslim group

24 May 2000 Agence France-Presse

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey, May 24 (AFP) - Turkish prosecutors accused Iran on Wednesday of providing support to a hardline Islamic group blamed for the murders of hundreds of people in the country, the Anatolia news agency reported. The accusation came in a 180-page indictment in which prosecutors in this southeastern city demanded the death sentence for 13 members of the Hizbullah movement on charges of trying to destroy Turkey's constitutional order and involvement in the murders of 156 people, Anatolia said.

The indictment called for sentences of up to 15 years in jail for two other defendants accused of involvement in the killings and of being members in an armed group working against Turkey's secular system.

No date was set for the trial of the 15. The indictment said Hizbullah leader Huseyin Velioglu, who was killed by Istanbul poli-

ce in a shootout in January, "had contacts with Iran's Revolutionary Guards, went to Iran many times and received military and political training there," according to Anatolia. "It is not possible to say that Iran provided Hizbullah only with military and political training," the prosecution said, implying that the group also received financial backing from Tehran.

"Iran's policy of exporting the (Islamic) revolution was put into practice with its support for pro-Hizbullah movements in Turkey and other Mideast countries," the indictment said. Iranian consulates and embassies in the targetted countries were used as operational centers, it added.

Hizbullah was founded in the early 1980s with an initial aim of countering armed Kurdish rebels fighting for self-rule in southeast Turkey. It is not believed to have any links with the Lebanese guerrilla group of the same name. Among the 13 defendants facing the death penalty are two high-level Hizbullah leaders, Edip Gumus and Cemal Tutar, who were captured in the shootout in which Velioglu was killed.

Following the shootout, police launched a nationwide crackdown against Hizbullah, arresting the other suspects and discovering the bodies of 66 people kidnapped and murdered by the group across Turkey. Turkish authorities hold Hizbullah responsible in all for more than 480 murders committed between 1991 and 1999.

According to the indictment, Hizbullah leaders decided at a meeting in Diyarbakir in 1980 "to resist the regime with arms, or to overthrow the current system and replace it with an Islamic state." The prosecutors' accusations against Iran came at a time when relations between the two countries were already strained.

Iran summoned Turkey's ambassador in Tehran to the foreign ministry on Monday to protest the arrest by Istanbul police of more than 250 Iranian nationals. Turkey said the sweep targetted illegal workers and that virtually all the Iranians were quickly released. The incident followed a statement last week by Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit charging that "some separatist groups in Turkey and others exploiting religion have benefitted from Iran's hospitality or have used for themselves its tendency to export the revolution".

Although Ecevit and other officials have stopped short of accusing Iran of more specific actions in Turkey, the Turkish press has reported that Tehran had a hand in a series of murders of pro-secular Turkish intellectuals whose suspected murderers have recently been captured.



Jalal Talabani Congratulates Nejdett Sezer, Newly-Elected President of Turkey

(May 16, 2000 - Suleimani)

Kurdistan Newline 29 n May 22, 2000

PUK Secretary General Jalal Talabani sent a telegram of congratulations and best wishes to President-elect Nejdett Sezer in Turkey, as follows: "Your Excellency, Mr. Ahmed Nejdett Sezer, President of the Turkish Republic, Ankara

I am honored to extend, on behalf of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, congratulations upon your election as President of the Turkish Republic, may it flourish in its national unity and its independence, and progress on all cultural, democratic, social and economic fronts. Historic ties bind Kurds and Turks together, ties which have been baptized with Kurdish and Turkish blood in the battlefields of defending Islam and the Turkish republic and in the liberation war of independence led by Ataturk. These ties constitute a strong foundation for the friendly brotherly relations we look forward to establishing with our Turkish brethren.

I take this opportunity to affirm to your excellency the determination and resolution of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan that Iraqi Kurdistan shall not be used into a base for terrorist actions against the Turkish Republic; we will combat any effort threatening the unity and safety of the Turkish Republic and its national security.

With (our) sincere wishes for success in realizing your democratic program and in propagating the principles and concepts of human rights in our brotherly Turkish Republic, May God grant you success, for the benefit of the people of Turkey, and in their best interests and so as to strengthen peace and security within its borders and in the Middle East as well.

Please accept my highest respects,

Your brother, Jalal Talabani General Secretary of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan"

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Arabization Policy Intensifies in Kurdistan: latest reports registry

Kurdistan Newline May 22, 2000

(May 6, Suleimani) Readers of Kurdistan Newline know that "Arabization", a euphemism for the deportation of Kurds from areas of Iraqi Kurdistan still under Iraqi central government control, is being implemented every day, in different ways, by the Baghdad authorities. Arabization and deportation is now being pursued increasingly relentlessly, as can be seen from a recent report compiled by the Suleimani-based Kurdish daily Kurdistan-e New. While the information related is without attribution and is presented in a random fashion, the overall picture that emerges is of an intensification of the deportation process throughout Iraqi-controlled Kurdish areas, and a concerted effort to change the demographics of the region.

A synopsis of their registry of latest reports follows:

Reports indicate that the omnipresent "higher authorities" have ordered the Kirkuk conscription office to send them a list of the names of those people whose identity cards are registered in the northern autonomous region and whose draft office is Kirkuk. Under a recently promulgated decree, the regime offers to distribute 200 metre square plots of land for settlement purposes to the ruling Ba'ath party officials who, prior to the Uprising of spring 1991 held the rank of Party Comrade. The condition is that they build a house within a year, or else the plot will be reclaimed. If the official in question is of Kurdish descent, he is obliged, to qualify, to "change his identity and become Arab". The plots of land being offered at the current time are situated on the Tikrit road and in the industrial district Kirkuk.

Moreover, in the city of Rumadi, the Aghas [dignitaries] of approximately 400 "Kakayee" Kurdish families who were deported from their own areas, met recently with Saddam Hussein and urged him to allow them to return to their place of origin. The Aghas in question were identified as Tariq Agha, Adnan Agha, Madhat Agha, Husam al-Din Agha, Nadhim Agha and Ajal Agha. An advisor to the Iraqi President is reported to have responded by stating that they cannot return to their place of origin because their lands have been distributed to Arab tribes, and "if they want to go to the North (KRG region) they are allowed to do so and take their families with them".

Other reports relate that Ba'ath Party groupings have asked their members and supporters to provide information to the party bodies about their families, particularly those who live abroad and in the Kurdish-administered regions. Failure to comply with this request will be considered to be disobedience.

The information being requested comprises the following: For those who live abroad: Full name, address, telephone and fax numbers in the country where they live, as well as the nature of their asylum (political or humanitarian). For those who live in Kurdistan: Full name, address (town, district and house number), profession and political party affiliation.

In a related incident, reports from Iraqi Kurdistan indicate that on the 7th and 8th of April 2000, the police patrols in the Musallah district of Kirkuk detained seven people, prior to their being deported. They are:

* Yasin Mansur from Shorija district. His family comprises 7 members.

* Nadhim Muhammad Ahmad from Shorija. His family comprises 3 members

- * Idris Yunis from Iskan district. His family comprises 9 members
- * Luqman Abd al-Rahman from Rashidawa district. Family comprises 8 members
- * Muhammad Abdullah from Rashidawa district. Family comprises 4 members
- * Rashid Ramazan Ghalib from Rashidawa district. Family comprises 2 members
- * Rahim Abd al-Hakim from Iskan district. Family comprises 9 members

In addition other reports state that from 1st to 8th April 2000, the Baghdad regime registered the following people for deportation:

- * Hasan Asi from Shorija district. Family comprises 4 members
- * Muhammad Ahmad Muhammad from Shorija district. Family comprises 12 members
- * Najim Wasta Ali from Shorija district. Family comprises 8 members
- * Majid Haji Hama from Shorija district. Family comprises 5 members
- * Shukriyah Sa'id Sabir from Tayay Mala Abdullah district. Family comprises 8 members
- * Yusuf Mahmud Muhammad from Tayay Mala Abdullah district. Family comprises 12 members
- * Karim Shaykh Marif from Tayay Mala Abdullah district. Family comprises 13 members
- * Sa'id Haji Khurshid from Rahimawah district. Family comprises 22 members
- * Burhan Hogir from Rahimawah district. Family comprises 3 members
- * Ramazan Rauf from Rahimawah district. Family comprises 7 members
- * Rahim Rahman Abdullah from Rahimawah district. Family comprises 10 members

Between 10th and 12th April 2000, the regime registered the names of seven Kurdish families for deportation, in the Arab district of Tuz Khurmatu. The names of four of them are known: Rauf Hawez, Rasul Rahim, Haji Hama Abdullah and Mansur Mustafa Duzi.

The Iraqi regime has also asked for information from heads of Kirkuk districts about those families that have members who are either soldiers who have defected, or are working with foreign organizations in Kurdistan or abroad, in order that they may be deported. At Iskan police station, local authorities have drawn up a list of 200 Kurdish families in Kirkuk who are to be deported. Before that, a governorate committee will reportedly be charged with estimating the value of their houses and compensating them financially.

On 28th April 2000, tens of party and security committees distributed forms to detail the families in all the districts of Kirkuk. They asked for information concerning: Becoming Arab; the location of the family during the 1947 and 1957 population censuses; the number of family members living abroad and in Kurdistan [region of Iraq under Kurdish control]; the number of family members arrested on political charges; religious belief; location during the [1991] Uprising; and affiliation to the parties of the Kurdistan Front. Every family should in addition provide the deeds of its house [to the authorities], who will return the deed to the family after effecting changes its [ethnic] identity to render them Arabs. Families providing inaccurate information will have their house deeds confiscated and a family member will be detained until the rest of the family is deported.

The regime has apparently also decided to deport all directors and officials, of Kurdish and Turkoman origin, from government departments and offices in Kirkuk. This measure affects 380 people and includes those who had actually changed their identity to "Arab". They will be deported to areas lying outside the Kirkuk governorate.

According to other sources of information, the regime has established another list of 500 Kurdish families from Kirkuk who are scheduled for deportation. In the township of Duz, Kurdish families have been asked to give the party, security and police bodies their house and shop deeds, which they confiscate. The regime has, through party and security bodies in Iskan district of Kirkuk, informed the families who live near the water reservoir that they should evacuate the area because there is oil underground and the area is to be designated a prohibited zone.

Early in April, the regime, through Kirkuk governorate security apparatus, asked those Arab Shi'a families who had been previously brought northwards from Southern Iraq in order to settle in the Kirkuk districts of Domiz and Rashid, to leave their houses and return to their place of origin within two months. At the present time there is no further information to suggest why the regime is

evacuating these houses. Since 10th April 2000, the regime has been registering those Kurdish Families in Kirkuk whose identity cards have been issued in the autonomous region. Of these, those who own houses have been asked to give their house deeds to the party organization of their district. If they disobey, they will be punished.

The regime is continually registering those Kurdish families in Kirkuk who have not changed their identity in order to deport them. On 29th April 2000 the regime started to arrest people in Azadi district of Kirkuk in order to deport them. A number of people were still detained at the police station as of this dispatch.

Reports indicate that a meeting was held recently at the Kirkuk Ba'th Party Branch, where all the Party members were asked to prepare a report on the following question: Why do most of the deported families go to the regions controlled by the PUK [Patriotic Union of Kurdistan], and a small number to KDP [Kurdistan Democratic Party] areas and to Southern Iraq?

In Rahimawah district of Kirkuk, the regime registers those Kurdish families who are on a special list of those who have not provided martyrs for "Saddam's Qadisiyah" [Iran-Iraq war] and who do not belong to the party and security organizations, in order to confiscate their house deeds and pressure them into changing their identity. The regime has distributed land in Qaraj plain and Makhmur to the Arab tribes of Liheb and Jibur. They are asked to go to Mosul in order to register the land in their name at the agriculture office. The regime has been preparing a list of houses confiscated from deported Kurds in Kirkuk in order to sell them by auction.

The Arab families known as "ten thousands" demanded of the Kirkuk governorate that they be allowed to return to their place of origin. Later they were informed that any family that wants to return must sign a deed ceding its house to Kirkuk municipality.

The "competent bodies" prepare a frightening census

In the past three months the regime has been collecting information about Kurdish and Turkoman families in the Kirkuk cities and townships of Haweja, Duz, Tawugh and Dubiz. The regime is conducting this task like a census and it is carried out by Ba'th Party organizations, security, police, municipalities and heads of districts. The information is registered on a special form for each family. The collected information concerns the following: place of birth registration; relations with party and security bodies; families listed on the deportation list since 1991; Peshmarga or defected solders in the family or having a member abroad; completion of Al-Nakhwah [military] training in the Popular Army [Iraqi paramilitary force]; ownership of their house: rented, owned or belonging to the government; the number and code of food forms; place of work of each member of the family]

According to Kurdistan-i New: "what can be deduced from these measures is that the regime intends to deport a large number of Kurds from this area to Kurdistan or to central and south Iraq.

There is also the possibility that Palestinians may be settled --- there are rumors in these areas to this effect -- in Kurdish and Turkoman families' properties. Alongside this measure, the regime is pushing Arab Shi'a families who now live in Kirkuk city after being brought there long ago in order to Arabize the city, to return to their places of origin in the southern governorates of Iraq.

Supporting this report, a secret document issued by the Ba'th Party leadership, dated 9th April 2000 and numbered 1102/8, has been sent to Tamim, Kirkuk and Tikrit Branches of the Ba'ath Party, urging them to accelerate the process of collecting information about the Kurdish families in the aforementioned areas, in order to conduct a comprehensive campaign of deportation of Kurdish families to Kurdistan, central and southern Iraq.

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La presse en Iran et les ruses du progrès *par Seyed Motaza Mardiha*

LA presse iranienne, tout comme les autres acteurs culturels et politiques de ce pays, traverse aujourd'hui des moments difficiles. Le minimum de liberté y est à peine toléré. Les critiques contre la presse indépendante et réformatrice de la part des conservateurs sont très sévères. L'interdiction des quotidiens modérés et démocrates, par le tribunal spécial de la presse, est catastrophique. Est-ce à dire que le rôle de la presse dans le projet de la réforme dont l'objectif est d'intégrer l'Iran dans la culture mondiale est terminé ? La réponse doit être prudente.

Pour l'intégration des pays en voie de développement dans la culture mondiale, on insiste souvent sur le rôle de la communication ; il est généralement admis qu'elle ouvre les fenêtres, longtemps fermées, des diverses cultures et des diverses nations les unes aux autres. Une sorte de langage commun et de compréhension mutuelle se déploie alors dans le monde. Le cas des Etats qui cherchent à garder leur pureté culturelle (si une telle pureté existe), comme l'Iran, en faisant obstacle à la communication, est une exception. Ces Etats espèrent que, par le contrôle de moyens de communication, le contenu culturel ne se transformera guère, et que, par conséquent, la compréhension des autres cultures et des autres nations deviendra difficile. Alors les fenêtres se fermeront et l'intégration s'arrêtera.

Mais, en dépit de cette fermeture, une large majorité des Iraniens ne se sentent pas tellement éloignés de l'état d'esprit de la société contemporaine, car la communication n'est pas le seul moyen de sortir de l'enfermement communautaire ou idéologique imposé. Le rôle de l'instruction, ou ce qu'on peut appeler le niveau culturel, est tout aussi important. Une convergence relative entre les personnes instruites de deux cultures

litique intérieure, était sous haute surveillance et sous la pression de la censure. Les journaux officiels, dépourvus de leur fonction d'informer, étaient largement dévalorisés. Parallèlement toutefois, quelques journaux traitant plutôt de sujets culturels, philosophiques et relatifs aux sciences sociales ont eu la chance de survivre. *Kian* et *Ettelaat* – politico-économique – en sont deux exemples parmi une dizaine. Sous l'influence de courants cultu-

analyses était de l'ordre de l'interdit, ou, comme on le dit, ici en Iran, dépassait la ligne rouge. Les journaux ont été dans l'obligation d'essayer de combler le vide de l'information par l'enseignement.

La presse, principal appareil de communication, devait aussi se charger de la tâche d'instruire, devenir un complément des universités. Des professeurs, des écrivains et des intellectuels ont occupé une place éminente dans la presse réformatrice iranienne, qui, pendant ces trois dernières années, a publié des articles scientifiques, des essais philosophiques, des analyses intellectuelles, davantage que des informations. Du fait du dysfonctionnement de la presse en tant qu'appareil de communication, l'instruction est devenue sa fonction primordiale. Ce n'est pas par hasard que la plupart des journalistes les plus célèbres – Ganji, Hajarjan, Djalaipour... – sont plutôt des intellectuels académiques.

Conséquence de cette stratégie : en dépit des fermetures de journaux, la société iranienne n'a pas grande difficulté à comprendre les termes principaux du langage commun de la culture mondiale et à s'y intégrer. Les systèmes politiques conservateurs peuvent faire obstacle à la communication mais pas à l'instruction.

A l'avenir, si la presse iranienne en a la possibilité, elle couplera instruction et communication, elle s'occupera de faire communiquer les gens pour les encourager à contribuer à la démocratisation. Si l'Iran entre, au contraire, dans une nouvelle période – improbable – de haute surveillance de la libre communication, la presse reprendra alors sa fonction d'instruction dans l'espoir d'affaiblir indirectement les résistances conservatrices. Il suffit d'augmenter le nombre des personnes instruites, d'expliquer, simplement, ce qu'est la démocratie. Les gens comprennent le reste.

