

INSTITUT
KURDE
DE PARIS

Information and liaison bulletin

N°186

SEPTEMBER 2000

This bulletin is issued in French and English

Price per issue : France: 30 FF — Elsewhere : 35 FF

Annual subscription (12 issues) France : 300 FF — Elsewhere : 350 FF

Monthly review

Directeur de la publication : Mohamad HASSAN

Numéro de la Commission Paritaire : 659 15 A.S.

ISBN 0761 1285

INSTITUT KURDE, 106, rue La Fayette - 75010 PARIS

Tel. : 01-48 24 64 64 - Fax : 01-48 24 64 66

www.fikp.org

E-mail: bulletin@fikp.org

CONTENTS

- **THE PRESIDENT OF THE COURT OF APPEALS DESCRIBES THE TURKISH CONSTITUTION AS A SET OF "POLICE REGULATIONS" AND CALLS FOR THE DRAWING UP OF A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT**
- **THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT CONDEMNS THE MASSACRE OF IRAQI KURDISH CIVILIANS BY THE TURKISH AIR FORCE**
- **IRAQ: ACCORDING TO THE FAO THE KURDS MANAGE THEIR REGION BETTER THAN THE BAGHDAD REGIME**
- **STRASBOURG: THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT CALLS ON THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE TO SET UP ALL FORMS OF COOPERATION AIMING AT SETTLING THE KURDISH PROBLEM IN TURKEY**
- **ACCORDING TO FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER K. INAN, PRESIDENT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMISSION, THE TURKISH SYSTEM WORKS IN THE SOLE INTERESTS OF THOSE WHO RULE**
- **"IT IS, INDEED, TANSU ÇILLER WHO HAD SIXTY KURDISH BUSINESSMEN ASSASSINATED" AFFIRMS SULEYMAN DEMIREL'S FORMER ADVISOR**
- **AS WELL AS...**
- **READ IN THE TURKISH PRESS: AN ILL ADVISED SECRET PLAN FOR THE KURDISH SOUTH-EAST**

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COURT OF APPEALS DESCRIBES THE TURKISH CONSTITUTION AS A SET OF "POLICE REGULATIONS" AND CALLS FOR THE DRAWING UP OF A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT

JUDGE Sami Selçuk, President of the Turkish Court of Appeals opened the new judicial year of 2000 - 2001 by, once again, giving his fellow citizens a magisterial lecture on Law and Democracy. Before a selected audience of representative of public bodies, the leaders of political parties, the media and the country's most senior civil authorities he

tackled, in a 115-page long speech, the problems of human rights, democracy, the State of Laws, the rights of citizens before the State, the independence of the judiciary, freedom of expression, the State's back slidings, going from the freedom from legal responsibility of officials to the routine practice of torture and corruption not to mention the questions of the day like the death sentence, amnesty and Turkey's

application for membership of the European Union.

Firmly taking up an Anglo-American view of a State of Laws, Judge Selçuk considered the present Turkish Constitution, imposed by the Turkish Army in 1982, as being more of a set of "police regulations" than a text of fundamental rights. According to him, this Constitution, whose conceived in an authoritarian spirit, cannot be amended — a new social contract must be drawn up, placing the individual and his rights, not the State, at the heart of the philosophy of this fundamental law. The Turkish Penal Code must be

purged of its "flowers of evil" (**Editor's Note:** the freedom-killing clauses) which earned the country 11 condemnations by the European Human Rights' Court in a single day; the widespread and routine practice of torture is "an national shame and disgrace". The law on the trial of State officials who, in practice, organise their own impunity, must be abolished — there is only the Congo to equal it for corruption and irresponsibility. Officials, like all other citizens, must face trial before ordinary courts.

"In a world where everything can be remedied and is subject to reparation, the death sentence, which is an irreversible primitive punishment, is an ignominy — it must be abolished" forcibly added Selçuk, who has campaigned for this abolition since 1970. He also called for a widespread amnesty to heal the wounds of a sick society and re-establish civic peace.

Regarding the European Union, which is not "an unreal dream for a country that, in its past, has known neither the Inquisition or racial segregation" we must reform our institutions so as to be in conformity with the Copenhagen criteria, "which, after all, are not supernatural rules". "The E. U. has set its unchanging conditions. Let us not fool ourselves — the European Union which does not console itself with illusions, is not going to change. It is Turkey that must change from A to Z by restructuring itself".

Judge Selçuk's lesson in tolerance and democracy, sprinkled with quotations from Descartes, Voltaire, Spinoza, Pascal, Russell, Nietzsche and Hegel, as well as Jesus and Mohammed, was not to every one's

taste. Forewarned about it, the Prime Minister had excused himself and kept away. The principle media gave it little space reproaching him for not having mentioned "the Islamic peril" which, according to the Generals, is

supposed to be threatening the Republic.

Will Selçuk, the spokesman for a State of Laws, be marginalised by the Turkish establishment?

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT CONDEMNS THE MASSACRE OF IRAQI KURDISH CIVILIANS BY THE TURKISH AIR FORCE

THE massacre of over forty Kurdish civilians by the Turkish Air Force, perpetrated on 15 August at Kendakot, in Iraqi Kurdistan (See our Bulletin N° 177 of 28 August), which passed unnoticed by the media, was the subject of a "Resolution of the European Parliament on Turkish bombing raid in Northern Iraq" passed on 7 September at a plenary session in Strasbourg.

Here are extracts from this important resolution:

The European Parliament:

- in view of its previous resolutions on the situation in Turkey and, in particular, those concerned with Turkish raids on Northern Iraq;

- in view of the European Convention for protecting Human Rights and fundamental freedoms as well as the International Convention against torture, ratified by Turkey;

- in view of the status of candidate for membership granted to Turkey by the Council at its Helsinki meeting in December 1999.

A. Considering that on 15 August 2000 the Turkish Armed Forces bombed villages in the Northern

Iraqi region of Kendakot, causing several dozen killed and wounded amongst the civilian population;

B. Considering that the bombing of Kurdish villages in Northern Iraq by the Turkish Armed Forces constitutes a violation of the territorial integrity of Iraq and of international law;

C. Considering that Turkey has committed itself, as a candidate for membership of the E.U. to satisfying the Copenhagen criteria;

1. Expresses its condolences to the families of the victims of the Turkish air raids of 15 August 2000 in Northern Iraq;

2. Demands that the international borders of all the countries in the region be respected and, consequently, condemns all Turkish incursions into Iraqi territory as being contrary to international law;

3. Repeats its deepest conviction that recognition of the fundamental rights of the Kurds is an essential element in the process on democratisation of Turkey, as well as the process for that country's joining the Union, as laid down by the Copenhagen criteria;

4. Invites the member states to respect the code of conduct regarding the export of arms in the case of Turkey as well. Reaffirms its conviction that there can only be a peaceful and political solution to

the Kurdish question, which must include the remedying of the underdevelopment of the region;

6. Demands that the Commission and Council stress that only the respect of Human Rights, of a State of Laws as well as international law will enable Turkey to continue

claiming the status of a candidate for membership of the European Union;

7. Demands that its Presidency transmit this resolution to the Council, to the Commission as well as to the Turkish Parliament.

IRAQ: ACCORDING TO THE FAO THE KURDS MANAGE THEIR REGION BETTER THAN THE BAGHDAD REGIME

THE United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) carried out, jointly with the World Food Programme (WFO), a fact finding mission in Iraq and Iraqi Kurdistan to assess the population's food and nutritional situation.

The mission carried out its work in the three governorates of the South and Centre, where the Iraqi Government is responsible for the execution of the UN "Oil for Food" Programme, and in the "semi-autonomous governorates" of Iraqi Kurdistan, where the programme is carried out by UN agencies (UN Inter-Humanitarian Programme) jointly with the local Kurdish authorities.

The mission found that, since the application of the Oil for Food Programme in 1997 *"there has been no improvement in the rate of infantile malnutrition in the South and Centre of the country and nutritional problems remain serious and wide spread"*. The enquiry shows that over 10% of Iraqi children of under five years of age show signs of *"acute malnutrition"*. The mission considers this rate *"unacceptably high"* and *"observes only a marginal decrease"* in this rate in these Iraqi governorates since its last

enquiry in 1995 — despite the application of the "Oil for Food Programme" since 1997, which has generated billions of dollars of revenue which, in principle, should have been devoted to the nutritional needs of the population.

In Baghdad, 12% of the under five year olds are, because of under nourishment, under size for their age, and this rises to 27% in the rural province of Dila.

The mission observes that the situation is *"brighter in the Northern governorates of Dohuk, Irbil and Suleimaniah"*. According to the report, the Oil for Food Programme has brought about significant improvements in the state of health, the death rate and the nutritional state of the population.

In the Kurdish North, the *"underweight problem"* has been virtually eliminated and chronic under nourishment amongst the under fives has dropped from 26% in 1996 to 18% in 1999.

A UNICEF enquiry carried out in 1999 had shown that the infant mortality rate in Iraqi Kurdistan had dropped from 80 per 1,000 in the 1984-89 period to 72/1,000 in the

1994 -1999 whereas the rate had doubled over the same periods in the Baghdad administered parts of the country the mission reports, concluding: *"this progress is not due to the Oil for Food Programme rations distributed to the Kurdish population (which are the same as those that the Iraqi regime is supposed to distribute to those Iraqis under its administration) but to the general economic growth"* in Kurdistan thanks to better administration.

Before the Oil for Food Programme the Iraqi government distributed rations of 1295 calories per head. The Programme has allowed this to rise to 2000 calories and 43.3 grams of protein per day in the 1998/1999 period.

At present, these rations are 2199 calories and 48.2 grams of protein per head, which the mission considers *"reasonably adequate in calories and protein"*.

However, the administration, widely corrupt, does not distribute these rations equitably, but favour its clients and sells a substantial part of the supplies, destined to feed the Iraqi citizens, on the markets of neighbouring countries, including Lebanon and Jordan.

This under-nourishment, organised by the Iraqi regime, is then used by it as a propaganda weapon for foreign consumption to denounce *"the genocide of the Iraqi people"*, while in Iraqi Kurdistan, with similar per capita resources but more efficient administration, the populations enjoys increasing food supplies despite a certain amount of wastage by UN agencies responsible for the Oil for Food Programme in the Kurdish provinces.

STRASBOURG: THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT CALLS ON THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE TO SET UP ALL FORMS OF COOPERATION AIMING AT SETTLING THE KURDISH PROBLEM IN TURKEY

ON 6 September the European Parliament passed a resolution with a view to establishing a common position of the Parliament and Council with a view to setting up joint action for the economic and social development of Turkey.

On its second reading Parliament altered its common position with the Council as shown below (amendments shown in bold).

Amendment 1

Article 4, para. 1 clause a

- a. modernisation of the productive system, the improvement of the capacity of the institutions and infrastructures, in particular in the areas of environment, power and transport, **except for the development of nuclear energy,**

especially in zones exposed to earthquakes;

h) all cooperation aiming at the defence or promotion of democracy, a State of Laws, Human Rights **and the respect of minorities, as well as the protection and recognition of their cultural identity and help for initiatives in support of abolition of the death sentence;**

h. b) **all forms of cooperation aiming at the settlement of the Kurdish problem;**

The Kurdish problem, of which the Turkish authorities continue to deny the very existence, thus becomes an essential fact in the negotiations between Turkey and the European Union.

ACCORDING TO FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER K. INAN, PRESIDENT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMISSION, THE TURKISH SYSTEM WORKS IN THE SOLE INTERESTS OF THOSE WHO RULE

KAMRAN Inan, is one of the pillars of the nationalist and conservative Turkish political establishment. Grandson of a Kurdish chief hanged by Ataturk for his part in the Kurdish independence uprising of 1925, and of an Armenian mother, he has, for the last forty years, been one of the

most zealous defenders of Turkish nationalist theses against the Armenians and Kurds. His concern for the preservation of the State went so far as to zealously defend the successive Turkish military regimes, including the terrible 1980 Army junta. His obedient services earned him the pleasure of various ministerial positions.

Pursuing a talented practice of "political tourism" in a country where the principle political parties licensed by the Army show hardly any ideological differences, he is at present president of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Commission.

In this, largely ceremonial, position, he meets many Westerners. The task assigned to him by the brains of the Turkish "deep State" (local code expression for the armed forces) is to tell foreigners that Kurds do not suffer any discrimination in Turkey since he is of Kurdish origin and occupies such a prestigious position. In brief, K. Inan is the conservative equivalent of his "social democratic" predecessor, Hikmet Çetin, who also, in Western company, like to show off his Kurdish origins to demonstrate the same thesis.

Through constantly playing this role of defender of the State, Mr. Inan has ended up trapped in his own contradictions by discovering, rather late, that this State has gone adrift, undermined by corruption, waste and irresponsibility. While his present party, ANAP, is part of the government coalition, he has felt an irresistible need to fax to all the principal newspapers, a 22 page screed on the crimes of the Turkish political system.

His prose enjoyed little response in the media. Only an old former fellow student at from Faculty of Political Science, Çetin Altan, non-conformist editorialist of the daily *Sabah*, opened his column to his in the 9 September issue of the paper. Here are some extracts:

1. *The Turkish system rewards traitors, appreciates the talents of*

thieves, offers comfortable positions to the ignorant. Holders of the record in the production of traitors, we are also notorious for thieves and the forming of ignorance. We are the only country to have printed bank notes of 10,000,000 currency units. The Germans and Swiss have stopped at 1,000 and the Americans have come last with \$100 bills. What do those who reacted to the promise, in the 50s, (Editor's Note: at the time of the democratic Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, hanged by an Army coup d'état) to create "a millionaire in every town district"? The must now be glad to see billionaires.

2. A great part of the people are deprived of any consciousness of culture or of their rights. A starving and unemployed man cannot be free. In Turkey, everything is thought out and planned to suit those who rule. The duties of those who are ruled is to ensure the prosperity of those who rule, to carry them on their shoulders — they cannot claim rights and services for themselves. Their equality is hidden in the dusty pages of laws.

3. All the means and resources are used by those who rule — they have 350,000 official residences — more than the total number of schools in the country. All public institutions, including the constitutional institutions and the Turkish Grand National Assembly live in ghettos, cut off from the society of which they are a part. They have their own residences, their own cars, their shops, sometimes even their

own schools, separated from the people, turned in on themselves. This system now covers the whole country and has assumed the appearance of a colonial structure.

4. With 125,000 official cars and 162,000 official telephones, the Turkish beurocracy holds another record. Every year, an average of 15,000 civil servants travel abroad on alleged missions and spend \$70 million. Over 3,000 officials of various institutions, who do not speak any foreign language and no not fulfill any need or render any service, live abroad and salaried tourists and waste resources that could have been used for providing drinking water supply to villages in need.

5. Our beurocracy, which is disproportionately large in comparison with the population, is at the bottom of the scale in terms of working hours and productivity. Its members enjoy an even greater immunity than the members of Parliament. They are protected by the armour of a special law on trying officials.

And, when that is found to be insufficient, the State Council, protector of officials, shelters them from any legal action. The officials demand accountability from others but are accountable to no one.... They make full use of their prerogatives but refuse all responsibility.

President Clinton, in the course of five years, has been able to reduce the number of civil servants by

250,000 and make savings of \$108 billion. Everywhere the State is withdrawing from interference in individuals' lives. In Turkey, the opposite is the case. The strength of the political powers is unable to control the dictatorship of the beurocracy. The Turkish beurocracy has never accepted the primacy of elected representative.

6. In the period when there were two Assemblies, before 1980, there were 650 people employed by the Parliament. Today there are 5,500 people are employed by our single Assembly. An office boy earns more than a general manager. Parliament works three days a week for 4 hours a day — in the budget for the year 2000, that works out at \$80,000 per hour, one of the most expensive of all similar institutions in the world.

According to K. Inan, Turkey has more official Mercedes than Germany, while, through lack of schools and resources, over a million children are unable to attend school. This former minister also challenges the official statistics and states that, on the level of human development, Turkey has fallen to the level of certain African countries.

K. Inan's diatribe against bureaucracy, however, does not contain a single word about the ubiquitous armed forces. It appears at a time when the Minister of the Interior declares that his is beginning a "crusade" against gangs of "mafia-politician-beurocrats". A vast programme!

"IT IS, INDEED, TANSU ÇİLLER WHO HAD SIXTY KURDISH BUSINESSMEN ASSASSINATED" AFFIRMS SÜLEYMAN DEMİREL'S FORMER ADVISOR

THE publication of the latest book by journalist Cüneyt Arcayürek, the political advisor of former Turkish President Süleyman Demirel entitled *"The patient man's dream become reality"* (Note: in Turkish *"Bekleyen adamin gerçekleşen düşü"*) is causing a great stir in politico-media circles at the moment. In his book, C. Arcayürek recounts the highlights of Turgut Ozan's presidency and that of his successor Süleyman Demirel. The Turkish newspapers were immediately fascinated by Süleyman Demirel's confidences on the Kurdish question. Mr. Arcayürek reports, in his book, his conversation with Mr. Demirel on 16 January 1998 and attributes the following remarks to him: *"Soon after forming her government (1993), Tansu Çiller visited me. She told me: 'I am going to solve the terrorist problem with the help of the Special Action Units (TİM)' I answered her 'Listen to me. The day will come when these units will be a real headache for you. You will be unable to control them, and anything may happen to you. This country doesn't have two Armies. You must solve the terrorist problem with the Army.' She became all pally with Chief of Staff Dogan Güres and other Army leaders ..."*

Cüneyt Arcayürek then adds: *"the President's bald remarks point the finger at those responsible for political instruction (...) ."* According to the book, Mr. Demirel is said to have continued: *"This case (Susurluk) is always classed as an 'unsolved murder'. Yet the authors are obvious. But ... it can't be*

proved. To clarify the situation, that is to say to discover who gave the orders to the mafia gangs, Mehmet Agar, (Editor's Note: former Minister of the Interior, former head of National Security, deeply implicated in the links with the mafia) must speak out." The 18 September issue of the Turkish daily *Hurriyet* carried the headline *"It was Çiller who had the Kurdish businessmen killed"*. According to the journalist, Süleyman Demirel told him that the "unsolved" murders of 60 Kurdish businessmen in 1993 were paid for on the verbal instructions of Mrs. Çiller.

Extracts from the book also deal with the Kurdish policy of Turgut Ozal. According to Mr. Arcayürek, the latter had proposed to his Prime Minister of the time, Süleyman Demirel, that they collaborate with the Iraqi Kurds to form a federation, but that Süleyman Demirel had

refused, maintaining that *"this would mean dividing the country"*.

Questioned about the book, Süleyman Demirel simply replied *"I will not discuss the subject"*. As for Mrs. Çiller, she limited herself to saying that she acted in accordance with the law, and that if she had to do it again she would do the same.

Can Atakli, a journalist on the daily *Sabah*, wrote the following in his column on 20 September: *"Here we have the former President of the Republic recognising that the State is implicated in the 'unsolved' murders and, moreover, that the instigator is none other than the Prime Minister at the time. Should not legal proceedings be started against the Prime Minister for those 'unsolved murder', against the President of the Republic for his inaction in the face of the events, and on the Army commander and the Director of National Security for having executed those orders? Lets wait and see whether, once again, the whole affair will be hushed up?"*

AS WELL AS...

• **AKIN BIRDAL FREED AFTER SERVING HIS SENTENCE.** Akin Birdal, Vice-President of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and former President of the Turkish Association for Human Rights (İHD) left prison on 23 September, having completed his 10 months jail sentence for "provoking racial hatred" by his calls for a peaceful solution to the Kurdish conflict in 1995 and 1996. He had been released on 25 September 1999 for six months on health grounds, having served part of his sentence, as from June. He was then

re-incarcerated last March to serve the rest of his sentence. He benefited from a reduction in his term, as provided for under Turkish law.

Mr. Birdal had already spent a year in prison, accused of activity in support of the PKK. He was seriously wounded in May 1998 in an attack perpetrated at the offices of the İHD. His assailants and their accomplices were sentenced, in December, to sentences varying between 10 months and 19 years imprisonment. On coming out of jail he declared *"I hope and pray that I will be the last*

victim of any "thought crimes". In an interview given to the English language paper Turkish Daily News, he did not fail to give the latest news about the Kurdish M.P.s incarcerated in the same prison:

DEP deputies Leyla Zana, Hatip Dicle, Orhan Dogan and Selim Sadak are currently serving sentences at Ankara Closed Central Prison. Hatip Dicle has problems with his stomach and digestive system. But all four of them are hopeful about the future. Orhan Dogan has a very high performance. He does everything in the ward, from cooking to writing and serving as a legal counselor, and he helps people who are sick or have problems.... Leyla Zana says that if she is acquitted after seven years, she will come out with "bare feet". In other words, she wants to tread on the soil with bare feet. Although she says that she feels very well, she suffers from a drop in blood pressure. That is why she looks pale. Leyla Zana's life has been spent in prison — first as the wife of an inmate and then as a convict. But she does not feel rancor and anger at any one, and is hopeful for the future of democracy and brotherhood" ... The democracy movement, which includes Kurdish politicians and intellectuals, has been stalled. An initiative intended to unite Turkish and Kurdish workers under one roof did not take off and the Kurdish politicians decided to join the People's Democracy Party (HADEP). But it would be wrong to conclude from that the efforts to pull together democratization and human rights efforts in Turkey have been given up (...) While my democratic and political rights were suspended under Article 312, I will continue to work for democracy and peace. In any case, I have certain

responsibilities as the deputy chairman of the International Human Rights Federation. It is not necessary to have a certain status to be a human rights activist; I will do whatever is necessary under the present conditions.

• **NADIRE MATER, TAKEN TO COURT FOR UNDERMINING THE ARMY'S MORALE, HAS BEEN ACQUITTED.**

On 29 September, an Istanbul Assize Court acquitted Nadire Mater, a Turkish journalist whose book "Mehmettin Kitabı" (The soldier's book), published in May 1999 was a collection of the testimonies of 42 conscripts who were doing their national service in Kurdistan. In this book, of which nearly 20,000 copies have been sold, the soldiers interviewed anonymously openly talked about the sacking of villages and the oppression of the civilian population as the Army's method against the PKK. Nadire Mater, as well as his publisher, and the publishing house Métis, were accused of undermining the morale of the Turkish Armed Forces and all risked prison sentences of between two and twelve years imprisonment. After the hearing, Nadire Mater stated: "We are glad — but this doesn't mean that all violations of freedom of expression have disappeared in Turkey", Hüseyin Semih Sökmén, the publisher, for his part added: "Our victory is more than symbolic. This was a case against the Army, since it was the Commander in Chief of the Army himself who started proceedings against us". The public prosecutor has a week in which to appeal against the finding.

• **ELEVEN HADEP MEMBERS ARRESTED IN SIRNAK.** Eleven members of the People's Democratic

Party (HADEP), including Resul Sadak, President of the Sirnak province organisation of the party and other local leaders, called in for questioning on 23 September were formally placed under arrest on 1st October 2000. The Turkish authorities maintain that they had seized arms in a HADEP convoy which was returning to Sirnak. HADEP, for its part, denounced this as a political plot, declaring that "these allegations have no basis whatsoever" and calling for the "immediate" freeing of its members.

• **REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS' VIOLATIONS IN TURKEY IN AUGUST 2000.**

The Turkish Association for Human Rights (IHD) has just made public its August 2000 report on Human Rights violations in Turkey. The following are extracts of the essential points:

Number of "unsolved" murders : 4
 Number placed in detention : 1120 (including 62 children)
 Number of people tortured : 98 (including 3 children)
 Number of journalists detained : 3
 Number of newspapers searched : 1
 Number of TV stations banned : 3
 Number of audio cassettes banned in the
 Kurdish State of Emergency Region (OHAL) : 242

The July 2000 figures are the following:

Number of "unsolved" murders : 4
 Number placed in detention : 714 (including 24 children)
 Number of people tortured : 57 (including 11 children)
 Number of journalists detained : 5
 Number of TV stations banned : 9
 Number of publications seized : 20
 Sentences for "crimes" of opinion : 2 years

• **A TRIAL OF STRENGTH BETWEEN TURKEY AND THE EUROPEAN COURT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.** The Turkish Foreign Ministry has asked for an increase in the number of Turkish lawyers at the European Court for Human Rights, following the criticisms by Sami Selçuk, President of the Turkish Court of Appeals, who had stressed the fact that Turkey had been found guilty in eleven different cases in a single day, during his speech opening the legal year.

Questioned on the matter, Prs. Bakir Çağlar and Aslan Gündüz, who have both acted for Turkey at the European Human Rights Court, declared that the solution for reducing the number of condemnations was, rather, in the adoption of new laws to prevent fresh violations of rights and freedoms. The 1999 clearly illustrate Turkey's depressing picture: 106 violations of the right to life, 109 cases of torture and inhuman treatment, 129 violations of personal safety, 232 violations of the right to a fair trial, 128 violations of freedom of thought and expression and 10 violations of the freedom of assembly. Turkey has already lost 17 cases this year.

According to the English language Turkish daily, *Turkish Daily News*, of 22 September, There were 2,661 pleas filed against Turkey before the European Court as of 1st September 2000. Between 1991, the date on which Turkey accepted that its citizens could apply to the Court, and 1998, 24 verdicts were against Turkey as against only 3 in its favour. In 1999 alone, there were 17 condemnatory verdicts, and 11 so far in 2000. The principal reason for the 1999 figures was a trial of 13 people arrested for their statements on the Kurdish problem. An analysis of recent cases before the European

Court shows a change in the basis of pleas. There are, evidently, less cases calling to question the role of Army judges in the State Security Courts (DGM) and also regarding expropriation and failures to pay compensation, detention, attacks on life and inhuman treatment. The more recent pleas are more often based on violations of Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, regarding freedom of expression, Article 6 on the right to a just trial and to expulsions from the Turkish Army because of religious observance.

Recently the Turkish government, accused by Nicosia of multiple violations of Human Rights in Cyprus, ostentatiously stayed away from the European Court for Human Rights on 20 September playing an abstentionist game. This gesture, described as a "challenge" by a diplomatic source of the Council of Europe, is the first in the history of the European Court.

Ankara had let it be known that it did not feel concerned by Nicosia's accusations, which in particular cover the disappearance of 1,500 persons, the forced displacement of 211,000 others, plundered goods, the living conditions of Greek Cypriots in the Northern part of the island and the voting rights of the displaced Greek Cypriots. Ankara throws all responsibility for these onto the North Cyprus Republic which it unilaterally proclaimed in 1983, and which Turkey is the only country to recognise.

• **BULENT ECEVIT'S VISIT TO KURDISTAN.** "I want to play in my village", "I want to return to my village" were the sort of banners with which the children of Siirt greeted Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit during

his visit of 27 September. About a hundred people shouting "Biji asiti" ("Long live peace" in Kurdish) "No to the death sentence", "Peace Now", "No to 'city villages'" (**Editor's Note:** the name given to the "strategic hamlets" Ankara wants to build on the plains to group together the displaced Kurdish peasants) were ejected from the meeting place. Faced with the se protests, Ecevit limited himself to saying "Whoever wants peace must first lay down his arms". The Turkish authorities had, however, several times announced that fighting had reached zero level since the PKK had called for a cease fire and an end to armed struggle.

• **FLAGRANT EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITIES: 34% OF MINORS ARE ILLITERATE.** The new school year in Turkey testifies, once again, to the obvious educational inequalities. According to statistics published by the Teachers Trade Union, Egitim-Sen (which, for this new school year 2000, the first since the virtually complete ending of fighting between the PKK and the Turkish Army, has drawn up a depressing assessment of the state of primary education in the country) 30% of the children of school age working (the majority of whom are Kurdish) and of these 4 out of 5 have completely given up all schooling. The remaining fifth go to school for half a day and work the other half, under a system which allows a teacher to teach two classes in the same day. The classes are generally overloaded, with up to 80 children per class, despite a declared objective of 30 per class — the national average being, in fact, 50.

According to Egitim-Sen's figures, throughout Turkey 21% if all minors are illiterate, a figure that rises to 34% in Kurdistan and even 47% in the case of girls. There is also a

shortage of 3,300 schools in the Kurdish provinces, out of a national total of 75,000. Similarly there is a shortage of 14,000 teachers.

The inequalities in access to education increase for access to secondary schools, which already only accept 22.4% of young Turks. Thus in Diyarbakir, there are only 6,000 places for 12,000 who pass their primary school leaving exam every year. And the regular erosion of the educational budget, which has passed from 13.2% of the national total in 1990 to 7.13% in 2000 is hardly calculated to reverse the trend.

• **FRESH TENSION BETWEEN THE TURKISH PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER.**

On 25 September, the Turkish President, Ahmed Necdet Sezer, again vetoed a government decree for the eventual privatisation of the State owned banks. The decree, which had the force of law and was sent to the President last week, was one of the preconditions laid down by the World Bank and the Japanese government, joint financiers of the project. The Presidency justified his decision by the fact that the matter was essentially an financial law which, under Article 91 of the Constitution, is the prerogative of Parliament.

Fresh tension is thus in the air between the Prime Minister, who is disinclined to work together with the Members of Parliament, and the President, who is much more concerned with democratic principles.

THE WORLD FEDERATION OF TWINNED TOWNS, ACCUSED OF SEPARATISM, REPLIES TO THE DAILY HURRIYET. On 22 September last, the Turkish daily

Hurriyet published an editorial signed by its Editor in Chief, in which a seminar, planned for October and organised by the Federation Mondiale des Villes Unies (FMCU — World Federation of United Townships) and the Diyarbakir City Council in South-East Anatolia, was said to be of a nature calculated to harm “*the project of peace and union of HADEP with Turkey as a whole*” by being only addressed to the towns of South East Anatolia. The General Secretary of the FMC asked for the right to reply to these accusations to establish the truth on the meaning of the FMCU’s action towards the Kurdish towns. We give below extracts from this reply by Mr. Michel Bescond, General Secretary of the FMC:

(...) Your article of 22 September attacking the FMC has created a misunderstanding that must be cleared up as soon as possible.

1) What is the FMC: First of all let us pinpoint the fact that the FMC is a major international organisation covering 1500 local authorities who have set themselves the task of acting in support of peace, of exchanges between peoples, of international cooperation between local authorities, of democracy, of local autonomy and the long term improvement of our living conditions. It also works so that those who are closest to the people, that is the elected local councilors, may be better heard at international level. Our correspondents are, therefore, mayors of towns and not representatives of political parties, whatever they may be.

2) The FMCU’s work in Turkey: Three Turkish town have benefited from the work developed by the FMC: IZMIR, SILFKE and ANTALYA. Izmir and Sifke are members of the MEDCITIES

network, whose secretarial work is undertaken by the FMC(...)

3) The “twinning seminar” project. Thus, as a result of the last municipal elections in 1999, about forty towns, including Diyarbakir, asked to join our Federation and, last March, after having received encouragement from the Turkish Ambassador in Paris, who I met on 24 February last, I personally led a delegation of European mayors who met their Turkish opposite numbers and the governors of Van and Diyarbakir. I informed Mr. Sönmez KOKSAL, Turkish Ambassador to France, as of 26 March and 17 August last, that we had laid the bases of cooperative actions and that, so as to examine the relevance of our projects and the possibility of their financing, we proposed to co-organise, with the City of Diyarbakir, a “twinning seminar” on 26/28 October 2000 in the framework of the “Town Twinning” Funds of the European Commission (Directorate General of Information and Communication) which brings together the mayors of the Turkish member towns, or their representatives, and the mayors of different European towns, in particular French and Italian, and institutional representatives (European Union, Council of Europe, Congress of local and Regional Authorities, UNOPS Agency of the United Nations) and representatives of the French and Italian cooperation organisations. Obviously, we would never have envisaged the undertaking of such a project without concentration with the Turkish government. That is why I requested, in the same letter to His Excellency the Ambassador, an interview that he granted for 2 October next. We would be glad if you would accept, in the name of the right to reply, to inform your readers of our position and to assure them of the frank and

disinterested proposal of cooperation from the European towns and their international federation (...).