Seyed Motaza Mardiha
est membre de la rédaction en chef d'« Asr-e-Azagedan », journal interdit depuis le 23 avril.

En dépit des fermetures de journaux, la société iranienne n'a pas grande difficulté à comprendre les termes principaux du langage commun de la culture mondiale et à s'y intégrer

semble moins difficile que la convergence entre les instruits et les non-instruits d'une même culture, notamment sur le plan des questions essentielles. A un haut niveau d'instruction, les questions principales de la vie sociale – droits de l'homme, entre autres – ont une forte chance de trouver les mêmes réponses, ici et là.

La société iranienne, dans les deux dernières décennies, n'a pas librement communiqué avec la société mondiale, ce qui l'a empêchée de comprendre le sens de la culture mondiale par la voie de communication. Mais l'autre voie est restée ouverte : le niveau moyen d'instruction s'est en effet élevé pendant ce temps et le nombre des étudiants, celui des lecteurs, etc. ont nettement augmenté. Si, malgré les difficultés dans l'ordre de la communication, l'Iran d'aujourd'hui n'a pas de grand problème pour se mettre au diapason de la culture mondiale, c'est en raison du développement de l'instruction.

Avant le 23 mai 1997, date de l'élection présidentielle dont le vainqueur fut Mohammad Khatami, et pendant dix ans, l'information, notamment en matière de po-

rels et intellectuels, constitués dans le cadre de ces journaux, un terreau culturel s'est constitué. L'idée de l'intégration dans la culture moderne (démocratie, société civile, droits de l'homme, etc.) a pu être enracinée fortement.

Si les hommes politiques, tels que Khatami, Mohadjarian (ministre de la culture, cible des attaques des conservateurs), Nouri (l'ancien ministre de l'intérieur, jugé et emprisonné pour son ouverture politique), Saïd Hajarjan (coordinateur du projet de réforme et conseiller du président, victime d'un acte terroriste), ont réussi à rallier autour d'eux des partisans de la réforme politico-culturelle, c'est parce que des savants et des intellectuels comme Abdolkarim Soroush, le grand théoricien de l'islam démocratique, avaient déjà renforcé, par le biais de journaux culturels et scientifiques, la capacité intellectuelle d'une large partie des gens concernés.

Après le 23 mai 1997, les conditions d'information ont plus ou moins changé, mais les journaux se heurtaient toujours à des obstacles. C'est pourquoi ils ont plus ou moins prolongé leur stratégie : une grande partie des nouvelles, des

Le Monde

MARDI 23 MAI 2000

Turkish court upholds heavy jail terms over pro-Ocalan hunger strike

ANKARA, May 24 (AFP) - A Turkish appeals court has upheld 45-month jail terms for 18 pro-Kurdish party members who went on hunger strike in protest at Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan's capture last year, the Anatolia news agency reported Wednesday.

The defendants, all members of Turkey's main Kurdish party, the People's Democracy Party (HADEP), were found guilty of "aiding and abetting the terrorist organization," the official jargon for Ocalan's Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK).

The convicted HADEP members had been sentenced to prison by a state security court in the southeastern Turkish city of Malatya, the agency added.

They were among scores of Kurdish sympathizers who went on hunger strike after Ocalan was brought to Turkey for trial on February 16 last year after he was seized in an undercover operation in Kenya.

Ocalan was convicted of treason and sentenced to death in June for his role in the PKK's 15-year armed campaign for self-rule in Turkey's southeastern corner. Although the sentence was upheld in November, the Ankara government has suspended the execution being carried out until the European Court of Human Rights rules on Ocalan's complaints against Turkey. The appeals court ruling on the 18 HADEP members is expected to set a precedent for similar cases where people have been convicted for their participation in pro-Ocalan hunger strikes.

One such case involves HADEP leader Ahmet Turan Demir and his predecessor Murat Bozlak, who along with 16 others, were jailed for 45 months each in February for HADEP-run hunger strikes and demonstrations in support of Ocalan, when he was in exile in Italy from November 1998 to January 1999. HADEP, which campaigns for increased cultural rights for Kurds, is regarded by Turkish officials as linked to the PKK and is threatened with closure over the charge, which the party denies. Ocalan's rebels declared an end to their war against Ankara last year in order to transform themselves into a political entity, but the peace pledges have been brushed aside by Turkey as a "terrorist ploy".

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Return to vacated villages at turtle-speed

Ankara - Turkish Daily News May 25, 2000

Sirnak Deputy and Motherland Party (ANAP) Deputy Chairman Salih Yildirim criticized the coalition government for delays in preparations in allowing people in the east and southeast to return to their villages.

Yildirim explained to the Turkish Daily News that 6,153 settlements, 1,779 villages and other hamlets had been vacated in the area. Either by force, or for security reasons, approximately 1 million people have been relocated to larger cities. The Sirnak deputy blamed lack of budgetary funds for the "turtle-speed" progress of the efforts to resettle the vacated villagers. He stated that TL 700 trillion was needed for the preparations to assist in their return, yet only TL 7.5 trillion has been allocated in the 2000 budget. This represents only 10 percent of the funds required. "This indicates that this year's attempts to encourage people to return to their villages have been in vain," Yildirim maintained.

Security will be restored by people going back home

All the problems in the southeast are tied to security, argued Yildirim, adding that security cannot be restored in the area unless people return to their villages. "It would be extremely difficult to maintain peace and security somewhere if people are not permitted to contribute to promoting order," he said. "If you wait until all the security measures are in place in the area before allowing people to go back to their villages, it will take an extremely long time and therefore be counterproductive. If people are encouraged to go back home by their own means, a 50 percent success rate can be achieved." A return to the villages should not be assessed in economic terms alone, Yildirim explained, stressing that there were also social, educational, psychological, cultural and political dimensions involved.

Yildirim then turned to the question of how people will survive in the area. "A solution has to be found based on the demographic structure of the area, as well as educational standards, climate, geographic conditions and peoples' skills," he commented. "Their lifestyle, skills and knowledge are best suited to animal husbandry. Trying to promote animal husbandry by implementing mega-projects will not work. The type of farming best suited to the climate and peoples' skills is sheep farming and that is what should be encouraged there."

In his statement Yildirim explained that they had successfully initiated a sheep farming project in Sirnak which, because of financial restrictions, only included approximately 150 families. "We were hoping to enlarge the project to 1,000 families this year, but unfortunately we were unable to obtain the necessary financial backing," Yildirim added. Asserting that peoples'

return to their villages should include social aspects as well as the region's infrastructural requirements, Yildirim emphasized, "This move will only be meaningful if the people do not feel obligated or in need of others in order to survive."

Ecevit's 'Central Village' project would not work

"I have a project for people going back to their villages which is the most comprehensive designed so far," Yildirim's statement read. "It is based on relevant regional conditions. Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit's 'Central Village' project is not relevant to the area, primarily due to the mentality of the locals, their culture and geographical conditions. This is why the administration should support a feasible project tailored to the region. The necessary financial support and timetable should be laid on for the project. Animal husbandry should be supported by the construction of the necessary meat processing facilities, animal feed plants, dairy processing establishments and the infrastructure for marketing the products. This will be the only way to improve living standards in the region. You cannot accomplish anything by just giving those people a few sheep."

Parlak: There are people picking over garbage dumps to find food

In his statement, Hakkari deputy Evliya Parlak said: "In Hakkari, peoples' biggest dream is to return to their villages. We suggested to the government that rather than starting a bidding process, the people should be given the necessary construction materials and equipment to build their own homes and plow their own land. What they need is the opportunity to feed their own chickens, and if we give them some animals on top of that, they will be content."

This issue was also debated in Parliament. Last week, I visited Hakkari and talked with the governor and military officials in the area. They share the same feelings. There are people who want to initiate a bidding process. I hope our proposal is accepted, as I think it would be best for our people. There are people living in the slum areas who have no jobs and are therefore forced to scavenge in garbage dumps for food.

They would be the only ones who would like to return back to the villages. I do not think that those who have found employment would consider going back home. The Interior Ministry allocated TL 1.2 trillion to Hakkari for use this year. Last year, a bidding process was initiated and a contract awarded to build 40 houses for a village designed to have 125 houses. Having buildings constructed through a bidding process causes the cost to rise. The cost for each resident was estimated to be TL 5 billion last year, which increased to TL 9 billion this year. I estimate that the villagers could build their own homes for as little as TL 5 billion.

They do not want concrete buildings. What is the purpose of all this? Is it to help contractors get richer, or to encourage people to go back to their villages? A distinction should be made between the two. If the actual intention is to have people go back to their villages, the necessary material, equipment and supervision must be provided to expedite the process. Otherwise it would be extremely difficult for the state to provide the necessary funds for homes to be professionally built by contractors. There are too many villages to be reconstructed. In the town of Cukurca alone 70 villages were vacated and need reconstruction."

Korkmaz: Unemployment insurance should first be set up in the east

Tunceli Mayor Hasan Korkmaz was also interviewed by the Turkish Daily News. He maintained that "the project to return people to their villages should be implemented without delay. People have emigrated in all directions. Those who could not go to big cities in western parts of Turkey have settled either in Tunceli or nearby towns. In some areas, two to three families share a single dwelling."

Now there is a critical housing shortage in Tunceli. The state should provide free credit for housing and the purchasing of animals so that they can sustain some means of living. If this is not possible, long-term, low-interest credit should be provided. If the state does not wish to encourage a return to the villages, then housing projects should be set up. Unemployment is another big problem in the region. There are approximately 3-4,000 people without jobs and therefore the unemployment insurance system must first be set up in the eastern and the southeastern regions."

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U.N. Forming a New Panel for Inspecting Iraq Weapons

New York Times - May 25, 2000

By BARBARA CROSSETTE

UNITED NATIONS, May 24 -- Despite increasingly negative signals from Iraq on the future of arms inspections there, the head of a new monitoring and inspection commission is moving ahead with the staffing of his advisory panel, members of the group said today.

An American expert is likely to be put in charge of training and equipping the inspection commission, with Europeans holding other crucial positions, officials say. A core staff of about 40 people is expected to be hired by sometime next month. The United States and other nations are also expected to provide the panel with intelligence information, officials said.

An advisory "college of commissioners" -- 16 arms-control and weapons experts from around the world -- met with the chief inspector, Hans Blix, a former Swedish foreign minister and ex-director of the International Atomic Energy Agency, twice this week to review his first report on the establishment of the new United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission. Dr. Blix is chairman of the advisory group as well as the commission, which replaces the inspection body known as Unscm.

The American representative in the college of commissioners is Robert J. Einhorn, assistant secretary of state for arms control.

On the eve of the meeting this week, Iraq's vice president, Taha Yassin Ramadan, condemned the commission in some of the strongest terms to date. The Iraqis continue to insist that sanctions be lifted before any arms inspections can resume.

"Iraq has become clearer and clearer in its rejections," an American official said today. "We think this is very unfortunate. Iraq needs to understand that if it wants sanctions to be suspended or eventually lifted there is only one route to that goal, and that route passes through full cooperation and compliance."

The Iraqis, who have been earning large amounts of money through the legal and illegal sales of oil, have made no moves behind the scenes to send a more conciliatory message to Dr. Blix, as some members of the Security Council had hoped. Dr. Blix has said he will not negotiate with the Iraqis to win their cooperation. He has not made any effort to go to Baghdad, saying that the first move is up to President Saddam Hussein.

Dr. Blix has drawn some criticism from independent arms control experts who say that he was not tough enough with the Iraqis in the past, when he was in charge of nuclear monitoring, while Unscm supervised inspections on biological, chemical and missile systems.

Critics also say that his plan to include "cultural" training for the new commission is a sop to those in the United Nations friendly to Iraq, who demand that the Iraqis be treated more diplomatically after years of tougher inspection techniques. "He is trying to demonstrate to Iraq that there's a real opportunity for Iraq in cooperating with Unmovic, but that its up to Iraq," the American official said of Dr. Blix. "He is making clear to the Iraqis that while there will be elements of continuity from the past in terms of the responsibilities of Unmovic and its mandate in Iraq, there will also be some innovation and some changes from the past."

"Dr. Blix wants to show a kind of fresh face to the world and to Iraq," the official said, "but at the same time show that this is truly a professional organization that is determined to pursue full Iraqi compliance with resolutions of the Security Council."

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Death penalty sought for 13 Turkish fundamentalists

AP - May 25, 2000

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey: The prosecutor's office on Wednesday demanded the death penalty for 13 Islamic militants accused of killing 156 people, many found dead in dungeons across the country, the Anatolia news agency said.

The defendants are members of the radical Islamic group Hezbollah, which aims to form an Islamic state in the overwhelmingly Kurdish southeast. Two other defendants faced a maximum 15 years in prison for membership in an armed group.

The victims included members of the main Kurdish rebel group, the Kurdistan Workers Party or PKK, and businessmen who refused to support the group. Some experts and foreign diplomats have speculated that Hezbollah, which killed dozens of PKK guerrillas but has not until recently attacked Turkish security forces, was backed by Turkish authorities and encouraged to kill rival Kurdish activists.

Hezbollah, which is not linked to the Lebanon-based guerrilla group of the same name, was formed in the southeast in the early 1980s when the PKK was becoming powerful in the region as well. Police have detained more than 1,000 suspected Hezbollah militants since launching a crackdown against the group in January. Police also unearthed the 66 bodies of presumed victims of the group in the basements of safe houses.

Prosecutors blamed neighboring Iran for supporting the group in an effort to export its theocratic regime to predominantly Muslim but secular Turkey. Although some 50 Turks are on death row, Turkey has not executed anyone since 1984.

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LES PROVOCATIONS DES BARBOUZES D'ANKARA!

Info-Türk - Mai 2000, N°261

Un livre publié illégalement et distribué pleinement dans la communauté turque en Belgique provoque des extrémistes non seulement contre les organisations et personnes d'opposition mais également contre la Ligue belge des droits de l'Homme et plusieurs députés et sénateurs belges. Il y a trois mois, quatre agents des services secrets turcs en poste en Allemagne ont été déclarés persona non grata par les autorités allemandes car ils recrutaient des mouchards parmi la communauté turque en vue de surveiller et d'infiltrer les mouvements d'opposition et attisaient la rivalité entre Turcs et Kurdes.

Selon l'hebdomadaire Der Spiegel du 4 mars 2000, ces quatre hommes, qui travaillent comme diplomates dans des consulats turcs, étaient également soupçonnés d'avoir livré des fausses informations au service allemand de contre-espionnage concernant le PKK. Il est de notoriété publique que les services secrets utilisent pleinement certains correspondants des grands médias turcs pour leurs activités occultes.

Depuis quelques mois, dans la communauté turque de Belgique circule un livre en turc intitulé La dimension belge de la terreur de PKK, la voilà! (PKK terörünün içyüzü: Iste onlar!). Contraire à la législation belge, ce livre de 176 pages ne contient ni le nom et l'adresse de son éditeur, ni le numéro de dépôt légal. Malgré cela, il est distribué dans certaines associations proches de l'Ambassade de Turquie.

De plus, malgré le fait qu'il a été publié sous un faux nom, Mümtaz Alperener, tout le monde sait très bien que ce livre plein de mensonges, provocations et insultes est l'oeuvre du correspondant d'un de plus grands quotidiens de Turquie. Dans un article destiné à la publicité de ce livre, ce quotidien avait avoué que l'auteur de ce livre était leur correspondant à Bruxelles.

Selon un tableau de ce livre, dessiné "à la militaire", non seulement des organisations kurdes mais également plusieurs organisations non-kurdes seraient "liées directement au secrétariat régional du PKK en Belgique". Dans cette liste figurent l'Institut kurde de Bruxelles, l'Association kurde de l'Amitié, l'Association des Arméniens démocrates et l'Association culturelle de Mésopotamie (Assyriens) ainsi que Info-Türk. (Pages 51)

Dans un chapitre consacré à Info-Türk, l'auteur formule une série de provocations contre notre rédacteur en chef, notamment: "Dogan Özgüden, dont le nom figure dans toutes les activités anti-turques en Belgique, suit attentivement toutes les réunions contre la Turquie et prend des notes afin de les utiliser ultérieurement quand il s'avère nécessaire. Après les incidents de 1994 à Bruxelles, en signant un communiqué commun [avec les associations kurde, arménienne et araméenne], il a donné la preuve de son entente avec le PKK. Il n'a pas hésité de faire la même chose après les incidents des 17-19 décembre 1998 en accusant les 'Loups Gris' comme le responsable de ces événements." (pages 98-99).

Le journaliste-barbouze fait également le "scoop" de sa vie professionnelle en mentionnant dans cette liste Maître Georges-Henri Beauthier ainsi que plusieurs députés et sénateurs belges comme subordonnés au secrétariat régional du PKK.

Les élus belges qui figurent dans ce livre: J. Vande Lanotte, F. Vandenbroucke, Hugo Van Rompoey, Willy Kuijpers, Jef Sleenck, Paul Pataer, Germain Dufour, Martine Devos, D. Van der Maelen, J. De Bremaecker, S. Verhaven, D. Grimbergesch, M. Vogels, M. Martens, Ph. de Feyt, E. Van Voerenbergh; J.M. Delizee, M. Harmegnies, Y. Ylieff, A. De Maght-Albrecht, W. Draps, J. Gossens. (Pages 56, 61, 62).