• READ IN THE TURKISH PRESS: AN ILL ADVISED SECRET PLAN FOR THE KURDISH SOUTH-EAST.

Cengiz Çandar, a journalist on the Turkish daily Sabah, seriously pinpoints the Turkish authorities' new "South Eastern plan" cooked up for the Kurdish regions (the eighth of that name) in his column of 17 September. This Army inspired plan deliberately ignores the cultural and linguistic issues. For their part, about twenty Kurdish members of Parliament coming from various Turkish political parties, have formed a Democratic Contact Group (DTG) to attempt to bring the issue before Parliament, which still looks like an observer, or even a rubber stamp, of decisions taken by the all powerful National Security Council (MGK). Here are some extracts from the article:

"An important "plan" was either leaked or "caused to be leaked" to the press during the week. It seems that this virtual "master plan," consisting of "107 articles," which was disclosed by journalists known to have close ties with the prime minister, was put into effect by Bulent Ecevit on 7 May. The plan is the "Southeast plan."

Presented as an "extremely comprehensive secret action plan," the blueprint is said to have been prepared— as may be guessed — upon the "recommendation" of the MGK [National Security Council] in December last year. Since the MGK in its present form is, as underscored by retired Lieutenant General Sadi Erguvenc in the magazine *National Strategy*, "an institution outside and even above

the executive by any measure," it would not be wrong to label the "Southeast Plan" as the "MGK plan" rather than giving the credit to Ecevit. Moreover, neither would it be wrong to translate the MGK's "recommendations" as "decrees" or "instructions to the government," (...).

What is inconceivable is that such a fundamental and important plan should be called a "secret action plan." Will the "Southeast question" be solved without letting anyone see it? Will the Southeast develop without letting anyone see? Why is it a secret? Furthermore, how could such a "secret plan" be published in every detail in dailies with the highest circulation?

Since it is this "administration concept" that makes Turkey a "funny country" and turns its quest for accession to the EU into a venture that cannot be taken seriously, it is unnecessary and meaningless to search for an answer to these questions.

(...) "According to information obtained, some 'controversial' cultural topics such as education and TV stations broadcasting in Kurdish were not included in the plan. We learned that these topics were excluded from the plan because they were considered 'politicization.' On the other hand, reinforcement of the TRT's [Turkish Radio and TV Corporation] technical capabilities to enable its programs to reach every part of the region was identified as one of the key objectives.

Another comedy and a waste of time... The "controversial cultural topics" in question are actually the "Copenhagen criteria" themselves. The "problem" is the insistence on

the same unsuccessful methods, regardless of how they have failed to find a solution for the past 70-odd years. It is the outdated mentality that reduces the "problem" to underdevelopment and believes that it will be solved through economic development, but never learns from past experience (...)

It is wrongfully believed that citizens living in the Southeast would develop a "Turkish identity" by means of the TRT, which is not even respected by the millions of Turks who watch it only in Turkish. In this "Internet age" in which there are Kurdish TV and radio broadcasts that can cross borders, the ostrich policy continues.

It is said that the first of the plan's "the three cornerstones" is "the above-party approach of all political parties to this action plan aimed at achieving development and prosperity in the Southeast." How will the political parties be informed of the "secret action plan" and thus adopt an "above-party approach"? Moreover, why should they develop such a strategy? Does this above-party approach not reflect a search for "political homogeneity"? Is this not "totalitarianism"? If every "fundamental issue" is to be handled based on "an above-party approach," what need would there be no need for a multi-party parliamentary system?

The most striking measure among those proposed to be taken in the Southeast is that bureaucrats will have to accept appointments to government offices in the Southeast in order to get a promotion to key posts. The bureaucracy has failed in the Southeast. Could there be a worse "administration philosophy"

than having the top management of the state composed of those who have failed in the Southeast?

I would like to quote another part from the article written by Dr. Riza Turmen, a career diplomat and a justice of the European Court of Human Rights (...): "Today we are witnessing the emergence of religious and ethnic identities as a result of the weakening of traditional ties such as citizenship and family in connection with globalisation. The strengthening, modernization, and democratization of the Republic depend to an extent on whether it will allow space for such ethnic and religious identities and be able to integrate them."

This does not seem likely with the broken-down mentality dominating Turkey. Therefore, let the two-paragraph "Copenhagen Criteria," which would transform the state, be applied instead of the 107-article "secret action plan" for the Southeast, and the Turkish Republic will gain strength"

• **READ IN THE TURKISH PRESS: AN ILL ADVISED SECRET PLAN FOR THE KURDISH SOUTHEAST.** Cengiz Çandar, a journalist on the Turkish daily Sabah, seriously pinpoints the Turkish authorities' new "South Eastern plan" cooked up for the Kurdish regions (the eighth of that name) in his column of 17 September. This Army inspired plan deliberately ignores the cultural and linguistic issues. For their part, about twenty Kurdish members of Parliament coming from various Turkish political parties, have formed a Democratic Contact Group (DTG) to attempt to bring the issue before Parliament, which still looks like an observer, or even a rubber stamp, of

decisions taken by the all powerful National Security Council (MGK). Here are some extracts from the article:

"An important "plan" was either leaked or "caused to be leaked" to the press during the week. It seems that this virtual "master plan," consisting of "107 articles," which was disclosed by journalists known to have close ties with the prime minister, was put into effect by Bülent Ecevit on 7 May. The plan is the "Southeast plan."

Presented as an "extremely comprehensive secret action plan," the blueprint is said to have been prepared— as may be guessed — upon the "recommendation" of the MGK [National Security Council] in December last year. Since the MGK in its present form is, as underscored by retired Lieutenant General Sadi Ergüvenç in the magazine National Strategy, "an institution outside and even above the executive by any measure," it would not be wrong to label the "Southeast Plan" as the "MGK plan" rather than giving the credit to Ecevit. Moreover, neither would it be wrong to translate the MGK's "recommendations" as "decrees" or "instructions to the government," (...).

What is inconceivable is that such a fundamental and important plan should be called a "secret action plan." Will the "Southeast question" be solved without letting anyone see it? Will the Southeast develop without letting anyone see? Why is it a secret? Furthermore, how could such a "secret plan" be published in every detail in dailies with the highest circulation?

Since it is this "administration concept" that makes Turkey a

"funny country" and turns its quest for accession to the EU into a venture that cannot be taken seriously, it is unnecessary and meaningless to search for an answer to these questions.

(...) "According to information obtained, some 'controversial' cultural topics such as education and TV stations broadcasting in Kurdish were not included in the plan. We learned that these topics were excluded from the plan because they were considered 'politicization.' On the other hand, reinforcement of the TRT's [Turkish Radio and TV Corporation] technical capabilities to enable its programs to reach every part of the region was identified as one of the key objectives.

Another comedy and a waste of time... The "controversial cultural topics" in question are actually the "Copenhagen criteria" themselves. The "problem" is the insistence on the same unsuccessful methods, regardless of how they have failed to find a solution for the past 70-odd years. It is the outdated mentality that reduces the "problem" to underdevelopment and believes that it will be solved through economic development, but never learns from past experience (...)

It is wrongfully believed that citizens living in the Southeast would develop a "Turkish identity" by means of the TRT, which is not even respected by the millions of Turks who watch it only in Turkish. In this "Internet age" in which there are Kurdish TV and radio broadcasts that can cross borders, the ostrich policy continues.

It is said that the first of the plan's "the three cornerstones" is "the

above-party approach of all political parties to this action plan aimed at achieving development and prosperity in the Southeast." How will the political parties be informed of the "secret action plan" and thus adopt an "above-party approach"? Moreover, why should they develop such a strategy? Does this above-party approach not reflect a search for "political homogeneity"? Is this not "totalitarianism"? If every "fundamental issue" is to be handled based on "an above-party approach," what need would there be no need for a multi-party parliamentary system?

The most striking measure among

those proposed to be taken in the Southeast is that bureaucrats will have to accept appointments to government offices in the Southeast in order to get a promotion to key posts. The bureaucracy has failed in the Southeast. Could there be a worse "administration philosophy" than having the top management of the state composed of those who have failed in the Southeast?

I would like to quote another part from the article written by Dr. Riza Turmen, a career diplomat and a justice of the European Court of Human Rights (...): "Today we are witnessing the emergence of religious and ethnic identities as a result of the weakening of

traditional ties such as citizenship and family in connection with globalisation. The strengthening, modernization, and democratization of the Republic depend to an extent on whether it will allow space for such ethnic and religious identities and be able to integrate them."

This does not seem likely with the broken-down mentality dominating Turkey. Therefore, let the two-paragraph "Copenhagen Criteria," which would transform the state, be applied instead of the 107-article "secret action plan" for the Southeast, and the Turkish Republic will gain strength"

UN Arms Agency Chief Will Back Off on Iraq

Move Follows Pressure From Security Council

By Colum Lynch
Washington Post Service

UNITED NATIONS, New York — To avoid a confrontation with Baghdad at an inopportune time, the United States and other permanent members of the Security Council have persuaded the chairman of a new UN arms agency to cancel his planned announcement that weapons inspectors are ready to return to Iraq.

The move follows repeated statements by the Iraqi government that it will never submit to inspections by the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission, known as Unmovic.

Diplomats said U.S., Russian, Chinese and French members of a panel that oversees Unmovic advised its chairman, Hans Blix of Sweden, to drop a conclusion from a draft report that 44 inspectors have completed training and are "now in a position to start activities in Iraq," including "baseline" inspections of facilities that might be involved in building prohibited weapons.

The final version of the report, released to the council Wednesday, says the arms experts "could plan and commence" preliminary tasks to prepare for future inspections. Given the uncertainty, more than half of the newly trained weapons specialists have been

sent back to their home countries. Their names will go on a roster and they may be called up for service in the future.

"The U.S. and Russia agreed that it was not appropriate to give the impression that Mr. Blix and the commission was ready to go back into Iraq," said a Security Council diplomat.

"They cautioned that this might create a climate of confrontation at an inappropriate time."

The Security Council's five permanent members — the United States, Russia, China, France and Britain — want to avoid a clash over Iraq policy when their heads of state meet at the United Nations next week during the so-called Millennium Summit of World Leaders, according to diplomats.

A U.S. official also contended that it would be premature to restart weapons inspections in Iraq. "They have more work to do," the official said. "While Unmovic has finished its first stage of preparation, it's a plain fact that they are not yet ready to launch a full-scale program in Iraq."

Despite the reversal, Mr. Blix reported that he would continue preparing for a resumption of on-site inspections.

He said a new team of inspectors would be trained in France from Nov. 7 to Dec. 8, and UN officials said he was talking with various countries about tech-

nical assistance, such as communications equipment and surveillance aircraft.

Under the terms of the 1991 cease-fire that ended the Gulf War, Iraq is prohibited from possessing medium- and long-range missiles or nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

A former inspection agency, the UN Special Commission, or Unscm, pulled its inspectors out of Iraq on the eve of a U.S.-British air campaign in December 1998.

Unmovic may face a renewed challenge from Iraq's allies when the council debates the future of inspections during the week of Sept. 11. Russia has told Mr. Blix that the participation of some former members of Unscm on the new team — particularly two Russian arms experts, Nikita Smidovich and Igor Mitrokhin — would make it difficult for Moscow to press Baghdad to cooperate.

■ U.S. Planes Raid Southern Iraq

Iraq said Thursday that its anti-aircraft defenses had hit one of a group of Western warplanes taking part in a bombing raid in southern Iraq on Wednesday in which three Iraqi civilians had been wounded, Reuters reported from Baghdad.

The U.S. Central Command said that the planes had returned safely, but "battle damage assessment" was in progress.

An Iraqi spokesman said the attack had taken place Wednesday at Rumaiitha district in Muthanna Province, 270 kilometers (165 miles) south of Baghdad.

"The bombings led to the injury of three citizens — a child among them," he said, adding that several civilian houses and an excavator had been damaged.

L'électrification des régions kurdes dépend de l'ONU (responsable)



BAGDAD, 1er sept (AFP) - 12h22 - Un responsable irakien a affirmé que le rétablissement du courant dans les régions kurdes du nord de l'Irak dépendait de l'approbation par le Comité des sanctions de l'ONU des contrats conclus dans le cadre du programme "pétrole contre nourriture".

"L'organisme irakien de l'Electricité a achevé les préparatifs pour relier le réseau électrique des provinces kurdes d'Erbil, de Dohouk et de Souleimaniyeh au réseau national, mais l'accomplissement du projet dépend des contrats", a déclaré son directeur Salah Youssef Kazir, cité vendredi par l'hebdomadaire Al-Zaoura.

L'Irak accuse régulièrement les représentants américain et britannique au sein du comité des sanctions de l'ONU de bloquer les contrats de pièces détachées pour la réhabilitation notamment de son réseau électrique, sérieusement endommagé par la guerre du Golfe (1991).

Le gouvernement irakien a annoncé la semaine dernière son intention de fournir de l'électricité aux régions kurdes du nord de l'Irak qui échappent à son contrôle depuis la guerre du Golfe en 1991.

Cette mesure devrait contribuer à diminuer les ruptures très fréquentes du courant dans les zones kurdes, contrôlées par des partis d'opposition au régime de Saddam Hussein.

Les régions contrôlées par Saddam Hussein, dont Bagdad, manquent également d'électricité, mais beaucoup moins que les zones kurdes, et le courant y est rationné depuis près de dix ans.

La réhabilitation des installations électriques irakiennes est entravée par un manque de pièces détachées dû aux sanctions imposées à l'Irak depuis son invasion du Koweït, en août 1990.

IRAK Dix ans après l'instauration des sanctions, les Nations unies ferment les yeux sur les exportations illégales de pétrole

Comment Bagdad contourne l'embargo

Irak, dix ans d'embargo : des organisations humanitaires françaises dénoncent les effets des sanctions internationales sur les populations civiles. Près de 300 personnalités ont par ailleurs apporté leur soutien au projet « Un avion pour l'Irak », qui vise à briser l'embargo sur les vols de passagers à destination de Bagdad.

Bagdad :
Georges Malbrunot

Un costume Armani en vente à 3 000 dollars, des lecteurs vidéo-disques meilleur marché qu'à Paris, des nouveaux restaurants qui ont peur d'envier à ceux de Beyrouth. Difficile d'imaginer, dans le quartier de la rue Arasat de Bagdad, que l'Irak est soumis depuis dix ans à un impitoyable embargo international.

Cette abondance, réservée à une petite classe d'Irakiens, est le résultat visible de la « stratégie alternative » de contournement de l'embargo mise en place en début d'année par le régime. Une stratégie fondée sur un accroissement de la contrebande pétrolière et sur

la multiplication des contrats commerciaux passés en dehors des résolutions de l'ONU.

L'atténuation des sanctions, à partir de 1997, par la résolution 986 (pétrole contre nourriture) autorisant l'Irak à vendre du pétrole en échange de biens humanitaires, n'a pas enravé la lente descente aux enfers. La réhabilitation des infrastructures continue de pâtir des contrats en attente au comité des sanctions de l'ONU à New York.

Adoptée fin 1999, la résolution 1284, en conditionnant la suspension progressive des sanctions à une coopération de l'Irak avec l'ONU en matière de désarmement, a en fait convaincu les autorités que l'embargo serait durablement maintenu.

Bagdad a donc adopté une

nouvelle stratégie afin de se doter de ressources fiscales et douanières. Le dogme de l'Etat-providence a été écorné au profit des lois du marché. L'accès à certains hôpitaux et écoles est devenu payant. L'ascension du ministre des Finances Hikmat Ibrahim al-Azzaoui, promu vice-premier ministre alors qu'il n'appartient pas à la direction du parti Baath, témoigne de ce virage.

Pilier de cette « stratégie alternative » : les exportations illégales de pétrole. En forte croissance, elles seraient désormais de l'ordre de 120 000 barils/jours, essentiel-

lement écoulées vers le sud sur des cargos croisant dans les eaux territoriales de l'ex-en-nemi iranien, le reste étant transporté en camions par la Turquie.

Dans le Golfe, les Nations unies estiment qu'au rythme actuel la contrebande de pétrole s'élèvera à près d'un milliard de dollars pour l'année 2000, soit autant qu'au cours des quatre années précédentes...

Au nord du Kurdistan, à la frontière turque, une visite du terminal de Zakho permet de prendre la mesure des trafics : des centaines de camions-citernes turcs font la queue pour franchir le poste frontalier d'Ibrahim Khalil. Ils ont fait le plein à la raffinerie de Daji à 300 km plus au sud.

A Zakho, le portrait martial de Moustapha Barzani en tenue peshmerga, le poignard glissé sous la flanelle, rappelle que c'est le Parti démocratique du Kurdistan (PDK, dirigé aujourd'hui par son fils Massoud) qui contrôle les flux, empêchant au passage une dîme de l'ordre d'un million de dollars par jour. En amont, Bagdad a prélevé une première taxe au départ de la raffinerie, puis une seconde au dernier checkpoint avant d'entrer au Kurdistan, région qui échappe depuis 1991 au contrôle de l'Irak.

A Ibrahim Khalil, ce sont surtout des produits raffinés qui transitent, donc d'un meilleur profit, d'autant que la passe est moins chère qu'au

sud, où les Gardiens de la révolution iranienne prélèveraient 40 % sur le montant du contrat. « Même à ce prix-là, observe un expert étranger, c'est intéressant pour l'Irak d'exporter illégalement du pétrole : 53 % de ses ventes d'or noir autorisées par la résolution 986 doivent être reversées aux victimes de la guerre du Golfe, aux Kurdes et aux Nations unies. »

L'ONU toujours indésirable

Le retour à Bagdad des experts en désarmement de l'ONU n'est pas encore pour aujourd'hui. Dans un rapport au Conseil de sécurité, le chef de la commission de désarmement avait pourtant annoncé mercredi que de nouveaux inspecteurs étaient prêts à reprendre leur mission en Irak au cas où Bagdad reviendrait sur son refus de coopérer. Les inspecteurs de l'ONU avaient dû quitter Bagdad en décembre 1998 à la veille des raids aériens américains et britanniques contre l'Irak. Mais afin d'éviter un nouveau bras de fer avec Bagdad, les membres du Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU ont persuadé le directeur de la nouvelle commission de désarmement d'annuler l'annonce du retour de ses inspecteurs, selon le *Herald Tribune*. Une décision prise après que le gouvernement irakien eut réaffirmé qu'il ne se soumettrait jamais aux inspections de l'ONU.

L'Irak : un des principaux marchés de la région



La rente est d'autant plus intéressante que, depuis le printemps, l'Irak et la Turquie ont conclu un protocole d'échanges commerciaux, sans l'aval des Nations unies, dont le montant serait illimité. En contrepartie du pétrole exporté aux Turcs, Bagdad se procure toutes sortes de biens de consommation et produits de luxe.

Les Kurdes ont compris tout l'intérêt qu'ils avaient à ce trafic : en réduisant les droits de douane, ils ont détourné à leur profit une partie du trafic qui passait par la Jordanie.

« On nage dans l'irréal », constate un diplomate à Bagdad. Les deux inspecteurs logisticiens des Nations unies chargés à Ibrahim Khalil de vérifier le contenu des camions entrant en Irak dans le cadre de la 986, ne contrôlent pas ceux qui violent l'embargo. « On ne veut pas les voir », répond, laconique, un fonctionnaire de l'ONU. « On surveille ce qui est légal, et on laisse passer la contrebande », s'étonne un industriel français.

Les Nations unies, qui n'ignorent pas ces trafics, ne disent mot. Il y a les « mauvais bateaux » et les « bons camions », déclarait en début d'année leur coordinateur chargé du programme « pétrole contre nourriture », l'Allemand Hans von Sponek. Sous entendu : les camions illégaux du nord présentent l'avantage de faire vivre l'administration kurde soutenue par les Nations unies, tandis que les bateaux au sud engraisent les profiteurs de l'embargo, proches du pouvoir à Bagdad. Ce dernier y trouve son compte : les BMW, les chaînes hi-fi et autres produits importés illégalement sont sévèrement taxés par les autorités irakiennes.

Deuxième élément du dispositif de contournement de l'embargo, le plus récent : les livraisons « hors résolution 986 » à partir d'un marché parallèle, via la Turquie, la Jordanie et Dubaï. « C'est ainsi que sont entrés illégalement en Irak un certain nombre de centraux téléphoniques chinois », note un industriel.

Les importations illégales concernent des biens d'équipement qui seraient sinon bloqués par le comité des sanctions de New York. Elles rapporteraient entre 300 et 500 millions de dollars par an aux autorités irakiennes.

Pour contourner les interdits, des circuits complexes ont

été mis en place : « Le gouvernement irakien paye un agent X qui se charge de trouver un soi-disant utilisateur final en Jordanie ou en Turquie des marchandises achetées à une société étrangère qui accepte de jouer le jeu », explique un expert en poste à Bagdad. « Quand la marchandise arrive à la zone franche de Zarqa, en Jordanie, on falsifie la feuille de chargement. Cela coûte environ mille dollars. Ensuite, le camion passe en Irak au nez et à la barbe des inspecteurs de l'ONU. Le système est bien rodé. »

Bagdad ne s'en cache pas : les diplomates voient passer des appels d'offre paiement cash, publiés chaque jour par les ministères demandeurs. Les Toyota de la police ont été financées de cette manière, et le gouverneur de la Banque centrale avoue qu'il a eu recours à ce marché parallèle pour acheter du matériel d'impression de billets. Très officiellement, des propositions de

livraisons « hors 986 » ont été faites en commission mixte à la Russie, au Pakistan, à la Yougoslavie et à l'Egypte, assorties de demandes de transfert de technologie.

Profitant de la passivité internationale et de la concurrence, l'Irak espère faire fléchir de plus en plus d'entreprises peu scrupuleuses. « Les entreprises françaises sont très rares à avoir répondu favorablement », affirme un membre du lobby pro-irakien à Paris. « Mais combien de temps résisteront-elles encore ? »

Enfin, dernier élément, mais non le moins juteux, de cette stratégie : depuis février, les autorités taxent les agents locaux des sociétés étrangères partenaires de l'Irak à hauteur de 2 % au maximum du montant du contrat passé, cette fois dans le cadre légal de la résolution 986. Sachant que ces importations ont totalisé 5 milliards de dollars sur les six premiers mois de cette année, le calcul est rapide. « Bagdad se constitue une cagnotte de

100 millions de dollars chaque semestre, à partir des recettes en principe sous séquestre, conformément à la résolution 986 », explique l'expert. Là encore, pour l'instant, les Nations unies font mine d'ignorer le tour de passe-passe.

Les recettes globales de la nouvelle stratégie de contournement de l'embargo avoisineraient déjà les deux milliards de dollars pour l'année en cours, c'est-à-dire le tiers environ de ce qu'ont rap-

porté les ventes légales de pétrole l'an dernier. Ces nouvelles ressources remontent à la présidence de Saddam Hussein (voir encadré). Elles ont permis au régime d'ouvrir de nouveaux chantiers : construction de raffineries, connexion informatique du pays, creusement de canaux d'irrigation...

« L'Irak est redevenu un des principaux marchés de la région, souligne l'expert étranger. Tous ses voisins, sauf le Koweït, commercent avec Bagdad. Et chacun y trouve son compte. Les Etats-Unis continuent de prétendre que l'on contrôle à peu près tout ce qu'importe l'Irak, alors que Saddam reste sagement contenu dans sa boîte. Bagdad, de son côté, après la résolution 1284, peut exporter une quantité illimitée de pétrole, ce qui lui permet d'acheter peu ou prou les mêmes quantités de marchandises qu'avant la guerre du Golfe. »

La passivité des Nations unies permet au premier cercle du pouvoir de faire tranquillement « ses petites affaires ». Ainsi, Saddam Hussein n'a plus intérêt à susciter de nouvelles crises avec la communauté internationale.

Conclusion d'un responsable d'une organisation internationale : « L'Irak est soumis à un embargo léger, les médicaments ne manquent pratiquement plus, mais ce statu quo ne résout pas les problèmes structurels du pays ni ceux de la population. Les enfants continuent d'être malades en buvant une eau insalubre, et sans la possibilité de se procurer des pièces détachées, une panne anodine dans une station d'épuration ou une centrale électrique se transforme en une panne générale. »

Les importations illégales rapporteraient entre 300 et 500 millions de dollars par an

Un système verrouillé par le pouvoir

Les ressources considérables nées de la contrebande ont nourri la corruption. Certains ont été tentés de se servir au passage. Les autorités ont répondu en procédant à des « redécoupages administratifs » parfois brutaux : le vice-ministre de la Santé et tous ses directeurs ont été limogés, tandis que l'on est sans nouvelle du patron de la centrale d'achat de médicaments du ministère.

Quant au titulaire du portefeuille de l'Education, qui avait lancé des appels d'offres pour la livraison de... camions de sapeurs-pompiers, il a été démis de ses fonctions. Il avait commis l'erreur d'importer des ordinateurs « piégés », destinés aux services de renseignements.

Pour verrouiller le système, les autorités contraignent désormais les agents locaux à inscrire leur nom et le montant de leur commission dans les contrats passés avec l'Irak, selon un observateur étranger à Bagdad. Ainsi la totalité de leurs rémunérations est connue de la présidence de Saddam Hussein, de même que l'ensemble des revenus de l'Etat. À l'étranger, des relais échappant aux interdits posés par les résolutions de l'ONU complètent le dispositif, dont la composante bancaire aurait été jusqu'à récemment supervisée par Barzan al-Tikriti, le demi-frère du président, longtemps installé à Genève.

G. M.

Turquie : aide au développement économique et social

Philippe MORILLON (PPE/DE, F)

Doc.: A5-0206/2000

Procédure : codécision, deuxième lecture

Débat : 05.09.2000

Vote : 06.09.2000

Le vote

La recommandation pour la deuxième lecture, adoptée par le Parlement européen, porte sur une proposition de règlement, doté de 135 millions d'Euro sur trois ans, destinée au financement d'actions visant au développement économique et social de la Turquie. Il s'agit de débloquent l'assistance financière de l'Union européenne à la Turquie.

Sur les 40 amendements adoptés en première

lecture par le Parlement européen, 21 se retrouvent tels quels dans la position commune du Conseil, 10 autres ont été repris en partie.

En seconde lecture, le Parlement insiste sur trois amendements (sur les 9 rejetés par le Conseil). Le premier reprend les préoccupations du Parlement quant à la prévention de tout risque d'incident nucléaire. Les récents tremblements de terre en Turquie démontrent en effet que la construction d'une centrale nucléaire sur des zones sismiques contribuerait à augmenter les risques de catastrophe nucléaire. Le second amendement adopté a pour objet de mieux spécifier certains droits et libertés et entend faire une référence explicite à l'abolition de la peine de mort. Enfin, le dernier amendement adopté vise à mentionner explicitement la question du peuple kurde et à spécifier les initiatives qui pourraient être entreprises en vue de régler le problème kurde.

Iraq Derides Missile 'Threat'

BAGHDAD — An official newspaper in Iraq on Sunday dismissed as "cheap fabrications" a U.S. report that Baghdad could try to fire missiles at Israel.

The United States, concerned over a possible threat, alerted a U.S. Army Patriot anti-missile battery in Germany to prepare for possible deployment to Israel, senior U.S. defense officials said last week.

"These are cheap fabrications and broken balloons," the paper Al Qadissiya said in a front-page editorial. "America and Zionism have repeated their overused phonograph record that Iraq is threatening the Zionist entity."

The Washington Post said Friday that U.S. and Israeli officials were concerned that President Saddam Hussein of Iraq could try to act against Israel during the U.S. presidential election, in the false belief that U.S. policymakers were distracted.

U.S. officials insisted that there was no evidence of an imminent threat but said that they were not taking any chances. Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel shrugged off any threat but promised to be ready for the possibility, however remote. (Reuters)

Saddam Cancer Care Reported

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — President Saddam Hussein of Iraq is to undergo chemotherapy for lymph cancer, and a family council led by his youngest son is ready to take control if he dies, a leading Arabic newspaper said Sunday.

Western newspapers have reported several times in recent years that Mr. Saddam has cancer, but Asharq al Awsat, a daily based in London, went into considerable detail. The Saudi-financed publication quoted an Arab doctor "with an excellent reputation" as saying that a team of five European doctors was taking care of the president. The team was put together by a committee led by the president's personal secretary, Abed Hmoud, the newspaper said.

One of the presidential palaces in a Baghdad suburb has been turned into a private clinic using equipment from Jordan, the doctor told Asharq al Awsat. Mr. Saddam had resigned himself to chemotherapy after suffering from inflamed joints, breathing difficulties, poor vision and temporary memory loss, he said.

Asharq al Awsat also quoted what it called independent Iraqi sources as saying that the president had called a family meeting to appoint his son Qusai to head a council that would run Iraq in the event of his death or incapacitation. (AFP)

Iran to Consider Amnesty for Exiles

TEHRAN — Iran's Parliament will consider a proposal to give amnesty to Iranians who left the country because of the 1979 Islamic revolution, news media in Tehran reported Monday.

The legislation makes an exception for those involved in "terrorist acts," a clear reference to the Mujahidin Khalq, an opposition group based in Iraq.

Iran recently has been looking for ways to lure back wealthy exiles who can contribute to its struggling economy. More than 2 million Iranians left after 1979 for Europe and North America. (AFP)

PUK leader calls for ending PKK control over KNK

Kurdistani Nuwe (Sulaymaniyah) 2 Sep 00

[FBIS Translated Text] A while ago we published the text of the cable sent by the General Committee of Kurdish National Conference [KNK] to Jalal Talabani. The message praises Talabani's struggle and role and regards him as a great and sincere leader of Kurdistan people. As we know this message expresses the stance of several honest people who are loyal to the Kurdish national movement, and against the use of abusive words by the two hirelings, [imprisoned Kurdistan Workers' Party, PKK, leader] Abdullah Ocalan [honorary chairman of the conference] and [member of the PKK Chairmanship Council] Cemil Bayik. A while ago Jamil Bayik talked about Jalal Talabani in an abusive language during a telephone conversation from Mosul.

At that time Professor As'ad Khaylani called Jalal Talabani and told him that the KNK general committee was disturbed by the use of this kind of abusive language, and professor Ismet Sherif Vanli made an apology on behalf of everyone. He said that the committee asks Jalal Talabani to release PKK prisoners and not provide an opportunity for Kurdish fratricide.

In response, Jalal Talabani told him that:

1. PUK does not hold any PKK prisoners; it released them after some friends' efforts;
2. This apology is not enough and using abusive language should be strongly condemned;

Professor As'ad Khaylani agreed with this and said: "Can I report your statement to the conference." Jalal Talabani replied: "Yes you can". Then Mr Khaylani asked him: "Do you support KNK?" Jalal Talabani replied: "KNK theory goes back 20 years. It was the idea of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, Iranian Kurdish Democratic Party and Kurdish Democratic Progressive Party of Syria. In order to support KNK we have two conditions:

1. Removal of Abdullah Ocalan from the chairmanship of the conference;
2. Ending PKK control on the conference and making it a conference for all Kurdistan original parties.

Jalal Talabani, also, asked As'ad Khaylani to tell Ismet Sherif on his behalf not to believe Osman Ocalan, Abdullah Ocalan and Jamil Bayik's lies any more. He would be welcomed in Kurdistan to see with his own eyes that all they had said was not true, particularly regarding the PUK having received 80m dollars from the KDP to fight the PKK on the side of the Turkish army. Jalal Talabani explained that the PUK was against fighting between Kurdish groups and that it had protected itself from PKK provocation so far. PKK has brought their forces into Qandil, which is scores of kilometres from Turkish borders in order to provoke the PUK. They have no reasons to deploy their forces far from the border with Turkey other than to provoke the PUK and causing disturbance, particularly after Abdullah Ocalan turned against his beliefs in court and said that he will not demand an independent Kurdistan and he is no longer a pan-Kurdistanist. All his aims are to revive the beginnings of Kamalism and to achieve democracy and linguistic and cultural rights.

Therefore, there is no pretext for mobilizing and keeping Kurds of Syria, Iran and Iraq within the PKK ranks. Equally bringing them to the PUK areas, which are scores of kilometres from the Turkish border, is a way of provoking and causing problems for us.

It is worth mentioning that in his recent statements, Abdullah Ocalan repeated his antagonistic stance towards the democratic experience and federalism in Iraqi Kurdistan. He expressed his readiness to use his armed members to fighting the PUK and the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] in order to harm this liberated Kurdistan. In these statements he beats war drums and says: If the PUK and the KDP do not submit, we will fight them to the end.

The Secretariat of Comrade Jalal Talabani

Sanctions become way of life in Iraq

September 5, 2000 By Betsy Pisik
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

BAGHDAD ó As the heat of the day illuminates the ancient Tigris River, Athwer Kanimi heaves up another shovelful of mud and rocks and sifts it into a plastic tub. Usually he finds nothing, but sometimes he spots the faintest sparkle of gold dust.

The slender young man and a dozen others stand waist-deep in the filthy water, panning for gold in a nation that has been reduced by U.N. sanctions to creative coping. Today, Iraq is so poor that its people are salvaging the discards of the past to make ends meet tomorrow.

A decade after the United Nations imposed a sweeping economic embargo on the oil-rich nation, ordinary Iraqis are increasingly finding strength in their history to get on with their daily lives.

The gold these young men are panning is the remnants of a more prosperous time when Baghdad's thriving jewelers and artisans swept the small links and gold filings out of their shops and into the river. "This is very hard work, but I like to do it," said Mr. Kanimi, who sells his cache to a jeweler for the equivalent of 70 cents a day. "In the winter, I find work in a restaurant, but this pays better."

At first glance, Baghdad appears to be a thriving city of construction, congestion and commerce. Cars choke well-maintained roads. Sprawling mosques, grand government buildings and luxurious private homes are taking shape, despite a shattered economy. Jewelry store windows are filled with gold and there is no sign of the bombs that pounded this city during the Persian Gulf war.

But it doesn't take long to realize the societal impact of the sanctions that remained in place after a U.S.-led international alliance drove Iraq from Kuwait in February 1991 in an effort to force Saddam Hussein to give up his program of weapons of mass destruction.

Children beg in the sprawling central marketplace and sell newspapers or incense on the street óat one time unheard of in a nation with the planet's second-largest oil reserves.

Sanctions' impact

The government claims as many as 1.35 million people have died as a result of sanctions, and U.N. agencies concur that collapsed infrastructure and poor nutrition have created a widespread health crisis. A U.N. program that allows Iraq to sell specified amounts of oil to pay for food and medicines has staved off famine in parts of Iraq, but hardship is pronounced in a country with insufficient electricity and poor sanitation and water-treatment systems.

Despite the hardships, the people display a tenacity born, they say, of their heritage.

"We are an ancient civilization, and 10 years of sanctions means nothing compared to that," says Qassem, an artist, teacher and proprietor of a new gallery and cafe in a residential Baghdad neighborhood. "We invented the alphabet, the wheel, art, poetry. What can the American government do to a people like this?"

Many Iraqis have taken second jobs to cope with the massive inflation spawned by the sanctions. In 1990, one Iraqi dinar was worth \$3. Today, it takes 2,000 Iraqi dinar to buy \$1. Rezak Ahmed drives a taxi by day and works in a pharmacy at night, barely able to provide for his 10 children, ages 4 to 18. "I work all day and night, and then I worry when I'm asleep," said Mr. Ahmed

over a cup of sugared tea made from preserved lemons. Periodic power cuts mean sudden darkness and stifling heat in a country where temperatures averaged 120 degrees this summer. A devastating drought is entering its third year ó imperiling food production in a country with less than 12 percent arable land.

"I cannot live this way any longer, and neither should my children," said Kula Jabar, a former civil servant who now supports her family as a seamstress. "I cannot afford meat, or fruits, or pretty clothes for my daughter. We have sold our luxuries. Life is not about suffering."

Middle-class and wealthier families long ago began selling off possessions to make ends meet. First the extra television and second car. Then the jewelry and carpets and antiques.

A poignant sight these days in Baghdad is the Friday-morning book market on Muttanabi Street, in which private libraries are laid out on blankets. These collections of books ó art, history, fiction, poetry, literature and scientific works in a dozen languages ó show the depth and breadth of Iraqi interests. The book owners themselves rarely appear at the market.

"Can you imagine how painful that would be?" says one salesman, who buys his books, mostly French-and English-language history and fiction, directly from peoples' homes.

Shouldn't be like this

On Aug. 2, 1990, Iraq ó which had barely finished burying its dead from the grim eight-year war with Iran ó invaded Kuwait, accusing the ruling Sabah dynasty of engaging in "economic war" by driving down oil prices.

The U.N. Security Council immediately condemned the attack, and four days later adopted by a 12-3 vote resolutions imposing sanctions of unprecedented scope and ambition on a country that once aspired to lead and even unify Arab states.

No nation or corporation was to buy Iraq's oil, depriving it of hard currency, nor was any entity to engage in any form of commerce with the pariah nation. In theory, Iraq was to be cut off from all foreign goods, including food, military equipment, textbooks and scores of vital products used routinely by 22 million people.

Although Iraqi troops were repelled by the U.S.-led international coalition in February 1991, the sanctions were left in place to compel Saddam to give up his program to build and stockpile weapons of mass destruction. Baghdad insists it has nothing left to surrender and refuses to cooperate with weapons inspectors until the sanctions are lifted.

"The sanctions regime was not meant to harm the people of Iraq," said America's deputy U.N. ambassador, James Cunningham. "What it was intended to do 10 years ago was create an incentive for the government of Iraq to move quickly through the disarmament process and the reparations process. Then the sanctions would be lifted and Iraq would be in a stabilized regional position without weapons of mass destruction," he said.

But many foreign diplomats, U.N. officials and the Iraqis themselves are skeptical of the U.S. position that the embargo was not to have a humanitarian impact.

"The U.S. government must see the condition of the Iraqi people," said one southeast Asian ambassador with four years in Baghdad. "They know what is happening here but they are blinded by their hatred of the regime and they are immobilized by pride." The sanctions, he says

are "like a genocide, but slow." U.N. officials based in Iraq are more measured. "It's no good to duck the issue," said Tun Myet, the U.N. humanitarian aid coordinator in Iraq. The problems "are not all one side or the other. There are areas that can be improved with genuine collaboration on all sides."

Mr. Cunningham says Washington is aware of the hardships born by ordinary people, and has worked to streamline the process by which educational, medicinal and agricultural and other humanitarian goods exempted from the embargo are approved and delivered.

The problem, he repeats, is not with the United Nations or the United States, but with Saddam Hussein. "We are absolutely convinced that if the Iraqi regime would cooperate fully, there would be food and medicines and the wherewithal to take care of all their needs."

Oil for food

To stave off a humanitarian crisis and, some allege, allay international opposition to the embargo a complex system of food rations was initiated in 1996. The U.N. oil-for-food program is funded by revenues of oil sales, and distributes monthly staples such as flour, sugar, rice, lentils and tea to almost every family in Iraq.

More than \$7 billion has been spent or earmarked since 1996 for essential imports and services. The effort is unique among international humanitarian aid programs in that it is rolling in money. Among the nearly 20 million Iraqis who rely on the rations, gratitude is often tinged with frustration.

"Life is about meat and vegetables and sweets," moaned one junior-level government employee. "We cannot live on flour and rice day after day."

The rations are supposed to supply about 2,500 calories a day, up from less than 1,800 a few years ago.

Food recipients complain about the quality of some items, such as the cooking oil, and say that no adult can get by on only 250 grams of tea a month.

In the south and central regions of Iraq, the oil-for-food program has staved off famine, but hardship is pronounced in a country with insufficient electricity and poor sanitation and water-treatment systems.

Health services also have declined dramatically in the decade of sanctions, say medical workers and government officials. Infant mortality has increased dramatically since 1984, when government records showed 42 deaths for every 1,000 live births. In a 1999 survey, UNICEF found 130 comparable deaths, and notes that one newborn in four has a low birth weight.

The United Nations warns that children born in Iraq in the past decade are more susceptible to stunting, retardation, learning disabilities and other chronic conditions related to poor nutrition and lack of basic health care.

In the Saddam Hospital for Children, for example, more than a dozen infants are listless and miserable on the "ward of death" for leukemia patients. The 350-bed teaching hospital is filled with advanced cases of preventable conditions that are exacerbated by malnutrition.

Nearly eradicated scourges such as polio, typhoid and cholera are making a comeback, according to Iraqi Health Minister Umaid Medhet Mubarak. Dr. A.G. Rawi, chief administrator of the Saddam Hospital, said it was difficult to rebuild the standards of health under current conditions.

"It is very frustrating to make these people well if they're just going to go back and drink dirty water and eat poorly and live in the same conditions that brought them here in the first place," said the London-trained pediatrician.

A decade after the embargo was imposed, nearly everything appears to be available in upscale Baghdad shops ó from videos of American action films to luxury merchandise that no professional or functionary can afford on his \$10- to \$30-a-month salary.

Nor do they publicly acknowledge any resentment over the construction of Saddam's luxurious palaces and ostentatious "guest houses."

Millions of dollars have been spent to build two new mosques that are going up in Baghdad and will be among the largest in the world. But rather than complain about the amount of money being spent on such indulgences when basics such as food and medicine are needed, many see these projects as creating desperately needed jobs.

However, rarely ó at least in conversations with foreigners ó do people seem to blame the regime for their hardships.

Saddam everywhere

Saddam's name and visage are ubiquitous. His photograph hangs in many homes and offices; one of the new mosques will be named for him; many schools, hospitals, monuments and other public buildings already carry his name. Saddam's face is on the front of the fiercely devalued dinar note as well as on billboard-size portraits at most traffic circles.

The people whose ancestors gave the world the alphabet and the mythic storyteller Scheherazade have little access to information that is not state sanctioned. The government controls all newspapers, television and radio in Iraq. Very few people have access to cable television, the Internet or even international telephone lines. Tourist visas have not been issued in a decade, and visiting reporters and trade missions are closely monitored by the government.

Oudai Faie, editor in chief of the government-controlled Iraqi News Agency, says sanctions have only toughened people, made them stronger in their devotion to Saddam Hussein and stauncher in their contempt for the United States and its strategic regional partner, Israel.

"We all understand these sanctions are the price one must pay to protect Iraq's sovereignty and dignity," he said. Mr. Faie's organization has 10 foreign bureaus, down from 30 a decade ago. While Iraqis are concerned about their future, remnants of their storied past are at risk. Few foreign tourists or Iraqis are able to visit the legendary ruins of Babylon, the 2,600-year-old gated city built by King Nebuchadnezzar and preserved, more or less, about 90 minutes south of Baghdad.

Mohammed Taher, an archaeologist who works as a guide at Babylon, says he can go for a whole day, or sometimes two, without receiving a single visitor to the biblical site, home of the now-lost Tower of Babel and the likely location of the Hanging Gardens.

The park is suffering from a lack of revenues, he said, but it is also cut off from visiting scholars and archaeologists who yearn to continue excavations and analysis. People have carved their initials into the mud bricks, right next to the cuneiform inscriptions. Tellingly, the Ministry of Culture and Antiquities, which has partially restored the ruins, has embedded in the same walls elaborate plaques praising Saddam in the same script as the originals. "They were going to put glass over that to protect it," said Mr. Taher, "but they forgot, or there is no money now. It's impossible to patrol everything."

Turkey's deputy PM cites Military fears EU membership will breakup country

September 6, 2000

ANKARA, Turkey (Reuters) -- Turkey's deputy prime minister was quoted Wednesday as saying the nation's powerful military feared that adopting the reforms required for European Union membership could lead to the breakup of the country.

"There are sectors that are scared that Turkey would be split up if we enter the European Union. The army shares this sensitivity," the daily Hurriyet newspaper quoted Mesut Yilmaz as saying. Yilmaz is responsible for Turkey's relations with the EU.

Turkey won candidacy for EU membership in December but faces a lengthy list of reforms including granting cultural rights to some 12 million Kurds, many of whom live in the southeast.

The military, which declared victory in its 15-year battle with Kurdish separatists after capturing Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan in 1999, strongly opposes such moves as the first step on a slippery slope to Kurdish independence.

"Some circles have reservations," said Yilmaz. "We have to convince them."

A U.S. human rights group said Wednesday there were groups within the Turkish establishment unwilling to carry out human rights reforms required for EU membership.

"In the past, fellow governments in Europe have sometimes been reluctant to press too strongly for reform. ... This patience ... has been exploited by successive Turkish governments unable or unwilling to stand up to the ruthless and conservative forces deep within the state," Human Rights Watch said.

Opposition to reforms in coalition

Yilmaz's two coalition partners -- Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit and nationalist leader Devlet Bahceli -- share the doubts over lifting curbs on Kurdish education and broadcasting.

But there are others who believe Turkey's prospective EU entry would not jeopardize the country's unity. "In my opinion, there is no hurdle stopping the Turkish people, who want to live in a united and indivisible country, from entering the European Union," Sami Selcuk, Appeals Court chief judge, said Wednesday.

The military has toppled three governments in coups since 1960, and in 1997 helped nudge from power Islamic Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan's government, which it deemed a threat to the secular order. The army's influential role in politics is already a source of worry for Europe, which is drawing up a road map for Turkey to move toward membership of the bloc.

"They (the military) feel they are obliged to intervene in matters such as the country's unity and secularism," Hurriyet quoted Yilmaz as saying. "That's why civil administrations should take steps to remove (their) sensitivity." He said the government must allay the military's concerns with steps such as firing civil servants accused of links to Islamic activism.

That planned move is part of a three-year-old crackdown on political Islam and will be a stern test for the government when it is brought before parliament next month.

Turkish leaders have mentioned 2004 as a date to start full EU membership negotiations, but observers see a 10-year time frame as more realistic.

* * * * *

Selcuk on Democracy, Secularism, Human Rights, Constitution, Judiciary

Anatolia 06 Sep 00

[FBIS Translated Text] Ankara (AA) -- Sami Selcuk, president of the Supreme Court of Appeals, has asserted the need to amend the second paragraph of the Turkish Penal Code's [TCK] Article 312 which organizes the prison terms to be given to persons who incite the people to hatred and enmity by means of discrimination on the basis of class, race, religion, sect, or regional differences.

The judicial year 2000-2001 began with a ceremony at the Supreme Court of Appeals. Sami Selcuk delivered the opening speech by summarizing the text of 115 pages. He commented on the issues of democracy, the Constitution, human rights, judicial independence, equality among the judicial, legislative, and executive powers, freedom of thought, secularism, the EU, Ataturk and Ataturkism, amnesty, the awareness of abiding by the law, corruption, the judgment of civil servants, public inspection, appellate courts, torture, the system of execution, the study of law, traffic, and environmental issues.

Selcuk stressed that the wish of Turkey and of the Turkish people is optimal democracy. If this is achieved, he said, the 21st century will belong to the Turks. At such a time, people should not waste time by means of slogans and clichés, he noted, adding: "The existing order is insufficient and is incapable of producing anything new. The solution must be to change the system that has become sterile and that is incapable of adapting to the new."

Expressing his views on democracy, Ataturk, and Ataturkism, Sami Selcuk said that Ataturk wanted a full democracy and that Ataturkism is a system of thought that is opposed to the raising of one type of person. Selcuk stressed that he would like to see Ataturk's values assimilated, not his image imitated, adding: "Ataturkism which is a blueprint for civilization is not a rigid ideology engraved in the past, but on the contrary, a system of development that rationally tests everything it comes into contact with and that renews itself constantly."

Selcuk pointed out that Ataturkism rejects stagnation, has adopted the basic values of Western democracies, and in that this respect, the EU's codes and the Turkish people's will converge. He went on to say that Turkey's place and power are being noticed better in the globalizing world.

Turkey is Not the Turkey of Yesteryear

Selcuk said: "Turkey is not the Turkey of yesteryear; the world has shrunk and Turkey has grown." He explained that with its dynamic people, Turkey started the 21st century wanting industrialization and democracy, and came to the EU's door with these characteristics. Selcuk said that a pluralistic, free, democratic, but peacefully integrated Europe is within Turkey's grasp, adding that the final stage of the EU process will be an integrated "United States of Europe."

The president of the Supreme Court of Appeals said in his speech that the most controversial question in the integration process is the issue of "nation-state," that the concepts of national sovereignty and quality have been considerably eroded in the EU, that the concept of supranationalism has reached proportions that may bring about integration, and that the EU's criteria are the same as Ataturkism and the path followed by the Turkish people. "I think that there are no obstacles before the Turkish nation -- which wants to live in a unitary state and an undivided country -- from joining the EU," he said, "as long as we become free and honorable members enjoying full rights."

Sezer noted that the European Convention of Human Rights has now become Europe's constitution,

and that the Copenhagen criteria do not bring such grave conditions. He asserted that Turkey should not be one of Europe's second-class neighborhoods because Ataturk's revolutions preclude that.

Selcuk said that he does not see any problem with softening the rigid view of sovereignty in line with globalization. He stressed that this does not mean a surrender but a meeting and partnership in economics, politics, and law by retaining one's identity. He also said that the EU is not a dream, and that the Turkish people are not opposed or strangers to the demands for transparency, a good administration with the people's participation, and coordination between the state and the civilian society. Sami Selcuk emphasized that Turkey must not wait for the alarm clock to ring because the alarm clock is for those who cannot wake up on their own.

Democracy and the People

In democracies, Selcuk said, the decisions reached at the top must take into account the people's vibrations and tendencies. He recalled that in Turkish, part of the word republic means "the people's administration."

He said that the best guards of a democracy are the people, adding: "Yes, the Turkish people want to take their place in the democracy. They are right. If the people cannot take their place in the republic would that be called a republic without a public, and the system a democracy without the people? The Turkish people want a people's administration, they want to move from a ruled democracy to a ruling democracy and to integrate with the state."

Selcuk recalled that Ataturk worked with the Assembly which he called "my greatest achievement," and that -- at a time when the rate of literacy was close to zero -- he trusted the Turkish women to such an extent that he granted them the right to vote and to be elected, before Switzerland and France. Selcuk stressed that the people must participate in the democracy's decisionmaking mechanisms. Freedom of Thought and Article 312 In his speech, Selcuk stated that the Turkish people want freedom and that heading the list of freedoms is the freedom of thought. He noted that in Turkey's written law there are still provisions that threaten the freedom of thought, that place Turkey in difficult positions in the international arena and in the EU, and that cause Turkey to be convicted 11 times a day at the European Court of Human Rights. He said: "There are weeds in our law like bad flowers."

The president of the Supreme Court of Appeals went on to say that the penal code defines the crimes, that nobody should be punished for a crime not cited in the law, and that people should know what constitutes a crime under the law. This is the crimes' "principle of legality," he said, and lawmakers must not define criminal acts in obscure terms. In order to ensure freedom of thought, Selcuk stressed, either these provisions must be abolished or their limits redrawn.

Selcuk stressed that paragraph 2 of the TCK's Article 312 is still on Turkey's agenda. He said: "A provision similar to this one does not exist in every country. An identical one does not exist, only similar ones exist, and they are not implemented in the way it is implemented in Turkey."

This article must be amended.

Adding the clause of 'disrupting the public order' as certain circles are advocating will not change anything. The limits of this law must be redrawn. Such provisions have political overtones. That must not be allowed. It must not leave us in a difficult position in international arenas. So long as this law is not rewritten, the judiciary must implement it."

Sami Selcuk stressed that the freedom of the press must not be given up, but the concepts of

report and of commentary must not be confused. Explaining that the overwhelming majority of the Turkish people embraced and had not problems with secularism, Selcuk added: "The problems start when the principle of secularism is distorted, broken, and altered from time to time."

Noting that Turkey will never give up secularism and that it does not have the luxury of having breaks in secularism, Selcuk added: However, the fact that this issue is being discussed constantly is sign of the existence of an "unease." Selcuk further said that pluralism necessitates the state to remain impartial to thoughts and beliefs.

"Pluralism makes it possible for the state to be impartial and impartiality enables the state to be secular. A state, which is impartial to thoughts, will secure freedom of thought and a state impartial to religions will secure secularism." Selcuk further said that a secular state cannot oppose any religion, favor and protect a religion; and impose a certain good and way of life on anybody.

Explaining that the public in a secular state should not try and instill a particular ideology in youth, create a state religion, and instill irreligious values, Selcuk continued: "Theocracy is when the state supports a certain religion and arranges its laws to this end, laicism is when the state has sovereignty over religion and guides it. Both theocracy and secularism lead to conflicts among religions and between state and religions. For this reason, secularism should be pluralistic and must not turn into laicism. Theocracy is the opposite of secularism and is its enemy. It is not a form of democracy but a rejection of it. In the same way as chauvinism is a degeneration of nationalism, laicism is a degeneration of secularism. Theocracy Brings Conflict, Secularism Brings Peace Noting that secularism is a technical instrument and value that realizes four goals, Selcuk explained that the four goals consist of securing freedom of religion and conscience; maintaining peace among the religions and between the state and religion; encouraging critical thinking and raising rational individuals; and enabling competitive thinking.

"Theocracy brings conflict, laicism disorder, and secularism peace.

The state will most definitely decide on secularism," said Selcuk and added that democracy complements the republic and secularism complements democracy, nurturing and strengthening it. Noting that history should serve as a lesson when it comes to religion-state relations, Selcuk added: "An overwhelming majority of the Turkish people have embraced secularism. They have no problems with secularism. The problem starts when from time to time the principle of secularism is distorted, broken, and altered." The Turkish People Want A Brand New Constitution Expressing his views on the Constitution, Selcuk said: "The Turkish people want a new constitution. They want back their previous constitutional state, which will give them their rights and freedoms, and not this Constitution and this constitutional state."

"There will always be discussions with regard to the political system as long as the 1982 Constitution, which was born defective, remains in effect," said Selcuk and added: "The public is in unity of views on canceling or fundamentally changing the Constitution, which is reminiscent of a police decree." Explaining that the Turkish nation will comply and will seek compliance with the current Constitution, as long as it remains in effect, Selcuk continued:

"A brand new constitution is essential. This new constitution should show the way befitting the fabric of today's dynamic social structure, and should be conciliatory and not contentious. There is no need for panic. The Turkish nation knows what it wants. We should respect its wish for a new constitution. It is a fact that we are getting closer to the doors of the EU. This opportunity should be put to good use."

Explaining that numerous articles of the Constitution were amended and that they wanted to chan-

ge more than half of the articles, Selcuk added that under the circumstances it would be more appropriate to draw up a brand new constitution. Asserting that the 1982 Constitution was in effect because the politicians could not reach a compromise, Selcuk said that personally he was in favor of setting up a participatory and constituent assembly, which will represent all the sectors, in order to draw up a new constitution in the event that a political conciliation is not secured.

Explaining that the individual should be the subject of the new constitution and not the predicate, Selcuk added that the Turkish people seek everybody to abide by the law. Asserting that there are efforts to amend the Constitution and the laws according to individuals, Selcuk stressed that the law cannot be adapted to individuals, that the individuals should adapt themselves to the law, and that special laws cannot be drawn up for individuals. Showing as an example the extension of the mandate of the president, acting president, and members of the High Election Council, Selcuk added that there was a stagflation of laws at present.

The Separation of Powers and Judiciary

Sezer touched on the subject of the separation of powers and the judiciary during his address.

Explaining that the judiciary was strengthened when the former Eastern bloc countries switched over to democracy, Selcuk added, however, that this was not the case in Turkey and quoted from a report written in 1936 by the then Finance Minister Celal Bayar. Indicating that the des-

criptions in the report are the same as those in a letter sent to him describing the condition of the Ministry of Justice building, Selcuk added: "This is a call, a cry. Less than 1.0 percent of the budget is allocated to the justice system today, when 1.3 percent was allocated to justice in the 1950s. We have a Supreme Court of Appeals, in which dossiers are transferred by hand carts among three old buildings. Run in a very primitive manner... Let us make the judiciary equal to the other powers. There was equality between the three powers in the early Republic, but this has been eradicated during the democratic Republic.

Recounting that the government had drawn up a draft bill on a special law, which was called for by the Constitutions in regard to the independence of the judiciary and constitutional assurances and which had not been drawn for some 40 years, Selcuk added that the government promised to resolve the issue and expressed the hope that "this check will not bounce."

Justice Becomes Tainted

Noting that the judiciary should be rendered completely independent, Selcuk added: "Justice becomes tainted when politics get involved in the judiciary." Noting that the Supreme Council for Judges and Prosecutors is not independent and that the way to the judiciary was blocked to the Council, Selcuk explained his proposal on this issue. Selcuk said the following: "In my opinion, a (National Judicial Authority Council) should be established. The prosecutors and senior judges of the higher judicial bodies should naturally be members of this council. The other members should be appointed by the judiciary and the council should be divided into two parts: judiciary and the administrative.

The justice minister should not take part in the council, and if he does, he should not have the right to vote. The council should have the right to refer those laws which concern it and law-decrees to the Constitutional Court."

Sami Selcuk stressed that capital punishment must be abolished, saying: "Whether or not capital punishment must be abolished is a scientific issue. You cannot submit to a referendum the question of whether or not the world is turning." Selcuk stressed the importance of the supremacy of law, adding that "the state needs to be afraid of the judiciary, and that the Turkish

nation has pinned its hopes on a strong judiciary for transparency in the administration and for the prevention of corruption."

Selcuk pointed out that Turkey has been living under charges of corruption for years and that it must fight corruption. He added that democracy and the judiciary must be strengthened and the judiciary's path cleared. The opposite has been happening in Turkey, he said, the state does not trust the judiciary and wants to prevent it from functioning. As an example, he cited the latest bill organizing the judgment of civil servants. He stressed that justice does not allow for discrimination among acts or persons, but this bill is based on a system of permission to try civil servants. Such a system exists in Togo and Somali, he added.

The Institution of Ombudsman

Selcuk said that the ombudsman will ensure transparency in public affairs, prevent corruption, and reduce the load of the judiciary. The law regarding this institution must be enacted as soon as possible, he said.

The president of the Supreme Court of Appeals maintained that Turkey is late in setting up appellate courts and that this issue must be legislated soon. He stressed that to strengthen the judiciary, a judicial police force must be established. He said: "The executive and especially the administration have always prevented the establishment of a judicial police. The administration is so monopolistic and jealous that it has not even allowed the implementation of a prime ministerial directive which says that when registering police officials, the views

of the chief public prosecutor must be taken because the police force is judicially attached to him. There is no limit to what a state can do if it is not afraid of the judiciary."

The Issue of Torture On the issue of torture, Sami Selcuk read a quote which went: "...Apart from Turkey which was underlined by the committee, torture in the real sense of the word is almost nonexistent in all the other European countries."

Selcuk stressed that this quote disturbed him for months. He explained that the likes of Pinochet, Suharto, and Habre cannot hide anywhere in the world and are brought before justice.

He noted that blatant human rights violations or torture cannot be seen in countries that have a high awareness of the law. He added: "In our case, I am ashamed. In those countries, reactions to such violations are very strong. An example was witnessed in France. When the European Court of Human Rights condemned France for torture, the people and the legal circles went up in arms. Not against the court, but against the state that brought this shame upon them."

Selcuk emphasized that torture causes justice to deviate from its path, separates the state from the people and erodes it. He called on all to wage a united struggle against torture.

Sami Selcuk charged that the system of the execution of the sentences does not meet the requirements of the age, and that the conditional releasing of prisoners has been deviated from its original purpose. He said: "the conditional releasing of prisoners has been used as a sort of amnesty. The trial period has been reduced. The sentences are no longer deterrent. This system should not be used in the case of hypocrites but in the case of convicts who deserve to get well and return to the society."

Capital Punishment

Selcuk described "capital punishment which eliminates the convict's right to return to the society as a primitive punishment." He stressed that viewed from a strictly judicial point of view, capital punishment must be abolished. He said: "I know, capital punishment came and set on the

agenda of Turkey -- which was late again -- at a very unfortunate moment. Fighting terrorism to death, the Turkish army proved that it reads our age well. Now it is the turn of us all. The Turkish nation which suffered greatly from terrorism will undoubtedly approach the issue calmly; it will not allow anyone to trample on the flag of its enemy which it defeated; it will show a greatness befitting the great commander who considered the dead of the defeated enemy as his own children buried in his own land. The Turkish nation will uphold Turkey's interests in the conflict between values."

Sami Selcuk maintained that everything can be repaired in life, that judicial judgments can be repaired but an executed death sentence cannot. No reason is great enough to cover the "repulsiveness" of the death sentence, he said, adding: "Whether or not capital punishment must be abolished is a scientific issue. You cannot submit to a referendum the question of whether or not the world is turning."

Selcuk recalled that he had opposed the death penalty in the 1970's as well. He noted that the Justice Ministry magazines that reported this were subsequently destroyed at SEKA [Turkish Cellulose and Paper Mills Administration]. He said: "I wish the voice of science was heard at the time and the death sentence lifted 30 years ago. At least in that case we would have preempted the incidents. Wouldn't that be better?"

Amnesty

Explaining that quality was directly related to law studies in the judiciary, Selcuk said that the draft bill on the Law Academy of Turkey should be passed.

Noting that amnesty is an institution, which forgives crimes and criminals, and that the Turkish legal system had adopted this institution, Selcuk continued: "To what extent an amnesty to be declared after 26 years will serve the public can be an issue of discussion. However, the matter of responsibility is not a question for discussion. Amnesty should be declared. Rules and regulations should be abided by when declaring an amnesty.

"First, it is natural for the state to use its right of amnesty in crimes committed against itself. However, the state should not be generous when it comes to crimes committed against individuals. Secondly, the regulation should not apply to the period after the amnesty was first reported and envisaged (18.4.1999). Thirdly, the principles of objectivity and equality must be abided by. Last, there should not be frequent amnesties.

Stressing the importance of education in fighting traffic accidents and the importance of environmental development, Selcuk said that the Check Law should be reviewed.

Our Contradictions

Explaining that the aspirations of the Turkish people are the same as those of the civilized world, Selcuk added: However, "there are some contradictions that should be settled." Noting that one of these contradictions is "resisting science even though we praise it as being the most reliable in showing us the way," Selcuk described the other contradictions as "emptying concepts of their meanings," "the approach that refers to (Turkey's conditions)," and "the lack of confidence in the people."

Recounting that democracy is a system of the people and not of a few, Selcuk added: "The people make up the womb of democracy. A people cannot go far if distanced from the state. The people get to the truth eventually. Let us believe in our people. Let us know their power and put to good use the dynamics within them."

Listing his longings in the last part of his address, Selcuk said that "creating a free individual" is the first step in creating a democratic human being. Stressing that freedom should

be applied to everybody and nurtured by equality, Selcuk said that a democratic way of life allows the individual to turn his way of life into his culture, adding that a certain culture cannot be imposed on anybody.