Quant à la Ligue belge des droits de l'Homme, le livre provoque les extrémistes turcs contre cette association et son ancien président en ces termes:

"La Ligue des droits de l'Homme, présidée par George-Henri Beauthier, un avocat du Barreau de Bruxelles, se charge de blanchir le PKK sur le plan international. Après ses plusieurs navettes entre la Belgique et la Turquie, Beauthier est interdit de voyager à la Turquie. Il a emmené plusieurs observateurs à la Turquie pour le procès relatif à l'assassinat de Göktepe, corres-

pendant du journal Evrensel. On se demande toujours pour quel but poursuit-il ces activités: professionnel ou politique? Ce qui est certain, il les fait au nom de quelques-uns." (Page 99) Le livre contient également des photos de plusieurs personnes prises comme cible avec sous-titres tout à fait provocateurs. (Pages 154 à 171)

Rappel 1: Le président de l'Association des droits de l'Homme de Turquie (IHD) M. Akin Birdal avait été fusillé en 1998 au siège de son organisation à Ankara à la suite d'une série de provocations des grands médias affirmant qu'il serait au service du PKK.

Rappel 2: Les auteurs et les instigateurs des attaques néo-fascistes de 1994 et 1998 à Saint Josse, justifiées entièrement dans ce livre, n'ont pas encore été inculpés malgré l'existence de plusieurs photos, films et coupures de presse comme preuves irréfutables.

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Report Calls for Government's Return to Iraq's Kurdistan

Al-Sharq al-Awsat 26 May 00

"Baghdad Calls for an End to the 'Abnormal Situation' in Kurdistan and the Central Authority's Return. Iraq Admits It Is Facing Difficulties in Dealing With the Minorities' Rights"

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, Al-Sharq al-Awsat-A special report issued by the Iraqi Foreign Ministry says that stability in Iraq's Kurdistan region cannot be reestablished unless the abnormal situation ends and the central authority returns to it.

Al-Sharq al-Awsat has obtained a copy of the report that carries the title "The Kurds' Position in Iraq." It says: "It is important that foreign parties should stop interfering in Iraq's internal affairs, including the imposition of the two illegal no fly zones on northern and southern Iraq on the pretext of protecting the population. Meanwhile, US and British aircraft are continuing their daily sorties to attack and destroy civilian installations and kill and wound civilians."

According to the report, Iraq is facing many problems in dealing with the issue of protecting minorities because of the direct foreign military interference in its internal affairs. The report explains that the Iraqi Government withdrew its administration from the northern region after the United States and some western countries resorted to direct military intervention on the pretext of protecting the population in northern Iraq and providing humanitarian aid. It adds: "The Iraqi Government has held a series of dialogues with the Kurdish parties for the purpose of reaching a solution that will put an end to our Kurdish people's suffering. But the political pressures exerted by the United States on some of these parties have prevented the attainment of an agreement."

The report then says that the suffering of the Iraqi citizen in Kurdistan has continued as a result of the Government's absence. Security incidents and the fighting between the armed Kurdish groups most often turn into street battles that claim the lives of hundreds of innocent citizens. It adds that the region has become a stage for interventions by the armies of some neighboring countries, such as Turkey and Iran, under various excuses and these have forced many citizens to leave their houses for safer places.

The Foreign Ministry's report goes on to say that US practices in northern Iraq clearly reflect the US administration's double standard policy toward the Kurds. It calls Kurds in neighboring countries terrorists while claiming at the same time that it is protecting them in northern Iraq.

The report coincided with Iraqi President Saddam Husayn's remarks at a meeting with members of the ruling Ba'th Party. A number of Kurdish citizens who attended the meeting told him that Kurdistan is yearning for him. He said: "Iraq from one corner to another will not be shaken by or give way to any agent, traitor, or the US and Zionist enemies."

The National Assembly asserted at the start of its sessions following the March elections that this "will be the year of national unity and Kurdistan's return to central Government."

Pro-Iraq Kurds, Army Units Said Massing in Northern Areas

Al-Sharq al-Awsat 27 May 00 by Nali Ali in Irbil

[FBIS Translated Text] Arrivals in Iraqi Kurdistan from Mosul and Karkuk say that armed units composed of pro-Iraq Kurdish tribes are massing in several positions close to the Kurdish governorates in northern Iraq, particularly in the Ba'idrah subdistrict near Dahuk city as well as in some areas between Mosul and Irbil, the capital of the Kurdistan region. These forces are armed with field weapons and artillery pieces of various caliber and backed by some Iraqi Army units which were brought there following a period of military training in camps created for this purpose.

Chieftains of the armed tribes and commanders of these armed units spoke of their "readiness to attack the northern governorates and liberate them from the filth of the agents of Israel and United States."

On another level, Al-Sharq al-Awsat received corroborated reports that a special force led by Qusayy, President Saddam Husayn's son, stormed Tirjan village, located between Mosul and Irbil, on 20 May. The force arrested at random a number of people and took them away in Land Cruiser vehicles covered with mud. Observers in Iraqi Kurdistan say that these moves are provocative and are intended to intimidate the people and increase their apprehension. ---

KDP's Sami Abdul-Rahman Rebuts PUK Statement

The Kurdistan Observer May 27, 2000

At a press conference on May 22, Sami Abdul-Rahman, KRG (Kurdistan Regional Government) Deputy Prime Minister and member of the KDP Politburo, responded to questions about allegations made by Feraydoon Abdul-Qadir, PUK Politburo member, published in the PUK official newspaper, Kurdistan-i-Niwe, and other PUK media.

He said that the KDP had wanted to respond immediately to the very inflammatory and derogatory statements, but decided that it would be wiser to wait to see what might follow. We hoped it was not the beginning of another negative media campaign. The KRG Deputy Prime Minister said that he would have preferred not to have to air our differences publicly, because every moment should be spent in solving the Kurdish question. We must work on the reconstruction and development of our country. But, when push comes to shove, we cannot remain mute and

do nothing. Perhaps the PUK should be asked why they are making such statements at this particular time.

If Abdul-Qadir alleges that the appointing of a president of the Iraqi Kurdistan region and the establishing of a separate Cassation Court in Sulaimanyah are not obstacles to the peace process, then what are the obstacles? Abdul-Rahman said that appointing what is called a president for the region and/or leader of the liberation movement or whatever title that they use is a thorny issue that even the 1992 elections were unable to solve. At that time, we managed to form a joint National Assembly and a joint government. But that issue remains unresolved. Everyone knows that this is a very crucial matter. He stressed that for any Party to unilaterally decide to appoint a leader for the region is obviously illegitimate according to the law of the land.

Two of the basic laws passed by the Kurdistan Front are: Law No. 1 about the parliamentary elections and Law No. 2 specifically about the election of the leader of the Kurdistan Liberation Movement (President of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region). The text of Law No. 2 clearly states that every eligible person in this region may participate in the election of the leader. The Washington Agreement requires the solving of problems on the basis of unified institutions. Basic important problems which the KDP and PUK cannot solve should be left for the people to decide by election. Disregarding the rights of the whole population to elect the regional leader is a violation of the law and the terms and conditions agreed to in the Washington Agreement. If the PUK can simply appoint the leader of the region, then what is the reason for an election?

Until this question about the leadership is resolved, no other serious political issues can be resolved. The PUK appointment of a leader of the region is illegal and is an obstacle to the forwarding of the whole peace process.

The Cassation Court was established during the time that the joint regional government was functioning. When the PUK occupied Erbil, they added five more judges to it and even after the PUK occupation ended, this Court continued to function, with the inclusion of these new members. We did and do respect the decisions of this Court. The PUK has made this into a problem.

The KDP has already suggested a way to resolve the question of the Sulaimanyah courts. We proposed that the Appeals Court in Sulaimanyah should hear cases and then forward them to the Cassation Court in Erbil for their opinion. When the Cassation Court has given their opinion it would be returned to Sulaimanyah to their Appeals Court without any interference from the administration. Unfortunately, just as in everything else, the PUK wants to make a fifty-fifty Cassation Court. This is an unacceptable position to anyone familiar with law and justice systems.

The Cassation Court was the one significant institution that remained unified. When all the PUK attempts to form a fifty-fifty Cassation Court failed, they unilaterally established an illegal and separate Cassation Court in Sulaimanyah.

Clearly, the PUK has taken two negative steps that hamper the implementation of the Washington Agreement. We believe that they have to retract them so that the Agreement can be smoothly implemented. The PUK continues to claim that the KDP tries to avoid settling the basic issues mentioned in the Washington Agreement? What are these basic issues?

We believe the basic issues are: meetings of the joint Interim Assembly revenue sharing establishment of a joint government elections

On the subject of revenue, the KDP has, up to October of last year, given the PUK 110 million ID (Swiss). These funds were supposed to be used for public service administration. Our information indicates that the funds were used for other purposes like the purchase of weapons, and perhaps funding the satellite channel.

The KDP continues to be prepared to abide by its financial and other commitments but keep in mind that every agreement comes as a complete package with mutual responsibilities and obligations.

In June 1999, the High Coordination Committee (HCC, consisting of KDP and PUK politburo members) went to Washington. We discussed the issues of parliamentary sessions, forming a coalition government, revenue sharing, and the election. The KDP agreed to all of these, but the PUK refused to sign at the last minute. All that the PUK wanted and still wants is to bring their militia back to Erbil and to form a fifty-fifty government, which has already proven to be unworkable. KDP President, Massoud Barzani, before and after signing the Washington Agreement, reminded the PUK Secretary General, as well as the American administration, that there was no way back to the fifty-fifty sharing of government.

They talk about normalization. We all want normalization. We believe that the opening of KDP offices in Sulaimanyah and Kalar, for example, and PUK offices in Erbil and Duhok, followed by the opening of Party branches in these locations with the authority to open local television and radio stations and to print and distribute information are real steps in the process of normalization. We also believe that local and international observers should be given the opportunity to witness and testify that normalization has been achieved to a sufficient degree to provide an atmosphere conducive to the holding of free and fair elections.

The PUK are avoiding the meetings of the Interim Assembly (Parliament) and they are the ones who are creating such a tense atmosphere that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to hold free and fair elections in the region.

The Washington Agreement calls for the meeting of the Interim Assembly on the basis of the results of the 1992 elections. This is the KDP position but it is rejected by the PUK. The Agreement also stipulates that the Interim Assembly may form a coalition government but, whether such a government is formed or not, it states that new parliamentary elections should be arranged by the Interim Assembly and the HCC within six months of the first meeting of the Interim Assembly.

The KDP recognizes that the issue of revenue is important. While the joint government was functioning, all revenue was deposited in the Regional Bank. PUK officials, at that time, were in the position to decide how to spend it, since they held the key posts of Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and head of the Bank. Despite this the PUK started the four-year internal war on May 1, 1994 and abandoned the joint government. It was unreasonable for them to expect that revenue would be handed over to them to finance their war.

The Washington Agreement like any other agreement comes as a packaged deal complete with obligations and commitments for both sides. Neither side can pick and choose which articles suit them. The conditions of the Agreement must be accepted and implemented by both sides in full

regardless of whether or not any particular condition is in their favour or not. In the spring of last year, the PUK arrested KDP supporters, their Secretary General unleashed a media offensive against the KDP while he was abroad, and allowed the PKK to transgress their territory to resume fighting against KDP forces.

Then last autumn, when a KDP delegation of top officials, headed by Nechirvan Barzani, visited Qalacholan where the PUK headquarters is, 50 million ID (Swiss) were handed over to the PUK. One week later they announced their appointment of the president of the region and establishment of their Cassation Court, both illegal actions. Do they want the KDP to finance a presidency appointed by the PUK politburo?

The PUK says that monthly Ibrahim Khalil (Khabur) customs revenue exceeds US\$ 35 million and also claims that some neighboring countries confirm this. Last year another PUK official had calculated the revenue to be around US\$ 1 billion! If the KDP earns US\$ 1 billion, how much do the Governments of Iraq and Turkey earn? In fact, these are just wild musings. All of these estimations are without foundation. There is no proof to their allegations, for if there were they would name the governments alluded to and provide the proof. You may have noticed that the PUK never mentions its own revenue, which may be comparable to or even exceed that of Ibrahim Khalil.

The PUK also alleges that they were obliged to establish their Cassation Court in order to deal with cases from the area under their control. The KRG Deputy Prime Minister said that the Cassation Court regularly tackled cases from all the four governorates of Erbil, Sulaimanyah, Duhok, and Kirkuk.

The Cassation Court is made up of respected and experienced judges, who have stated many times in public that they were not responsible for delays that held up the cases of people who came from areas under PUK control. Any hold ups that occurred were due to delays in their handling in Sulaimanyah or as a result of not being forwarded to the Cassation Court in a timely manner.

It is surprising that the PUK accuse the KDP of being responsible for the dissolution of the joint government. The joint government, formed by the KDP, PUK, and other Parties, functioned right up to 1994. During the spring of 1994, the PUK declared war on the KDP. Everyone knows that the PUK initiated all four unfortunate rounds of internal conflict from 1994-1997. The KDP was forced into a defensive position. The coalition managed to survive the first round of war. The regional government was ruined exactly when the PUK occupied Erbil in January 1995. The KDP Second Branch building was razed to the ground, the Sheraton was virtually destroyed and both ruins remain as testimony for all to know who is responsible for the devastation of the joint government. KDP Ministers had to move their base to Shaqlawa but they did not form another government. They remained hopeful that the joint government could be resurrected.

The PUK denies that a secret meeting was held with the Iraqi Higher Council of the Islamic Revolution in Sulaimanyah. Why not acknowledge the truth? The meeting took place on March 3, 2000 at the Sarchinar summer resort and the PUK hosted and participated in the meeting. There were some other parties present at the meeting as well. We could provide a list of the names of the attendees if necessary. In fact, those who were present at the meeting told us about it. It seems that there is something the PUK would like to hide.

Although the KDP and PUK agreed to prepare houses for 30 families each in Erbil and Sulaimanyah for internally displaced people from the four-year war, now the PUK has backtracked. Massoud Barzani has unilaterally allowed the families of PUK supporters to return to Erbil. The PUK has either hampered their return or didn't want it to happen. Until now the 30 houses in Erbil have remained unoccupied. If those 30 families are willing to return they are most welcome. They will be fully respected and safeguarded.

At the end of the session with the press, Abdul-Rahman emphasized that the KDP would not be dragged into a negative media campaign. We simply needed to respond to these latest PUK allegations and accusations in order to clarify and explain our position for all to understand.

We believe that it is very important and challenging to devote every minute and hour to the service of our people and to build our country. We wish the PUK would join us in this challenging work and take advantage of this rare opportunity.

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KDP Leader Urges Party Media To End Attacks

Kurdistan Satellite TV 28 May 00

[FBIS Log] Following the media attacks of last few days, between the KDP and PUK's media organs, [KDP] Leader Mas'ud Barzani sent a message to the central KDP media office today, 28th May 2000, urging them to stop media vituperation and stop responding to PUK's Media campaign. Following is the text of the message:

Neither the Kurdish nation nor their friends have the energy to listen to media vituperation. It is clear for the Kurdish nation who is serving them and developing the country and who wants peace and has a firm stance towards it. All realities are clear and obvious. You should keep yourselves away from media vituperation and do not respond to the PUK's media attacks. If they think that their media attacks serves them, let them continue with it.

Your brother; Mas'ud Barzani; 28th May 2000

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US to open permanent Southeast bureau

Selcuk Gultasli Ankara - Turkish Daily News May 27, 2000

The United States will open a permanent bureau in Diyarbakir in a bid to contribute to the region's economic development. A senior U.S. official stated that U.S. Ambassador to Turkey Mark Parris would sign a protocol in Sirnak to open a permanent Southeast bureau in June. The press had previously indicated that the bureau would be opened in Diyarbakir. Ambassador Parris will start a week-long visit to the Southeast on Monday during which he will visit Van, Sirnak, Hakkari and Batman.

The U.S. official told a select group of journalists that the United States would institutionalize its presence in the Southeast to enable local tradesmen to meet U.S. businessmen and give them opportunities to do business with U.S. companies. Stressing that for the last two years, the situation in the region has been dramatically changing as the violence and terror

stemming from the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) has almost ended, the senior official said that Parris would be the first U.S. ambassador to visit the region since the early 1980s.

He added that the aim of Parris' visit was to get firsthand knowledge and thorough insight into the region's current situation. "To end 15 years of terror and violence in the region was very important for Turkey both domestically and internationally," the official said. "Therefore, it is important for us to have a deep understanding of the region's current situation."

Noting that Parris would be meeting businessmen, mayors, university staff and local people during his trip, the official added that the visit would be helpful in assessing what contribution the United States could make to the region's development since the terror has started to decline enormously.

According to the official, Parris is interested in getting the locals' perception on civil liberties and human rights abuses in the region. As bilateral relations on a wide range of issues are being pursued between Turkey and the United States, Turkish authorities are not concerned about Parris' visit to the region, despite some Turkish authorities' previous claims that the United States had intentions to support the creation of an independent Kurdish state in northern Iraq.

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Turkey Reviews the Darkest Hours in Its Painful Past

New York Times May 28, 2000 By STEPHEN KINZER

STANBUL, May 27 -- When a Turkish prosecutor announced recently that he wanted to indict Gen. Kenan Evren, who led the 1980 military coup, officials in Ankara were not amused. They quickly announced that the prosecutor had been placed in semiretirement, and then said he would be investigated for abusing his office.

"For years I waited for someone to open this case, but too much time was passing so I decided to do it myself," said the prosecutor, Sacit Kayasu. "This army is my army, and it should protect me, not repress me." It remains highly unlikely that General Evren, now an 83-year-old retiree, will ever be called to account for his three unsuccessful coup attempts, for the one that succeeded in September 1980, or for the excesses committed during three years of military rule that followed. But the fact that a prosecutor could even consider indicting him reflects a new climate in which the coup, along with other painful episodes in modern Turkish history, can be discussed more openly than ever before.

Before leaving power in 1983, the military imposed a law giving itself immunity from prosecution for crimes committed during the period when it ran the country. A move to repeal that law is gathering strength, though there is no prospect of a repeal anytime soon.

According to the official version of the events of 1980, Turkey had fallen into such chaos -- with people cowering in their homes as cities were besieged by terror -- that the military was forced to intervene. The arrest of thousands of people after the coup is said to have been a regrettable necessity.

Attempts to prosecute General Evren are not the only signs that a revisionist view is emerging. Two new films portray the torture that was widespread in military prisons. One of the films, called "Where the Rose Wilted," tells the story of an innocent man who is arrested following the coup and, in intensely graphic scenes, savagely tortured by sadistic police officers.

"How can they do this?" one character wonders. "Even beasts wouldn't do such a thing."

The other film, "After the Fall," tells the story of the coup through the eyes of a 5-year-old boy whose family is shattered by its effects. His parents are arrested and tortured, his grandmother collapses and dies during an army raid on her house, and his grandfather begins losing his mind as he wonders who is responsible for the tragedy unfolding around him. "If one family in a small village suffered so much from the coup, imagine what happened to the whole country," said the film's director, Atif Yilmaz. "The effects of the coup are still with us. A lot of people are still carrying scars after 20 years."

Some of those who were tortured after the coup have gone on to become successful in business, journalism and academia. A handful have even been elected to Parliament, including one man whose glistening teeth are all false, replacements for the ones smashed out during torture sessions.

"It's finally becoming possible to acknowledge and discuss these things," Mr. Yilmaz said. "There's more openness and more desire for honesty. Part of it comes from our moving closer to the European Union, but a lot of it just has to do with Turkey starting to grow up. What people like me are doing is trying to give this country back its memory." The 1980 coup is not the only sensitive subject filmmakers are beginning to confront.

One much-praised new film deals with the "wealth tax" that was imposed on Christian and Jewish Turks during the 1940's with the intention of bankrupting them or forcing them to emigrate. Another portrays Kurds as victims of discrimination and military repression.

"I wouldn't say the military likes this," said a foreign ambassador posted in Ankara, "but they're letting it happen."

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Deputy Piskinsut, Minister Turk on Torture

Anatolia Agency 29 May 00

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ANKARA, May 29 (A.A) - Parliament Human Rights Commission is preparing a report on ``Human Rights and Justice`` where they will compile the research carried out on this field.

Parliament Human Right Commission Chairman Sema Piskinsut held a press briefing on Monday where she gave information about the Commission's activities. Piskinsut said they contacted 8,500 inmates since 1998 and prepared 14 separate reports which they will submit to the Parliament Chairmanship. She said she wants to speak at the Parliament and explain to the public opinion that torture and mistreatment are crimes. She said they will complete the report by June 15.

Noting that they found a ``hook``, a torture device, in Istanbul Kucukkoy police station and they will give the hook to Ankara Prosecutor's Office to be sent to Istanbul Gaziosmanpasa Prosecutor's Office. Piskinsut reminded reporters that they earlier found similar devices in Mugla Armutalan police station and said no investigation was carried out about these devices so far.

Hikmet Sami Turk, the Justice Minister, said on Monday that they will not hesitate to punish those who torture people. Sema Piskinsut, the Chairman of the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission, visited Turk and submitted six reports prepared by the commission. Following the meeting, Turk told reporters that Turkey will impose sanctions on those who violate human rights.

Turk noted that the commission investigated the human rights violations in the police stations and prisons in recent years and that it prepared six reports following this investigation. Turk continued, ``the reports of the commission will shed light on our initiatives. We will impose sanctions on the human rights violations. These reports will be examined by the Punishment Affairs, Prisons General Directorate and Inspection Board.`` The target of all these initiatives is ending the human rights violations in Turkey, Turk said.

Turk emphasized that torture in Turkey in 21st century cannot be accepted. The punishments given to torture and maltreatment are increased, Turk stated. Turk stressed that what is more important is everybody's accepting that torture is a crime of humanity. The judicial system will fulfill its responsibilities to end the human rights violations, Turk said.

Turk continued, ``Turkey will solve this problem. We are determined to investigate the torture allegations. Torture has never been a state policy.`` The Constitution prohibited the torture, and they aim at making Turkey an example country in human rights, Turk added.

Piskinsut said that their reports depend on concrete evidence and that they will prepare three more reports in the following days.

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Parliament human rights initiatives documented

Ankara - TDN Parliament Bureau May 27, 2000

The Parliamentary Human Rights Commission has been following up claims of torture since 1998, carrying out intensive studies and interviews with both prisoners and detainees awaiting trial. The commission first noted down all claims of torture and abuse these people had experienced by the time they had got to the prison or penitentiary they were detained in. Following this they inspected the rooms and cells where the detainees and prisoners alleged they had been tortured and abused. The commission determined that their findings coincided with the claims made by the prisoners and detainees, they found instruments of torture and noticed that the interrogation rooms were not up to standard.

At the end of their studies, the commission published the results of their investigations into six separate institutions. Reports prepared by the commission's sub-commission members were accepted unanimously by the cross-party commission, which is chaired by Democratic Left Party (DSP) deputy Sema Piskinsut. Not stopping at this, Piskinsut had all the reports combined and published as a book and has taken the decision to distribute copies of it to all

concerned public bodies and institutions. The commission made separate investigations into several locations both before and after the April 1999 elections and has published its findings as to whether any change occurred over that time.

The entire work was recorded in shorthand and illustrated by Parliament's authorized stenographers and sound recording technicians. The Parliament Minutes Directorate deciphered the shorthand and turned them into proper minutes. Sketches drawn up by commission members of the areas and cells investigated were turned into proper building plans by parliamentary technical drawing experts. The minutes of interviews with alleged victims, together with photographs of torture equipment and other findings, have all found their place in the report. The report also makes suggestions as to how torture and abuse can be prevented.

The commission is also expected to release reports in the coming days concerning its studies into various districts, including the incident at Ankara Ulucan Prison.

The commission has made the following statements regarding allegations of torture and abuse at police stations in Istanbul, at the Bakirkoy Women and Children's Penitentiary and in Erzincan, Erzurum, Sanliurfa and Tunceli: arabaslik Istanbul police stations and Bakirkoy Penitentiary for Women and Children.

The inmates and detainees at the Bakirkoy Penitentiary for Women and Children all recounted the details of torture and abuse they suffered in many police stations all over Istanbul and the rooms, cells and individuals concerned while they were being investigated and questioned before being sent to the penitentiary. The women and children questioned in the investigation this year all claimed to have suffered abuse and torture in 32 separate police stations in Istanbul.

The commission chose at random five police stations from among those determined by its investigations where the worst incidents of torture were being carried out. The visits to the police stations, all carried out at midnight and later and accompanied by the police station commander and police officials, followed interviews conducted with anybody found detained at that time. The commission investigated all rooms and cells, even those the police did not want them to. During the course of the investigations objects and equipment that could be used for torture and abuse were found in some stations. These objects were all noted and taken away.

The observation and interrogation rooms were all seen to be well below standard, being dirty, airless and with wet floors. They found equipment there exactly as described by the detainees - cassette recorders, cooling fans, cupboards, fire hoses and spade handles. But during the second visit the conditions had been tidied up somewhat. The commission delegation came to the opinion that everything had been used for abuse and torture.

A room was discovered in which special efforts had been made to soundproof it and containing such items as car tyres and a large water barrel. The commission was given misleading information and the police had tried to hide the presence of the room.

Sanliurfa

Investigations carried out in 1998 found that practically all the prisoners and detainees had been tortured while being questioned by the police or the gendarmerie. The commission noted that during their visits to police and gendarmerie units, those on duty had tried to avoid

giving direct answers to the commission's questions, that the detention registers in the observation cells were not in order, that the interrogation rooms were absolutely not up to standard and were in an appalling condition. The commission noticed items that could be used for torture and abuse.

The trial process is seriously questionable as well. The chief dubious practice is the length of time that suspects are kept in detention. One commission delegation took one detainee's allegations of torture seriously and filed charges against the police station concerned.

Tunceli

Tunceli was subject to investigation by the commission both this year and in 1998. The commission cites Tunceli as showing the most progress in cleaning up its act.

The commission determined that the police precinct had undergone extensive renovation and re-equipping and that the observation cells and interrogation rooms had been brought up to standard. The anti-terrorist unit observation cell block, which had contained dozens of cells when inspected in 1998, had been demolished and rebuilt with several groups of four cells thus bringing them up to standard by 2000. They had also been fitted out with CCTV and other observation means.

It had been noted that the interrogation personnel had been replaced by better trained staff and that with the reduction in terrorism all the staff were exhibiting a more neutral attitude. It had also been noted that the provincial chief of police together with the provincial gendarmerie regiment commander had managed over the past few years to create an atmosphere of trust and respect for human rights by adopting a different style and manner.

Erzurum

Allegations of abuse and torture while suspects were being detained and questioned are extremely common in Erzurum. While investigating these claims, the commission found that the descriptions of interrogation rooms given by detainees were by and large correct. The commission noted that evidence of abuse and torture still exists today, even though at a much reduced level than in 1998.

It has also been observed that no significant change has been made in the investigation and questioning system over the last two years and that practically no change has been made to rooms and cells belonging to the police. It has been determined that equipment that could be used for abuse and torture was still present in the police stations but that staff had done their best to hide them.

Erzincan

Almost all the inmates and detainees awaiting trial being held in Erzincan's prisons claimed that while being questioned both in Erzincan police stations and in other provinces before being transferred to Erzincan, they had been abused and tortured. It has been determined that descriptions given by prisoners and detainees alleging they were abused and tortured matched perfectly with the commission's findings from investigations of both the old and new

police and gendarmerie premises. The commission is also of the opinion that although fittings in the ceilings of interrogation rooms, considered suitable for abuse and torture, had been removed and the holes concreted in, there are still rooms in those premises where undesirable practices are being carried out.

Prevention of torture

The commission makes the following recommendations to eradicate claims of abuse and torture.

"It is not, in point of fact, all that difficult to resolve human rights issues such as abuse and torture in police stations and prisons. In order to do this, it will be enough to determine who is directly accountable for these practices and to single them out in the public eye.

"As for those who are in reality responsible for such abuses, it is not, as people believe, the police station commanders and executive officers and other lower and middle level positions. Rather, it is the governors and chief public prosecutors who are to blame. This is because both these positions have the authority and duty to supervise and inspect the entire system. The fact that they do not carry out their duties and avail themselves of their authority should never be excused and should be investigated as extreme neglect of duty. We should have the political determination to resolve this issue without further hesitation or deviation.

"There have not been enough follow up investigations into the all too frequent and clear allegations of abuse and torture. As for the trial process, the reasonable period detention has been ignored. Worthy of example here is a public trial that began in 1998 and is still in progress. It has been discovered that there are over 3,000 cases that the courts have been reviewing now for over a year. However, when it comes to the principle that a criminal trial should be brought to a conclusion in a short period of time and without being protracted, something that requires careful study within the scope of "the right to a fair trial" as defined by the European Declaration of Human Rights, it is imperative that the Justice Ministry carry out work to improve this situation.

"It is very distressing to see that those personnel who have been punished and fined as a result of these investigations are still in office and still carrying out their former activities. As a result, the illegal actions of the administration and personnel acting incorrectly are still unpunished."

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Yildirim: GAP is not in capable hands

Ankara - Turkish Daily News May 27, 2000

Alluding to the coalition government and the Democratic Left Party's (DSP) State Minister Mustafa Yilmaz, Sirnak Deputy Salih Yildirim of the Motherland Party (ANAP), who formerly served in 55th government as the State Minister responsible for the Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP), has made accusations that the GAP is being neglected. The tone of Yildirim's voice when he answered questions put to him by a Turkish Daily News reporter resembled that of an opposition deputy. In his criticisms, Yildirim asserted that the GAP has been diverted from its

intended purpose and neglected by the administration. Responses provided to the TDN reporter by Professor Yildirim are as follows:

TDN: We haven't heard anyone talking about the GAP recently. Are you following its progress?

YILDIRIM: The GAP, which is an integrated regional development project, is a positive development in an environment where many difficulties and hardships have been experienced by people. It is an improvement that represents a light of hope for us locals. It is unfortunate, however, that its progress to date has been far from meeting our expectations.

We are extremely sensitive about this issue, since we know that problems encountered in the region stem from a poor economy and other social factors. There are numerous factors contributing to this situation, but the most important one has to do with the economy. I think that no one should have the right to delay this project or create policies to divert its intended purpose, which is to try to eliminate the negative social and economic factors present in the region. It is unfortunate that in Turkey, which is a farming country, one-third of the population is on the verge of poverty, while one-fourth is threatened by hunger. This project represents work for 3.8 million people in a country where 10.5 million people are unemployed.

TDN: From the perspective of the people in the Southeast, would you elaborate on the significance of the GAP?

YILDIRIM: I will reiterate once again that in a country where there are so many problems, such as 10.5 million people being out of work, this project represents the hope of 3.8 million people to find jobs. It means that 1.7 million acres of land would be irrigated, as a result of which an additional 26 million tons of crops would be harvested. This also represents 13.5 millions tons of additional raw material for the agricultural products industry. Upon completion of this project, the overall production rate would increase by 445 percent in the area, representing a 209 percent annual income increase for the local residents. The project would provide 27 billion kilowatt hours of additional electric power for the country, a contribution that is a determining factor in structuring our future.

TDN: When should GAP's construction be completed?

YILDIRIM: There has been a delay of fully 33 years on this great project, which has the potential to provide very significant returns for the country. This neglect represents a 70-year delay in agriculture, a 16-year delay in energy production and a 25-year delay in education. It is evident that in the present situation, the project's completion by the year 2005 seems impossible. The ongoing preparations for the development of a Regional Development Plan for the GAP region are designed for its completion by 2010.

I like to emphasize that if this project is to be completed by 2010, the annual funding needs to be around \$1.8 billion. Based on the \$700 million allocated to the GAP project for 2000, its financial deficit will be around \$1.1 billion for this year alone. This picture indicates that only about 35-37 percent of the construction targets for each year will be accomplished. This means that not only will it be impossible to catch up on time lost in the past, but also impossible to maintain construction targets planned for the future.

TDN: Why do you think the proper emphasis has not been placed on a project capable of changing the nation's mood ?

YILDIRIM: It should be a first priority for the government to give this project the emphasis it deserves. A project of this magnitude can also change the mood of our neighbors and make a significant contribution to bilateral relations. All sincere and determined efforts to locate the required sources should therefore be exerted for the timely completion of this project. No one has the luxury of delaying or neglecting such an important project.

TDN: Is Turkey encountering difficulties in obtaining the necessary resources to complete the project?

YILDIRIM: Realistically, the Treasury cannot obtain the funds needed to complete this project solely by drawing on its domestic resources. It is possible, however, to find foreign investors. It is perfectly appropriate to pursue foreign investment in this situation. Those international finance organizations and foreign countries who in the past refrained from providing funds for this project due to anxiety from political considerations are now willing to invest, if we ask them. If the resources available are wisely used, and the issues are properly explained, finding a solution will not be difficult.

TDN: Did you complete research on how to obtain foreign credit for this project when you were assigned as state minister responsible for the GAP?

YILDIRIM: During my tenure as state minister in the 55th government, I made numerous contacts and maintained dialogue with many international organizations as part of the Southeastern Anatolia Regional Development Administration. What was achieved in that period is beyond imagination. Many international organizations, including the World Bank, Eximbank and the European Union, were practically racing with each other to provide support for the GAP. I can't say that this interest carried through to the subsequent period.

TDN: What do you think is the correct method to obtain financial support for GAP?

YILDIRIM: By the use of the 'build-operate-transfer' method, by obtaining proper credit conditions, or by introducing GAP to the international financial markets, a surplus of resources for the project could be obtained. I would like to underline that no individual or authority can find a logical excuse to delay this project. It is a primary obligation to obtain the conditions needed for the completion of this project. It is a moral responsibility.

TDN: What stage was the project in when you left and what is the situation now? What is the reason for the delay?

YILDIRIM: We first carefully identified the problems and matched them with the available state resources. This indicated the dimensions of what could be done with the resources available to us. Furthermore, we drafted a bill designed to assist the administration in fully upholding its responsibilities in the region. But at present, priorities have not been properly identified for regional investments.