Explaining that "communities will not keep to themselves if there is pluralism, which treats everybody equally," Selcuk added this is similar to the togetherness of the multitude of different species in Noah's Ark and quoted Nazim Hikmet's poem, which says: "To live free like a tree, and together like a forest."

Noting that the ability to discuss and argue is the most distinguished attribute of humanity, Selcuk added that criticism is not an individual right but a duty towards public morality, adding that critical reasoning will bring tolerance. Quoting from Yunus Emre and Asik Veysel on tolerance, Selcuk said: "Let us argue with our pens and tongues. Swearing should not take the place of criticism. Cursing and swearing weakens the ability to hold a discussion and does not refute the other side's argument."

Explaining that Turkey should have place for both Nazim Hikmet and Mehmet Akif, Selcuk added that secularism, which is an essential foundation of democracy and the Republic, should be freed from extremes. The Republic and democracy are a synthesis of a transparent administration that gives account to its people, with a pluralistic, independent, participatory society, and a just legal system, explained Selcuk. "Let us safeguard our people, public, and state," said Selcuk and added: "Long live Turkey, long live the democratic republic."

Selcuk's speech was received with a standing ovation by the guests.

Selcuk included various quotes from several scientists, poets, and philosophers in his 115-page speech.

The Participants

Acting President Ali Iliksoy; Nejat Arseven, Turkish Grand National Assembly [TBMM] acting president; Constitutional Court President Mustafa Bumin; Virtue Party leader Recai Kutan; Devlet Bahçeli, state minister and deputy prime minister; Kemal Nehrozoglu, secretary general to the President's Office; TBMM acting president Murat Sokmenoglu; Dalova Sancar, Council of State acting president; certain ministers; military and civil judges; representatives from political parties; administrators of various organizations; and judges and prosecutors were present at the ceremony.

After the chanting of the National Anthem, the Culture Ministry's chorus gave a short concert. The Supreme Court of Appeals members, who retired during the judiciary year, were presented with placards and honor awards after the ceremony.

* * * * *

U.S. Must Earn New Ties, Khatami Says

In UN Speech, President Also Praises Iran's Expatriates and Minorities

By Soraya Sarhaddi Nelson
Los Angeles Times Service

NEW YORK — President Mohammed Khatami has said that the United States must earn renewed political and economic ties to his country through accountability for its actions against Iran, including its role in a coup in 1953 that ultimately restored the shah to power.

Any relationship with the United States has to be in Iran's national interest, Mr. Khatami said Monday in a speech to about 1,000 expatriates who packed a United Nations conference room at the invitation of the Iranian mission to the world body.

But to Iranian Americans, many of whom fled Iran after Muslim clerics took control in 1979, Mr. Khatami extended an olive branch and drew multiple ovations, especially from younger participants who for years were dismissed by the Islamic Republic as *gharb-zadeh*, or foreign born.

Mr. Khatami, who is in New York to attend the Millennium Summit, praised Iranians living abroad for keeping the love for their homeland alive in their children. He appealed to their common heritage and raised their patriotic fervor when he recalled how Iran successfully resisted Arab influence 13 centuries ago

while embracing the "righteousness and justice of Islam."

He lauded Jews, Zoroastrians and other Iranian minorities for their contributions to the country's history and culture over the past 2,500 years.

The president also pleaded for expatriates to be patient with the slow pace of reforms that are aimed at establishing a more democratic Islamic Republic, in which leaders and citizens live by the letter of the constitution.

"For the first time, the government is for the people's freedom," he said, "instead of opposing it," an apparent reference to the reforms.

Mr. Khatami's reforms have met fierce resistance from Iran's old guard of conservatives, led by the supreme leader, Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei, who have refused to relinquish power despite several defeats at the polls. They control the courts, the military and the broadcast networks, as well as the powerful Guardian Council that vets all legislation passed by Parliament, which is dominated by moderates.

The gathering Monday was the second in as many years at which Mr. Khatami addressed expatriate Iranians. The meeting room was believed to be the same one used recently for the United Nation's 50th anniversary celebration of

international human rights efforts.

A few opponents of Iran's clerical rule privately described the use of the room Monday as ironic, given the Islamic Republic's history of arrests and executions of its citizens on political and religious grounds. Such actions prompted some Iranian Americans to decline their invitations to the meeting.

"There are some hopes with respect for Khatami's plans for the future," said a government opponent who asked not to be identified, "but at this point, he's still representing a regime under which Iranian minorities feel they have not been treated fairly."

More vocal opposition groups, including expatriate monarchists who supported the late shah and the Mujahidin Khalq, who took part in his overthrow, planned demonstrations Tuesday in New York and Los Angeles against Mr. Khatami's visit.

Those plans were met with disdain by many expatriates in attendance Monday, who insisted that the only hope for change lies in dialogue, not isolation of a regime many do not agree with. That included a handful of female participants at the meeting who did not cover their hair — a way to show their opposition to current Iranian law requiring all women to do so.

IRAN

La fuite en avant des conservateurs

HAYAT-E NO
Téhéran

Au moment des manifestations étudiantes de l'an passé et suite aux débordements provoqués par des contre-manifestants, le Guide suprême, l'ayatollah Ali Khamenei, avait déclaré : "Tout acte violent, même s'il est commis au nom de la défense de la religion, est un acte délictueux et condamnable. Face à des opposants et même dans une situation où l'on en viendrait à insulter le Guide suprême, en déchirant ou en brûlant son portrait, par exemple, il faut faire preuve de patience et ne pas avoir un comportement violent." A l'époque, ces propos du Guide de la révolution semblaient traduire le consensus régnant parmi les différents responsables du régime pour rejeter toute forme de violence.

Le message s'adressait en principe aux groupes radicaux qui ont fait de la défense des valeurs saintes et de la charia leur cheval de bataille. Néanmoins, le prétexte de l'"obéissance aveugle aux ordres du Guide", qui est l'horizon indéchiffrable de

dizaines de ces groupes ultras, a pourtant été brandi à nouveau pour justifier des actions violentes qui ont eu pour cadre cette fois la petite ville de Khorramabad (à l'ouest du pays, chef-lieu de la province du Lorestan).

Ces groupes violents avaient ainsi reçu l'ordre d'empêcher à tout prix la venue dans cette ville [il y a une dizaine de jours] de deux figures éminentes du mouvement réformateur, l'universitaire Soroush et le théologien moderniste Kadivar. Pour ce faire, ils n'ont pas hésité à encercler l'aéroport, à tabasser des étudiants

et à blesser l'adjoint du gouverneur de la province.

La capacité logistique de ces groupes violents à amener rapidement des troupes dans une localité comme Khorramabad est un message clair à l'attention des réformateurs. En substance, il signifie que désormais ces extrémistes ne se borneront plus à harceler les réformateurs dans les grandes villes. Dans ce contexte, ces derniers événements doivent également être compris comme un moyen d'intimider ceux qui au sein du pouvoir croient encore possible de conci-

lier religion et démocratie.

En outre, les blessures infligées à l'adjoint du gouverneur, qui est pourtant un invalide de guerre, sont un autre signe fort envoyé aux réformateurs par ces groupes violents. En l'occurrence, il signifie que des valeurs révolutionnaires comme "appartenir à une famille de martyrs", "avoir été blessé de guerre", etc. ne sont valables que dans la mesure où l'on partage leurs idées et leurs intérêts. Dans le cas contraire, même un individu qui a sacrifié les plus belles années de sa vie pour la révolution n'est pas à l'abri de leurs attaques.

Aujourd'hui, les auteurs des crimes contre les étudiants de l'université de Téhéran ont été acquittés, alors que les victimes de cette violence ont été condamnées à de lourdes peines de prison. Malgré cela, les étudiants qui soutiennent les réformes refusent la violence et continuent de se distinguer des groupes ultras dont la seule philosophie se limite à considérer que celui qui n'est pas avec eux est obligatoirement contre eux. Dans ce contexte, il convient de se concentrer sur l'avenir des réformes et de rester optimiste.

Amir Shahla

European Parliament
Texts Adopted by Parliament
Provisional Edition : 06/09/2000

18.Droits de l'homme: bombardements turcs au nord de l'Irak

B5-0672, 0715, 0731 et 0744/2000

Résolution du Parlement européen sur les bombardements turcs au nord de l'Irak

Le Parlement européen,

- vu ses précédentes résolutions sur la situation en Turquie et notamment celles qui concernent des bombardements turcs au nord de l'Irak ;
 - vu la Convention européenne de sauvegarde des droits de l'Homme et des libertés fondamentales ainsi que la Convention internationale contre la torture, ratifiées par la Turquie;
 - vu le statut de pays candidat accordé à la Turquie par le Conseil à sa réunion d'Helsinki en décembre 1999,
- A. considérant que le 15 août 2000, l'armée turque a bombardé des villages dans la région nord-irakienne de Kendakor, provoquant plusieurs dizaines de victimes et de blessés parmi la population civile;
- B. considérant qu'une délégation de l'Association Turque des Droits de l'Homme, qui voulait se rendre compte des conséquences de ces derniers bombardements, n'a pas reçu l'autorisation de se rendre sur les lieux ;
- C. considérant que le bombardement de villages kurdes au nord de l'Irak par l'armée turque constitue une violation de l'intégrité territoriale de l'Irak et du droit international;
- D. considérant que la Turquie s'est engagée, en sa qualité de pays candidat à l'adhésion à l'UE, à satisfaire aux critères de Copenhague;
1. exprime sa condoléance aux familles des victimes des bombardements turcs du 15 août 2000 au nord de l'Irak;
 2. demande le respect des frontières internationales de tous les pays de la région, et par conséquent condamne toutes les incursions turques en territoire irakien comme contraires au droit international;
 3. réitère sa profonde conviction que la reconnaissance et le respect des droits fondamentaux des Kurdes sont des éléments essentiels du processus de démocratisation de la Turquie, ainsi que du processus d'adhésion de ce pays à l'Union, conformément aux critères de Copenhague;
 4. invite les États membres à respecter le code de conduite en matière d'exportations d'armes dans le cas de la Turquie également;
 5. réaffirme sa conviction que seule une solution politique et pacifique à la question kurde, qui doit inclure un remède au sous-développement des régions du sud-est de la Turquie, pourra contribuer à la stabilisation et au développement de la région;
 6. demande au Conseil et à la Commission de souligner que seul le respect des droits de l'Homme, de l'état de droit ainsi que du droit international permettra à la Turquie de continuer à prétendre le statut de pays candidat à l'adhésion à l'Union Européenne ;
 7. demande à sa Présidente de transmettre cette résolution au Conseil, à la Commission ainsi qu'au gouvernement et au parlement turcs.

European Parliament
Texts Adopted by Parliament
Provisional Edition : 07/09/2000

Human rights: Turkish bombing in the north of Iraq

B5-0672, 0715, 0731 and 0744/2000

European Parliament resolution on the Turkish bombardment of northern Iraq

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the situation in Turkey and, in particular, those concerning the Turkish bombardment of northern Iraq,

- whereas Turkey has ratified the European Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the International Convention against Torture,

- whereas the European Council meeting in Helsinki in December 1999 conferred on Turkey the status of a applicant country,

A. whereas the Turkish army bombarded villages in the Kendakor region of northern Iraq on 15 August 2000, claiming the lives of scores of civilians and wounding dozens of others,

B. whereas a delegation of the Turkish Human Rights Association wishing to examine the effects of the recent bombardment has not received authorisation to visit the area concerned,

C. whereas the Turkish army's bombardment of Kurdish villages in northern Iraq constitutes a violation of the territorial integrity of Iraq and of international law,

D. whereas Turkey, as an EU applicant country, has pledged itself to fulfil the Copenhagen criteria,

1. Expresses its condolences to the families of the victims of the Turkish bombardment of northern Iraq on 15 August 2000;

2. Calls for respect for the international borders of all countries in the region and, therefore, condemns all Turkish incursions into Iraqi territory as contrary to international law;

3. Reiterates its firm conviction that recognition of and respect for the fundamental rights of the Kurds is an essential aspect of the process of democratisation in Turkey and of that country's process of accession to the Union in accordance with the Copenhagen criteria;

4. Calls on the Member States to comply with the Code of Conduct on arms exports in the case of Turkey as well;

5. Reaffirms its belief that only a political and peaceful settlement of the 'Kurdish question', which must include remedying the underdevelopment of the south-eastern regions of Turkey, can contribute to the stabilisation and development of the region;

6. Calls on the Council and the Commission to stress that only respect for human rights, the rule of law and international law will enable Turkey to continue to claim the status of an applicant country for accession to the European Union;

7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Turkish Government and the Turkish parliament.

Pentagon says attack on Kurds would prompt U.S. military response

CNN September 6, 2000 by Chris Plante

WASHINGTON (CNN) -- The United States has developed highly classified plans for at least three days of intense attacks against Iraqi military targets if President Saddam Hussein's military strikes at the minority Kurdish population in northern Iraq this fall, Defense Department sources said.

The sources told CNN that a U.S. Army Patriot missile battery -- recently placed on a "heightened state of readiness" for possible deployment to Israel -- was alerted out of concern that Iraq might fire Scud missiles at Israel in response to any potential U.S. military action.

Officials cautioned that any action by the United States would have to be prompted by Iraqi military assaults against the minority Kurds, who are generally considered by Baghdad to be hostile to the government of Saddam Hussein. -

Plan likely to include cruise-missile attacks

U.S. analysts are divided on whether the Iraqi military will pursue military objectives in the Kurdish region this fall, said sources who asked not to be identified. But they said the planning was "prudent" in light of Iraq's violent history with the Kurds. The proposed U.S. strike plan would almost certainly include cruise-missile attacks and air strikes against a range of Iraqi targets, including military sites and Iraqi infrastructure associated with Saddam's military machine, officials familiar with the plan said.

One official said the United States has closely monitored recent Iraqi troop movements in the northern part of the country, but has seen no unusual activity.

"It could just be normal troop rotation," an official said. Members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff were briefed on the planning Tuesday evening in the Pentagon's classified briefing room known as "the tank."

U.S. carrier battle group in Persian Gulf

The aircraft carrier U.S.S. George Washington and its battle group are in the Persian Gulf. The carrier group includes a number of ships capable of firing Tomahawk Land Attack cruise missiles. The George Washington carries an airwing of about 75 combat aircraft.

The United States maintains a carrier battle group in the Gulf at all times to provide air power for enforcement of the southern "no-fly" zone and to keep a high-profile U.S. presence in the region. Iraq is vulnerable in the south to U.S. and British warplanes based in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait and in the north to fighter and attack planes based in Incirlik, Turkey.

U.S. officials apparently do not want to be caught flat-footed, as they were in 1996 when Iraq moved against Kurds in the north under the guise of carrying out routine exercises.

In response to the surprise Iraqi move, the United States struck 14 targets on September 3, 1996 in southern Iraq with 27 Tomahawk Land-Attack cruise missiles, but only after an Iraqi military assault against the Kurdish town of Irbil. The Baghdad government at that time installed pro-Saddam Kurds into positions of power in Irbil. That round of U.S. strikes was widely seen as an impotent response to the Iraqi strongarm tactics in Irbil.

Strikes would last several days

Sources said the contingency plans call for several days of strikes, but would not be as intense as the attacks that took place December 16-19, 1998, during Operation Desert Fox, when the United States attacked 100 targets in Iraq in response to a dispute between Iraq and United Nations arms inspectors that led to the departure of the U.N. team.

Pentagon officials said at the time that the strikes set back by about two years Iraq's efforts to develop weapons of mass destruction and greater ballistic missile capability.

There has been speculation that the United States might respond militarily to an anticipated Iraqi refusal to allow United Nations arms inspectors back into Iraq, but Pentagon officials said such a proposal was opposed by important U.S. allies, including Saudi Arabia, which provides bases to U.S. and British warplanes patrolling Iraq's southern "no-fly" zone.

New UK Report Reveals Significant Underestimation of Turkey Dam Effects

The Guardian 07 Sep 00 by Paul Brown

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A confidential report commissioned by the government into the controversial Ilisu dam project has revealed significant underestimates of the chaos and misery it would bring to tens of thousands of people.

Up to 78,000 Kurdish people, around three times the number originally thought, will be made homeless and landless by the British-backed scheme in Turkey, according to the report seen by the Guardian.

The report makes clear that thousands of already extremely poor people are at risk of "falling into greater destitution" if the government goes ahead with its plan to make 200m pounds sterling of taxpayers money available to contractors Balfour Beatty to allow the dam to be built.

Reports that the government was dropping the dam project have been formally denied by Richard Caborn, the trade minister. He was writing to protesters on behalf of the prime minister, who has been threatened with high court action because damming the Tigris would alter the flow of water to Iraq and Syria without any consultation.

His letter reiterating the British support for the project came on August 22, four days after the report on the flawed resettlement plan was sent to the Department of Trade and Industry by Ayse Kudat, 56, who is Turkish but has most recently been the World Bank's head of social development.

The report, leaked yesterday to the Guardian, had been kept secret even though the department said it would make documents connected with the Ilisu project public.

The report said the dam would inundate the most fertile irrigated land in the area where landlessness and poverty was already widespread. Half of the people did not grow crops but grazed animals on pasture, worked for cash payments and relied on subsistence gardening "to stay alive".

The people who were forced to move would be at high risk of falling into greater destitution, Dr Kudat said.

Dr Kudat was employed by the export credit agencies of the UK and other European countries to report on the Turkish plans to resettle Kurds in the area to be inundated. She said some of the area was not accessible because of Turkish military operations against the Kurds, but potentially the number of people affected was between 47,000 and 78,000 - up to three times the government's original estimate.

The government made its support for the project conditional on a proper resettlement plan but Dr Kudat noted that many similar plans round the world had failed. She said sweeping institutional reforms were required in Turkey if there was to be any hope of an Ilisu plan working.

"In the Turkish context, past failures have been particularly severe with respect to inadequate and inappropriate delivery of resettlement housing," she said.

There had been a lack of concern for the well being of those forced to move, failure to consult them, and no monitoring of social impact.

She said the Ilisu catchment already contained thousands of people displaced from previous projects who had not been properly settled or compensated for losing their homes.

The coalition of environment and human rights groups opposing the dam said the report highlighted 10 serious problems with the Turkish resettlement plan which violated World Bank and OECD guidelines on financing such projects. These included Turkey's failure to provide a resettlement budget.

Kerim Yildiz, a director of the Ilisu Dam Campaign, said: "This report clearly indicates that the Turkish government is in no position to fulfil even the basic conditions put forward by the UK government."

"It provides more than enough evidence for the government to abandon this ill conceived and destructive project."

A trade department spokesman confirmed that no decision had yet been made on whether the Ilisu project would be backed, but it was conditional on the resettlement plan being satisfactory.

Ocalan: audience le 21 novembre à la Cour européenne des droits de l'homme



STRASBOURG, 7 sept (AFP) - 16h30 - La Cour européenne des droits de l'homme tiendra le 21 novembre à Strasbourg une audience sur la recevabilité et le bien-fondé de la plainte du chef rebelle kurde Abdullah Ocalan contre la Turquie, a-t-on appris jeudi auprès du Conseil de l'Europe.

M. Ocalan, qui a été condamné fin juin 1999 à Ankara à la peine de mort pour trahison et séparatisme, allègue devant la Cour européenne la violation par l'Etat turc des articles 2 (droit à la vie), 8 (droit au respect de la vie privée et familiale) et 13 (droit à un recours effectif devant une instance nationale).

Ces plaintes concernent sa condamnation à mort, son procès ainsi que son enlèvement au Kenya par un commando turc le 15 février 1999.

L'arrêt de la Cour sur la recevabilité et le fond de la requête est attendu dans un délai, non précisé, de plusieurs mois après l'audience.

Le chef du Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK), qui est incarcéré en cellule d'isolement sur l'île-prison d'Imrali (nord-ouest de la Turquie), bénéficie d'un sursis à exécution de sa peine à la demande de la Cour européenne, dans le cadre de "mesures d'urgence" décidées par les juges européens.

Ce sursis est destiné à donner à la Cour le temps de juger de la validité des griefs d'Abdullah Ocalan contre la Turquie.

Les juges européens ont en revanche rejeté le 11 août dernier une seconde demande de mesures d'urgence présentée le 1er août par les avocats du chef kurde et concernant ses conditions de détention: Ocalan demandait de changer de prison, se plaignant de son isolement et demandant une cellule plus grande.

Si le procès d'Ocalan était déclaré "non conforme" à la Convention, une éventuelle exécution serait d'autant plus difficile à justifier par les autorités turques sur la scène internationale.

Le Conseil de l'Europe et l'Union européenne ont à de multiples reprises engagé la Turquie à abolir la peine de mort de sa législation. De fait, depuis 1984, le pays n'a procédé à aucune exécution.

Swiss Authorities Say Northern Iraq Safe for Repatriation of Asylum Seekers

Swiss Info 7 Sep 00

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Refugee authorities in Switzerland have given the go-ahead for unsuccessful asylum seekers from the Kurdish region of northern Iraq to be sent home.

The refugee appeals commission said on Thursday [7th September] that forced repatriations of people whose asylum requests had been rejected was now acceptable. It added, however, that each case should be treated individually.

The commission said the two parts of northern Iraq, controlled by the rival Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, could be regarded as "de facto" countries.

However, it added that the region could not offer effective protection to people from other parts of Iraq who sought refuge there.

The commission said there was no major danger facing those who returned to northern Iraq from Switzerland, providing they were not being sought by the central government in Baghdad.

It repeated that people trying to leave northern Iraq to seek asylum in Switzerland would continue to be rejected.

In June, the federal office for refugees rejected an appeal by a group of Iraqi Kurds not to be sent back to the region.

There are about 4,300 Iraqi nationals in Switzerland, but only about a third have been granted refugee status.

IMMIGRATION Les filières turques inondent l'Europe d'immigrants illégaux

La Turquie base arrière des clandestins

Un navire transportant 430 immigrants clandestins, en majorité des Kurdes et des Pakistanais, a été intercepté lundi par les garde-côtes italiens au large de la Calabre (sud). Le navire, sans pavillon ni nom, serait parti de Turquie il y a quatre jours. Les débarquements sur les côtes calabraises se sont multipliés au cours des derniers mois et les forces de l'ordre ont intercepté plus de 4 500 personnes dans cette région depuis le début de l'année.

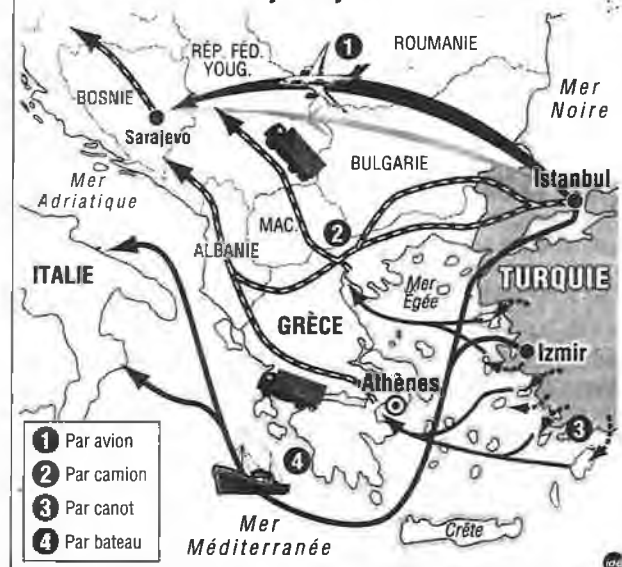
Istanbul :
Éric Biegala

A pied, en camion, en bateau et parfois même à la nage, tous les moyens sont bons pour rejoindre l'Europe. Comme chaque été, des dizaines de milliers de candidats à l'immigration clandestine vers le havre européen ont tenté leur chance au départ de la Tur-

quie. Quelle que soit la route choisie, les conditions climatiques sont réputées plus favorables et le chassé-croisé des vacances européennes permet de se perdre dans la masse des touristes.

Tous évidemment ne sont pas Turcs même si les Kurdes, de nationalité turque ou irakienne, constituent le gros des impétrants. Il y a également des Syriens, des Iraniens et ceux qui viennent de plus loin :

Quatre voies turques pour les clandestins



Au cours des derniers mois, les carabinieri italiens ont intercepté plus de 4 500 personnes sur les côtes calabraises. Ci-dessus des Kurdes et des Pakistanais en provenance de Turquie. (Photo Franco Cufari/AFP.)

Afghans, Pakistanais, Chinois ou Africains. La Turquie, et principalement Istanbul, est depuis longtemps une plaque tournante de tous les trafics...

Pour un contrebandier, un clandestin n'est jamais qu'une marchandise comme une autre. Paco (un nom d'emprunt) a 17 ans. Il est sénégalais, mais a passé une partie de son enfance dans le sud de la France. Ses frères ont acquis la nationalité française, mais pas lui : trop jeune à l'époque, il avait dû rentrer au Sénégal avec sa mère et voudrait bien aujourd'hui revenir en Europe.

« J'ai tous les papiers nécessaires, assure-t-il, mais l'ambassade de France au Sénégal m'a refusé le visa, alors je n'ai plus que cette solution. » La « solution » consiste à passer du Sénégal en Turquie, puis en Italie et, de là, rejoindre la France ou la Suisse. Coût du transport par voie de mer entre Istanbul et l'Italie : 3 000 dollars (22 000 francs). Évidemment, Paco n'en a pas le premier centime. Aussi s'est-il lui-même fait contrebandier, complice des trafiquants clandestins pendant huit mois, pour payer son passage. « Mon rôle se limite à emmener les « clients » africains de l'appartement où on les fait patienter jusqu'au bateau. Je ne connais

qu'au dernier moment le nom du navire et du lieu d'embarquement. »

En fait, Paco n'est qu'un rouage d'une organisation cloisonnée dont il ne possède qu'une vue partielle. Il servira de « responsable », en clair de fusible, si son groupe de clandestins se fait prendre. En quelques mois de ce travail, Paco a toutefois acquis le droit de voyager à l'œil. Chaque nationalité possède ainsi son réseau et son organisation : il y a les Africains, les Kurdes irakiens, les Iraniens... Au total, estime Paco, les bateaux accueillent 5 à 600 passagers de diverses nationalités à chaque traversée. La fréquence ? « *A peu près une fois par semaine... Parfois, le bateau part d'Izmir et il faut emmener les passagers jusque-là, à 600 kilomètres d'Istanbul. C'est souvent dans ces transits que les gens se font prendre.* »

Sans bagages donc, mais souvent avec femmes et enfants, les candidats à l'exil vont alors s'embarquer dans une croisière des plus mouvementées. Paco l'affirme sans ambages : « *Les bateaux sont dans un tel état qu'ils peuvent à peine tenir la mer.* » Les clandestins sont entassés à fond de cale pendant plusieurs jours avec souvent pour seules provisions ce qu'ils ont pu emporter au dernier moment.

Le 7 août dernier, les autorités grecques autorisaient ainsi

le Barbados, un bateau en bois de 30 mètres de long et de plus de 40 ans, à finalement accoster en Crète. A son bord : 334 clandestins, dont 97 enfants, qui erraient depuis six jours sur le navire, la plupart sérieusement déshydratés. Le capitaine turc avait fini par renoncer à livrer son « chargement » en Sicile...

Le sud de l'Italie : la Sicile, les Pouilles, la Calabre sont des points de chute parfaits. Avec ses milliers de kilomètres et autant de criques discrètes, la côte italienne est très difficilement contrôlable. Pour la seule Calabre, plus de 4 000 arrestations de clandestins ont eu lieu durant les sept derniers mois là où quelques dizaines de milliers de chanceux ont sans doute réussi à passer.

La Grèce est également un point d'entrée privilégié, surtout au départ de la Turquie. A partir de la façade égéenne de l'Anatolie, les premières îles grecques ne sont qu'à quelques encablures, mais la traversée est souvent périlleuse.

La semaine dernière, c'est une grosse barque de 8 mètres qui chavirait entre le port turc de Bodrum et l'île grecque de Kos. On repêchait 7 survivants sur les 31 personnes ayant pris part à l'expédition. Le capitaine déclarait que les contrebandiers organisateurs du périple lui avaient offert 1 000 dollars (7 300 francs) par personne transportée, soit un magot de

La filière bosniaque

Conséquences de la guerre et de ses alliances occultes, les ressortissants de quelques pays à fort potentiel migratoire (la Turquie, l'Iran et la Chine...) n'ont pas besoin de visas pour entrer en Bosnie-Herzégovine. Une brèche dans laquelle se sont engouffrés nombre de clandestins. L'aéroport de Sarajevo est ainsi régulièrement encombré de jeunes Kurdes, de nationalité turque. Quant aux Chinois, les habitants de Sarajevo l'affirment : « *Ils sont partout* »... Des Iraniens ont été repérés la semaine dernière lorsqu'ils tentaient de passer la Save pour entrer en Croatie. Leur embarcation a chaviré. Douze corps, dont ceux de trois enfants, ont été repêchés.

E. B.

30 000 dollars (220 000 francs, environ)... de quoi tenter nombre d'apprentis capitaines en Turquie. L'autre chemin possible pour la Grèce passe par la frontière terrestre. Il s'agit de franchir le fleuve Meriç (Evros en grec) qui sépare les deux pays au nord. Les passeurs demandent 1 000 dollars en moyenne pour ce qui s'avère être une véritable aventure.

Longtemps à couteaux tirés, Grèce et Turquie ont renforcé leurs défenses sur la frontière et les zones minées ne sont pas rares. Et au printemps dernier un accord entre les polices grecque et turque est intervenu, renforçant la coopération en

matière de lutte contre les clandestins. La police et la gendarmerie turque multiplient effectivement les arrestations (« *près de 10 000* », clament les autorités). Les ressortissants des pays limitrophes, Iran et Syrie essentiellement, sont reconduits chez eux manu militari.

Ceux qui viennent de plus loin, tels les Sénégalais, sont généralement relâchés, la Turquie ne disposant pas des moyens pour les expulser vers leur pays d'origine.

Pour le moment, Paco a réussi à passer au travers des mailles du filet. Le bateau sur lequel il devait finalement tenter sa chance a quitté Istanbul jeudi dernier...

Swiss commission sees conditions for return of Kurds to Iraq

BERN, Sept 7 (AFP) Certain parts of northern Iraq have now become safe enough for the return of Kurdish refugees, the Swiss government committee handling asylum cases said Thursday.

The regions involved are those controlled by the Democratic Party of Kurdistan and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, two groups that virtually control swathes of northern Iraq, the CRA statement added.

The issue of whether Kurdish refugees in Switzerland should be repatriated to those parts of Iraq now had to be examined, the committee added.

In practical terms however, the prospects for sending back Kurdish refugees to northern Iraq remained very limited.

The same principle could also be extended to zones considered "safe" in Afghanistan and Bosnia-Herzegovina, said committee spokeswoman Marylaure Garcia.

There are 1,735 asylum demands from refugees from northern Iraq currently before Swiss authorities.

Of them, an estimated three-quarters are from regions under the control of Kurdish groups, although no figures were available for the zones remarked upon by the committee.

The Cancer Conspiracy

Newsweek 7 Sept 2000 By Rod Nordland

Are rumors that Saddam has been sidelined by illness a conspiracy to boost oil prices?

September 7 - In Baghdad a few weeks ago, a foreign ministry official gloated over a reported remark by former U.S. Treasury Secretary Robert E. Rubin: "When oil prices top thirty bucks a barrel, there will be no rogue states."

He laughed heartily, because that's just where prices have been headed.

BRENT CRUDE CLOSED at \$33.91 on Wednesday, and Thursday marks the 20th consecutive day on which oil has sold for more than \$28 per barrel-the point at which OPEC has tentatively agreed to increase production, and drive prices down. That may go farther than just about anything else to explain recent reports that President Saddam Hussein of Iraq has a potentially fatal cancer.