Those investments are generally based on the requirements of the sectors operating in the area, not on maintaining the social integrity of the area. As a result of this situation, when resources are not wisely distributed, and priorities not properly established, the investments are inevitably absorbed by consumption projects rather than the promotion of production. Within a very short period, the investments in the region will transform into a source of financial loss rather than into production which would add to the welfare of the local residents. I can

expect some returns from energy investments, but agriculture investments are unfortunately discouraging.

The driving sector in the area is agriculture. If you invest billions of dollars to construct dams in the area, and collect billions of cubic meters of water behind these dams, but without constructing the necessary infrastructure or erecting essential irrigation systems, all those investments will rapidly transform into a costly project with no return for the local economy. That is why, despite all the expenditures, the actual progress in agriculture is around 12 percent. A total of 9 percent of the agricultural projects are under construction. 79 percent of the project is still in the design phase and consequently, based on the current situation, it will take approximately 70 years to complete the project. Do you think we deserve this?

TDN: What are the problems encountered due to delays in the GAP project?

YILDIRIM: In a country with a 10.5 million unemployment figure, where one-third of the people are on the poverty line, and an additional one-fourth is close to starvation levels, the only possible logic in delaying an income-producing project of this magnitude would be a desire to harm people. The people who want to do that either have no conscience or are crazy. According to some unofficial figures, unemployment rates in Turkey are around 23 to 24 percent. There are about 10.5 million jobless people in the country, 3 million of whom live in the eastern and the southeastern regions. The GAP project, once it starts to operate, will provide jobs for approximately 3.8 million people. This will not only provide jobs for the people in that region but will obviously reverse the migration to the big cities in the west, thus eliminating another big social problem.

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Iraq Reopens Saudi Border at Arar To Boost Trade

Kuwait Times 24 May 00

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BAGHDAD: Iraq has opened its Arar border crossing with Saudi Arabia for civilians and goods traded under the oil-for-food programme for the first time since the 1991 Gulf War, a Baghdad newspaper said yesterday.

Al-Ittehad quoted director-general of the Customs Authority Hameed Shuker as saying that Arar, where religious pilgrims were allowed to cross two months ago, was now open to civilians and commodities exported by Riyadh or other Gulf states to Iraq.

In March, more than 1,200 Iraqi pilgrims crossed by road into Saudi Arabia on their way to Makkah to perform the annual Haj pilgrimage.

In March as well, Iraq received the first shipment of medicine bought from a Saudi firm under an oil-for-food programme with the United Nations.

Since last year, Iraq has been tentatively restoring trade with Saudi Arabia, which backed the US-led coalition that drove Iraqi occupation troops out of Kuwait in 1991.

The UN allows Iraq to sell oil to buy food, medicines and some other essential supplies

for Iraqis struggling under sanctions imposed for its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Meanwhile, the Iraqi vice-president said yesterday that Iraq's plans to reopen an oil pipeline which crosses Syria indicated a warming of ties between the two Arab neighbours.

"The issue comes within the framework of the improving economic relations between the two countries," Vice-president Taha Yassin Ramadan told reporters when asked about the plans.

"I cannot predict a date" for the pipeline to restart operations, he told reporters in Sanaa, where he had attended Yemen's national day celebrations.

Ties between Syria and Iraq, ruled by rival factions of the Baath party, deteriorated at the beginning of the 1980-1988 Iraq-Iran war when Syria sided with Tehran. They worsened when Damascus joined a US-led multinational force that drove Iraqi troops out of Kuwait in 1991.

The two countries decided three years ago to reopen their borders and to engage in economic and commercial cooperation. Last month they agreed to establish diplomatic representation interest sections at the Algerian embassies in Baghdad and Damascus. In 1998, the two countries signed a deal to reopen the oil pipeline closed since 1982 and to build a new one with a capacity of 1.4 million barrels per day (bpd).

Ramadan did not comment when asked about Iraq's current oil production, which the United Nations earlier this month said had been running at about 2.8 million bpd. Iraqi oil exports are strictly monitored by the United Nations under sanctions imposed on Iraq after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

The vice-president also laid down conditions for Baghdad's future cooperation with the UN Security Council. "Any cooperation or transparency with the Security Council will not take place before lifting the blockade, condemning the US and British aggression on Iraq and compensating Iraq for damage resulting from this aggression," he said.

Iraq has not allowed UN arms inspectors to return since they withdrew in December 1998 on the eve of US-British air strikes aimed at forcing Baghdad to cooperate.

Iraq rejected a December 1999 Security Council resolution that created a new arms inspection agency. The measure also held out the promise of suspending stringent UN trade sanctions if Baghdad complied with the weapons demands.

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Iraqi National Congress To Discuss Political Program at Upcoming Meeting

Al-Zaman 24 May 00

[FBIS Translated Text] London, Al-Zaman -- The presidency of the [opposition] Iraqi National Council has decided to invite the Central Council to convene its first meeting in London 7-9 July. In a statement, of which Al-Zaman received a copy yesterday, the congress said that the presidency appointed Riyadh al-Yawir as a coordinator to supervise and follow up the convocation of the meeting, assisted by a committee that includes Isma'il al-Qadiri, Faysal al-Qurrah Ghuli, and Albert Yilda.

A congress source has told Al-Zaman over the telephone that the meeting will discuss the new structure of the congress in accordance with its bylaws, in addition to the issue of setting up offices for the congress in London, Washington, and a number of regional capitals. The source added that the meeting will discuss the future action plan, whose elements will be drawn up by the provisional presidency. It includes the political moves to be made in all world states, relief work plans for the Iraqi people, the informational plan which includes the publication of a newspaper and the establishment of a satellite channel. The source said that this plan has been completed and awaits the final endorsement in the meeting, and that the provisional presidency is working to secure the necessary funds to implement it.

The source continued that the committee formed to coordinate and supervise the convocation of the meeting will prepare working papers and invite 65 Central Council members representing the various tendencies that participated in the New York conference. The source added that these members come from various Arab and foreign capitals.

The sources pointed out that the committee will also send invitations to political and media observers to attend some of the general meetings, and that it will inform the various media services of the developments as they happen.

Sources close to the congress had told Al-Zaman that the dialogue is continuing with the Iraqi opposition factions that withdrew from the congress or those which suspended their membership. But so far this dialogue has not achieved positive results. The sources also pointed out that those who refrained from attending the New York conference continue to maintain their previous stands, whose motives vary.

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Al-Hayah Report on Reasons for Sacking of Iraqi Minister

Al-Hayah 25 May 00 by Ali Abd-al-Amir

[FBIS Translated Text] Informed Iraqi sources said that President Saddam Husayn dismissed Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Abd-al-Jabbar Tawfiq Muhammad for his failure to stem the emigration of Iraqi Professors abroad and for his delay in implementing an order calling for the transfer of a number of professors from Baghdad University and al-Mustansariyah University to new colleges carrying the name of Saddam in Baghdad and the governorates.

The same sources added that some 2,000 university professors and scientists have emigrated abroad in the past five years. They left Iraq because of their bad economic conditions and their isolation from the scientific developments taking place in the region and beyond. The Iraqi authorities had prevented the travel abroad of Iraqi professors and specialists in medicine, engineering, physics and chemistry until 1998. But when this measure did not stop the travel of professors and specialists with passports which did not carry their real names or who bribed passport officials to remove their names from the stop list, Baghdad allowed the resignation of 10 percent of Iraqi university professors. It also allowed a number of professors to sign contracts with Arab universities in Libya, Yemen, the United Arab Emirates, and the Sultanate of Oman.

The sources said that the dismissed minister delayed the implementation of an order for the transfer of a number of Iraqi professors to the Saddam Colleges of Medicine, Science, and Engineering to which Baghdad provides special funds. The Minister tried to link the delay in the implementation of the order with the shortage of professors, which obstructs university programs, especially higher certificates programs.

Last month Iraqi papers indirectly criticized the Minister of Higher Education, noting a constant increase in the failure of students preparing for master and doctorate degrees and blaming the ministry for this failure.

Professors of Iraqi universities receive a monthly salary of 10,000 to 25,000 dinars (5-12 dollars), while professors of Saddam Colleges of medicine, engineering, law, science, religion, and history receive much more and enjoy health and housing privileges. The Saddam colleges are linked to a special scientific department supervised by the presidential office and separated from the Ministry of Higher education.

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Iraqi Vice President Criticizes Qatari Initiative

Al-Rayah (Doha) 24 May 00 by Al-Azab al-Tayib and Nabil Sayf al-Kamim

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraqi Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan has rejected the proposals made by His Excellency Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani regarding the normalization of relations with Iraq. Ramadan said that the proposals made by his excellency the minister do not rise to the level of an initiative. They confuse the issues, and this is not valid.

The Iraqi vice president made this statement in response to a question by Al-Rayah at a news conference held in Sanaa. The vice president yesterday ended an official visit to Sanaa during which he attended Yemen's celebration of the 10th anniversary of its unity.

Ramadan added: Whether his excellency the foreign minister of Qatar made his remarks in his personal capacity or as foreign minister, given that foreign ministers can make tactical statements, we reject the logic on which his excellency the minister based his remarks at the symposium on the future of Kuwaiti-Iraqi relations recently held in Kuwait. Ramadan justified Baghdad's rejection of the Qatari proposals by saying that the minister confused the issues in his remarks, and this is not valid in matters of this kind.

The Iraqi vice president said that in his speech at the symposium, his excellency the Qatar foreign minister was trying to satisfy Iraq and the United States or those whom he represented in the symposium--referring to Kuwait. Regarding Iraq's position on Resolution 1284, Taha Yasin Ramadan repeated Baghdad's absolute rejection of this resolution. He rejected any possibility of talks about this resolution, about amending it, or about discussing any new meaning for it.

Ramadan said: This resolution was the product of British colonialist mentality, whose effects are still evident in the nation's geography in the form of border problems and disagreements. He noted that Resolution 1284 explicitly aimed at imposing a new situation and reality. Its purpose was to initiate new relations with the Security Council to eliminate the previous Council resolutions, which Iraq has implemented. Its purpose was also to initiate rela-

tions with Baghdad, after 10 years, based on a system that perpetuates the foreign powers' hegemony and mandate.

Regarding the resolution's suggestion of a possible suspension of the embargo on Iraq, Ramadan said this was a meaningless provision, designed to create confusion. It was designed to exploit the ability of the Western media, which have been saying that Resolution 1284 represented a solution to the problem, when its basic purpose was to place Iraq under hegemony and mandate. Taha Yasin Ramadan strongly criticized what certain Arab states have been saying about the need for Iraq to undertake to implement the UN resolutions. He said that in doing so, these states were speaking for the United States and Britain, although they were also expressing sympathy for the suffering of the Iraqi people.

As to whether there were signs of improvement in Iraq's Arab relations, he said that improvement has taken place in various degrees. He said that Iraq's relations have witnessed important improvement with Egypt, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and the Arab Maghreb states except Mauritania.

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UK Minister Sees Iraqi Leader Re-Emerging as World Threat

Press Association (London) 25 May 00 By Andrew Woodcock

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein is rebuilding his arsenal of weapons of mass destruction and is once more becoming a threat to the rest of the world, Foreign Office Minister Peter Hain warned today.

Mr Hain called on Saddam to allow United Nations arms inspectors back in to Iraq to seek out and destroy the Middle Eastern country's nuclear, biological and chemical weaponry. He also condemned campaigners demanding the lifting of international sanctions against Iraq, saying that they were effectively pursuing a policy of "appeasement".

The minister's warnings came days after former United Nations arms inspector Richard Butler raised concerns over Saddam's renewed military capabilities.

Mr Hain said: "I am very concerned indeed. The UN disarmament panel very recently confirmed the kind of fears that Richard Butler has written about.

"The sorts of details which have been identified include the weaponisation of the nerve gas VX, the failure to hand over documents to the previous inspection team of declarations of chemical warfare munitions, the failure to provide remotely credible evidence of its biological weapons capability, and the fact that the nuclear weapons development team is still in place.

"This is very worrying and it is why we have taken a tough stand in saying that the UN arms inspection team must be allowed under the terms of the UN resolution to go back into Iraq and make these inspections," he told the BBC Radio 4 Today programme. "If not, then Saddam Hussein has the capacity, is rebuilding it, to threaten the world.

"That is why those who want Britain and the UN to play it softly with Saddam Hussein, lift sanctions and allow him to go about his murderous business are actually pursuing a strategy which amounts to a form of appeasement.

"We have got a UN resolution. The team will shortly be ready to go to Baghdad to make sure that these inspections are carried out.

"If Saddam denies that he possesses these awful capabilities in biological weapons, chemical weapons and a potential nuclear capability, and his apologists are seeking to conceal it, that is unacceptable.

"Why don't they let the UN arms inspectors in and reveal to the world what is happening?"

* * * * *

Efforts to form a liberal Kurdish party begin in Adana

Ankara - Turkish Daily News May 29, 2000

The Democratic Masses' Party (DKP) was closed down due to a narrow 6-5 Constitutional Court vote but has remained active since the court has not yet published its ruling and justification. Its leader, lawyer Serafettin Elci, said, "Unless the Kurdish issue is resolved within the framework of the Copenhagen Criteria, Turkey will never be able to enter the EU."

Elci has tried, unsuccessfully, to unite left and right-wing Kurdish intellectuals in order to form a liberal Kurdish party. In spite of not being able to unite them, Elci, his friend Nafiz Kaleli, and other DKP colleagues participated in a regional conference in Adana last Saturday. Elci stated that being Kurdish has to become an acceptable norm and that some people who do business with the state have been forced to keep their identities a secret. "Just as a Turkish identity is the norm, so we want a Kurdish identity to be recognized as a normal ID in this country," Elci said. The most striking parts of Elci's two-hour speech are as follows:

Why a new party?

"The need and justification to form a new party has been laid down in the DKP manifesto. It's a shame that our party, which was doing what needs to be done for the country, which was following a positive and conciliatory path in resolving the basic issues in this country, has been closed down. The struggle we engaged in was to create a happier, more civilized Turkey without rocking the boat; but the hawks that rule this country wanted to prevent this.

The DKP is a party of ideas. It is not possible to stifle thought or block the path of pioneering parties through imposed legal rulings and political obstacles. Turkey wants to present the Kurdish issue as far simpler than it is in order to show itself to be 'taking concrete steps' towards resolving it. They want to narrow the issues down to concerns over terrorist and economic factors. They are saying: 'We brought the PKK to its knees and even captured its leader. Now we can guarantee some economic development.' But this is far from the core issue.

They are trying to evade the issue by deceiving Europeans as well. The issue is not about terrorism or the economy. If the problem was economic, then economic problems in other regions of Turkey would give rise to the same consequences. This means the issue is ethnic rather than economic, and we have to agree on a formula to resolve the ethnic issue appropriately. There is a need for a party that will courageously take up this issue beyond the deceptive approach chosen by the state. We are going to work towards this end."

Has terrorism really been ended? "Just because you have brought a party or particular organization to its knees does not mean that the threat of terrorism has been eradicated. This is because the reason for the organization's existence was the problem prompting its creation in the first place. If the core issues remain, who can guarantee that, even though the first organization abandoned the area, other organizations will not spring up? You have to do your sums very carefully here. If we really do not want such a headache, if we do not want to relive those painful days, then we have to agree on core solutions to the problems."

Does the one who is right always win?

"We are struggling to maintain the rights we have had since birth. That is, it is not enough to just own the right. You have to know the proper ways and means of defending your rights. While many people are in the right, the incorrect methods applied may put them in the wrong. This means it is not enough to be in the right. You need qualified people to stand up for those rights. We are up to this task. If we get powerful backing from you, we will be able to defend your legal rights within the law far better than anyone else."

Who is more foolish, the fool or the fools who follow him?

"All of us have lived through a painful time. A mass of people set out with great promises and hopes, but at a certain point it was understood that we had arrived at an abyss or dead end. The people who led the masses down that road paid a heavy price and admitted their mistakes. 'We made a mistake. It was a pointless venture,' they say. Those people who claimed it was just a pointless venture have been accused of treason. And the same people can now say, 'I made a mistake, but follow me and I will take you down a new path.' What guarantee is there that a man who admits a mistake in the past will not make a mistake again? If you follow this man he who admitted to mistakes, can this be anything other than foolishness? If you are honest, then join the ranks of those who showed you the correct path. Give them your help, let us all walk together down that path and take our people to a safe place."

Do you have to be a Turk to be happy?

"You have to abandon the idea that this state is a Turkish state and that you can only be happy as a Turkish citizen. The legal basis for Turkish-Kurdish equality has to be reordered and Kurdish identity has to achieve legal recognition. As long as the Constitution stipulates that all citizens of this country are Turkish, we Kurds will never be able to avail ourselves of our rights in this country."

Cultural rights, including the right to education, are the rights we are fighting for the hardest. The right to organize is one consequence of freedom of thought. The use of our language is still forbidden in education and on radio or television. When you look at the history of this people, you will find that for thousands of years they have given their own names to their surroundings. These names are a part of their identity. Everyone knows that the names of all our features and surroundings, from our villages to our rivers and mountains, have been changed. One demand we will never relinquish is the immediate reinstatement of the old names."

General amnesty

"This country has seen a lot of pain. Some people have been the victim of travesties of jus-

tice. The prisons are full of these people. We see a general amnesty as compulsory so that these people can rejoin society and get their health back. A general amnesty will help relieve social tensions and contribute to a more peaceful and tranquil environment."

* * * * *

A new decree has paralyzed economy in border region

Kemal Ilter Ankara - Turkish Daily News May 29, 2000

The coalition government introduced a new decree a month ago, putting restrictions on border trade, particularly oil. With this decree, the amount of cheap oil being brought into Turkey at various border crossings, including Habur, has been halved.

The United Nations imposed sanctions on Iraq in 1990 and the Turkish border gate at Habur was closed, seriously affecting people living in the region. The Habur gate was important for southeastern Turkey since it links Turkey to the Middle East and Iraq. Turkey, and particularly the southeast, has suffered from suffering from Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) terrorism for twenty years. As a result of this economic activity in the region has come to a standstill. There is no doubt that this closure played an important role in decreasing economic activity.

With the reopening of the gate, the region's economy flourished. It made a great contribution to the revitalization of the southeastern region's economy. But debates over how the government would be able to control this oil trade arose. Four or five months ago the government introduced new regulations that the fuel brought over from Iraq would be sold to a state-owned company at the border and reach the consumer after state tax had been put on it. After two or three months of the regulation the government introduced new decree which put some restrictions on border oil trade.

Under the decree, trucks have been able to bring 75,000 tons of oil via Habur and 15,000 tons via Iğdir border gate a month, whereas the figures were 150,000 tons in Habur and 30,000 in Iğdir before the decree. The new decree has also drastically reduced the amount of oil that can be brought into Turkey semi-officially on modified tankers. For example, the volume of oil on tankers has been reduced from 800 liters to 400 in trucks and from 1,100 to 550 liters in big trucks. The reductions are so steep that transport companies no longer want to transport oil to Turkey.

Mehmet Emin Deger, who has a transport company in the region, told the Turkish Daily news that people do not want to go to Iraq to bring oil over since given the increased costs they can no longer break even. "As is well known, our trucks have been carrying food and other important supplies to northern Iraq under the framework of border trade and then bringing back fuel and crude oil. The trade has caused the regional economy to flourish. Some 13,000 trucks carried oil. Many people made their living from the oil trade. Whereas 1,500 trucks used to cross the border every day before the decree, the figure has now decreased to 100-150," Deger noted.

Asked why the government had introduced such kind of degree, Deger said: "It is no secret that there are some ministers and deputies who do not know southeastern realities and the importance of the Habur border gate for the economy of the region. Some people give misinformation to the government, particularly to the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) that the fuel money in the area goes to PKK terrorists and that trade at Habur should be curbed. In addition we know that foreign oil companies lobbied to prevent the fuel trade since they were suffering great

losses as a result of the cheap fuel coming into Turkey from Iraq." Drawing attention to the importance of cheap oil Deger said. "Our transportation sector really improved with this cheap oil. The competitiveness of our transport companies against foreign companies increased. Transportation costs within Turkey fell and it made a positive contribution to other sectors."

Asked whether they would meet any officials or ministers from the government Deger said that they had met a Cabinet minister and that he had promised to look the decree over.

* * * * *

Government dries up only source of living for Southeast

Ankara - Turkish Daily News May 29, 2000

The decree passed by Cabinet on April 28, which reduces the amount of cheap oil and diesel brought into the country by border trade with Iran and Iraq and sold in domestic markets, has come under fire from Southeast governors. Motherland Party (ANAP) assistant leader and deputy for Sirnak Professor Salih Yildirim has said that the decree, issued by the coalition of which his own party is a member, dries up the only remaining means of making a living in the Southeast.

Yildirim maintains that the Southeast's economy used to be a tripod based on animal husbandry, agriculture and border trade, but that terrorism had eradicated the raising of animals many years ago and drought a few years back had brought agriculture to a standstill. "The only means left to forge a living and get by was border trade and now this April 28 decree has dried that up as well," he complained. Yildirim answered the Turkish Daily News' questions on the border trade issue: TDN: How do you interpret the Cabinet's latest write-up of the April 28 border trade decree?

Yildirim: Because of the terrorist activities in the region, the economic life and productive base fell to very low levels. This directly led to settlements being abandoned, work places being totally closed down or having their performance considerably reduced. This led to already high unemployment figures becoming even higher. Unemployment levels in the Southeast are thought to be two to two-and-a-half times the national average.

Under such conditions, the only way to win bread and forge any kind of living was through border trade. Border trade provided both work and sustenance for a large part of the region and got economic and commercial life up on its feet and moving. Of course, it is true that border trade was not being practiced in an efficient manner. It was not just limited to meeting the needs of the border provinces, border trade covered items and goods taken to and sold in neighboring provinces and beyond. But this was down to necessity.

It is true that the latest decree adds legality and direction to border trade, but the facts of the region are such that it could cause problems from the point of view of the burden and risk it brings. This decree creates the impression that decisions are not taken by the center bearing in mind and correctly evaluating rural problems or are implemented accordingly. If the views of the people in the region had been taken into account when this regulation was being drawn up and the necessary investigations were made, then the decree would not have been passed.

TDN: Why did the Cabinet feel the need to release such a decree?

Yildirim: The facts that had been determined here were taken under review. They looked at them from the point of view of the burden put on the economy, the reasons for unjust competition and the problems and headaches associated with the security aspect, and thought it needed tightening up. But there was one thing they could not see. Far more than the cash they raked in as tax, is what we call alternative income or knock-on income, which has been the cause of more negative effects. The eradication of these negative effects actually creates a 10-fold loss in income for the region, the people and the state.

TDN: What will the effect of the decree be on the Southeast's economy?

Yildirim: This decision will adversely affect both the region's social peace and security. I do not even want to think about the problems this will lead to.

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The Habur mess

Editorial

by Ilnur Cevik Turkish Daily News May 29, 2000

The Habur border gate, which links Turkey and Iraq, has become the vital artery for the economic survival of southeastern Turkey. The gate has created flourishing border trade which has brought some economic relief to the region.

Turkish trucks carry food and other vital supplies across the border to northern Iraq, now controlled by the Kurds, and then into Iraq, bringing back fuel and crude oil. The trade has rejuvenated the regional economy while it has also opened broad avenues for Turkish exporters who sell their goods to the Iraqi-controlled areas and to Iraq.

At times foreign oil companies have lobbied to curb the fuel trade because they felt cheap fuel coming into Turkey from Iraq and distributed freely across the country has created unfair competition which should be curbed.

But recently the authorities introduced new regulations, which meant the fuel brought into from Iraq would be sold to a state-owned company at the border and would then find its way to consumers in Turkey. Thus the new fuel would be taxed and some elements of the unfair competition would be eliminated.

All was going fine until late April. Turkish lorries were bringing in crude that was sold to the state-owned refineries, and the money went to paying Iraq's debts to Turkish companies which have sold food to Baghdad. Other lorries were bringing in fuel that went to the state depots and thus there was no unfair competition. Lorry traffic at the border went up to 1,500 vehicles a day, which was regarded as a healthy sign for the economy of southeastern Turkey.

However, for some unexplained reason, the government issued a decree on April 28 which was designed to drastically cut down on fuel trade and thus paralyze the area. Because of this border trade has come to a virtual halt. There are about 100 lorries coming and going a day, which is regarded by the locals as trivial.

The government decree has killed border trade and is threatening the future of Habur and commercial ties between Turkey and Iraq. But more important than all this it is threatening the well-being of the people of the region who have been eager to hear some good news of economic relief from the government as separatist Kurdish terrorism has lost all its intensity in recent months.

However, we see with great shock that instead of unveiling a massive package of economic and social relief for Turkey's southeastern provinces the government has shot itself in the foot by taking measures to kill border trade and finish off Habur.

This is unacceptable. It seems some sources have completely misled the government and the conservative partners in the coalition. We are told the nationalists in the coalition have been told the fuel money in the area goes to separatists and that trade at Habur should be curbed. If this is true, the conservatives in the Cabinet have been misled and have been forced to make a serious mistake which will only help the separatists.

Yes, it is true that the government parties have not received many votes from the Southeast, but this does not call for punishment. On the contrary, these government parties should realize that the current environment of peace and stability is mainly due to the positive atmosphere created with the demise of separatist terrorism and hopes in the Southeast that there will be peace and tranquility in the area. Do the conservatives in the government want to sabotage this environment?

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Turkish Army Conducts 'Press Tour' in Southeast Region

from Anatorlia Agency Reports 26 May 2000

[FBIS Report] The semi-official news agency Ankara Anatolia in Turkish on 26 May carries reports by Adyin Kanavetci on the "press tour" conducted by the Office of the Chief of the General Staff, OCGS, in eastern and southeastern Anatolia region.

In a Siirt/Sirnak-dated report at 0934 GMT, AA states: "The Turkish Armed Forces [TSK] is helping the people in eastern and southeastern Anatolia region with all its means to prevent them from being exploited again by the terrorist organization.

"About 70 journalists who participated in the 'press tour' organized by the OCGS left Sirnak, where they spent the night, in two groups and were taken by helicopters to Siirt's Pervari District and to the Dagdusu village in Siirt's Erueh District.

"In Pervari, the journalists were given a tour of the 'Mehmetcik [endearing term used for Turkish soldiers] Classrooms,' offering courses in reading and writing, computers, English, and preparations for university entrance exams." Another group was taken to the Dagdusu village, where a Turkish flag is hoisted in every house. The name of this village was changed to "Bayrakli [with flags]" because of this phenomenon. "Officials noted that three villages in the vicinity will be moved to the new central village that is being built nearby, and the houses in this new village are being constructed with the joint efforts of the regional residents, the Mehmetcik, and the village guards."

At 1459 GMT, the agency carries an Omerli/Lice-dated report on the statements made

by Lieutenant General Dogan Temel, commander of the 7th Army Corps; by Mardin Governor Temel Kocaklar; and by Gokhan Aydiner, state of emergency region governor, during a tour of the Ikipinar village in Mardin's Omerli District, where the journalists "observed the TSK efforts to assist the villages."

Dogan Temel says that the villagers of Ikipinar have been loyal to their "country, flag, and honor, and fought together with the Mehmetcik against the terrorists since the onset of terrorism." Governor Kocaklar, in his turn, describes Ikipinar as one of the best examples of "army-nation integration."

Also addressing the journalists, Aydiner outlines all the services provided by the TSK to the villages, emphasizing the "morale aspect" of this assistance. He also refers to the "army-nation integration as a way of life." "Stressing that the foreign forces that support the terrorist centers, which are acting as their tools, have realized that there is nothing they can attain, Aydiner says: 'They have formulated certain new policies in order to add political dimensions to the armed struggle. We are extremely alert to all this.'"

At 1744 GMT, AA reports that the journalists participating in the press tour were then introduced to the Governor Aydin Arslan Operations Base in Tapantepe, north of Diyarbakir's Lice District. According to the briefing received by the journalists, "the base, which has the means for multidirectional observation and electronic intelligence on the Lice-Genc highway with a view to better controlling the area in a critical section of the Diyarbakir-Bingol highway, providing point intelligence, and creating a base area for operations to be conducted by the units, was completed on 25 November 1999." "The operations base provides indoor accommodation to 1,000 persons in all seasons with 14 prefab and 2 concrete buildings, as well as warm meals for 2,500 personnel. It has health and communications services as well as a landing pad for eight helicopters."

The journalists were also introduced to a team of the "long-distance reconnaissance group. The team is furnished with extremely modern equipment and tools. It is led by a lieutenant and consists of two officers and 10 noncommissioned officers." The team includes operational, intelligence, weapons, communications, and medical experts and trains in real field conditions. It has the capability of "rapid reaction."

After also being told about the army's efforts to block the income of "the terrorist organization" from narcotics and about the "4.3 million Indian hemp roots destroyed in the past two months," the journalists were flown by helicopter to Diyarbakir. Later, they returned to Ankara.

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Kurdistan : l'angoisse des « gardiens de village »



Institués en 1985, un an après le début de la lutte armée, les *köykoruculari* sont au nombre de 80 000. Ils sont l'élément central du dispositif de sécurité de la zone d'exception qui recouvre la plupart des provinces à majorité kurde de Turquie. (Photo F. Guenet.)

Bostaniçi :
de notre envoyé spécial
Éric Biegala

Eméché par la bière, Firat, un jeune Kurde d'une vingtaine d'années, quitte sa réserve habituelle : « *Ce sont des traîtres !* » confie-t-il à propos des « gardiens de village », milice supplétive d'Ankara dans sa lutte contre le Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK).

C'est la grande question aujourd'hui dans le Sud-Est anatolien, le Kurdistan turc : que faire de ces gardiens, comment démobiliser en douceur ces quelque 80 000 Kurdes dont la fidélité à l'Etat est sujette à caution, et dont se méfie une population souvent favorable à la rébellion ?

« *Jamais je ne rendrai mes kalachnikovs, jure Husseyn, un de ces gardiens. Se retrouver sans arme dans ces montagnes, c'est comme se prome-*

ner sans culotte en ville, impensable. » A 35 ans, Husseyn dirige un petit village des environs de Batman, où il remplit les fonctions de maire, d'électricien et d'infirmier. Il assure également la sécurité de ce hameau de 810 âmes avec une trentaine d'autres *köykoruculari* (gardiens de village), sans avoir jamais eu à tirer un coup de fusil. A vrai dire, mis à part une casemate « camouflée » par des motifs criards, la défense de l'endroit semble théo-

rique.

Le village de Husseyn ressemble à tous ceux du secteur : quelques masures de parpaing et torchis, des enclos pour les bêtes, et une myriade de gamins jouant dans la poussière des venelles. Rien qui rappelle la guerre. Le « muhtar » (maire) et ses hommes n'en continuent pas moins leurs rondes, alors que le PKK a aujourd'hui pratiquement disparu.

Après la condamnation à

mort de son chef, Abdullah Ocalan, en 1999, le PKK a en effet ordonné à ses combattants de se retirer de Turquie en septembre dernier. En février, il renonçait officiellement à la lutte armée. Il resterait à

« *Se retrouver sans arme dans ces montagnes, c'est comme se promener sans culotte en ville* ».

peine quelques centaines de maquisards sur le territoire turc.

Institués en 1985, un an après le début de la lutte armée, les *köykorucuları* sont au nombre de 80 000. Ils sont l'élément central du dispositif de sécurité de la zone d'exception qui recouvre la plupart des provinces à majorité kurde de Turquie, soit environ un cinquième du pays.

Ces fermiers devenus militaires n'ont guère eu le choix. Souvent, l'armée ne laissait d'autre alternative que l'engagement dans la milice ou la destruction du village. Selon un rapport parlementaire, plus de 3 000 villages et hameaux ont été vidés puis détruits, et au moins 400 000 villageois expulsés *manu militari*.

Mehmet, 55 ans, fait partie des Kurdes qui ont pu rester chez eux. « Dans le clan des Shegua, on a toujours été du

côté de l'État », explique-t-il simplement. Certains clans ont en effet choisi de faire allégeance en bloc.

Armés et contrôlant la vie quotidienne de la région, les gardiens de village ont souvent eu la tentation d'abuser de leur pouvoir. « Rien que dans la zone de Batman, nous avons arraché 3,7 millions de plans de cannabis en 1999 », explique par exemple un sous-officier de l'armée turque en poste dans le secteur. Trafics, drogue, rapt, vendettas déguisées en batailles contre le PKK, les exactions ne manquent pas. Ces supplétifs de l'armée ont été purgés de 10 à 15 000 hommes depuis 1985, et près de 3 500 actions en justice ont été intentées contre eux.

Le gardien Mehmet, lui, n'a jamais fait d'argent grâce à ses armes. Assis sur son petit tabouret branlant, à côté du foyer où mijote le mouton en sauce du dîner, il suppute les avantages d'une démobilisation. « J'aimerais bien pouvoir bénéficier d'une retraite et de la sécurité sociale... ou alors qu'on me laisse mon salaire », soit 700 à 1 200 FF par mois. Vraisemblablement, les chefs des gardiens prélèvent parfois leur part sur la solde de leurs hommes.

Pour le moment, nul ne

semble en mesure de prédire le sort de la milice. On parle de démobiliser d'urgence les moins de 18 ans et les plus de 45 ans, de préserver le statut de ceux qui ont fini leurs études secondaires, de garantir une retraite aux plus de 55 ans. C'est peut-être à Bostançî, dans la banlieue de Van, que peut se lire leur avenir, dans le quartier Yalim Erez. Ici s'entassent 3 500 personnes, toutes originaires de Çukurca, à proximité de la frontière irakienne, et toutes apparentées à des gardiens démobilisés en 1994.

« A l'époque, les militaires avaient miné les alentours de nos villages et interdit les pâturages. Beaucoup d'enfants ont été blessés par les mines, et les bêtes ont fini par mourir. Alors, nous sommes partis », raconte Ramazan, 47 ans. Réduits à l'état de réfugiés, les gardiens de Çukurca ont d'abord campé pendant un an, puis l'État leur a construit 258 maisons, toutes semblables : 74 m² sous un toit de tôle ondulée. Une aide alimentaire a été distribuée pendant un temps, puis la manne s'est tarie. « Depuis la fin de l'été, l'État ne leur donne plus rien », indique le maire. De nombreux gardiens redoutent le même sort. La confiance dans l'État turc semble fragile.