What could that possibly have to do with the price of oil? Welcome to the Mideast, where the attitude is, if there's no conspiracy, nothing must have happened. On Sunday, Asharq al-Awsat, the leading Arabic-language newspaper, based in London, published an article claiming that Saddam has cancer of the lymph glands. There have been such reports in the past, but what made this slightly more arresting was the amount of detail. Abed Hammoud, the president of the presidential palace, as Saddam's personal secretary is known, had formed a committee of French, Swiss and German doctors to treat the Saddam, the newspaper reported. It also said that Iraq has imported enough equipment from Jordan to outfit a private hospital in one of the president's palaces, located in a Baghdad suburb, and that Saddam would be treated there with chemotherapy.

Even more significantly, however, the report claimed that Saddam had convened a family council and anointed his youngest son Qusay as his stand-in, should he become incapacitated, rather than his eldest son, Uday. The newspaper also said that the president's brothers and half-brother Barzan al-Tikriti would be members of a caretaker council under Qusay's direction.

None of the sources quoted in the report were named. An Iraqi doctor, not in exile, purportedly told Asharq al-Awsat that "the Iraqi president suffers from pain in the joints, disturbance in breathing and the respiratory system, weakness in eyesight, temporary loss of memory, and lack of concentration." Another source said recent speeches by the president were unusually illogical and rambling, suggesting that the disease was significantly advanced. "All presidential instructions, which reach the ministries, are signed by Maj. Gen. Abed Hammoud. Qusay ... is behaving in the backstage like the president of the republic," the account said.

Still, Venezuelan diplomats have said that Saddam seemed vigorous and lucid when the country's president, Hugo Chavez, visited him last month. And an academic in London said Russians who have recently seen Saddam also say he seems well. Meanwhile, Iraq's charge d'affaires in London, Mudhafar Amin, dismissed the cancer report as yet another example of "CIA disinformation". "There is a campaign against Iraq in every way and this is part of it," he said.

At the end of the day, whether dad is sick or well, Qusay controls the secret police-and Uday runs the Iraqi Olympic Committee. Like all good fabrications-if that's what the story was-the Asharq al-Awsat report had a germ of truth to it. Qusay lately has been much more visible in Baghdad. As head of the regime's security apparatus and personally in charge of security for his father, Qusay had previously avoided the limelight. Uday, on the other hand, courted it, running newspapers and magazines and, as the city's rumor mill has it, notoriously deflowering

Baghdad's virgins-sometimes against their will and before the age of consent. Uday is probably best known for his politically motivated murders: he is generally thought to have been responsible for the assassinations of his brothers-in-law, his father's bodyguard and an uncle.

Then, in 1998, unknown assassins very nearly did in Uday. Two years later, Uday is still recuperating from multiple gunshot wounds. He claims to be fully recovered. But most Iraqis assume he is crippled, judging from television broadcasts in which he seems unable to take more than five steps-and those only slowly. In the Arab world, and particularly in a brutal regime such as Saddam Hussein's, a handicap of that sort all but rules him out for the top job. "I would think at this point," says one Western analyst, "that Uday needs Qusay more than Qusay needs Uday." Iraqi television lately has shown the two of them in joint appearances, and given considerably more face time to Qusay than to Uday. At the end of the day, whether dad is sick or well, Qusay controls the secret police-and Uday runs the Iraqi Olympic Committee.

"If Iraq wanted to, it could cause real havoc in world markets." - AMIN Iraqi diplomat

Whether true or false, the cancer account certainly did nothing to cool oil prices. One Western diplomat said she wasn't sure whether the story might have been planted by the Iraqi opposition-or the Iraqi government. What would be the motive? Asharq al-Awsat is published by a Saudi firm, one that is close to the royal family-but not to Crown Prince Abdullah, who has been leading the effort to push prices down. That push is by no means popular in the producing world, or even within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Higher prices would maximize income while at the same time conserving reserves, one school of thought goes. Abdullah, on the other hand, says if prices go too high, they'll suppress global growth, leading to decreased long-term demand for oil.

This is where Iraq could play a key role. It has what may well be the world's largest reserves of oil, and even if it's technically limited to the production of 2.5 million barrels a day of oil under the United Nations' Oil For Food program, that's a pretty important 2.5 million barrels. Some analysts, including the European Union's transport commissioner, Loyola de Palacio, think that even if OPEC were to increase production by 500,000 barrels per day as the Saudis favor, that would still not meet present demand. Iraq also produces another 500,000 barrels a day, which it sells on the black market. It could easily shut that off, undercutting any OPEC increase. That also explains why Iraq is willing to take such a hard line on refusing to allow UN weapons inspectors to return, as they were supposed to have done by last month.

Technically, the Iraqi refusal to allow the weapons inspectors back flouts a decision of the UN Security Council, which at this point should be taking action. But what action? A military response would make Iraq a political issue in the United States-something neither presidential candidate seems to want. Imposing fresh sanctions would mean suspending the Oil For Food program, which would bring new suffering to Iraq's people, at a time when many of their children are already starving to death. And perhaps more tellingly, it would also reduce worldwide oil production to a degree impossible for other oil producers to make up, at least right away. "If Iraq wanted to," said Iraqi diplomat Amin, it could cause "real havoc in world markets." Unsurprisingly, the Security Council has not front-burnered the issue of Iraq's non-compliance with weapons inspections.

With French truckers blockading refineries and fuel depots and U.S. home heating oil stocks at historically low levels, the timing would be off. Then there's the matter of OPEC's meeting this Sunday in Vienna. Saddam Hussein may or may not have cancer, but he certainly has a lot of oil. Given that, head of a rogue state or not, a lot of other countries will see no choice but to deal with him.

Gulf War Syndrome study draws blank

BBC - 07 Sept 2000

A new study has failed to identify any specific cause for the chronic illnesses suffered by tens of thousands of veterans of the 1991 Gulf War. Scientists from the Institute of Medicine - which advises the US Government on health issues - looked at a range of substances which have been linked with so-called Gulf War Syndrome.

These included the nerve gas sarin; vaccines - including one for Anthrax; and depleted uranium (DU) - a radioactive material used for ammunition.

"We'd like to give veterans and their families definitive answers, but the evidence simply is not strong enough," said Dr Harold Sox, chairman of the research committee.

More than 100,000 troops have suffered unexplained illnesses

"Without data on the levels of exposure in the Persian Gulf theatre, answers will remain elusive."

The study was commissioned by Congress and the US Department of Veterans Affairs.

More than 100,000 American and allied troops who served in the war against Iraq have complained of nervous disorders, chronic fatigue, rashes and muscle and joint pains.

DU link 'doubtful'

The study found that while the effects of sarin and vaccines were still questionable, it was doubtful that DU was linked to instances cancer or kidney disease suffered by veterans.

The Pentagon has also denied a link between DU and Gulf War Syndrome.

But a scientist who has extensively researched the subject said on Monday that the metallic dust released from DU could be responsible.

Dr Durakovic said DU particles could have been inhaled

Dr Asaf Durakovic said veterans he had tested had a "significant presence" of DU in their bone and body tissue.

Doctors in Iraq have also long believed that DU is causing cancer in thousands of children born after the war.

A study published in May, which looked at over 900 British Gulf War veterans, suggested a possible link with the cocktail of vaccines administered to troops during the War.

Few studies on veterans

The Institute of Medicine's report involved no direct scientific research of its own, but instead examined 1,000 studies on the effects of sarin, vaccines and depleted uranium.

But most of these studies did not look at Gulf War veterans, who have been poorly studied, and little is known about how much exposure veterans had to the substances in question.

"In order to study the health effects on veterans, we are going to have to study veterans," Dr Sox said.

"We have got to try to do a better job of recording what happened to soldiers next time."

* * * * *

HADEP Mayor's Speech Calls for Peace, Applauded by Bahceli

Milliyet 06 Sep 00 p 19 by Faruk Balikci, Naci Sapan

[FBIS Translated Text] Diyarbakir witnessed the third visit in 25 years of a Nationalist Action Party [MHP] leader. Following on from Alparslan Turkes's visits in 1975 and 1995, Deputy Prime Minister Devlet Bahceli held a "Regional Development Meeting" in Diyarbakir with the aim of putting the problems of the Southeast on the table.

In the afternoon session of the Regional Development Meeting, Bahceli met with Peoples Democracy Party [HADEP] Mayor of Diyarbakir Feridun Celik. Bahceli, who replied, "Thank you" when Celik said, "Welcome to our city", applauded Celik along with everyone else in the hall, when Celik addressed the meeting.

Making the first speech of the afternoon, Feridun Celik approached Bahceli and said, "My Deputy Prime Minister. I would like to submit this eight-page report on the problems on the region and proposals for their solution." Following this, Celik took the rostrum and spoke, frequently turning round and glancing at Bahceli. In his speech he said that [the region] had experienced pain over the past 15 years but that an atmosphere of peace and tranquillity, albeit it at a certain level, was present in the region these days.

Words Worthy of Applause

Stating that the country's problems did not consist solely of the problems in the region, Celik said, "We hold the belief that the people of this country as a whole are capable of working together hand in hand and creating important things. What is more important than political differences and quarrels is our working hand in hand at all levels and in all ways in the service of our country and fighting together for the development our country. On this basis, I believe that all political circles will look to the future in the coming period in the same frame of mind. I believe we will work together so that our country sees better times."

Starting with Bahceli, all the MHP Ministers and everyone in the hall applauded Celik's speech.

* * * * *

A handshake may mean much : MHP's Bahceli in Diyarbakir

Turkish Daily News Editorial by Ilnur Cevik September 7, 2000

On Tuesday Deputy Prime Minister Devlet Bahceli, the leader of the conservative Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), and pro-Kurdish Diyarbakir Mayor Feridun Celik met in Diyarbakir in a warm atmosphere and made history when they shook hands and hugged each other.

Earlier Bahceli was treated to a rousing welcome in Diyarbakir, a city with a predominantly Kurdish population. The crowd chanted "Prime Minister Devlet," which thrilled the MHP leader as well as his entourage.

Bahceli was in the city which is regarded as the provincial capital of the Southeast to attend an economic meeting on regional development. On the occasion Mayor Celik, a member of the pro-Kurdish People's Democracy Party (HADEP), briefed Bahceli on the problems of the city and ways to overcome them. Bahceli applauded Celik's presentation and the two shook hands. Later they hugged.

Only a year ago such scenes would have been considered "impossible." The enmity between the MHP and HADEP has always been crystal clear. About 25 years ago the people of Diyarbakir, who are not only predominantly of Kurdish origin but are also staunch leftists, prevented the MHP's

late mentor Alparslan Türkeş from entering the city. In contrast, today Bahçeli is being greeted by the same crowd with cheers and chants of "prime minister." This signals a grand reconciliation which should be followed up with new gestures and initiatives.

Bahçeli and Çelik have sown the seeds of this reconciliation which should be regarded as a major breakthrough. They have shown the courage to take this step and we feel their followers should get the message and act accordingly.

Süleyman Demirel made an important gesture when he received the pro-Kurdish mayors of the southeastern provinces last year when he was president. That was a mini-coup. Now Bahçeli and Çelik have come up with a major coup, which is very good news for the future of our country.

Bahçeli's difference as a leader of the far right is obvious. He has made giant strides in the past year to blunt the edges of the far-right movement and the MHP is gradually becoming a valuable part of the system rather than being the odd man out. The pro-Kurdish mayors, on the other hand, are seeing the realities of Turkey and see that there is no alternative to reconciliation and positive action.

The wonderful events in Diyarbakır coupled with the wonderful pro-democracy speech of Supreme Court of Appeals Chief Justice Sami Selçuk on Wednesday, which once again received a standing ovation, shows there are many positive developments which should give us hope for the future. We only hope that the conservative establishment which loves to sabotage these positive developments doesn't do anything in the coming days to cast a shadow on them.

* * * * *

Kurdish TV Commentary Views Bahçeli's Diyarbakır Visit as 'Major Development'

Medya TV 06 Sep 00
Commentary by İrfan Doğan

[FBIS Translated Text] Devlet Bahçeli, Nationalist Action Party [MHP] leader and deputy prime minister, went to Diyarbakır yesterday. The MHP officials wanted to visit Diyarbakır before and after 1980; however, every one of their visits prompted tension. Most of the time, the MHP officials were not allowed into Kurdistan. Everybody still remembers the reaction of the people to Türkeş' visit to Diyarbakır in the mid 1970s. People could not even bear to hear the name of MHP until now. Today, however, it is a major development if Bahçeli can go to Diyarbakır.

This is evidently the consequences of the Kurdish people's wish to resolve issues through peaceful and democratic means. The Kurdish people seek to live with all the Turkish people, together with its right and left, in a democratic and free unity. The MHP, in turn, is a reality in Turkey; therefore, the Kurdish people are capable of living together with the MHP in common land even though they are against the MHP views. Bahçeli's latest Diyarbakır visit is noteworthy because it demonstrates that it is possible to live together in a common land with democratic rules.

The Kurdish people have always said that they seek to live peacefully with the Turkish people. It is a historic truth that let alone stab the Turkish people in the back in their most difficult moments, the Kurdish people have always extended support. It is a known fact that the Kurdish support was the determinant factor in the Malazgirt victory in 1071. Moreover, it was the Kurdish people who extended the most support to the Turkish people in the 1920s when their lives were threatened. For this reason, it is a historic must for the

Turkish people to view the Kurds as their brothers and embrace them.

It should be said openly that the Ottoman Empire would not be considered an empire if it had rejected the different cultures. What makes empires and states great is their acceptance of different cultures. This fact should not be forgotten by any political power. In this regard, the Turks have always had alliances with other peoples in those periods when they assumed great roles. The Turkish public, in turn, must accept the differences if it seeks to become a great state and agree to brotherly union with the Kurdish people.

The MHP, in turn, has to shoulder important responsibilities during this period. It is of utmost importance that the MHP should not incite chauvinism at a time when the Kurdish side seeks a democratic solution and peace. The MHP assumed a role in encouraging chauvinistic approaches in the past. The Kurdish people will soften the approach they have adopted to the MHP in the 1970s, 1980s, and the 1990s if the MHP acts reasonably, accepts the Kurdish people as brothers, and avoids inciting chauvinism. The MHP should accept the Kurdish people as a power with which it has to coexist even though it does not embrace and supports its views.

There is a break in the relations between the Kurdish people and the Turkish state and its people. The MHP can assume a role eliminating this break. All the other political parties will adopt favorable approaches if the MHP relinquishes its chauvinistic attitude. In this way, those approaches which have prevented the Kurdish people from uniting with the Turkish people will be eliminated. This is essential for the democratic and free union of the two peoples in the 21st century.

Democracy does not mean that everybody should think alike. Democracy means that different views accept each other in line with democratic rules and wage a struggle with each other in line with democratic rules. For this reason, it is natural for Bahçeli to visit Diyarbakir. The Kurdish people, however, have expectations from each and every political movement: that the Kurdish identity, culture, and language be accepted and given legal assurance to this end. The economic, social, and all the other issues will have meaning only when the existence of the Kurdish people is accepted. Only in this way can the union of the two peoples be consolidated.

With the hope that all the politicians and circles, regardless of their political views, strengthen the atmosphere of peace and free unity in Kurdistan.

* * * * *

Turkey slams European parliament for linking aid to Kurdish problem

ANKARA, Sept 7 (AFP) - Turkey, a candidate for membership of the European Union, Thursday criticized the European parliament for efforts to tie financial aid to Ankara to a solution to the Kurdish problem.

"The European parliament's initiative is based on insufficient information and a faulty evaluation does not constitute a constructive attitude," a Turkish foreign ministry statement received here said.

The Turkish response was triggered after the European parliament approved an aid package of 135 million euros (117 million dollars) to Turkey and adopted a proposal linking the funds to the Kurdish issue.

The aid package, which has still to be approved by the European Union's Council of Ministers, would be issued over a three-year period.

"It has become more important and urgent for the European Commission and the Council of Ministers to take additional measures to prevent further obstacles for the release of long-

delayed EU aid," the Turkish statement said.

It also criticized the European parliament's plans to discuss Thursday a draft resolution condemning a Turkish air raid in northern Iraq on August 15.

Ankara has acknowledged that it carried out an operation against Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) rebels sheltering in the area and said it would probe claims by northern Iraqi Kurdish factions that civilians were killed in the strike.

Turkey's mainly Kurdish-populated southeast has been the scene of bitter clashes between government troops and PKK rebels fighting for Kurdish self-rule in the region since 1984.

The normally heavy fighting, which has claimed some 36,500 lives, has gone down considerably since the PKK said last September it would stop fighting against Ankara to seek a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

Since declaring its EU candidacy in December 1999, Turkey has been obliged to carry out far-reaching human rights reforms, especially to rectify the situation of the Kurds, in order to join the 15-nation bloc.

But Ankara is reluctant grant the Kurdish population the right to educate and broadcast in their own language on the grounds that such a move could destabilise the country.

* * * * *

Communist Party of Iraq accuses PUK of despotism

Kurdish Media 07 Sept 2000

SULEIMANIYEH - Kurdistan (KM) - The Workers Communist Party of Iraq accuses the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) of new attacks on its members, arrest and execution of them.

Since mid July, the armed men of the PUK have forcibly closed the WCPI's offices, its radio and TV stations, the Independent Organisation of Women, the Women Shelter and the Children's Protection Centres. "Five members of the WCPI were shot dead and dozens arrested. Most of the arrestees are still in prison and their whereabouts are unknown." stated WCPI in its recent statement. The PUK recent campaign has been expanding to include not only WCPI members and supporters, but also a large number of writers, poets and intellectuals, even its own party members and independent political figures who issued statements against the PUK and its actions.

Recent reports from South Kurdistan shows that there is a split emerging in PUK party on the issue of collaboration with Turkey against PKK and the more important issue of successor of Talabani in PUK. Jabbar Farman, the influential military commander in PUK resigned earlier this year from PUK. Many observers considered him as the only successor of Talabani in the military wing of PUK.

Kurdish observers see the oppression policy of PUK against WCPI a reflection of the policy of PUK to curb the influence of left wing parties in southern Kurdistan and PKK and as a result of more complicated internal scrambling for power in the PUK. The WCPI statement provides a strong case against PUK. The following list from the letter shows the extent of PUK atrocities against Kurds in the region under its control recently:

1. On 24th Aug. 00 the PUK's security and Intelligence forces began a wide house raids campaign targeting the WCPI's members and supporters. As a result, the following cadres and members of the WCPI were arrested: Falah Ahmed (from Sulemanya) Saman Satar (Sulemanya) Sardar Mohammed (Sulemanya) Na'ib Fa'iq (Sulemanya) Omer Mohammed (Sulemanya) Farydoon Hussein Zadeh (from Kurdistan, Iran)
2. On 26th Aug. 00, another house raids operation was carried out by the PUK's security forces

and a further three cadres of the WCPI arrested: Azad Ahmed (member of the leadership committee of Kurdistan organization of WCPI and the party's political representative in Peshder and Ranya areas) Bakhtyar Nader (WCPI cadre in Sulemanya) Anwar Noory (WCPI cadre in Sulemanya) These attacks against the WCPI are continuous. It is worth mentioning that those who were arrested earlier and whose names appeared in our earlier statements are still held by the PUK's security forces, except for the two brothers (Karim and Kameran Latif) who were only released on a bail of ten thousand Iraqi Dinars each and upon signing a statement of abandoning all kinds of political and organizational activities, they were forced to resign from the WCPI and forced residence in Sulemanya was imposed on them. The brothers Karim and Kameran were arrested on 9th Aug. 00 by the security forces while distributing a magazine (Children's world) of the Children's Protection Centre in Sulemanya.

3.The whereabouts of Sadiq Nigbin (Iranian Kurd) remains uncertain. Sadiq was seriously wounded then arrested on 14th July 00 in Sulemanya. On 17th Aug.00, he was transferred from the Emergency Hospital in Sulemanya to one of the Intelligence forces prisons at Alsalam Thicket. Later on Sulemanya Security Authorities issued a statement signed by Usta Hassan of the Political Department at Sulemanya Security Services, stating that Sadiq's transfer was an initial step in his removal and deportation to Iran and his handing over to the Iranian authorities. Sadiq is a prominent political figure in Iranian Kurdistan and one of the well-known opponents of the Islamic regime, at the same time an activist of the Worker-communist party of Iraq. No doubt that his deportation will be followed by his immediate execution.

4.The security forces in Sulemanya are still searching for (Nawzad, Sirwan and Isma'il) all from Iranian Kurdistan and members of the WCPI. We are seriously concerned if they are arrested and handed back to the Iranian authorities.

5.Saman Mohammed, Haider Rassam and Mohammed Najim,, all members of the WCPI , were arrested on 21st July 00 while the security forces raided the Women's Shelter in Sulemanya. They are still in prison, their whereabouts remain uncertain.

6. Nidhal Ahmed (member of the Middle and Southern of Iraq committee of WCPI, from Basrah, south of Iraq) arrested on 13th July, in Sulemanya by the security forces. We fear his surrender to the Baath authorities by the PUK.

7. Issam Samir Ouda (Palestinian nationality), arrested on 24th July 00 because his brother, Hussam, is a member of the WCPI. Issam is still held by the Security services.

8. Jaza Mohammed and Azad Mohammed Amin, WCPI members, arrested on 10th Aug. 00 by the security police in Sulemanya while distributing leaflets against PUK's terrorism. They are still held in prison, and their whereabouts unknown.

9. Shazeen Herish, a well known writer and a poet, arrested on 21st July at Alsha'ab casino in Sulemanya after he issued a statement condemning the PUK's terrorism against the WCPI and the Independent Women Organisation. He is still held in prison, his whereabouts uncertain.

10. The famous poet, Kocher, arrested on 23rd July 00 for issuing a statement against the PUK's actions towards the WCPI and the other organizations. His whereabouts remain uncertain.

11. The bodies of our five members who were murdered by the PUK security are still held and not returned to their families.

12. Twelve women with their children arrested on 21st July 00 during the security polices raid to the Women Shelter. Those were women who fled their families in fear of domestic violence and sought protection from the shelter. All twelve are still held in prison. We fear their return

to their families by the PUK security where they could face honor killing. These women are in grave danger and are likely to be murdered by their families or by the islamists.[end of excerpt] The PUK reply so far to the WCPI accusations has been that we moved these people to be safe. "The irony of this reply is that one does not kill another to make life safe for him." Commented a Kurdish analyst.

* * * * *

PUK Leader Talabani Urges UN Chief To Guarantee Kurds' Security

Kurdistani Nuwe (Suleymaniyah) 9 Sep 00

[Report: "Jalal Talabani sent a letter to the UN Secretary-General on the Millennium Summit: Our people are subjected to genocide; the international community should grant them a security assurance. Resolution 688 will ease the suffering of Iraqi people. Oil-for-Food Programme should be protected and Kurds' share from oil revenues should be secured"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 4th September, [Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, PUK, leader] Jalal Talabani sent a letter to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on the Millennium Summit in New York. He urged the international community to protect the Kurdish people from genocide and ethnic cleansing, to implement [UN Security Council oil-for-food] Resolution 688 and to secure Kurds' share of the oil-for-food programme. The following is the text of the letter:

His Excellency the UN Secretary-General: I am writing to your excellency on the occasion of the Millennium Summit to present my own views regarding the situation of the Kurdish people. The dawn of the new millennium is a good sign for humanity to advance along the path of peace, justice and in a safe and secure world. During the 20th century my people suffered various huge tragedies. We faced the division of our homeland. Far-reaching injustice and unfairness took place repeatedly, including genocide against our people with the use of destructive chemical weapons and ethnic-cleansing campaigns. These brutal acts did not only effect the Kurdish people; indeed, it left Middle East region in a state of continuous conflict and instability.

Nevertheless, the end of the Gulf War offered the Iraqi Kurds relative freedom and autonomy. Despite regional hostility against us and our unfortunate domestic conflict, our nascent local government proved that it is still alive, successful and it deserves respect. However, concern over instability and economic security may threaten our critical freedom.

Attempts by Baghdad government to re-impose its control over Kurdistan cast shadows of evil omen on the Kurdish people. Baghdad government has always been inclined towards waging wars and committing genocide against the Kurds by using chemical weapons and practising ethnic cleansing. Therefore, the Kurdish people should be granted security assurance by the international community.

The UN Security Council Resolution 688 granted protection for the oppressed Kurds. This resolution should be consolidated as a base for establishing an international policy towards the Iraqi government.

Additionally, the Iraqi government's campaign of ethnic cleansing and coercive displacement [of people] in Kirkuk, Khanaqin, Makhmur and Sinjar is under way. The aim is to wipe out all features and characteristics of the remaining Kurdish life and culture in these areas. Since 1991 Iraq has deliberately violated all UN charters, clauses and international resolutions and carried out coercive displacement of more than a million people in Kirkuk and its environs (please see the enclosed memorandum). According to all humanitarian charters and standards ratified by the UN in the Balkan region, the international community should mediate to make the Iraqi government stop this repulsive policy.

Anfal operations which were carried out by the Iraqi regime in 1988 resulted in the destruction of the Kurdish area and the economy in Kurdistan rural areas and the obstruction of efforts to reconstruct these areas by the order of Baghdad government. For more than eight years, the Kurdish areas suffered from internal sanction imposed by Baghdad, in addition to the UN sanctions against Iraq. UN oil-for-food programme has a positive impact on bringing back life to the area. Through our continuous cooperation with the relevant UN agencies, the above mentioned programme has become fruitful. However, the delay caused by bureaucratic measures were eased and tackled and the Iraqi government efforts were reduced.

The oil-for-food programme, in its minimal limits, must be safeguarded. Continuing the programme successfully should be confirmed in order to ease the suffering of all the Iraqi people. I sincerely reaffirm that any view regarding UN sanctions against Iraq should consider the condition of the Kurdish people and commit itself to the freedom of choice, which will not destroy the prosperity of the area and its economy.

Categorical international assurances should be made to guarantee that the Kurdish people would receive their usual quota from Iraqi oil sales without deception or threats by Baghdad. Any view about UN policy must consider the Iraqi people's suffering, which can only be eased by the full implementation of the international resolution in letter and spirit. Relentless pressures on the Iraqi people should, also, be ended. We must rely on your support to solve the Kurdish and Iraqi peoples problem in democratic and just ways.

May God protect you

* * * * *

KDP leader Barzani comments on inter-Kurdish talks, ties with Turkomans

Kurdistan Satellite TV 10 Sep 00

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Kurdistan Democratic Party, KDP] leader Mas'ud Barzani reaffirmed the KDP's commitment to the implementation of the Washington peace agreement and to giving impetus to the peace process. He also stressed the importance of the freedom of expression and practising religion. He also said that the KDP is enjoying good relations with neighbouring countries and it is highly regarded at the international level.

On PKK's aggressions, leader Barzani said we oppose the PKK's presence in Iraqi Kurdistan under any circumstances.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent] In the presence of leader Mas'ud Barzani, the second session of the Kurdistan National Assembly was opened today in Arbil.

[Passage omitted: The opening ceremony, the Speaker addressed the Assembly]

Later, and upon the request of Kurdistan National Assembly, leader Mas'ud Barzani addressed the session.

On the peace issue, leader Barzani said: It is time to tell our people about the peace process.

Leader Barzani believes that the Washington agreement is a historic document and it is the best agreement for the people of Kurdistan. We should not allow any alternative agreement to replace it.

[Barzani] The Washington agreement is a whole package. It cannot be separated. Neither the PUK nor the KDP can pick and choose clauses that are in their interest and leave the others.

When the agreement was signed, we explicitly told everyone that returning to the 1992 results does not mean returning to the agreement that was made [after the elections] between the KDP and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK]. This means that the KDP had a majority of the votes. Whether other people accept it or not, recognize it or not, this is a reality that can not be changed by the acceptance or recognition of this person or the other. The KDP had a majority of the votes. But we compromised and made it 50-50 in order to prevent problems and fighting and for the sake of the success of the experience. Unfortunately, fighting took place and we suffered a lot of casualties. Therefore, there is no excuse for us to repeat a failed experience. The 50-50 arrangement stopped any development for the KDP and the PUK. We came to a standstill. Returning to that experience will not be a wise thing to do.

[correspondent] Leader Barzani spoke about the KDP-PUK meetings held in Washington in June last year and this year, which were held to clarify all PUK's different interpretations to the Washington agreement. In order to clarify the contents of the agreement, leader Barzani spoke about an important issue and expressed readiness for the holding of elections as soon as tomorrow.

[Barzani] The Washington agreement gives us two options. Either to form a joint administration and government that starts the normalization process with the help of the parliament and holds elections; or the two administrations stay as they are and the parliament starts its work and then normalization starts and a new election is held. In both cases, holding another election is the only way for solving all the problems. Some people say that the KDP is not willing to hold another election. I am surprised by this. I declare to you and the whole Kurdish nation that if elections were held tomorrow, we would be ready for it, even without normalization. Elections need preparations, but if it was held tomorrow, we would be ready for it. We strongly want elections to be held and we are ready for it and we will accept the results.

[Correspondent] Leader Barzani explained the results of the last meeting of the KDP-PUK Higher Coordinating Committee for peace [HCC]. The PUK has accepted the results of the 1992 election, where the KDP polled 51 per cent [of the votes] and the PUK polled 49 per cent; expressed readiness to stabilize the situation in Kurdistan region; and the return of the green list's MPs to Arbil; and revoke the illegal steps taken in Sulaymaniyah. The KDP in return should fulfil its financial obligations. Leader Barzani considered the results of that meeting as a good step in giving impetus to the peace process. But he mentioned the PUK's approach to the implementation of those decisions.

[Barzani] It was a good step. Many obstacles were overcome. When it came to the implementation, issues like the venue of parliament arose. This is the place of the parliament. In order to avoid problems, our friends [KDP delegation to the HCC meeting] said: let us hold the first session in the official venue [Arbil] and hold the second in Sulaymaniyah and the third in Dohuk. I think that this exists in parliamentary systems.

On the MPs' security issue, we said that we will be responsible for their safety when the meeting is held in Arbil and you should be responsible when it is held in Sulaymaniyah. Neither us nor you should bring an army when we visit each other. We should overlook these minor points that are not even worth mentioning.

The other issue that they put forward was the Speaker of parliament. If they are really satisfied with the results of 1992, 51 per cent and 49 per cent, this should be reflected on everything; If not, it should be left to the parliament. Because if everything is decided prior to the parliament convening, then what is the use of the parliament.

On the [KDP's] financial obligations issue, it was decided that a lump sum of 50m dinars

was to be paid [to the PUK] as a loan and monthly payments to follow after that. They spoke about astronomic figures. If their figures were right and the KDP was receiving them, let them have everything. Whoever can afford this budget will not have any problems. Despite

this, and when our friends returned and spoke about the positive atmosphere and the possibility of it developing further - [changes thought] - In fact, the issue is not whether the money should be for the KDP or the PUK. As far as we are concerned, the people of Sulaymaniyah and Garmiyan [PUK-controlled area of Kirkuk Governorate] are as important as the people of Arbil and Dohuk, if not more. They are our brothers and sisters. We deeply want to serve them, even without reaching an agreement. We are ready to participate in service projects for the people. We should not link that to any agreement, provided that the money is spent on services and nothing else. When our friends returned, we said that in order to prove that financial matters are not an issue, our dispute is not over this point, we increased the 50m dinars to 90m dinars and [decided on] monthly payments of 12m dinars to the service sector. They say that this amount is small. At other times they say: we accept it. But we want it now. Not now nor later, will the money be given to one person. It should be clear from the start how is this money going to be spent. It should be spent on services for the people and not on arms and other things.