Provinces d'exception

Etat d'urgence, loi martiale, régime des provinces de l'Est... Dès les débuts de la république, dans les années 20, et jusqu'à aujourd'hui, le Kurdistan turc « bénéficie » d'un régime à part autorisant déportations (en 1934, dans les années 50 et dernièrement) et régime policier. Le 30 mars dernier, le Parlement a voté la prolongation pour quatre mois du régime d'exception dans les provinces de Diarbâkir, Van, Tunceli, Hakkâri et Sîrnak. L'administration des provinces sous état d'exception (Ohal) date de 1987, en remplacement de la loi martiale en vigueur depuis le coup d'État militaire de 1980. A l'origine, l'administration couvrait 13 provinces. Elles ne sont plus que quatre aujourd'hui, officiellement. En fait, l'autorité du « super-gouverneur » de l'Ohal s'étend sur une quinzaine de provinces à majorité kurde. Ce personnage tout-puissant est en général issu des rangs de l'appareil sécuritaire et n'est même pas responsable devant le Parlement. L'une des seules différences entre les provinces sous régime d'exception et celles qui ne le sont plus, c'est que la période de détention maximale,

avant la présentation à un juge, est ramenée de 10 à 7 jours. Selon les organisations de défense des droits de l'homme, c'est en général

durant cette période que des sévices sont infligés. A Batman, à Van, à Bitlis ou même à Diarbâkir, l'étranger peut dorénavant se promener à peu près librement, mais il n'en va pas de même à Hakkâri, par exemple, près de la frontière irakienne.

Vous avez eu raison de vous abstenir de tout contact, confie un jeune homme. En 1993, j'ai été détenu et battu pendant une semaine parce que j'avais essayé de parler des villages détruits par l'armée à des journalistes allemands. » Aujourd'hui, on n'expulse plus la presse du Sud-Est anatolien. Mais on lui recommande l'autocensure.

E. B.



TURQUIE *Le pays utilise son poids dans l'Alliance atlantique pour faire pression sur l'UE*

LE FIGARO

JEUDI 25 MAI 2000

Ankara entre l'Otan et l'Europe de la défense

Le secrétaire d'Etat américain, Madeleine Albright, a « applaudi les progrès de l'UE dans l'établissement d'une politique européenne de sécurité et de défense », lors d'une réunion, hier, à Florence, des ministres des Affaires étrangères de l'Alliance atlantique. M^{me} Albright a annoncé une simplification des procédures d'exportation d'armes vers les pays de l'Otan, soulignant que cette initiative devait « donner des bases technologiques plus solides à l'Alliance ».

Bruxelles :
Pierre Bocev

Ce n'est pas la crise ouverte entre l'Otan, bastion de la « défense collective » des Occidentaux, et les Quinze, qui posent les jalons

d'une « Europe de la défense » pour s'émanciper sur le plan militaire. Ce n'était même pas le principal point à l'ordre du jour de la réunion de Florence. Mais la tension couve entre les deux organisations, et la Turquie est en première ligne de ceux qui ont des revendications à l'égard de l'Union européenne.

L'Otan et l'UE, toutes deux installées à Bruxelles, ont de tout temps fait mine de s'ignorer. D'un côté le glaive, de l'autre le portefeuille. Ce partage des rôles n'est plus possible depuis que les Quinze, sous l'impulsion de la France et de la Grande-Bretagne, ont décidé de se doter d'une capacité militaire propre. Mais les Européens ont beau viser à l'horizon 2003 une force de soixante mille hommes, ils ne peuvent, à ce stade, se passer des moyens logistiques de l'Alliance.

Le problème vient des six pays européens de l'Otan qui ne sont pas

membres de l'Union. Parmi ces « furious six », comme on les appelle dans le jargon bruxellois, il y a la Norvège et l'Islande, mais aussi les trois « petits nouveaux » de l'Otan qui négocient leur adhésion à l'Union européenne (la Pologne, la République tchèque et la Hongrie), ainsi que la Turquie, à laquelle les Quinze ont reconnu le statut de candidat sans pour autant lui ouvrir une perspective réelle.

Se sachant soutenus par les Etats-Unis, ils veulent avoir voix au chapitre quand les Quinze parlent défense entre eux. Pour appuyer ce point de vue, il arrive que l'un ou l'autre – et Ankara plus souvent que d'autres – menacent de bloquer la mécanique de l'Otan, où tout se décide à l'unanimité. Le recours aux moyens de l'Alliance pour la constitution de la force de réaction rapide des Quinze en serait affecté.

Paris a longtemps minimisé le

problème. Il fallait d'abord que les Quinze aient établi les structures nécessaires, qui, pour l'instant, ne sont qu'intérimaires : un Comité politique et de sécurité (COPS), un Comité militaire et l'embryon d'un état-major européen. Appuyée par le Royaume-Uni, la France a accepté d'aller plus vite. Son idée, entérinée au niveau ministériel, doit être avalisée par le sommet européen de Feira, les 19 et 20 juin.

Cette offre comporte la création, dès juillet, de quatre « groupes de travail ad hoc », celle d'une « structure provisoire » pour mener deux consultations semestrielles entre les Quinze, d'un côté, et, de l'autre, les douze candidats est-européens, plus la Turquie, l'Islande et la Norvège. Les « furious six » bénéficieraient quant à eux d'une « sous-structure » spéciale.

Hope for Turkey

Turkey's freshly sworn-in president, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, offers his country a chance to begin exercising fuller democracy than it has hitherto been willing to risk. The new president, who is a former chief justice of Turkey's highest court, has few formal powers but commands a significant bully pulpit from which — unlike any other Turkish political office — he can be removed only by the most drastic means.

A few well-chosen words from him could nudge lawmakers toward granting limited cultural autonomy to the Kurdish minority and lifting restrictions on free speech. That in turn could boost Turkey's chances of European Union membership by eliminating abuses such as the refusal to grant Kurds the right to broadcast their language or teach it in schools and the eagerness of prosecutors to imprison those who even mildly advocate such rights.

On these questions Mr. Sezer presents a mixed record. As a sitting jurist he voted to close political parties

and to uphold other offensive clauses in a constitution that seems more designed to protect the government from its people than the other way around. Lately, though, Mr. Sezer has made speeches reflecting an increasingly skeptical view of restrictions on political parties in general and on the Kurds in particular.

That made him attractive to a split Parliament that had earlier rebuffed efforts by Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit to push through a constitutional amendment allowing the previous president, Süleyman Demirel, to seek a second seven-year term.

Mr. Ecevit's abortive effort on that front reinforces the picture of a nation capable of more democratic stability than its leaders are willing to credit. Mr. Ecevit has brought stability and economic reform; he argued that a presidential transition would endanger both. But in a functioning democracy, lawful transitions of power pose no threat. There is no reason to think that Mr. Sezer's accession will do so.

— THE WASHINGTON POST.

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE,

THURSDAY, MAY 25, 2000

SYRIE

Trente-sept ans d'état d'urgence...

Malgré la libération en 1999 de 150 prisonniers politiques – en majorité membres des Frères musulmans – et un relatif recul de la pratique de la torture et des arrestations arbitraires, la situation des droits de l'homme dans la Syrie de Hafez el-Assad demeure « déplorable », estiment dans leur dernier rapport les Comités de Défense des Libertés démocratiques et des Droits de l'Homme en Syrie (CDF), affiliés à la Fédération internationale des Droits de l'Homme. Selon les informations recueillies par les CDF, près de 1 700 prisonniers « d'opinion et politiques » sont aujourd'hui détenus. Environ 700 d'entre eux ap-

partiraient aux Frères musulmans ou à d'autres organisations islamiques, 500 seraient membres de partis interdits et 400 seraient des Kurdes de Syrie, d'Irak, d'Iran ou de Turquie. Selon les CDF, 8 journalistes et écrivains (10 d'après Reporters sans Frontières) figureraient aussi parmi les détenus politiques. Les libertés d'expression et d'association sont, il est vrai, tenues pour des instruments de la subversion dans ce pays où 40% des habitants sont analphabètes, où il n'existe aucun média indépendant et où le régime de l'état d'urgence et les lois martiales sont en vigueur depuis trente-sept ans.

R. B.

122 / LE NOUVEL OBSERVATEUR

25-31 MAI 2000

Iranian coalition split over speaker

By Guy Dinnore in Tehran

Three months of uncertainty in Iran have ended with the weekend's official inauguration of the new parliament, but the loose coalition of reformists that holds an overwhelming majority is already facing divisions over its first serious decision, the election of a speaker.

The Participation Front, the main reformist party led by Mohammad Reza Khatami, the president's brother, is backing one of its senior officials, Mohsen Mirdamadi. A 45-year-old academic with a doctorate in international relations from Cambridge, he also took part in the storming of the US embassy in 1980 and the subsequent hostage crisis.

The Association of Combatant Clerics, however, is supporting Mehdi Karrubi, a 65-year-old Shia Moslem cleric who was speaker 10 years ago and is seen as the establishment's favoured candidate. The conservative faction, its old majority now reduced to around 60 seats in the 290-seat Majlis, is

expected to back the compromise leftwing candidate rather than set the precedent of having a non-cleric as speaker for the first time since the 1979 revolution.

While the contest reflects broad policy differences within the coalition behind Mohammad Khatami, Iran's moderate president, the two candidates also represent the old and new dynamics at work.

Iranians watching the formal opening ceremony live on television on Saturday were impressed by the sea of new and younger faces. Two women MPs broke tradition by wearing headscarves, rather than the *chador*, the head-to-toe cloak. But they were still dressed in black.

Behruz Afkhami, a film director, opted for jeans, rather than a dark suit. Only 70 MPs were re-elected from the old parliament and, most worrying to the establishment, only 33 clerics won seats, 20 fewer than before.

The few remaining liberal newspapers in Iran spoke of the "relief" and "exultation" that greeted the new parliament. Since the conservatives were routed in the February 18 polls, the hardline-controlled judiciary has closed down most reformist dailies, arrested numerous activists and given light sentences to a gang of vigilantes who shot and seriously wounded a key aide to the president.

FINANCIAL TIMES
MONDAY MAY 29 2000

Des supporters d'Abdullah Ocalan accusent la Turquie de le laisser mourir



BRUXELLES, 30 mai (AFP) - 18h21 - Les supporters en Europe du leader kurde Abdullah Ocalan, qui souffre de problèmes respiratoires, ont accusé mardi la Turquie de le laisser mourir à petit feu en prison.

"D'après nos informations, l'état de santé de M. Ocalan est en train de changer de manière qui paraît suspecte et anormale", a déclaré à la presse Ismet Chériff Vanly, président du Congrès national du Kurdistan, basé à Bruxelles.

"Il existe une grave tentative de l'Etat turc de le laisser croupir. C'est comme une mort lente", a pour sa part affirmé Estella Schmidt, membre d'un mouvement de soutien à la cause kurde, Initiative internationale pour le Kurdistan, basé à Cologne, dans l'ouest de l'Allemagne.

M. Chériff Vanly et Mme Schmidt ont demandé à ce que le leader du parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK) soit examiné par une équipe médicale internationale et soit transféré de l'île d'Imrali à une prison sur le "continent" avec d'autres détenus politiques.

Abdullah Ocalan a été condamné à mort en juin 1999 pour trahison et séparatisme pour les 15 ans de lutte armée de son PKK en vue de créer un Etat kurde indépendant dans le sud-est anatolien.

Ankara a suspendu le processus d'exécution en janvier, en réponse à une demande de la Cour européenne des droits de l'Homme, qui a réclamé un sursis en attendant d'avoir statué sur le fond.

ENTRETIEN AVEC EPHREM-ISA YOUSIF

La grande épopée de la Mésopotamie

● **France-pays Arabes :** Vous êtes un universitaire, un écrivain irakien, vous venez de publier "L'épopée du Tigre et de l'Euphrate", qui relate l'histoire de la Mésopotamie depuis des millénaires. La Mésopotamie englobe-t-elle l'Irak actuel et une partie de la Syrie ?

-**Ephrem-Isa Yousif :** -C'est tout à fait vrai. La Mésopotamie antique était limitée à l'est par la chaîne du Zagros, elle englobait les terres situées à l'ouest de l'Euphrate, jusqu'au Khabur, affluent du Tigre. Quand on voit les différentes civilisations qui se sont succédées en Mésopotamie, notamment la civilisation des Sumériens à partir du IV^{ème} millénaire avant l'ère chrétienne, on constate que ce peuple du sud du pays eut une influence importante dans la région que l'on désignera plus tard comme le Croissant fertile. D'ailleurs les découvertes archéologiques faites dans la vieille ville de Mari, en Syrie, en témoignent.

L'empire akkadien, le premier empire, fondé à la fin du troisième millénaire avant notre ère par le roi Sargon, (2234-2279) s'étendait sur une grande partie du Moyen-Orient, car Sargon avait établi sa suprématie sur Sumer et Akkad.

envahi la Syrie du nord, dominé l'Elam, région du sud-ouest de l'Iran. Ses successeurs avaient fait campagne vers le nord de l'Irak actuel.

Après la chute de l'empire akkadien en 2193, la dynastie sumérienne d'Ur III domina une importante partie de la Mésopotamie. Comme la dynastie d'Akkad, elle allait influencer le peuple d'Assour, les Assyriens, qui commencèrent à faire leur expansion territoriale sous le roi Shamshi-Adad (1807-1776 avant notre ère) et constituèrent au IX^{ème} siècle un très vaste empire.

Avec la dynastie babylonienne d'Hammourabi (1792-1750), le territoire s'agrandit peut-être au-delà de Ninive, au cours de campagnes en direction du nord. Ce roi reste dans les mémoires comme un grand législateur grâce à son fameux "code" de lois, dont nous reparlerons plus loin.

● **Découvrez-t-on encore des informations nouvelles sur cette civilisation à partir de ce qui a été mis à jour, et par les recherches des archéologues ?**

-Tout n'a évidemment pas été découvert. Les archéologues déclarent qu'à peine 10% du patrimoine de la Mésopotamie a été mis à jour. L'on parle aujourd'hui d'à peu près 10 000 sites historiques, selon des sources irakiennes. Les quatre grandes capitales assyriennes, Assour, Nimroud, Ninive, Khorsabad, ont été fouillées en partie, et aussi la Babylone de l'époque chaldéenne (612-539 avant notre ère). Beaucoup de sites n'ont pas encore été dégagés, donc étudiés. Des milliers de tablettes, "cuites" lors de l'incendie final des cités vaincues, puis enfouies dans le sable, restent à déchiffrer.

Malheureusement, les événements qui se sont déroulés en Irak depuis une vingtaine d'années ont interrompu les recherches archéologiques. Celles-ci avaient commencé à dégager les grandes villes de l'antiquité, Eridu, Ourouk, Nippur, Ur, Lagash; Ninive, Babylone...

Espérons que la paix reviendra bientôt et que la situation permettra de reprendre les recherches et de trouver encore des centaines de milliers de tablettes cachées dans le sol ! Leur transcription révélera une partie méconnue de l'histoire de l'humanité, car il nous manque des jalons... Il sera peut-être possible de remonter jusqu'au IX^{ème} millénaire, là où l'homme a peut-être tenté de s'ouvrir au monde, de se poser les grandes questions et de sonder les mystères...



Ephrem-Isa Yousif

Ephrem-Isa Yousif est né en 1944, au nord de l'Irak, dans le Kurdistan irakien d'aujourd'hui, dans un village assyro-chaldéen. Il a effectué ses études primaires dans ce village, et ses études secondaires à Mossoul. Puis il est venu en France en 1974 pour poursuivre ses études universitaires à Nice. Après des études de philosophie, il s'est consacré à l'histoire des civilisations, ce qui lui a permis réellement, déclare-t-il, "de découvrir l'aube des civilisations, la Mésopotamie, berceau de l'histoire des grandes civilisations. J'ai découvert en France, continue-t-il, cette civilisation mésopotamienne avec des méthodes historiques et scientifiques et j'ai apprécié la grandeur de l'homme civilisé, qui a débuté au pays du Tigre et de l'Euphrate, pays dont je suis originaire !"

Ephrem-Isa Yousif est docteur en civilisations et en philosophie.

● **On n'a pas encore une idée exacte du passage de "l'homme préhistorique" à l'être qui appartient aux premières civilisations. Vous remontez, au plus loin, vers 8000 avant l'ère chrétienne ?**

On connaît l'époque néolithique qui débute entre 8100 et 7500 avant notre ère. Les archéologues ont fait des recherches dans ce domaine. Ils ont constaté que les premières traces de cette période se trouvent au Proche-Orient. En Mésopotamie, le village néolithique de Jarmo, au Kurdistan, le site d'Ali Kosh, le village fortifié de Maghzaliyeh au nord de l'Irak, ont livré des outils en obsidienne, des volants de fuseaux en argile et divers ustensiles. La chèvre puis le mouton ont été domestiqués. De chasseur, l'homme est devenu agriculteur. Il



est passé du village à la ville. Les premières villes, Eridu, Ourouk, ont été créées.

Dans ces cités adonnées au commerce, il faut bien communiquer; on invente alors l'écriture, vers 3200. C'est le cunéiforme des Sumériens.

Plus tard, au troisième, deuxième et premier millénaire, la langue akkadienne s'impose dans une grande partie du Moyen-Orient. Elle se divise au deuxième millénaire en assyrien et en "babylonien". Le sumérien n'est plus alors qu'une langue religieuse. Des écrits en akkadien de grande qualité voient peu à peu le jour, comme l'épopée de Gilgamesh, roi d'Ourouk.

L'influence de l'écriture mésopotamienne s'étend jusqu'à la ville d'Ugarit, en Syrie. Les premiers textes en signes alphabétiques sont datés des XIV^{ème}-XIII^{ème} siècles. L'alphabet a adopté une trentaine de signes. Il sera repris par les Grecs et se répandra en Occident.

● Les langues dites sémitiques, l'arabe, l'hébreu, ont-elles pour origine la langue akkadienne ?

- La langue akkadienne reste la plus ancienne langue sémitique connue avec l'éblaïte. L'arabe et l'hébreu et le syriaque sont aussi de grandes langues sémitiques, mais plus tardives.

● L'histoire de la Mésopotamie peut-elle remettre en cause l'Ancien Testament, et la version des événements donnée par la Bible ?

-D'une certaine façon, oui. La Bible ne relate qu'une partie de l'Histoire. Elle débute à peu près un millénaire avant l'ère chrétienne. Elle nous offre les écrits d'un peuple, le peuple hébreu, qui avait constitué un petit Etat souvent dominé par les grands empires voisins, l'Egypte et la Mésopotamie.

La Bible présente d'une manière souvent partielle les Assyriens, les Babyloniens, et les Egyptiens, qui jouent souvent les rôles d'ennemis ! Le roi assyrien Salmanazar III ne fit-il pas campagne au IX^{ème} siècle avant notre ère dans la région des Hébreux. Plus tard, au VI^{ème} siècle, le roi chaldéen Nabuchodonosor prit Jérusalem en 597. Après une coalition, il revint mettre à sac la ville en 586 et déporta une partie de la population juive en Babylonie. Elle vécut là-bas, observant les moeurs, les coutumes, les courants de pensée, et ne rentra d'exil qu'en l'an 538. Certains auteurs du Livre sacré s'inspirèrent d'ailleurs de récits mésopotamiens, comme le Déluge.

● N'y a-t-il que cette région du Proche-Orient dont la civilisation a été ensemencée par l'homme, ou d'autres parties de la planète ont-elles aussi vécu le même processus ?

-Sur le plan historique, il exista une autre civilisation qui suivit de quelques siècles la civilisation mésopotamienne, ce fut celle de l'Egypte. Elle fut puissante, mystique, et ses



Pharaons atteignirent une réelle grandeur. Mais elle resta plutôt "égyptienne", centrée sur elle-même. Elle ne conquiert pas d'autres pays, n'exporta ni sa langue ni son écriture.

Vers la seconde moitié du troisième millénaire, et au début du second, une autre civilisation se développa, celle de l'Inde, celle du fleuve Indus. Riche et spirituelle, elle marqua cette région de l'Asie. Elle continue aujourd'hui encore à nourrir l'âme d'un milliard d'hommes.

Au dix-huitième siècle avant notre ère, apparut une autre civilisation, la civilisation chinoise de Shang, riche, variée, écriture et métallurgie. Curieusement, elle avait une vision du monde assez proche de celle des Babyloniens !

On peut donc parler de quatre civilisations marquantes. Celle de la Mésopotamie eut le plus de retentissement, d'abord en Grèce et en Occident. Elle fut à l'origine de grandes inventions : la ville, l'écriture, l'aire, la roue, le chariot, le tour du potier, le bateau à voile, le soudage. En architecture, elle inventa les voûtes, les coupoules, et dans le domaine des sciences, l'astronomie, l'astrologie, les mathématiques : les Babyloniens, au début du second millénaire, conçurent des systèmes de numérotation, de calcul, découvrirent, avant Pythagore, le théorème de l'Hypoténuse.

La civilisation mésopotamienne domestiqua le temps, mit sur pied le calendrier. L'année lunaire, de 354 jours, qui commençait à l'équinoxe de printemps, se décomposait en 12 mois de 29 ou 30 jours, et en semaines de 7 jours. De temps en temps, on ajoutait un mois en correction. Comme pour nous aujourd'hui, qui en avons hérité, l'heure avait 60 minutes et la minute 60 secondes.

En droit, la civilisation babylonienne nous légua le "code" d'Hammourabi, gravé sur une stèle de basalte, (aujourd'hui au Louvre) pour gérer la vie politique, et sociale. Les habitants

des cités avaient droit à une protection, des personnes et des biens. Des articles se rapportaient aux veuves et aux orphelins, aux esclaves, qui gardaient une certaine dignité. Le "code" traitait du droit civil, commercial, familial, pénal. Ce "code" inspira l'Orient ancien, et, par la suite la Grèce et Rome, l'Occident.

Les vieux Mésopotamiens nous laissèrent encore des "bibliothèques", comme celle de la cité de Nippur; ou, au VII^{ème} siècle, celle du roi assyrien Assurbanipal à Ninive, qui contenait, d'après les découvertes archéologiques, 30 000 tablettes d'argile en cunéiforme, recopiées, classées selon un système remarquable. Ces tablettes contenaient des archives, des édits, des donations, des rapports. Les savants, voulaient enregistrer leur histoire sur l'argile, sauvegarder l'héritage de Sumer, d'Akkad, de Babylone, de Ninive.

● Et les dieux, l'homme avait déjà besoin des dieux ?

-Dès l'aube de ces civilisations, il y eut des textes écrits qui montraient que ces peuples, sumérien, akkadien, babylonien, assyrien, étaient croyants.

Il existait, par contre, une diversité de dieux. Aucun monothéisme n'écrasait les autres dieux. Ceux-ci habitaient le ciel. Ils créèrent l'homme pour les servir, pas pour autre chose. La sagesse consistait pour les humains à manger, boire, aimer, profiter de la vie. Elle inspira l'auteur de l'Ecclésiaste, dans la Bible. L'homme ne pouvait prétendre à l'immortalité, réservée aux dieux. Gilgamesh, le roi d'Ourouk, le héros de la célèbre épopée, se lança dans un voyage extraordinaire pour conquérir l'immortalité, mais il échoua et se résigna à son sort.

La civilisation mésopotamienne ne ressemblait pas à celle d'Egypte. Elle ne construisait pas de pyramides où Pharaon vivrait éternellement dans un au-delà lumineux.

Les tombeaux des rois assyriens, que l'on a retrouvés, sont des tombeaux tout à fait ordinaires, car, après la mort, l'homme entrait dans le monde de l'ombre et de la poussière.

On se sent infiniment petit au regard de ce passé si éloigné, sorti des sables, et qui est à l'origine du monde moderne d'aujourd'hui, ce monde contemporain qui croit avoir tout découvert.

● **Votre public, vos étudiants sont-ils passionnés par l'histoire de la civilisation mésopotamienne ?**

-Les étudiants s'intéressent beaucoup à cette civilisation, qui, en réalité, est peu connue du grand public. Je dois dire que jusqu'à ces derniers temps, la Mésopotamie figurait au programme d'histoire en classe de sixième. Or l'Education Nationale, il y a quelques années, a supprimé ce cours.

● **Mais c'est le point de départ de l'Histoire...**

-Question très grave, parce que l'une des

grandes vertus de l'homme, c'est la gratitude, la reconnaissance à l'égard des pionniers de notre civilisation.

Quand on supprime la Mésopotamie du programme scolaire, on occulte une page de notre histoire, on coupe nos racines.

J'insiste : la nouvelle génération française ne va pas savoir que la source de son histoire, et de sa civilisation, c'est la Mésopotamie.

Je souhaite que l'étude de cette grande civilisation soit rapidement rétablie dans l'enseignement scolaire français. Tout ne commence pas avec la Grèce au septième siècle avant notre ère, comme on voudrait le faire croire !

● **Et les Arabes eux-mêmes placent-ils cette civilisation mésopotamienne au premier plan et se consacrent-ils à la recherche de l'origine de leur patrimoine ?**

-Malheureusement peu, ou d'une manière secondaire. Parce qu'au début du vingtième siècle, avant l'indépendance de la plupart des pays arabes, l'Empire ottoman s'intéressait peu à ce patrimoine. Les grandes découvertes archéologiques survinrent récemment, vers le

milieu du XIX^{ème} siècle. Quand les Arabes devinrent indépendants, la priorité fut donnée à leur identité ethnique, nationale. Et ils mirent l'accent sur les civilisations omeyyade, abbasside, très importantes et plus proches d'eux dans le temps. Les civilisations antiques furent négligées d'une certaine manière.

C'est aussi pour les Arabes que j'ai écrit le livre "L'épopée du Tigre et de l'Euphrate" (1), pour leur faire comprendre qu'ils ont un palais magnifique, qui comprend plusieurs civilisations.

Chers amis, ne restez pas dans une seule salle de ce beau palais, passez aussi dans les autres pièces, qui représentent les civilisations dont vous êtes issus, ces civilisations grandioses et belles qui enivrent l'âme et l'esprit de l'homme.

Propos recueillis par Lucien BITTERLIN

(1) Ephrem-Isa YOUSIF, "L'Epopée du Tigre et de l'Euphrate"

"Comprendre le Moyen-Orient".
L'Harmattan 1999-158 pages-80 F.

Entre 3 ans de prison ferme et 18 mois avec sursis pour 10 militants du PKK



PARIS, 31 mai (AFP) - 17h50 - Des peines allant de 18 mois de prison avec sursis à trois ans de prison ferme ont été prononcées mercredi par un tribunal parisien, à l'encontre de 10 militants ou sympathisants du Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK).

Les 10 hommes étaient accusés notamment d'association de malfaiteurs en relation avec une entreprise terroriste, destruction et dégradation de biens, violences, séquestrations et détention d'explosifs, pour avoir mené une opération-commando contre l'ambassade du Kenya à Paris, après l'arrestation au Kenya, le 16 février 1999, du président du PKK, Abdullah Ocalan.

Ismail Ozturk, alias Ugur, a été condamné à trois ans de prison ferme avec une interdiction définitive du territoire français. Yeli Koyuncu, désigné à l'audience comme le chef du commando par les victimes, et Ali Alci ont été pour leur part condamnés à deux ans de prison dont 18 mois avec sursis.

Les autres prévenus ont écopé de peines allant de 30 mois -dont 18 avec sursis- à 18 mois avec sursis.

Le 16 février 1999, le groupe était entré par une porte laissée ouverte par erreur par une secrétaire de l'ambassade et avait menacé d'incendier le bâtiment entièrement barricadé. Le plancher de la bibliothèque avait été aspergé d'essence et trois cocktails-molotov avaient été découverts sur les lieux après l'évacuation.

A l'audience du 27 avril, les prévenus avaient déclaré être venus individuellement à l'ambassade et y être entrés pour demander des détails sur le sort d'Ocalan, en étant par la suite entraînés dans l'opération.

La présidente, Jacqueline Rebeyrotte, avait pourtant jugé cette explication "peu sérieuse", évoquant notamment la concordance des faits avec d'autres opérations du même type organisées simultanément en Europe.

Abdullah Ocalan a été condamné à mort en juin 1999 pour trahison et séparatisme pour les 15 ans de lutte armée de son organisation en vue de créer un Etat kurde indépendant dans le sud-est anatolien.

Ankara a suspendu le processus d'exécution en janvier, en réponse à une demande de la Cour européenne des droits de l'Homme, qui a réclamé un sursis en attendant d'avoir statué sur le fond.

Contrat de Khalife

Sylvie JAN est présidente de la Fédération Démocratique Internationale des Femmes. Cette fédération rassemble plus de 80 organisations de femmes sur les cinq continents.

Vous revenez d'un voyage en Turquie. Quel est l'Etat de l'opinion publique sur l'adhésion de la Turquie à l'Union européenne ?

S. Jan : J'ai rencontré beaucoup de Turcs et de Kurdes qui espèrent beaucoup de l'entrée de la Turquie dans l'Union européenne. Le fait que l'une des conditions de l'adhésion soit le respect des droits humains aide les progressistes turcs. C'est une pression sur l'opinion publique. D'ailleurs le débat s'engage sur le fait que pour entrer dans l'Europe, la Turquie doit se démocratiser. Le fait que la candidature de la Turquie soit discutée dans l'Union européenne en raison des atteintes aux droits des personnes soutient les démocrates dans leur combat.

Vous êtes allée régulièrement en Turquie, vous connaissez bien ce pays. Lors de votre dernier voyage, avez-vous remarqué des évolutions ?

S. Jan : J'ai trouvé une situation très dure. Par exemple le Maire de la capitale du Kurdistan a été emprisonné. C'est un coup très dur pour tout le monde, pour les Kurdes. J'ai rencontré beaucoup de démocrates turcs, de femmes : tous me disent que la répression est encore très forte. Autre exemple, je devais assister à une conférence à Istanbul organisée par les " Femmes pour la Paix en Turquie et en Europe ". Cette conférence a été interdite malgré la présence d'invités internationaux. Des femmes, des militantes kurdes sont l'objet d'arrestations fréquentes, de tortures, de viols...

En lui reconnaissant officiellement un statut de candidate, l'Union européenne a donné un signe majeur de reconnaissance diplomatique à la Turquie. N'y-t-il pas un risque de signer un chèque en blanc au gouvernement turc ?

S. Jan : Je le répète, l'Union européenne aide les démocrates en Turquie en étant ferme sur les

droits humains. Les Turcs que j'ai rencontrés veulent participer à l'Union pour être tirés vers les démocraties européennes plutôt que vers l'Iran. L'exigence de démocratie des Européens face à la Turquie commence à se savoir et les Turcs en discutent. C'est un point d'appui pour les progressistes. Depuis sa prison, LEYLA ZANA lance un appel aux européens : ne lâchez pas ! Nous avons fait l'expérience que la Turquie n'a aucune retenue dans ses déclarations et n'en applique pas une seule. La promesse de l'amnistie des prisonniers politiques non-engagés dans la guérilla n'a pas été tenue. LEYLA ZANA est toujours en prison ainsi que 10 000 autres prisonniers politiques dont un millier de femmes.

Les progressistes turcs et kurdes n'imaginent pas une seule seconde que la Turquie se "tiendra bien" à partir du moment où elle entretrait dans l'Union. Sur ce sujet, ils commencent chaque fois en disant la contradiction qu'ils ressentent : d'une part volonté d'intégrer l'Union mais en même temps ils ressentent l'utilité pour leur combat que l'Union soit très exigeante sur les droits humains avant d'accepter l'adhésion. La Turquie est encore une dictature : si l'Europe l'accueille sans conditions, ceux qui connaissent ce pays ne peuvent croire que la guerre cessera par " pure morale ". J'espère que les député-e-s européen-ne-s ne lâcheront pas. Il faut que la Turquie donne des actes forts : la libération des prisonniers politiques. Il faut vider les prisons.

Quel est le rôle de l'Europe et des député-e-s européen-ne-s ?

S. Jan : Obtenir que cesse la guerre contre le peuple kurde dans l'intérêt des Kurdes et des Turcs. Les Turcs payent très cher la guerre. Il faut que le gouvernement reconnaisse simplement l'égalité des droits entre Turcs et Kurdes ainsi que leur identité culturelle respective. Tous les Turcs que j'ai rencontré aspirent

à la fin de la guerre. Les femmes kurdes ont des exigences très fortes : les mères de disparus aspirent à la paix. Les député-e-s européen-ne-s doivent faire pression. Je suis assez critique sur l'U.E. L'Europe reste trop tolérante parfois sur le problème kurde.

Vous avez également rencontré des femmes de la ville de Izmit touchée par le récent tremblement de terre...

S. Jan : Quarante cinq secondes, trente mille morts. Aujourd'hui beaucoup de gens vivent sous des plastiques de deux ou trois mètres carrés. Les femmes qui organisent la vie sous ces tentes ne parlent pas seulement de reconstruction de la ville mais aussi des droits, de leurs droits. Elles veulent une autre Turquie, une société civile, des services publics, une législation contre la violence, elles veulent participer aux conseils de ville, elles revendiquent leur présence dans les lieux de décision et de pouvoir.

En se promenant à Istanbul, on a le sentiment d'une normalisation de cette société. Certains quartiers rappellent les capitales occidentales. Cette impression est-elle justifiée ?

S. Jan : Ce qui marque, c'est la présence de femmes occidentalisées mais aussi le port nouveau du foulard et du voile. Les islamistes et les intégristes sont bien présents en Turquie et le foulard gagne du terrain. Les intellectuels turcs, les femmes s'organisent. Il existe un mouvement féminin, voire féministe, qui tend à s'affirmer et qui s'organise. Le 14 octobre prochain, les Turques et les Kurdes participeront à la marche mondiale des femmes en Europe. Les femmes ont un "besoin d'Europe". Elles souhaitent bénéficier des acquis des européennes, des libertés. Elles veulent échanger avec l'Europe, elles sont à l'affût de rencontres.

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