[Correspondent] [Passage omitted: Reporter summarizing the above]

[Barzani] I call on everyone from inside and outside, or even the PUK brothers, to come forward if they have anything better to help us do something better. I do not know what more we can do? We are ready for the parliament to convene, ready to fulfil our financial obligations, ready to accept that the parliament holds its second session in Sulaymaniyah, ready for elections, ready to cooperate in all other fields. I do not know what more we can do? If the intention is that the KDP dissolves itself, this is a dream and no one will accept this. This is the state of the peace process.

In the last meeting of the HCC, the PUK friends said: Let us stop these meetings until a change in the stance of one or both of us takes place. It is up to them when they wanted to meet. They are welcome, and it is also up to them if they do not want to [meet].

[Correspondent] At the end of his address, leader Barzani said that the steps taken over the last two years since the Washington agreement were a good basis for confidence building between the two sides.

[Passage omitted: Barzani urging the Kurdistan regional government to pay particular attention to Halabjah]

Later, Leader Barzani spoke about some aspects of the people of Kurdistan's life. He started with the freedom of thought and expression. He said: freedom has its framework and it should not undermine traditions and sacred values at a time when Kurds have their own traditions and can not be changed by few written lines. He reaffirmed that Kurdistan is a centre for religious and ethnic tolerance. Religiously, Muslims, Christians and Yezidis; and Ethnically, Kurds, Turkomans and Assyrians are living freely. The Turkomans and Assyrians are enjoying their rights to a great extent.

[Barzani] I think that our Turkoman and Assyrian brothers are enjoying their rights to a great extent. There are no favours in that. I don't like people saying that we gave you these rights. God gave us these rights, he gave us and them these rights. We did not give these rights to them. Today, governance is in the hands of Kurds. We have to prove that Kurdish rule is a humane one, they accord other people whatever rights they have themselves.

But we still see some people, especially the so called Turkoman Front, deliberately creating hostility between Kurds and Turkomans. I think that those people should take these dreams with them to their graves. Kurds and Turkomans are brothers and there is no room for anyone to come and create an atmosphere of hostility between us.

Illegal acts are not acceptable -- I am saying this frankly. Sooner or later, law will prevail and unauthorized militias will cease to exist in Kurdistan. Illegal acts in Kurdistan

should stop. The government is asked to implement the laws passed by the parliament concerning parties and arms. The KDP is at the disposal of the government to do that. I also call on all the allied parties to cooperate in order to achieve that. Let us have a civilized front. The KDP does not harbour hostility towards anyone. But we see some parties that breach some laws and three or four other parties contact them as if they are defending the oppressed and the KDP is the oppressor. Let us stop dealing with each other in this way. Whether other people like it or not, we will uphold the law and we are proud of doing that. But let us do it together.

[Correspondent] Leader Barzani repeated his earlier statement saying that if Turkomans have a better condition anywhere else, let them come and tell us about it. But this should be done through dialogue because we are not used to accepting forceful language from anyone.

[Passage omitted: General comments about having a Kurdish flag and the way in which it should be put]

On the issue of internally displaced people, leader Barzani said:

[Barzani] We guarantee the security of the people from Arbil and Dohuk if they return [from PUK-held areas] to their homes. But I can't guarantee the security those who will go from her [to PUK-held areas]. I urge the regional government to offer everything possible to them [the internally displaced people in the KDP-held area]. There should not be a limit on serving those people. Be sure that however long they stay, it is temporary.

[Correspondent] [Passage omitted: General comments on the importance of taking care of the internally displaced people]

On regional and international relations, leader Barzani said that there are strong fraternal relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey. On Turkey, leader Barzani said that inappropriate acts of any person or group will not affect these relations. On relations with the Arab world, leader Barzani said: We attach great importance to these relations and we are trying to build a good network of relations. On International relations, leader Barzani said that the KDP's voice receives a special attention. On the complicated situation of Iraq, leader Barzani said: The situation of Iraq is very complicated. But it is in our interest to get our rights through peaceful means and through dialogue. On the economic sanctions and the current situation of the Iraqi people, leader Barzani said: We will do whatever we can to end the misery of the Iraqi people.

The PKK issue was another part of leader Barzani's speech. He said: the PKK talks about peace and democracy, but they are always, and up until a few days ago, carrying out sabotage acts and planting mines and killing innocent civilians. At the same time, leader Barzani reaffirmed that we do not have any problems with the PKK apart from asking them to leave Iraqi Kurdistan in order to let the people live peacefully.

* * * * *

TURQUIE Craignant pour leur sécurité

Les détenus refusent d'aller dans de nouvelles prisons

Istanbul :
Éric Biegala

« Nous nous battons jusqu'au bout, nos fils dans les prisons et nous à l'extérieur ; il y aura des blessés, des morts peut-être, mais jamais nous n'accepterons ces nouvelles prisons ! » Pour Nadire Çelik, la soixantaine, dont les deux fils sont incarcérés, comme pour toutes les familles de prisonniers politiques, les perspectives sont lourdes de menaces. Toutes les ONG l'affirment : le problème des prisons risque de dégénérer dans les prochains mois.

La menace existe depuis que le gouvernement entend moderniser ses pénitenciers. Six nouvelles maisons d'arrêt dites « de type-F », sur les onze prévues, sont déjà terminées. Environ 4 000 détenus doivent y être transférés d'ici à la fin de l'année. Or ceux-ci refusent obstinément les transferts, craignant pour leur sécurité dans les nouveaux bâtiments. Protestations de détenus et manifestations des familles ont déjà émaillé les mois d'été. On peut s'attendre à davantage de troubles à mesure que le programme sera mis en œuvre.

Actuellement le système péni-

tentiaire craque de toutes parts. Manque de moyens, incompétences, politique strictement répressive (les prisons sont cogérées par les militaires dont les unités de gendarmerie interviennent régulièrement).

Le résultat est surréaliste. Répartis dans d'immenses dortoirs où les gardiens ne mettent jamais les pieds, les détenus sont libres de s'administrer comme bon leur semble. Les gangs et surtout les quelque 12 000 prisonniers politiques peuvent ainsi organiser la vie carcérale selon leurs propres lois.

Certaines prisons sont devenues de véritables centres d'endoctrinement. « Il est très difficile d'échapper à l'emprise de ces groupes dont l'organisation est très hiérarchisée », explique Hüsnü Umay qui a passé un mois en prison en 1996 après avoir été rafiée dans une manifestation étudiante. « Il y avait des tentatives systématiques de recrutement dès que les nouvelles détenues arrivaient au dortoir. Même le jour de visite des familles était organisé par les groupes politiques », se souvient-elle.

Une organisation qui vient souvent pallier les manques de l'administration mais qui n'hésite pas non plus à se faire justice. En 1996, une jeune femme

soupçonnée d'être une « balance » par ses codétenues du Parti-Front de libération du peuple-révolutionnaire (DHKP-C) était jugée et exécutée en prison. Son procès, filmé au Caméscope, fut diffusé par les télévisions : le parti leur avait envoyé la cassette.

Avec ses prisons « de type F », le gouvernement compte casser la puissance des groupes politiques en organisant les pénitenciers en cellules d'une à trois personnes. Mais les familles de détenus et les défenseurs des droits fondamentaux estiment que les nouvelles prisons ne serviront qu'à isoler les détenus pour mieux les soumettre, notamment par la force.

« L'État considère le détenu politique comme un ennemi du peuple. À partir de là, tout est permis contre lui », assure l'avocat Kemal Aytaç qui dirige la commission prisons du barreau d'Istanbul. « Tout ceci relève du procès d'intention : les nouvelles prisons sont aux normes occidentales et les droits fondamentaux y seront garantis », répond en substance le gouvernement.

Il est vrai qu'on ne prête qu'aux riches et qu'en l'occurrence l'arbitraire policier, les violences gratuites ou les tortures ne sont pas rares en Turquie.

Nadire Çelik, qui a deux fils en

prison, explique que l'un d'eux est incarcéré depuis huit ans sans que son procès ne soit même terminé : « Depuis deux ans, il refuse d'assister aux audiences parce que la police lui tape dessus à chaque transfert jusqu'au tribunal. » S'il peut

ainsi résister, c'est que le fils de Nadire se trouve protégé dans un dortoir d'où les policiers auront du mal à l'extraire.

Quand les forces de l'ordre se risquent à ce genre d'opération, l'affaire tourne invariablement au drame. Fin septembre 1999, 10 détenus d'une prison d'Ankara étaient ainsi abattus dans un raid de la gendarmerie dont ni les circonstances ni même les raisons n'ont été éclaircies jusqu'à présent. Quelques jours après le drame, le quotidien *Milîyet* révélait qu'une des victimes n'était autre qu'Ahmet Savran, champion de lutte gréco-romaine. Il avait été écroué cinq mois plus tôt, la police ayant trouvé dans son sac un magazine gauchiste, quoique parfaitement légal. Selon ses avocats, Ahmet Savran aurait dû être relâché dès sa première comparution devant un juge. Il n'en a pas eu le temps.

Iraqi Contracts Go to Critics Of Embargo

By Judith Miller
New York Times Service

NEW YORK — The Central Intelligence Agency says Iraq has consistently used the United Nations' oil-for-food program to reward countries that call for ending economic sanctions against Iraq and to punish those that oppose lifting the embargo, according to U.S. officials familiar with the agency's findings.

The officials said the CIA stated in a new report that President Saddam Hussein had given the bulk of contracts in the program to China, France, Russia

and other vocal champions of lifting the sanctions.

The Security Council imposed the sanctions after Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, aiming to force Iraq to give up weapons of mass destruction.

The council instituted the oil-for-food program in 1996 to let Iraq sell some of its oil to help ease the suffering of ordinary Iraqis reportedly caused by the sanctions.

But the CIA study shows that Iraq has also used the program as a lever to pry open the sanctions by rewarding its allies with contracts, especially those on the 15-member Security Council, and to punish its opponents.

“Over the life of the program, Baghdad has awarded one-third of the contracts to France, Russia and China,” the report states. “Besides these Security Council members and neighbors, Iraq has given substantial oil-for-food business to others that deliver anti-sanctions rhetoric.”

Iraq has denied contracts to some of its former traditional suppliers that have not called for an end to sanctions. The report notes that Japan and Germany, Iraq's two largest suppliers before the Gulf War in 1991, have each received “only 1 percent of total contracts.”

The two-page report is accompanied by charts and graphs that demonstrate the strong connection between support for lifting sanctions and the awarding of contracts under the program, which is now in what the UN accounting system calls Phase 8, each phase corresponding to a period of 180 days.

Copies of several of the graphs and charts were provided to The New York Times, and sections of the report were read to a reporter by officials who had read it and thought that its conclusions should be more widely known.

The report is likely to reinforce U.S. frustration over pressure from some nations and organizations for lifting of the sanctions.

Khatami Seeks Apology By U.S. for Past Policies

'Confession' Would be 'Big Step' to New Ties

The Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS, New York — Iran's president said Thursday that relations between his country and the United States would improve only if Americans apologized for past policies in Iran — and that even that might not be enough.

There are "the various sanctions. There are animosities, there are allegations against Iran," President Mohammed Khatami said at a news conference. "We need apology for those as well as some practical measures and steps that prove that in reality the behavior has changed."

"But unfortunately, in practice, Americans have been less inclined to do this," said Mr. Khatami, one of about 150 leaders attending the three-day UN Millennium Summit.

On Wednesday, President Bill Clinton also was in New York, and the leaders listened to each other's speeches at the UN General Assembly. The two,

however, had not crossed paths and Mr. Khatami was expected to skip a reception given Thursday night by Mr. Clinton at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Mr. Khatami indicated that any such meeting would be premature because Iran, he said, still had "serious issues" with the United States.

Mr. Khatami, the moderate cleric who has been seeking better relations with the West since his 1997 election, has taken steps to open up Iran and improve its international standing by calling for U.S.-Iranian dialogue.

The Clinton administration has addressed Iranian grievances and has taken concrete steps in trade and other areas.

In February, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said Iranians have reason to resent U.S. intervention in the 1953 coup on behalf of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, but she did not apologize.

Mrs. Albright also announced an end to sanctions on some Iranian imports,

including Persian carpets, and a reduction in restrictions on contacts between U.S. and Iranian scholars, artists and athletes.

But Mr. Khatami, who is locked in a power struggle at home with hard-liners who oppose moderation and an opening up to the West, has argued that the U.S. gestures were inadequate.

Mr. Khatami said the United States must acknowledge and apologize for past wrongs, including the coup and what he described as damage done to his nation by U.S.-backed regimes since then.

"The Americans will have to confess to this," he said. "Through this confession — if the Americans accept to do it — I think it will be a very big step toward removing our misunderstandings. But unfortunately, in action, they have not done this."

Mr. Khatami said the controversy over Iranian Jews convicted of spying for Israel in Iran was blown out of proportion. He said the government would not interfere in the case, which has drawn condemnation from Israel and criticism from the United States.

"If instead of these Jews they were Christians, would the world still react as it does today?" he asked.

Turks Block U.S. Gays From Seeing Tourist Sites

The Associated Press

ISTANBUL — The police escorted hundreds of vacationing gay Americans on a visit to Istanbul's tourist sites Thursday after officials on the Aegean coast expelled them from popular attractions.

Police officials said they had arrested 19 people who had tried to harass the Americans as they toured the historic Sultanahmet quarter.

On Wednesday, the police barred members of a gay tour group from visiting the ancient city of Ephesus and the resort town of Kusadasi, before ordering them to return to their cruise ship, the Anatolian News Agency reported.

Passengers on a gay-oriented

cruise said they were angry and disappointed after not being allowed to visit Ephesus.

"I haven't seen anything like this anywhere," said Bruno Gideon of Toronto. "I didn't think a country like Turkey would act like this. I still don't understand."

The cruise liner was taking 800 passengers, many from the United States, on a seven-day tour, with other stops in Egypt, Israel and Greece.

On Wednesday, after allowing several buses to leave the Turkish Aegean port of Kusadasi, the police turned back another bus, apparently after realizing that the passengers were all gay, the tourists said.

The police also chased after buses headed to Ephesus and turned back several of them in the town of Selçuk, 3 kilometers (2 miles) from the Ephesus ruins, said Erkunt Oner of the Searner Tour Agency, which organized the land tours from the liner.

One passenger, Ken Damon of Arizona, said: "When we got back, a guy from the ship just said, 'Get on the ship as fast as you can.' We were going to spend two weeks in Kusadasi, but we don't want to be in a country that doesn't respect us."

Although gay artists, singers and belly dancers are popular in Turkey,

homosexuality is taboo, and gays say they often face discrimination, especially from the police.

Edward Timblyn of Houston was forced to remain on board.

"I was disappointed, being stuck on the ship all day," Mr. Timblyn said, adding that many angry passengers refused to disembark Thursday in Istanbul.

The police activities prompted the U.S. State Department to complain to the Turkish government.

"We brought this to the attention of the authorities in Ankara and have been pleased with the response thereafter," a U.S. Embassy spokesman said in the Turkish capital.

Turkish officials tried to make amends Thursday, arguing that the local police had acted on their own.

The Anatolian News Agency quoted the tourism minister, Erkan Mumcu, as saying that overzealous local officials had exceeded their authority in barring the group before he could appeal to the interior minister to allow the tour to proceed.

"I explained that we do not take anyone's sexual orientation into consideration and that this would hurt tourism in Turkey," Mr. Mumcu said. "He intervened and settled the matter immediately." (AP, Reuters)

Iran's Factions Are Uniting on Détente With U.S.

By Geneive Abdo

Special to the International Herald Tribune

TEHRAN — Contacts between high-ranking Iranian and U.S. officials in New York last week revealed publicly for the first time that both sides of Iran's factional divide favor an eventual end to the 21-year freeze in relations, analysts and diplomats said Sunday.

Meetings related to the Millennium Summit of nearly 150 world leaders at the United Nations last week signaled that Iran's conservative establishment is willing to admit in public what until now they had acknowledged only in private: relations with the so-called Great Satan could produce economic rewards too lucrative to pass up.

The clearest sign of this development came in a meeting that Iran's parliamentary speaker, Mehdi Karroubi, and other lawmakers had with several U.S. counterparts at a reception at the New

NEWS ANALYSIS York Metropolitan Museum of Art. Mr. Karroubi, a veteran revolutionary cleric with ties to both the reformist and conservative camps, described the encounter as accidental.

Analysts, however, said that such a meeting could not have occurred without general, if not explicit, sanction from high-level figures within Iran's clerical establishment, which has publicly denounced any reconciliation with the United States.

"Karroubi's meeting was totally unexpected. But he must have done this with permission or knowledge from someone at the top," said an Iranian political analyst who is an expert on U.S.-Iran relations. "This is a departure from the past because although the conservatives want to eventually restore relations, they didn't want it to happen when President Khatami was in power. They didn't want the reformers to get the credit."

Public opinion in Iran overwhelmingly supports reconciliation with the United States, and such a popular move would undoubtedly redound to the benefit of President Mohammed Khatami, who has done more than any other recent Iranian leader to reshape the West's perception of the Islamic Republic.

But Iranian policy has been dominated for two decades by anti-Americanism. Many of the reformers who now hold positions of influence in Mr. Khatami's movement were among the student militants who held Americans hostage for 444 days in 1979, an event that has remained the greatest single obstacle toward rapprochement.

Once the hostage-takers became reformers, they modified their public position.

Upon returning Saturday to Iran from New York, Mr. Khatami said the United States should alter its position based on the changes in Iran since the revolution. "The United States is still throwing baseless allegations against Iran," he said. "Now that the world has accepted that Iran has something new, fresh and logical to say, the U.S. should recognize it, too."

He also appeared unimpressed by gestures from President Bill Clinton and U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright at the United Nations, where Mr. Clinton and Ms. Albright listened attentively to a speech Mr. Khatami delivered. "This does not solve the problem," Mr. Khatami said. "America's behavior should be basically changed. They should compensate for the problems they have created in the past."

Mr. Khatami has consistently said that relations could improve if the United States apologized for many perceived misdeeds, including the CIA's involvement in the 1953 coup that overthrew the government of Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadegh and restored Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi to power.

The United States has insisted that Iran end its support for militant Islamic groups, such as Hezbollah, which waged a battle for two decades against Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon. Iran insists that it halted Hezbollah funding years ago.

Washington also claims that Iran is seeking to develop weapons of mass destruction, in particular long-range missiles. Tehran denies the charges.

The merchants of Tehran's central bazaar, who still dominate much of the private economy and have provided much of the backing for Iran's conservative clerics, stand to reap the greatest immediate reward from reconciliation with the United States.

For two decades, Iran's conservatives have based a large part of their political and ideological strength on an anti-American policy. An editorial in the hard-line newspaper Jomhuri-ya Eslami recently asserted that if the conservatives surrendered their anti-American rhetoric, there would be little left of the revolution.

But the mild reaction to reports in the hard-line press of Mr. Karroubi's meetings with the Americans has provided further proof of a shift in Iran's position. Generally, the newspapers harshly condemn contacts abroad between Iranians and Westerners. But Mr. Karroubi's meetings received only token criticism.

He also held meetings with representatives of three oil companies: Conoco, Chevron and Exxon Mobil. U.S. oil companies are applying increas-

ing pressure on Washington to end sanctions that have prevented U.S. energy firms from signing oil contacts with Iran, No. 2 producer in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. Five years ago President Bill Clinton imposed the unilateral embargo. Since then, U.S. oil companies have been forced to wait on the sidelines as French, British and other European companies signed contracts to secure

lucrative Iranian oil and gas projects.

The United States should lift sanctions and end its hostile behavior, Mr. Karroubi was quoted as saying.

A dramatic shift in the balance of power in Iran over the last six months could also help improve relations with Washington, analysts said. The conservatives have reasserted their vast institutional power and in the process diluted the strength of the presidency. In a series of recent speeches, Mr. Khatami admitted as much. Speaking at the United Nations last week, he criticized his followers for having unrealistic expectations of political and social reform, which his government is not able to deliver.

Publicly, Western governments are eager to see an improvement in U.S.-Iranian relations.

Privately, Western business is less sanguine. Britain, which restored relations in 1999, has the most to lose. Britain is the leading Western power in the Islamic Republic and its companies have recently made large investments in the oil industry.

Herald INTERNATIONAL Tribune

SEPTEMBER 11, 2000

Le Monde du 13 au 19 septembre 2000 - aden

aden

Bahman Ghobadi

« Sous la neige de nos premiers fers, de temps pour l'ivresse des chevaux... le goût tragique de l'empire. »



En Couverture

LA VIE EN CONTREBANDE

Bahman Ghobadi est comme cette famille kurde qu'il filme : il se joue des frontières. Et nous emmène de l'autre côté...

Sa voix est douce et posée. Elle n'en dit pas moins des mots durs. Sur la condition des Kurdes ou la difficulté de tourner un film en Iran. Bahman Ghobadi a 30 ans, il vient de réaliser son premier long métrage, au titre énigmatique, *Un temps pour l'ivresse des chevaux*, et paraît débarquer d'une autre planète quand on le retrouve dans le chahut des terrasses de café du festival de Cannes. Que son film se retrouve d'ailleurs projeté sur la Croisette (il remportera la Caméra d'or) lui semble tout à fait miraculeux. « On a commencé le film pendant un hiver très dur. En 1998. Puis les conditions climatiques ont changé. On ne pouvait plus raccorder les prises. Le tournage s'est interrompu. Le producteur a finalement laissé tomber... » Le réalisateur n'en est pas moins persévérant. Une qualité qu'il a appréciée chez Abbas Kiarostami, dont il a été l'assistant pour *Le vent nous emportera* et qui, dit-il, l'a impres-

sionné par sa volonté et son obstination à mener son projet là où il le voulait, exactement. Avec Kiarostami, Bahman



Bahman Ghobadi.

Ghobadi a sillonné la région du Kurdistan iranien à la recherche d'un village. Il connaît la région comme personne. Les deux hommes sympathisent. « Le tournage n'a duré que trois mois, mais j'aurais voulu qu'il dure un an... » raconte Ghobadi. Cela ne l'empêche pas d'hésiter à réaliser un sujet que Kiarostami lui confie. Après réflexion, il refuse : « Il y a actuellement une mode, en Iran,

de faire des films "à la Kiarostami". Je l'admire beaucoup mais j'essaie de faire des films à ma manière... » Une manière qui ressemble à un parcours du combattant. Il faut à Bahman Ghobadi trouver des fonds pour achever son film, l'hiver suivant. Il travaille et accumule les dettes, emprunte à sa famille, aux gens du village où son film se déroule et qui sont attachés au projet... Un an plus tard, il faut compléter les scènes interrompues... sans que l'on remarque le décalage. La neige, elle, rend les routes impraticables. Et il faut mobiliser les « acteurs » (non professionnels) tandis qu'ils doivent survivre de leur côté, de la façon même décrite par le film, en passant clandestinement des marchandises par-dessus la frontière. Et le film est ainsi : un film frontière. D'abord, entre fiction et documentaire. Il s'inspire de la vie quotidienne réelle d'une famille (qui, dans le film, joue son propre rôle). Mais cette base véridique a donné ensuite un scénario construit et structuré. Le film a cette force d'être à la fois rigoureux et en même temps nourri d'un sentiment plus flou que c'est la vie, sans fioritures, qui se déroule devant nous. *Un temps pour l'ivresse des chevaux* est aussi un film frontière, au sens propre : situé sur la crête séparant le Kurdistan iranien et le Kurdistan irakien, pourtant invisible derrière le brouillard, la neige et la montagne, mais qui constitue un « ailleurs » sur lequel se focalisent les espoirs. Film frontière, film symbole de la douleur kurde, peuple écrasé, pays écartelé, hommes broyés... Ce « temps » que le titre du film invite à prendre, il est pour les chevaux. Des chevaux que l'on enivre en versant de l'alcool dans leurs auges afin qu'ils supportent leurs si lourdes charges dans le froid et le danger des montagnes. Des chevaux ivres, titubant comme les hommes sous le poids de leurs conditions de vie inhumaines.

Philippe Piazza

Un parti kurde irakien fait une concession sans transiger sur le pouvoir



DUBAI, 13 sept (AFP) - 16h14 - Un parti kurde irakien a annoncé mercredi avoir fait une concession à son rival mais s'est déclaré déterminé à ne pas transiger sur le partage du pouvoir dans le nord de l'Irak qu'ils se disputent depuis 1991.

"Lors d'une réunion parlementaire à Erbil, le chef du Parti Démocratique du Kurdistan (PDK), Massoud Barzani, a annoncé le retrait au cours des deux prochains mois de tous les miliciens armés des principales villes sous son contrôle", a affirmé à l'AFP M. Dilshad Miran, un porte-parole du PDK à Londres.

"La réunion, tenue samedi et dimanche, a regroupé 65 représentants du PDK, des Kurdes chrétiens et des indépendants, mais aucun représentant de l'Union Patriotique du Kurdistan (UPK) qui boycotte ces réunions parlementaires", a-t-il précisé.

"Le retrait des miliciens armés des principales villes, qui doivent être ouvertes à toutes les parties, constitue l'une des exigences de l'UPK pour une normalisation" entre les deux factions rivales, a pour sa part déclaré à l'AFP M. Latif Rachid, un porte-parole de

l'UPK à Londres.

Lors de la réunion parlementaire, M. Barzani a également affirmé que son parti "n'est pas prêt à transiger sur la question du partage du pouvoir, qui lui revient de droit, en vertu des résultats des élections législatives de 1992", a ajouté M. Miran.

Le PDK avait alors remporté 51 sièges, contre 49 pour l'UPK et 9 pour la minorité kurde chrétienne.

"Les résultats de 1992 montrent que le PDK avait remporté la majorité. Ceci est un fait, une réalité qui ne peut être changée même si les autres (l'UPK) ne sont pas contents ou ne voudraient pas l'admettre", a souligné M. Barzani lors de la réunion.

"En dépit des résultats, nous avons fait une concession et accepté le partage égal du pouvoir pour éviter les conflits. Malheureusement, ces conflits ont éclaté. C'est pourquoi il ne serait pas sage d'appliquer de nouveau la formule de partage égal du pouvoir, qui a prouvé son échec", a ajouté M. Barzani.

Des combats avaient opposé les deux parties depuis 1994, faisant plus de 3.000 morts malgré la conclusion de plusieurs cessez-le-feu, et chaque formation avait proclamé son propre "gouvernement" en 1996.

Les deux formations se sont ensuite entendues sur des mesures de normalisation qui n'ont pas été entièrement appliquées.

Des délégations des deux partis avaient tenu des réunions, sous le parrainage des Etats-Unis, pour tenter de rapprocher leurs points de vue, mais jusqu'à sans grand succès.

Le PDK et l'UPK sont tiraillés entre le régime de Bagdad et l'administration américaine qui a promis une aide de 97 millions de dollars à l'opposition irakienne pour l'aider à renverser le président Saddam Hussein.

Evoquant la question des recettes douanières prélevées par le PDK, qui contrôle la région proche de la Turquie, M. Barzani a exprimé la disposition de son parti à "remplir tous ses engagements financiers".

"Nous sommes prêts à contribuer au développement de toutes les régions kurdes, à condition que ces fonds soient consacrés aux services et non pour l'achat d'armes", a-t-il dit.

Le partage des recettes représente l'un des principaux sujets de conflit entre les deux formations rivales.

"Le partage des recettes pétrolières et douanières, dont le PDK est actuellement le bénéficiaire, constitue un autre obstacle qui empêche la formation d'un gouvernement de coalition et les élections", a déclaré M. Rachid de l'UPK.

Il a toutefois souligné que "les contacts se poursuivent avec le PDK en vue d'une normalisation".

Neuf Kurdes condamnés pour violences mais pas pour terrorisme



PARIS, 14 sept (AFP) - 17h01 - Le tribunal correctionnel de Paris a condamné jeudi neuf Kurdes, dont huit Turcs et un Français, qui s'étaient violemment opposés à d'autres Turcs en juin 1998 à Paris, mais il a jugé qu'il ne s'agissait pas d'une affaire de terrorisme.

Les prévenus ont en effet été tous relaxés du délit de participation à une association de malfaiteurs terroriste, et ils ont été condamnés pour violences en réunion sans relation avec une entreprise terroriste.

Ils étaient venus, le 20 juin 1998, sur l'esplanade des Invalides, armés de bâtons et de barres de fer afin de s'opposer à la tenue d'une manifestation d'associations turques qui protestaient contre la reconnaissance par la France du génocide arménien. Quelques jours plus tôt, l'Assemblée nationale avait en effet adopté un texte reconnaissant le génocide de 1915.

La 31ème chambre du tribunal a condamné Kemal Akyuz et Seyfettin Turgut, 28 et 32 ans, à 20 mois d'emprisonnement dont 6 mois fermes.

Ekrem Toprak, 30 ans, a lui été condamné à 20 mois d'emprisonnement dont 8 mois fermes, Veysel Aktepe, 26 ans, à 18 mois d'emprisonnement dont 4 mois fermes, Deniz Ozdemir, 21 ans, à 18 mois d'emprisonnement avec sursis.

Les quatre autres, Edhem Gunel, 24 ans, Ali Ekerbicer, 32 ans, Ahmet Seyhan, 35 ans, et Ayraz Toprak, 28 ans, ont été condamnés à 15 mois d'emprisonnement dont trois fermes.

SCIRI Says Saddam Has Cancer, Regime 'Deteriorating'

Al-Sharq al-Awsat 10 Sep 00

[FBIS Translated Text] London -- In a statement sent to Al-Sharq al-Awsat yesterday, the Supreme Council for the Islamic Resistance in Iraq [SCIRI] warned the states, institutions, and companies that seek to normalize relations with Iraq that Saddam Husayn's regime is "trembling and deteriorating," especially with the Iraqi president's suffering of "cancer" and his eldest son Udayy's "paralysis," and also as a result of the "conflict inside the family and the growing popular discontent among the Iraqi people and army."

The statement added that the "attempts to normalize relations are against the principles of human rights and run counter to all international norms and laws." The statement accused the states that seek normalization with Baghdad of being "interested in keeping Saddam's regime because the debts it owes them for the weapons they sold during the wars it staged against the Iraqi people and its neighbors."

The statement added that the advocates of normalization include "organizations that received funds from Saddam to beautify the regime's ugly face in the world, as well as companies that benefited from the export of material that were used in the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction."

The statement highlighted the anti-regime operations in the past several years, including "a Katyusha attack on the Presidential Palace, the bombing of Ba'th Party headquarters, and the assassination of several senior security and intelligence officers." ---

* * * * *

Sept. 11, 2000

US New & World Report Inside Saddam's Iraq After a decade, sanctions take a terrible toll on Iraq's people but leave Baghdad's durable dictator as comfortable as ever

By Kevin Whitelaw and Warren P. Strobel

BAGHDAD—It hardly seems like the capital city of a country under siege. Posh Arasat Street is lined with designer perfume stores, brand-new art galleries, and chic interior decorating shops that would be at home on the Champs-Élysée. A massive wall of Korean televisions fills the plate-glass windows of an electronics store. Nearby, a drive-through takeout joint has recently opened, offering burgers and gyros, and entrepreneurs are building a large new restaurant in the shape of a castle, complete with a drawbridge.

But Fortress Saddam is as impregnable as ever, despite a decade of U.S.-led sanctions. Saddam's vast security apparatus retains its vise grip over all aspects of Iraq's society. The Iraqi leader and a wealthy elite in Baghdad have not only escaped the effects of sanctions but are actually profiting from them. This year alone, Iraq's oil smuggling has nearly quadrupled, producing a massive financial windfall for Saddam to keep his several-thousand-strong circle of sycophants happy. Iraqi businessmen are flouting the sanctions by signing new deals with foreign companies as international support for sanctions erodes.

Bold boasts. Ten years after Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait, it is tempting to wonder: Is Saddam winning? Yes, if winning means survival—and for Saddam, it does. "Today, we are breathing

much better than yesterday. Tomorrow, we will be breathing much better than today," boasts A. K. Al-Hashimi, a veteran regime figure. "There is no limit to how long we can hold."

Perhaps so for the privileged few. For most, though, the past decade brought little but misery. U.S. officials repeatedly insist that the sanctions are not targeted at ordinary Iraqis, but they are its only true victims. Away from the glamour of Arasat Street, the embargo is devastating the bulk of Iraq's 23 million citizens, who are shell-shocked by the daily grind of scraping by. The United Nations oil-for-food program, now in its fourth year, has eased the suffering by providing at least a minimum amount of food and medicine. But child mortality, while stabilized, remains high. One in four children is malnourished. Children are dropping out of school to help support their families. "There are no dreams anymore," says Jassan Abdul-Hassan, a 23-year-old shop clerk living in Saddam City, a seething slum of 2 million people outside Baghdad. "We just work to get enough food for the next 24 hours."

Iraq blames U.S.-led sanctions for the misery; American officials retort that Saddam is failing to spend his considerable resources on his people's basic needs. They are both right. Sanctions have destroyed Iraq's once-prosperous middle class, along with its formerly prestigious universities. A world-class health system has disintegrated to Third World levels. And while Saddam can find the money to construct ornate new buildings for government ministries and a giant palace complex in downtown Baghdad, he relies almost exclusively on UNICEF to rebuild his country's schools. Meanwhile, some \$4.5 billion in revenues from the oil-for-food program lies unspent in Iraq's bank account in New York.

Not everything is rosy for Saddam. The new U.N. weapons inspection agency is preparing to send teams back to Iraq to resume the search for chemical and biological weapons facilities halted at the end of 1998. Saddam is unlikely to permit their return, which could provoke another crisis with Washington. And while the 63-year-old Saddam's grip on power seems as sure as ever, the regime may be rotting from the inside. Increasingly reclusive, the man from Tikrit rarely appears in public. His inner circle is aging, enough of a worry that the ruling Baath party recently purged officials to make way for new blood.

U.S. policy has succeeded in one key area: Saddam's military, while still formidable, is under severe strain, lacks spare parts, and is much less threatening to its neighbors. Its air defenses are bombed regularly by U.S. planes patrolling the no-fly zones in the south and north. Despite 10 years of daily patrols, the Iraqi military has never downed a U.S. plane. The no-fly zone in the north prevents Saddam from controlling large tracts of his country, effectively creating a booming Kurdish territory beyond his reach.

Still, the sanctions have missed their target as badly as Iraqi antiaircraft fire. They haven't broken Saddam's regime but have beggared what was a pro-Western middle class. Anti-Western sentiment could last decades. "The sanctions created two classes. One is up and one is down," says Fuad Abdulridha, 60, whose Yaqoot auction house used to be the only one on a section of 14th Ramadan Street. Now there are 20, he says. Cash-starved Baghdadis put their antiques, appliances, carpets—even house doors—up for bid almost nightly. The best merchandise is long gone: The goods now are often homely, and prices low.

A four-person U.S. News team spent two weeks in Iraq, traveling throughout Saddam-controlled territory, in the company of Ministry of Information "minders," and Iraqi Kurdistan in the north, where rival Kurdish parties are the de facto rulers. Portraits of Saddam that adorn Baghdad corners and hang in every office and store disappear along the road north from the oil city of Kirkuk, replaced by the yellow flag of the Kurdistan Democratic Party. People there are quick to criticize Saddam, who has not ruled the region since 1991. Saddam "is the worst leader all over the Arab homeland," says Azad Youssef, sitting in his small PlayStation video arcade in the regional capital of Irbil. In the north, TV satellite dishes (which bring a six-month prison term in Baghdad) peek from the rooftops. Radio stations and newspapers flourish.

And every major city has at least one Internet cafe, with open access to anybody (box, Page 56).

Controlled society. The rest of Iraq is monitored by a network of secret police and informers. Dissent brings punishment, sometimes death. Domestic broadcasting is state controlled; Baghdad's Voice of Youth FM station attempts to draw young people away from outside alternatives, such as the Voice of America, with pop hits and country tunes such as "She Thinks My Tractor's Sexy (It Really Turns Her On)." Baghdad opened its first public Internet center in late July to help the business community communicate with foreign companies. But the wary regime bans access to unmonitored Web-based E-mail systems.

The north, buffered from the full brunt of the sanctions, is clearly more prosperous. The U.N. is allowed to distribute food and medicine itself, in cooperation with local authorities. At a simple, but clean, UNICEF-funded health care center in Irbil, mothers hold children waiting to receive vaccinations and be checked for malnutrition. Of the 80 children examined on one recent day, only two were malnourished. "Now, we are seeing fewer cases," says nurse Najiba Hamed Amin.

Blood and tears. In contrast, Baghdad insists on handing out food rations itself and still refuses to let most private aid groups operate in the area it controls. "They are spies," says Iraq's health minister, Umid Midhat Mubarak. "I won't let them in." Food has become more plentiful in the past year now that Iraq is allowed to sell as much oil as it can under the U.N. oil-for-food program.

But supplies of medicine remain uneven and hospitals are suffering from a severe lack of blood bags for transfusions. Hospital wards in the south are still filled with cases of chronic malnutrition and serious diseases like leukemia. Abdul Kareem Subber, the deputy director of the Basra Pediatric Hospital, describes how on a typical day, he has enough antibiotics for only four of the six people he operates on. And sometimes, he must operate by flashlight, using the same rubber gloves for multiple patients.

Life is perhaps toughest on the children. UNICEF estimates that up to half of the schools in the south are unfit for teaching. And enrollment is plunging. Only three of Suhilla Hattam's seven children are still in school. The rest work in the market every day selling nylon bags and other goods. She has sold all her furniture; only a stove and television remain in her crumbling house in the southern city of Basra. And fun is a particularly rare commodity. In one ramshackle amusement park, only two of the 24 bumper cars still function.

Nature has added to the hardship, with much of southern Iraq suffering from the worst drought in memory. The land around the village of Zurfat on the Euphrates River that used to produce wheat, barley, vegetables, and six kinds of fruit is now largely barren, save for its famed date palms. The river level is 45 percent below normal, and farmers often have less than one hour a day of electricity for irrigation pumps. "Our children are slowly dying, like our plants," says Safi Abed-Salman, head of the village's tribe.

The long-term effects of the sanctions on the Iraqi people are difficult to calculate. Western observers report that this year nearly double the number of children participated in the Saddam Hussein Fighting Cubs, a sort of summer camp for sports, recreation, and military and political training. "You should lift the embargo because you are creating a generation of people who hate America," says Nazar Ali, a father of four in Basra. But, a professor says, most Iraqis distinguish between the American people and the government. "So we treat you as a friend."

Iraqis are turning more often to religion. Mosque attendance at prayers has risen sharply, partly as a result of a Faith Campaign led by Saddam. Iraq was formerly a proudly secular

state, but Saddam needed the political support of the religious community after the embargo obliterated the middle class, the original base for his regime. The seven-year campaign has transformed Iraq with a ban on public drinking. Top government and Baath party officials take courses on Islam. And prisoners can get their sentences reduced by memorizing passages of the Koran.

Saddam has also built at least four new mosques in each of Iraq's 18 provinces and some 30 in Baghdad alone. And in a ritzy Baghdad neighborhood, construction has begun on the mammoth Saddam Mosque, which will be one of the largest in the Middle East. But this campaign strikes even some of his own people as hypocrisy. "It is not by words; it is by actions that you are a believer," says Sheik Majid al-Hafeed. "If he was a real Muslim . . . you should not harm people. [Saddam] is harming 20 million people." Al-Hafeed can criticize his mosque is in Sulaymaniyah, inside the Kurds' northern autonomous zone and, for now, beyond Saddam's wrath.

Significantly, Iraq's oil industry is back on stream. Both pipelines and refineries were heavily damaged during the Gulf War. In recent weeks, Iraq's oil production neared pre-Gulf War levels, putting Iraq whose oil reserves are second only to Saudi Arabia's squarely back among the world's leading oil exporters. But a lack of spare parts means that much of the equipment has been patched together and is deteriorating. "They performed miracles," says Roger Diwan, a managing director at Petroleum Finance Co. in Washington, D.C. "But it's not sustainable."

In many other ways, Iraq is not well prepared for the embargo to end. Most Iraqis depend entirely on the food ration provided through the U.N. program. Salaries range from \$2 to \$10 a month. And the financial system is woefully inadequate. The largest bill is a 250-dinar note, even though the exchange rate is 2,000 dinars for each dollar. Moneychangers literally use balances to weigh wads of money bound together by rubber bands.

And that's the way it may stay. "There are signs that the status quo suits a lot of people," says one diplomat. Iraqis are completely dependent on handouts from the government, which remains firmly in power. The oil-for-food program provides enough food and medicine to prevent starvation, leaving Saddam free to spend his oil-smuggling profits on his first priority the survival of his regime. The Kurds in the north enjoy unprecedented political autonomy under the protection of U.S. fighter jets. And Washington is able to boast that Saddam is kept "in his box," without being drawn into repeated crises that erode the international resolve on maintaining the embargo.

Handling hardship. Iraqis have little choice but to carry on. The women's federation in the southern city of Na- siriya runs a twice-weekly health clinic and offers self-help courses that teach women "how to make everything themselves, not buy it," says the group's president, Rabab Daib.

In Baghdad's hard-luck Fadhwa Arab district, Lamy'a Abdul-Sattar shares a house with eight other families. She quit her nursing job, overwhelmed by the pain and death of cancer victims. Her husband, Mahmoud Abdullah, returns home with poison to kill the rats infesting their one-room dwelling. His auto body work brings in \$15 to \$17 a month; of that, \$5 goes to rent. A second child (son Ra'ad is 7) is out of the question. Blame seems beside the point. Lamy'a looks toward a day when, one way or another, life will improve. "We are suffering 10 years," she says. "When is this day?"

* * * * *

Pentagon keeps closer eye on Iraqi military during maneuvers

September 12, 2000 Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) -- U.S. forces are monitoring Iraq's military "with particular care and closeness" during its late summer field maneuvers, the Pentagon said Tuesday. Air reconnaissance is being stepped up, but additional forces are not being sent.

Kenneth Bacon, spokesman for Defense Secretary William Cohen, said the Air Force is carrying out a normal rotation of fighters and other aircraft that monitor Iraq's skies from bases in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Until the exchange is complete in several days, he said, the overlap will have extra U.S. aircraft in the area.

"We have not made any increases in our force sizes in the area," Bacon said. "We maintain, on a daily basis, a very strong, well-trained and active force from all services. And that's what we're doing now with just a standard rotation." Other Pentagon officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said additional Air Force planes and crews have been designated for deployment on short notice if necessary, but they said this was a standing practice and indicates no expectation of an imminent buildup of the U.S. warplane force in the Persian Gulf.

The usual complement of U.S. forces in the area includes 20,000 to 25,000 sailors, soldiers, airmen and Marines.

The Air Force rotates its group, called an Aerospace Expeditionary Force, every 90 days, and the swap-out now under way is according to the normal schedule, Bacon said. To be completed in a few days, it includes fighters, electronic warfare planes and other support aircraft, Air Force officials said.

Bacon noted that late summer and early fall have sometimes been periods of heightened tension with Iraq. President Saddam Hussein sent the Iraqi army into Kuwait in August 1990. In October 1994 forces of the Iraqi Republican Guard moved to within a few miles of Kuwait, which prompted a rush deployment of U.S. forces to the area.

In August 1996, Iraq sent troops into Kurdish regions in northern Iraq and overran the town of Irbil. In September U.S. forces launched cruise missiles on air defense targets in other parts of Iraq.

"So we watch him closely all the time. We watch him with particular care and closeness during this period of the year," Bacon said.

"It also is a period of time when he tends to be exercising his military," the spokesman said. "So they are engaged in a normal training cycle at the end of the summer, early fall. And that training cycle means that there are some movements of troops, and it also can be used to disguise movements that he might make toward either his own people or toward neighboring states."

Last week some Iraqi warplanes were moved away from their normal bases, but they later returned, Bacon said. He said this could have been a sign that the Iraqi air force was practicing defensive maneuvers, he said.

U.S. and British aircraft have been monitoring the skies over northern and southern Iraq since shortly after the Gulf War at the end of February 1991. U.S. ships also help enforce a U.S. economic embargo against Iraq.

* * * * *

Iraq Freedom for 1999: Annual Report on International Religious Freedom

13/09/00

Annual Report on International Religious Freedom for 1999: Iraq Released by the Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Washington, DC, September 9, 1999

IRAQ

Section I. Freedom of Religion

The Constitution provides for freedom of religion; however, the Government severely limits this right in practice. Islam is the official state religion.

The Government's registration requirements for religious organizations are unknown.

The Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs monitors places of worship, appoints the clergy, approves the building and repair of all places of worship, and approves the publication of all religious literature.

While a precise statistical breakdown is impossible because of likely inaccuracies in the latest census (1997), according to conservative estimates, over 95 percent of the population are Muslim. The (predominantly Arab) Shi'a Muslims constitute a 60 to 65 percent majority, while Sunni Muslims make up 30 to 35 percent (approximately 18 to 20 percent are Sunni Kurds, 12 to 15 percent are Sunni Arabs, and the rest are Sunni Turkomans). The remaining approximately 5 percent consist of Christians (Assyrians, Chaldeans, Roman Catholics, and Armenians), Yazidis, and a small number of Jews.

The Shi'a, predominantly in the south, are present in large numbers in Baghdad and have communities in most parts of the country. Sunnis form the majority in the center of the country and in the north. Christians are concentrated in the north and in Baghdad. Yazidis are located in the north.

New political parties must be based in Baghdad and are prohibited from having any ethnic or religious character. The Government does not recognize political organizations that have been formed by Shi'a Muslims or Assyrian Christians. These groups continued to attract support despite their illegal status. There are religious qualifications for government office; candidates for the National Assembly, for example, "must believe in God."

Although Shi'a Arabs are the largest religious group, Sunni Arabs traditionally have dominated economic and political life. Arabs holding Sunni religious beliefs are at a distinct advantage in all areas of secular endeavor: civil, political, military, economic, etc. Although there is a political factor, the government's repression of the Shi'a appears basically religiously motivated. Shi'a and Sunni Arabs are not ethnically distinct. Shi'a Arabs supported an independent Iraq alongside their Sunni brethren since the 1920 Revolt, many joined the Ba'ath Party, and Shi'a formed the backbone of the Iraqi Army in the 1980 to 1988 Iran-Iraq War.

The Government--dominated by a repressive one-party apparatus controlled by Saddam Hussein and members of his extended family--has for decades conducted a brutal campaign of murder, summary execution, and protracted arbitrary arrest against the religious leaders and followers of the majority Shi'a Muslim population and has sought to undermine the identity of minority Christian (Assyrian and Chaldean) and Yazidi groups.

There was no change in the status of respect for religious freedom during the period covered by this report.

Despite supposed legal protection of religious equality, the regime has repressed severely the Shi''a clergy and those who follow the Shi''a faith. Forces from the Intelligence Service (Mukhabarat), General Security (Amn al-Amm), the Military Bureau, Saddam''s Commandos (Fedayeen Saddam), and the Ba''ath Party have murdered senior Shi''a clerics, desecrated Shi''a mosques and holy sites (particularly in the aftermath of the 1991 civil uprising), arrested tens of thousands of Shi''a, interfered with Shi''a religious education, and prevented Shi''a adherents from performing their religious rites. Security agents reportedly are stationed at all the major Shi''a mosques and shrines and search, harass, and arbitrarily arrest worshippers.

The following government restrictions on religious rights remained in effect throughout the period covered by this report: restrictions and outright bans on communal Friday prayer by Shi''a; restrictions on Shi''a mosque libraries loaning books; a ban on the broadcast of Shi''a programs on government-controlled radio or television; a ban on the publication of Shi''a books, including prayer books and guides; a ban on funeral processions other than those organized by the Government; a ban on other Shi''a funeral observances such as gatherings for Koran reading; and the prohibition of certain processions and public meetings commemorating Shi''a holy days. Shi''a groups report capturing documents from the security services during the 1991 uprising that listed thousands of forbidden Shi''a religious writings. Since 1991 security forces have been encamped in the shrine to Imam Ali in Najaf, one of Shi''a Islam''s holiest sites, and at the Shi''a theological schools of Najaf. As far as is known, security forces to be encamped there. In June 1999, several Shi''a opposition groups reported that the Government had instituted a new program in the predominantly Shi''a districts of Baghdad using food ration cards to restrict where individuals could pray. The ration cards, part of the U.N. oil-for-food program, reportedly are checked when the bearer enters a mosque and are printed with a notice of severe penalties for those who attempt to pray at an unauthorized location.

Shi''a expatriates reporting this new policy believe it is aimed not only at preventing unauthorized religious gatherings of Shi''a but at stopping Shi''a adherents from attending Friday prayers in Sunni mosques, an expedient many pious Shi''a have turned to since their own mosques remain closed.

Shi''a groups reported numerous instances of religious scholars--particularly in the internationally renowned Shi''a academic center of Najaf--being subjected to arrest, assault, and harassment during the period covered by this report. This follows years of Government manipulation of the Najaf theological schools. As reported by Amnesty International in the late 1970''s and early 1980''s, the Government systematically deported tens of thousands of Shi''a (both Arabs and Kurds) to Iran, claiming erroneously that they were of Persian descent. According to Shi''a sources, religious scholars and Shi''a merchants who supported the schools financially were prime targets for deportation. In the 1980''s, during the Iran-Iraq war, it was widely reported that the Government expelled and denied visas to thousands of foreign scholars wishing to study at Najaf. After the 1991 popular uprising, the Government relaxed some restrictions on Shi''a attending the schools, perhaps hoping this would deflect popular revulsion over arrests and executions of religious leaders. Instead the revival of the schools appears to have exceeded greatly the Government''s expectations, helping to bring traditional Shi''a piety into even greater contrast with the depredations of the regime. This led to a redoubled Government crackdown on the Shi''a religious establishment.

These restrictions have played a divisive role in society, leading to the alienation of many Shi''a adherents from society and to protests against the regime. The apparently systematic campaign by the Government to eliminate the senior Shi''a religious leadership (the Mirjaiyat) through murder, disappearances, and summary execution accelerated during the period covered by

this report. There were four attempts at killing high-level Shi''a clerics, culminating in the death of Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Mohammad Sadiq as-Sadr, the country's senior Shi''a religious leader. Some of the more prominent incidents of this nature since Saddam Hussein became President of Iraq are:

- Ayatollah Sayyid Mohammad Baqir as Sadr, who was executed along with his sister in 1980; - Ayatollah Mohammed Sadeq al-Qazwini, who was arrested in 1980 and whose whereabouts remain unknown; Sayyid Mehdi al Hakim, the eldest son Grand Ayatollah Mohsin al Hakim, who was killed in Khartoum in 1981; - Ayatollah Abul Sahib Al Hakim and 16 members of his family, who were killed in 1983; - Ayatollah Qasim Shubar, who was arrested in 1979 and whose whereabouts remain unknown; Ayatollah Nasrallah al Mustanbat, who was killed in the mid-80s; - Ayatollahs Ala''ad-din Bahr al-Aloom and Aiz ad-Din Bahr al-Aloom and over a dozen members of their family, who were arrested by security agents in 1991 and still are missing; - Ayatollah Sheikh Mohammad Taqi al Jawahary, who was arrested in the 1980''s and whose whereabouts remain unknown; - Grand Ayatollah Abul Qasim Al-Khoei, age 93 and formerly the senior Shi''a clergyman, who died under house arrest in 1992 after intensive interrogation (a total of 108 of al-Khoei''s associates arrested with him still have not been accounted for, and the Government continued to harass and threaten members of his family); - Ayatollah Mohammad Taqi Al-Khoei, who died in what appeared to be a staged car accident in 1994; and Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali as Seistani, who survived an attempt on his life in 1996.

Since January 1998, the killings of three internationally respected Shi''a clerics (and an attempt on the life of a fourth) have been widely attributed to Government agents by international human rights activists, other governments, and Shi''a clergy in Iran and Lebanon. Grand Ayatollah Sheikh Murtada al-Borojourni, age 69, was killed in April 1998. Grand Ayatollah Sheikh Mirza Ali al-Gharawi, age 68, was killed in July 1998. Ayatollah Sheikh Bashir al Hussaini escaped an attempt on his life in January 1999. Grand Ayatollah Mohammad as-Sadr, age 66, was killed in February 1999.

U.N. Human Rights Commission Special Rapporteur for Iraq Max Van Der Stoel sent a letter to the Government expressing his concern that the killings might be part of an organized attack by the Government against the independent leadership of the Shi''a community. The Government has not responded to Van Der Stoel''s inquiries.

On April 22, 1998, Grand Ayatollah Murtadha Ali Mohammad al-Borojourni and two of his followers were shot and killed near the Imam Ali Mosque in Najaf while returning home after morning prayers. The killing was widely attributed by Shi''a religious leaders outside Iraq to the Government because of the assaults and harassment he had suffered in recent years. Security forces reportedly beat al-Borojourni in 1996. Subsequently, a hand grenade was thrown at him. In 1997 government agents reportedly threatened to kill him if he did not cease leading prayers and giving sermons at the Imam Ali Mosque, an order with which he refused to comply.

On June 1, 1998, Ayatollah Sheikh Mirza Ali al-Gharawi, his son, and son-in-law were shot on the road from Karbala to Najaf. A month before these killings, Shi''a sources reported that al-Gharawi had been harassed by government officials and, similar to al-Borojourni, warned to cease leading communal prayers.

The Government''s initial claims regarding these two killings-- that forces from outside Iraq perpetrated the attacks--and its subsequent assertion that a gang led by Shi''a religious students killed the clerics to rob them, were criticized by Shi''a authorities outside of the country as transparent lies.

They criticized the Government''s subsequent executions of eight of these men. In the aftermath of the killings, the Government stepped up repressive activities in the south and in other predominantly Shi''a areas to prevent mourning observances and popular demonstrations.

As part of this campaign, two Shi''a scholars in Baghdad, Sheikh Hussain Suwai''dawi and Sheikh Ali al-Fraijawi, reportedly were executed in July 1998.

On January 7, 1999, Ayatollah Sheikh Bashir al-Hussaini (also known as al-Najafi and al-Bakistani), a high-ranking scholar and teacher in Najaf, escaped an attempt on his life when a hand grenade was thrown into his home. At the time, al-Hussaini was teaching a class in Islamic jurisprudence to students gathered during the Ramadan fast. Three of his pupils were killed and al-Hussaini was injured.

On February 19, 1999, Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Sadiq as-Sadr, the most senior Shi''a religious leader in Iraq, was killed in downtown Najaf when the car he was riding in was boxed in by two other cars and hit by machine gun fire. Two of his sons also were killed in the attack. As-Sadr''s death was widely attributed to the Government, as he was killed immediately after leading Friday prayers despite an order not to do so issued by Central Euphrates Region Military Governor and Revolutionary Command Council member Mohammad Hamza al Zubeidi.

As-Sadr reportedly expected to die and had led the Friday prayers wearing a funeral shroud. In the months leading up to his death, Shi''a sources report that security agents detained as-Sadr several times, arrested his deputy, blockaded his house, and prevented him from leading prayers. Government agents pretending to be religious students allegedly came to study under him in order to keep tabs on him. President Saddam Hussein reportedly made blunt reference in his speeches to as-Sadr''s cousin--Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Baqir as-Sadr, executed in 1980--as al-Maqbur, "the buried one." In the aftermath of the killing, the Government delayed a public announcement of his death for 24 hours, allegedly pressured his family and followers not to hold a funeral, and reportedly executed as-Sadr''s deputy. As-Sadr''s writings (including pamphlets on devotion and prayer) and videotaped sermons were banned and seized.

Unconfirmed reports from Shi''a sources in Najaf indicate that several teams of security officers were immediately on the scene after the shooting to collect as-Sadr''s body and rush it away, a circumstance that they believe points to government foreknowledge of the attack. These same sources also claim to have learned the identities of four of the five members of a special security death squad that allegedly were assembled from around the country to carry out the killing. They allege that Security Major Mohammad Ghanim of Tikrit, Security Major Ahmad abd al-Khalaf of Basra, and Security Major Akram Said Umar of Baghdad were involved, as was one "Hajj Aziz."

Although a funeral for al-Sadr was prohibited, spontaneous gatherings of mourners took place in the days after his death. Some of these, particularly those outside major mosques in the cities, grew to be quite large. Government security forces used excessive force in breaking up these illegal religious gatherings. In the impoverished Shi''a Thawra district of Baghdad, a crowd of tens of thousands of persons was attacked by security forces using automatic weapons and armored vehicles, resulting in the death of perhaps 25 mourners killed (although estimates range up to 400) including, according to one report, the imam of the al-Thawra mosque. Fifty persons reportedly were seriously wounded and about 250 persons were arrested, including 15 religious scholars. At around the same time, in the Shu''la district of Baghdad, 22 persons reportedly were killed. Afterwards more than 600 Shi''a residents of al-Thawra may have been arrested arbitrarily in security sweeps.

Outside Baghdad illegal assemblies of Shi''a took place in most of the major cities of the south in reaction to the as-Sadr killing. Ali Hassan al-Majid, the military "supergovernor" for southern Iraq, reportedly declared martial law throughout the region. Twenty-two persons reportedly were killed in the Suq as-Shuyukh area of Nasiriyah on February 20, 1999 when security forces attempted to break up a gathering of mourners. When the crowds could not be quelled directly, the army reportedly surrounded the city and shelled its center; 17 more persons reportedly were killed. Expatriate citizens from Nasiriyah subsequently learned that 10 to 20 armo-

red personnel carriers then entered the city, sealed off the marketplace, and stampeded the crowd, resulting in further injuries and deaths.

Other Shi''a sources report that on the same day the city of Najaf also was surrounded by government troops. Sparked by the news of as-Sadr's death and government suppression of mourning activities, demonstrations took place in Karbala and Basra. Several Shi''a sources report that in Amara Sheikh Ali as-Sahalani, the imam of the Majar al-Kabir mosque, allegedly was shot and killed along with other mourners; the angry crowd then reportedly seized control of the city for a short while. Nine demonstrators reportedly were executed in Ramadi. To prevent them from leading religious gatherings, the chief Shi''a clerics of Basra and Nasiriyah reportedly were arrested. These government actions ultimately silenced the mourners and protesters, and the disturbances had ended by late February 1999.

In Najaf in early April 1999, 15 persons reportedly were wounded and hundreds were arrested while commemorating the 40-day anniversary of as-Sadr's death, a traditional Islamic religious observance. Later in April, the Government executed four Shi''a men for the as-Sadr slaying after a closed trial. Shi''a religious authorities and opposition groups objected to the trial process and contend that the four executed men were innocent. At least one of the four, Sheikh Abdul Hassan Abbas Kufi, a prayer leader in Najaf, was reportedly in prison at the time of the killing. The Shi''a press reported in January 1999 that he had been arrested on December 24, 1998. The three others executed with Kufi were Islamic scholar Ahmad Mustapha Hassan Ardabilly, Ali Kathim Mahjan, and Haider Ali Hussain. The condition of Ali al-Musawi, another Shia cleric accused of complicity in as-Sadr's death, was unknown.

In the aftermath of as-Sadr's killing the Shi''a religious community is in a precarious state. Of the three generally acknowledged senior Shi''a clerics, Grand Ayatollah Ali as-Seistani is forbidden to lead prayers and remains home bound in Najaf as a result of attempts on his life; Ayatollah Mohammed Sayeed al-Hakim is forbidden to lead prayers at the shrine of Imam Ali in Najaf; and the status of Ayatollah Hussein Bahr al-Aloom in Kufa is not known. Many scholars at the Shi''a religious schools in Najaf have reportedly been arrested as have many of as-Sadr's religious appointees throughout the country. These restrictions will make it difficult, if not impossible, for a new Shi''a leadership to emerge naturally. Normally after the mourning period for a very senior cleric like as-Sadr, the Shi''a faithful--particularly the scholars--would begin to learn more about the surviving senior clerics by attending their lectures and prayer sessions, reading their religious analyses and decisions under Islamic law, etc. Gradually, in a traditionally informal and discreet process, a consensus would form regarding who would lead the religious community. According to several knowledgeable Shi''a observers outside Iraq, there is no way this process can take place under the present circumstances.

The as-Sadr killing intensified Shi''a anger at the ruling Sunni minority and led to more severe government repression of the Shi''a and bolder actions by the Shi''a resistance against the regime--including grenade and rocket attacks on security headquarters, Ba''ath Party offices, and presidential residences in Baghdad and small arms attacks in many parts of the capital. For example, the al Amin, Nuwab ad-Dubbat, and al Nafth districts of Baghdad.

Reportedly remained in heightened state of alert every Friday since February. The security and military crackdown against the Shi''a, however, had been building for some time. During the period covered by this report, Shi''a and opposition sources with close ties to individuals in the south, such as the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) and the Dawa organization, report that regular armed forces, the Republican Guard, Saddam's Commandos, and ad hoc formations of Ba''ath Party members have conducted deliberate ground sweeps and artillery attacks against Shi''a civilians and large-scale burning operations in the southern marshes.

According to these Shi''a sources, in January 1998, Shi''a villages near Sayed Yoshi lake in

Nasiriyah province were surrounded by government troops and bombarded with heavy artillery and mortars, the 14th Division bombarded fishermen in the Am an-Ni''aj marsh in Amara province, and scores of villagers in the Am al Ghizlan area of Amara province were arrested and their crops burned. In February 1999, the Government cut off food rations and attacked the al-Fuhood district of Nasiriyah province and the Hamyan, al Azair, and Nahr al-Iz districts of Amara province, with dozens of Shi''a civilians reportedly killed and hundreds arrested. In March 1999, the 11th Division bombarded many areas in Nasiriyah, and Ba''ath Party militia followed with sweeps against the Amarya tribe, which included incidents of looting. In May 1999, the Government launched a mass arrest campaign in the al-Alam, ad-Dawara, and Nahr al-Iz areas. In June 1999, "Saddam's Commandos" attacked villages between Qala''at Salih and al-Kahla in Amara province and arrested and tortured a Shi''a businessman in Amara as a pretext for confiscating his savings.

Reports of military operations against Shi''a civilians increased notably in the summer of 1998, after the killings of Ayatollahs Ali al Gharawi and Sheikh al Borojourni. In July 1998, security services resumed arrest sweeps in the Thawra district of Baghdad, rounding up young men, assaulting residents, and looting money and personal property. In August 1998, the Third Army Corps, in conjunction with Ba''ath Party officials led by Abdul Baqi as-Sa''doon, conducted large-scale operations against settlements of the al Juwaisid, ar-Rahma, al-Bu Salim, and Asakira tribes in Nasiriyah province; most of the inhabitants, including women, children, and the elderly, were forced to flee after dozens were wounded in heavy artillery bombardments.

In September 1998, security forces launched an attack on an-Nibron village in the Rifa''ee district; the troops burned houses, confiscated land, and arrested entire families. This was only a precursor to further large-scale assaults against the Shi''a that month. According to reports received by the Iraq Foundation, an estimated 20,000 persons reportedly were detained arbitrarily and trucked to tent-camp holding facilities in the desert region of Rifa''ee about 60 miles north of the marshes in the south.

In October 1998, government troops reportedly attacked villages in the Fuhood and I''gaga districts of Nasiriyah province. In November 1998, security forces, the Third and Fourth Army Corps, and Ba''ath Party militia staged a 5-day assault, including heavy artillery bombardment, in the Bani Malik area and the al Suwaib district of Basra province, and widespread areas of Nasiriyah and Amara provinces, nearly to the Iranian border. Hundreds of persons reportedly were killed in late November 1998 in Amara as part of a security sweep personally directed by Qusay Hussein, Saddam's son and his Principal Deputy on the State Council. In December 1998, commandos arrested 39 persons in the aftermath of an alleged attempt in Karbala to kill Revolutionary Command Council Vice President Izzat ad-Douri. Some sources in the opposition claimed that the attempt on ad-Douri's life was staged in order to justify the crackdown. Others indicate that the 39 persons arrested were executed summarily.

On January 14, 1999, according to a report from SCIRI, security officials reportedly arrested Sheikh Awas, imam of the Nasiriyah city mosque. The next day, when Awas did not appear to lead the Friday prayers, his deputy went to the Nasiriyah security directorate to plead for his release. Soon afterward hundreds of Shi''a congregation members reportedly marched on the security directorate to demand that Awas be released immediately to them. Security forces allegedly opened fire on the unarmed crowd with automatic weapons and also threw hand grenades. Five persons were killed, 11 were wounded, and 300 were arrested. The security services subsequently banned Friday prayer in Nasiriyah.

The security forces have used the symbolism of religious holidays to underscore the impunity with which they operate. In January 1999, for example, 27 members of the elite "Saddam's Commandos" reportedly were executed in Amara for conspiring with the Shi''a-based opposition forces. Their bodies reportedly were delivered to their families on Eid al Fitr, one of the most important holidays of the Islamic year.

On February 15, 1999, troops of the 11th division reportedly attacked the Asakir tribe in the south of Nasiriyah province. In March 1999, the Iraq Communist Party and Iraqi Shi''a groups reported large-scale protests in Basra when government authorities forbade Shi''a Friday prayer.

According to these reports, security forces under orders from Ali Hassan al-Magid attacked the marchers resulting in many deaths. Seventy Shi''a men allegedly were detained in the Abu Sakhair region of Basra; 100 in the Hayaniyh district; 40 in the Dor a-Fdubat area, and 85 in the Jumhuriya district.

On April 16, 1999, dozens of unarmed protesters (some reports indicate hundreds) allegedly were killed in street gatherings in the Thawra district of Baghdad, after the security services prohibited Shi''a congregants from attending Friday prayers. After the closure announcement, a large unarmed crowd reportedly gathered at the entrance of the Hikmat mosque in the Jawadir section of Thawra, which was guarded by Ba''ath Party members. At the same time, a smaller group--in which some individuals were armed--gathered in the Sharkat neighborhood nearby. When shooting erupted between security forces and the Sharkat group around noon, the Ba''ath Party members fired on the unarmed group at the Hikmat mosque. Afterwards regime forces reportedly opened fire on another crowd that had formed outside the Abbas mosque near the Thawra Children's Hospital.

In April 1999, thousands of Shi''a men reportedly were arrested in security sweeps in Basra. From May 19 to May 27, 1999, the al Fatah al-Mubaeen forces of the Special Republican Guards and Ba''ath Party militia under the command of Aziz Salih al-Noman reportedly conducted operations in the Jazirah region of Kut, Amarah, and Nasiriyah provinces. The local resistance reports that it repelled the attack. On June 5, 1999, the village of al-Maeil in Meisah province reportedly was attacked and 15 houses were destroyed.

(more to follow)

* * * * *

Honor Killings in Southeast Turkey Viewed

Los Angeles Times September 10, 2000

By AMBERIN ZAMAN,

In Modern Turkey, Women Continue to Pay the Price for Honor Rights: For some families, the only way to restore a reputation that they believe has been tarnished by a female relative is to kill her.

Ferdi Tumbul has little compassion for her daughter, a rape victim. "That stupid child shamed our entire family," the Turkish mother says.

SANLIURFA, Turkey--Her first name means "saint" in Turkish, but in the eyes of her family, Azize Tumbul was anything but that. The 14-year-old daughter of a Kurdish farmer admitted having sex with her neighbor's son. Never mind that he had raped her. She had stained the family honor. In this largely Kurdish province in Turkey's arid southeast, the only way to erase that stain was with Azize's blood. Two of her brothers took her to an irrigation canal, threw her in and left her for dead.

Azize's story isn't uncommon in Turkey. Experts say that "honor killings" claim dozens of women each year in this predominantly Muslim country. But what makes the crime shocking is that women in Turkey, unlike in other Muslim countries where honor killings occur, theoretic-

cally enjoy the same rights as Western women. In a drive to Westernize his nation nearly 80 years ago, Kemal Ataturk, the founder of modern Turkey, bid women to cast off their veils and declared them equal. In the 1930s, a law granted them the right to vote. Polygamy was abolished along with religious wedding ceremonies. Equality of inheritance was accepted as well as a woman's testimony before a court of law. Today, such Turkish provinces as Istanbul and Izmir are bustling with professional women practically indistinguishable from their counterparts in Los Angeles or London.

"They live with their boyfriends, they go to bars, and nobody bats an eyelid," says Halime Guner, who heads a women's rights group called Flying Broom that is based in Ankara, the capital.

As Turkey makes its bid to join the European Union after becoming a candidate for membership last year, the government is preparing legislation that would abolish the commonplace practice of reducing penalties for honor killings.

The government has already scrapped laws that say the man is the head of the family and banned arbitrary virginity tests at state hospitals. And it has also launched a multibillion-dollar development plan that would help boost literacy and employment among women in the Kurdish-populated regions.

'A Virtue That Only a Man Can Possess'

In Turkey, honor crimes are most common in poor regions such as the Kurdish-dominated eastern and southeastern provinces, where tribal structures remain intact and illiteracy is widespread.

What is honor? "It is a virtue that only a man can possess and that can only be soiled by a female body," says Vildan Yirmibesoglu, a Turkish lawyer who campaigns against honor crimes. "It is a notion that was concocted by men to ensure their continued domination over tribe and society long before Islam was ever introduced."

Sanliurfa, a sunbaked city of 500,000 people about 40 miles north of the Syrian border, is notorious for the frequency of such crimes, and none quite so chilling perhaps as that of Hacer Felhan.

The teenager's throat was slit in the town square in broad daylight by her 11-year-old brother because someone dedicated a love ballad to her over the radio. The girl was a virgin and didn't have a boyfriend. Then there was 12-year-old Hatice. Her throat was cut by her 17-year-old husband because she had gone to the movies without his permission. Adultery, elopement, even rumors of unchaste behavior are common reasons for such killings.

"You can be sure that most are hushed up or reported as accidents, so we will never know the full extent of this continuing butchery," Yirmibesoglu says.

What sets Azize Tumbul apart from her fellow victims is that she lived to tell her tale.

After being dragged by the current for nearly a mile, Azize managed to grab a metal pole protruding from the side of the canal. Villagers overheard her cries and hauled her out of the water. Azize walked to the nearest police station and filed a complaint against her brothers. A police investigation determined that the brothers, both adults, had shot the 19-year-old neighbor to death on a street in Sanliurfa a day before trying to kill Azize.

They are in jail and on trial, along with nine other family members implicated in both crimes. Azize, pregnant with the 19-year-old's child, was spirited to a state-run shelter at an undisclosed location, where she is to remain under protection until she's 18.

Under Turkish law, killing a blood relative is a crime punishable by death. Yet those who commit honor killings nearly always get off with a light prison sentence because judges regard the "provocation" as a mitigating circumstance.

The average prison term of such convicts is six years. Some families order minors to carry out honor killings because their age is a further mitigating factor. They are usually freed after two years in prison.

"There is huge social pressure on our judges to lessen the sentences," says Sabri Cepik, who chairs the Sanliurfa Bar Assn. "In the eyes of the people, the murderer is merely carrying out his duty. He too is a victim, because he has no other choice but to do as he's told." In a dilapidated farmhouse about 10 miles south of Sanliurfa, Azize's mother, Ferdi Tumbul, shows little compassion for her daughter, claiming that the girl fell into the water "accidentally."

"That stupid child shamed our entire family," she says, her pale green eyes flashing with rage. "We could not show our faces to the neighbors, not even to the shopkeepers, and now all our men are in jail." "We must find her, not to harm her, but to make her change her testimony," the mother adds.

But Ferda Gulluoglu, a women's rights activist here, says, "If they find her, more likely they will finish the job." It is not unusual for mothers and other female relatives to act as willing accomplices in honor killings.

"A stained reputation means that other unmarried girls in the family will never find suitors until it is cleansed," Gulluoglu says. "If a woman has no skills, no education, her honor is her only currency in the marriage market."

Even death isn't enough to remove the stigma attached to unchaste behavior. Disowned by their families, victims of honor killings are often buried in paupers' graves.

"For us, such girls are no different from dogs--they are dirt," says Mehmet Guksuz, a spice merchant in the city center, spitting noisily to reinforce his point. Senay Eser, a senior government official involved in the development project, acknowledges that laws can do little to deter honor killings in the impoverished southeast "until the hold of the tribes is broken." For now, there are few signs that Turkey's politicians want to challenge the tribal structure of the Kurdish region. Good relations with its leader can secure the votes of an entire tribe. Many lawmakers elected from the Kurdish provinces are tribal leaders themselves.

"Criticizing honor crimes would be political suicide for these people," says Hashim Hashimi, a Kurdish lawmaker from the southeastern province of Diyarbakir. "They would be regarded as wimps."

Girls Often Seen as Commercial Assets

There is also a ruthlessly material aspect to honor killings. In provinces such as Sanliurfa, an aspiring groom has to pay so-called head money to his intended's family before he can wed her. When a girl is dishonored, the family forfeits that income.

"It is true that we view our girls as commercial assets, to be traded or sold," says Mahmut Ozyavuzlar, an ethnic Arab clan leader in the largely Arab-populated town of Harran, 30 miles south of Sanliurfa. Pointing to an old bearded man reclining against a pile of kilim cushions, Ozyavuzlar says: "Look, Hacı Fuat here wants 8 billion liras [\$12,000] for his girl."

Depending on their looks and wealth, some girls can fetch as much as \$50,000. Government efforts to abolish head money have failed to make an impact. Newspapers here brim with tear-jerking accounts of young lovers who elope and get killed after being hunted down by their relatives. In most cases, the boy could not come up with the sum demanded by the girl's family. Turkish dailies last month carried the story of a girl, 15, who committed suicide in the eastern province of Van after being married off to a 45-year-old man who had 11 children and multiple wives. A recent study in the eastern province of Mus revealed that 28 girls had killed themselves over the past six months after being forced into similar marriages.

"Better perhaps they kill themselves than run away and dishonor their families," Ozyavuzlar says. "Otherwise, it would fall upon the family to erase the stain."

* * * * *

Women Activists Detained in Turkey

Associated Press Sep 9 2000

ISTANBUL, Turkey (AP) - Police forced 35 Turkish and Kurdish women activists onto buses Saturday, kicking and punching them, to stop them from telling reporters about a message they had sent to the U.N. secretary-general denouncing violence against women.

The women had gathered in front of Istanbul's main post office to send a postcard to Secretary-General Kofi Annan before police rounded them up.

"We say no to war, we want peace. We say no to rape and harassment in prisons," the postcard read.

Several women were injured and one was treated at a hospital for a broken arm, said Leman Yurtsever, one of the detained women.

The demonstration was organized by leftist political parties.

"We want equal treatment for all women all around the world. We are against violence, but today we are being beaten by police," said Yurtsever, speaking from a police bus.

Turkey, a candidate to the European Union, has pledged to improve its poor human rights record. The EU has urged Turkey to find a peaceful solution to its 16-year war against Kurdish rebels in the Kurdish-dominated southeast.

Also Saturday, police detained 63 people in their weekly protest against government plans to transfer prisoners from large prison wards to small cells, the Anatolia news agency reported.

Inmates say they will be more vulnerable to abuse by prison guards in the small cells. Human rights groups say torture is common in prisons here.

The government says it cannot control the large wards, where up to 100 prisoners live crammed together in squalid conditions. Inmates regularly stage riots, hostage-takings and hunger strikes.

* * * * *

Iraqi Kurdish faction to pull out militias in concession to rival

AFP 13 Sept 2000

DUBAI, Sept 13 (AFP) - 14h14 - A Kurdish faction said Wednesday it will withdraw armed militias from the main northern Iraqi towns it controls in a move towards normalising relations with its main rival.

"During a (parliamentary) meeting, held Saturday and Sunday in Erbil, KDP head Massoud Barzani announced the withdrawal of all armed militias from the main towns under its control in the next two months," a Kurdistan Democratic Party spokesman Dilshad Miran told AFP from London. A spokesman for the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) said this was indeed one of its demands.

"The withdrawal of armed militias from main towns, which must be open to all groups, is one of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan's demands for normalisation between the two rival factions," said PUK spokesman Latif Rashid.

The two groups have long been fighting for control over swathes of northern Iraq outside of Baghdad's reach and under a US security umbrella since the end of the Gulf War in 1991.

The United States has been trying to unite the two factions in an effort to spur internal opposition to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and has offered 97 million dollars in aid, but the reconciliation process has moved haltingly.

* * * * *

Malnutrition Viewed in Northern, Southern Iraq

September 12, 2000 Voice of America By BRECK ARDERY

UNITED NATIONS--A United Nations report says there is a stark difference in the levels of child nutrition between northern and southern Iraq. VOA Correspondent Breck Arderly reports from the United Nations.

The report says that in the central and southern parts of Iraq, child malnutrition remains a very serious problem. U-N spokesman Fred Eckhard says that, by contrast, the situation in the predominantly Kurdish northern region of Iraq has improved significantly.

The situation in the north, where humanitarian aid is distributed by the United Nations on behalf of the government of Iraq, acute malnutrition has virtually disappeared and levels of chronic malnutrition have been reduced by half. The report says that northern Iraq is more self-sufficient in food and receives more assistance per person.

The U-N relief agencies that prepared the report say malnutrition is often due to factors other than lack of food such as chronic infections. The report says poor water quality, bad sanitation and a shortage of pharmaceuticals in Iraq all contribute to the malnutrition problem.

The report points out that Iraq is now allowed to export an unlimited amount of oil to raise money for food and other humanitarian needs. But the U-N agencies say that, so far, there is no indication that the government of Iraq is implementing the program "for the benefit of malnourished children."

* * * * *

Government's Southeast Action Plan Outlined

Milliyet 14 Sep 00 p 16 by Fikret Bila

[FBIS Translated Text] That the government has no detailed and practicable plan for the Southeast is the main criticism leveled against the public sector about the Southeast question.

Uncoordinated actions taken under projects and programs formulated by different agencies adopting disparate standpoints have always come under attack too.

It has now become clear that the government, including all its departments and agencies, has focused on this matter and undertaken a broad-based study named "East and Southeast Action Plan" [ESAP], capitalizing on the considerable progress made in its struggle against terror.

The starting point of the new endeavor was a MGK [National Security Council] meeting held in December 1999. The project, developed as a kind of "regional development plan" through contributions made by all government agencies in line with a decision made at that meeting, is now in the hands of the government for implementation. The government's action plan was formally launched after it was signed by Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit's in May.

The plan consists of two main chapters, namely "determination of existing conditions" and "suggestions." Another trait of the plan is that it is one of the four critical schemes former President Suleyman Demirel entrusted to the government at the valedictory meeting at which he chaired the cabinet with the president-elect Ahmet Necdet Sezer while handing the office to the latter.

Problems grouped under eight main headings

The first chapter of the ESAP includes a socio-economic picture of the region. In this section a "diagnosis" is made regarding the Southeast question.

Key findings about the situation in the region are listed in the action plan as follows:

The problem encountered in the East and the Southeast has a "social" nature.

The sources of this problem, which features a social character, can be summed up as follows:

a) Terror events have created a major security problem in the region.
b) The problem is being nurtured by shortcomings and inefficiencies in the public administration.

c) The economic problem has significant weight.

d) Education has become a major issue.

e) Health care is one of the critical issues.

Supporters of terror may change their ranks

During the 16-year campaign, which started in 1984, attempts were made to create "a sense of regional identity" which seems to have succeeded in part, but is not considered an extensive and fundamental issue. The region's people, exposed to propaganda as part of a terror campaign, can be classified as follows:

a) A part of them are considered PKK [Workers' Party of Kurdistan] sympathizers.

b) Another group is seen as protesters.

c) A third group is identified with the PKK.

These three groups do not constitute a majority among people living in the region. For the citizens in the first two groups economic and social problems are of paramount importance. If these problems are addressed people in these categories can be liberated from the PKK's influence. However, those in the third category are dedicated and conscious followers of the PKK.

According to data obtained as a result of scientific studies undertaken in the region, almost half of the regional population wants a "powerful, fair, and caring" government.

A powerful government means a public administration that has done away with its shortcomings.

There are substantial gaps in public administration including administrators. For example, the Ministry of Agriculture can fill only 26 percent of the positions in its offices in the region. Corresponding figures for the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education are 46 percent and 66 percent, respectively. A majority of responsibilities are assumed by civil servants appointed to deputize for others. They are currently holding 50 percent of government posts in the region.

Though the Ministry of Education goes to great lengths in the field of education there is a substantial deficit in terms of capacity utilization. Regional boarding schools must be strengthened and promoted. For instance, there is an idle capacity that can accommodate 10,000 students. There are schools, but no students. Consolidated grades system seems to pose a significant problem. The teacher shortage was reduced by 37 percent from 12,000 in 1998-1999 to 7,453.

Illiteracy among women is one of the most critical problems in education. Thirty-eight percent of women living in the region are literate.

Health problems also appear to have reached significant proportions. The national average is 2,141 persons for one specialist physician whereas the corresponding figure in Southeast is 7,600. In Turkey there is one dentist for 5,400 persons on average while the regional average in the Southeast is 21,000.

Ox-cart era in agriculture

Economic indicators also demonstrate that the problem primarily stems from economic reasons. The agricultural sector accounts for 54 percent of employment in Turkey while its share goes up to 70 percent in the Southeast and to 73 percent in the East.

In spite of accumulation of labor in agriculture regional productivity is very low. The small size of lands, insufficient inputs, and absence of full-fledged cooperatives lead to a decline in productivity.

As for animal production, specially-bred cattle make up 36 percent of the total bovine population whereas the regional average is 12 percent. There is only one veterinarian for 50,000 animals.

Agricultural incentives are at a very low level. The amount of incentives used in the East and the Southeast represent 2 percent and 8 percent of the total allocated nationwide, respectively.

Actions proposed

After making these determinations in the first chapter, the ESAP lists in the second part actions that need to be taken. The plan contains a total of 107 actions including 30 in public administration, 47 in economy, 17 in education and 13 in health care.

Some of these proposed steps are listed as follows:

- Reinforcement of the public administration. Ensuring that governors and district governors are provided with an adequate security by establishing a "governorship guarantee" system. In this context, identification of first-class civil administrators and appointment of governors from among this group.

- Creation of an appointment system based on objective criteria used for selection of governors and district governors.

- Village guards employed for a temporary period must be employed in other jobs or retired without causing them to suffer financial losses. Employment of these guards as Forest Guards and security guards in public organizations may be considered.

- Creation of a Turkey Employment Agency focusing on the region and helping people learn a profession and find a job.
- Increasing the size of cultivated lands to economically feasible levels through land aggregation.
- Encouragement of irrigation in agriculture and provision of training for local people.
- Reinforcement and expansion of cooperatives.
- Ensuring that medical personnel are appointed to the region under a rotation system.
- Making it compulsory for civil servants to serve in the region for a certain period and taking this into consideration in their promotion.
- Employing contract personnel in the region.
- Giving priority to people living in the region when selecting people for jobs.
- Increasing educational programs broadcast by the TRT [Turkish Radio and Television Corporation].

Conclusion

The action plan appears to be the outcome of a broad-based effort involving many participants and carried out under a bipartisan approach. Those who have contributed to the plan hope that the plan will be implemented in a similar manner.

Some of the actions proposed in the plan require short-term efforts while others necessitate long-term endeavors. Actions called for by the action plan, which was launched in May, will be one of the most important priorities for the government. The plan is designed to address economic and social problems in the region and to eliminate the social factors that help separatist organizations, particularly the PKK and reactionary groups recruit new members.

Four thousand PKK members in Northern Iraq

It seems that some evaluations have also been made regarding the PKK's current conditions in parallel with the work on the action plan. The PKK's activities in the region have undergone a change in nature. The organization is making efforts to shift its efforts to the political arena. However, intelligence reports show that the organization has not totally disbanded his militants. Nearly 4,000 militants are being drilled in Northern Iraq. Their total number is estimated at 5,000 together with those stationed in Iran.

The PKK is trying to gain sympathy by naming these armed men as "People's Defense Forces." According to the government's assessment, these armed militants, considered a "potential army," can be mobilized at any moment. Therefore, it is emphasized that jumping to the conclusion that terror has been entirely wiped could be misleading.

* * * * *

Copenhagen Criteria Said Better Than Southeast Action Plan

Sabah 17-Sep 00

[Column by Cengiz Candar: "Secret Plan"--"Open Criteria"--ellipsis as published]

[FBIS Translated Text] An important "plan" was either leaked or "caused to be leaked" to the press during the week. It seems that this virtual "master plan," consisting of "107 articles," which was disclosed by journalists known to have close ties with the prime minister, was put into effect by Bulent Ecevit on 7 May. The plan is the "Southeast plan."

Presented as an "extremely comprehensive secret action plan," the blueprint is said to have been prepared -- as may be guessed -- upon the "recommendation" of the MGK [National Security Council] in December last year. Since the MGK in its present form is, as underscored by retired Lieutenant General Sadi Erguvenc in the magazine National Strategy, "an institution outside and even above the executive by any measure," it would not be wrong to label the "Southeast Plan" as the "MGK plan" rather than giving the credit to Ecevit. Moreover, neither would it be wrong to translate the MGK's "recommendations" as "decrees" or "instructions to the government," putting aside the word recommendation.

What is inconceivable is that such a fundamental and important plan should be called a "secret action plan." Will the "Southeast question" be solved without letting anyone see it? Will the Southeast develop without letting anyone see? Why is it a secret? Furthermore, how could such a "secret plan" be published in every detail in dailies with the highest circulation?

Since it is this "administration concept" that makes Turkey a "funny country" and turns its quest for accession to the EU into a venture that cannot be taken seriously, it is unnecessary and meaningless to search for an answer to these questions.

News reports about the "plan" are saying: "According to information obtained, some 'controversial' cultural topics such as education and TV stations broadcasting in Kurdish were not included in the plan. We learned that these topics were excluded from the plan because they were considered 'politicization.' On the other hand, reinforcement of the TRT's [Turkish Radio and TV Corporation] technical capabilities to enable its programs to reach every part of the region was identified as one of the key objectives.

Another comedy and a waste of time... The "controversial cultural topics" in question are actually the "Copenhagen criteria" themselves. The "problem" is the insistence on the same unsuccessful methods, regardless of how they have failed to find a solution for the past 70-odd years. It is the outdated mentality that reduces the "problem" to underdevelopment and believes that it will be solved through economic development, but never learns from past experience. It is the line of reasoning that is totally ignorant of the "fundamental sociological fact" that one of the inevitable outcomes of development and growth would be the strengthening of "ethnic identity" and the instigation of a "cultural revival" particularly focussing on "language."

It is wrongfully believed that citizens living in the Southeast would develop a "Turkish identity" by means of the TRT, which is not even respected by the millions of Turks who watch it only in Turkish. In this "Internet age" in which there are Kurdish TV and radio broadcasts that can cross borders, the ostrich policy continues.

It is said that the first of the plan's "the three cornerstones" is "the above-party approach of all political parties to this action plan aimed at achieving development and prosperity in the Southeast." How will the political parties be informed of the "secret action plan" and thus adopt an "above-party approach"? Moreover, why should they develop such a strategy? Does this above-party approach not reflect a search for "political homogeneity"? Is this not "totalitarianism"? If every "fundamental issue" is to be handled based on "an above-party approach," what need would there be no need for a multiparty parliamentary system?

The most striking measure among those proposed to be taken in the Southeast is that bureaucrats will have to accept appointments to government offices in the Southeast in order to get a promotion to key posts. The bureaucracy has failed in the Southeast. Could there be a worse "administration philosophy" than having the top management of the state composed of those who have failed in the Southeast?

I would like to quote another part from the article written by Dr. Riza Turmen, a career diplomat and a justice of the European Court of Human Rights, that I mentioned yesterday: "Today we are witnessing the emergence of religious and ethnic identities as a result of the weakening of traditional ties such as citizenship and family in connection with globalization. The strengthening, modernization, and democratization of the Republic depend to an extent on whether it will allow space for such ethnic and religious identities and be able to integrate them."

This does not seem likely with the broken-down mentality dominating Turkey. Therefore, let the two-paragraph "Copenhagen Criteria," which would transform the state, be applied instead of the 107-article "secret action plan" for the Southeast, and the Turkish Republic will gain strength.

Humanitarian Experts Refused Entry to Iraq

Oil-for-Food Inspectors Also Barred, UN Says

By Barbara Crossette
New York Times Service

UNITED NATIONS, New York — Iraq will not allow independent experts into the country to assess the living conditions of Iraqis a decade after economic sanctions were imposed, the United Nations secretary-general, Kofi Annan, has told the Security Council.

In a report to the council, Mr. Annan also said Monday that the Iraqis were barring another group of experts that he wanted to send to devise ways to improve an oil-for-food program, which was developed to soften impact of the sanctions on the Iraqi population.

Those experts had planned to set up a system in which Iraq would use some of its oil-sales money to buy goods locally, a move that was expected to spur the local economy.

These latest decisions by Iraq not to cooperate with this new purchasing program or the impact survey to come after it also refused to allow the Netherlands ambassador, Peter van Walsum, who is chairman of the Security Council's sanctions committee, to visit Iraq.

Diplomats and relief officials say several reasons contribute to this attitude.

Iraqis say they do not want charity. Saddam Hussein wants to control all contact between Iraqis and outsiders.

Furthermore, the government demands the right to decide how aid is distributed and by whom. If cash is to be made available for local purchases, the Iraqis want total control of the money.

Diplomats and international aid workers say the Iraqi government has also been turning down offers of relief from private organizations.

Earlier this year, a British "flying hospital" was given permission by the UN sanctions committee to land in Iraq and provide free medical treatment, but the Iraqis barred it.

Iraq has severely restricted or expelled some groups in recent months, including representatives of the Middle East Council of Churches. But anti-sanctions protesters, who bring in relatively small amounts of aid, are welcomed for their propaganda value.

Private aid, a relief official said, "has not even scratched the surface," although its potential in meeting Iraqi needs is great.

Human rights monitors are routinely barred, and entry has been denied to Yuli Voronstov, a Russian diplomat who, as a special UN envoy, is looking into the cases of people missing since the invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

Since December, Iraq has been permitted to sell limited amounts of oil — at high international prices — but only to pay for essential civilian needs under the oil-for-food program.

The embargo cannot be lifted until Iraq meets key disarmament requirements, but Mr. Saddam will not permit arms inspectors to enter the country, either.

Since 1996, when Iraq finally agreed to the oil-for-food program, Mr. Saddam has sold \$32 billion in oil. Nearly \$1

billion in medicine and medical supplies have been bought, along with more than \$6 billion in food.

Concern is growing that as more goods flow in, close associates of Mr. Saddam will gain from cornering distribution rights, if not through outright black-marketeering. If no independent collection of information is possible, Iraq can continue to blame outsiders, particularly the United States, for illnesses and deaths from disease or malnutrition, when relief officials say that at least some of the problem rests with the Iraqi leadership.

A European diplomat said there were "pretty solid reports" that Iraq had been exporting medical supplies, some of which appear to have found their way to Lebanon, and had sold food from the oil-sales program to Syria and Jordan.

■ U.S. Won't Enforce Inspections

The United States on Tuesday ruled out the use of force solely to try to make Iraq let UN inspectors monitor its weapons programs, Reuters reported from the United Nations, New York.

The U.S. secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, speaking at the United Nations, repeated the U.S. position that letting in the new UN inspection agency was the key to the United Nations easing sanctions imposed on Iraq in 1990.

But Mrs. Albright said the United States would not use force if Iraq did not comply with a UN resolution setting up the new agency.

The United States and Britain bombed Iraq in December 1998, saying Iraq was obstructing the work of the previous inspection agency. No inspections have taken place since then. The United States has said that as long as Mr. Saddam refuses to let the inspectors in, sanctions will stay in place.

France Warns Iraq: The UN Is Determined to Resume Inspections

Christopher S. Wren
New York Times Service

UNITED NATIONS, New York — France has warned Iraq not to expect any weakening of the Security Council's determination to send UN inspectors back into Iraq to eliminate weapons of mass destruction before sanctions can be lifted.

France's foreign minister, Hubert Vedrine, who has criticized the sanctions, nonetheless said Wednesday that he had told Iraq's deputy prime minister, Tariq Aziz, that it would be "a very serious mistake" to think that an erosion

of the council's resolve would lead it to lift the sanctions, which were imposed when Iraqi forces occupied Kuwait in 1990.

"I in fact met with Tariq Aziz the day before yesterday, and I told him the only solution for Iraq was to comply with Resolution 1284 and to cooperate," Mr. Vedrine said.

[On Thursday, Iraq accused Kuwait of digging vertical wells to steal its oil and warned that it would take proper measures to stop its neighbor's actions, The Associated Press reported.]

[In response, the United States issued a tough warning to Iraq. "The U.S.

maintains a strong and robust military presence in the Arabian Gulf region and remains ready to use it if [Iraqi President Saddam Hussein] tries to rebuild his weapons of mass destruction, strikes out at his neighbors, challenges allied aircraft or moves against the Kurds," said a Pentagon spokesman, Bryan Whitman.]

The Security Council's resolution on Iraq, which it adopted on Dec. 17, created a new arms inspection plan for Iraq. The previous inspection system collapsed in December 1998, when U.S. and British warplanes bombed Baghdad to punish Mr. Saddam for failing to

cooperate.

As an incentive for Baghdad, the resolution lifted a ceiling on the amount of oil that it could sell abroad to buy food and other essentials, and it also relaxed controls on imports of some other supplies.

Otherwise, the economic sanctions were kept in place.

Eleven of the 15 Security Council members voted for the resolution at the time. But France joined Russia, China and Malaysia in abstaining, prompting the Iraqis to infer that support for sanctions was waning.

The split emboldened Iraq to reject the council's resolution. United Nations officials have been concerned that Iraq keeps balking in hopes of forcing a further dilution or even lifting of sanctions. Baghdad has refused to allow arms inspectors back into the country, though the new inspection commission's ex-

ecutive chairman, Hans Blix, says team members are ready to begin inspections.

Mr. Vedrine, after the meeting with Mr. Aziz, said he foresaw no short-term change in Iraq's refusal to comply. "I regret that," he said.

■ Iraq and Russia Discuss Flights

Iraq and Russia are in discussions to resume air travel between the two countries, officials at both national airlines said Thursday, but it is uncertain when commercial flights would resume. The Associated Press reported from Baghdad.

The state-run daily Al Thawra quoted Pavel Piryatku, a regional director of the Russian airline, Aeroflot, on Thursday as saying flights would begin next month.

In Moscow, an Aeroflot spokeswoman, Yuliya Maryashkina, confirmed that

the company was considering resuming flights to Iraq, but refused to specify when.

Another Aeroflot official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said no specific time for the resumption of flights had been set and that Aeroflot was still engaged in complex negotiations with Iraq on the issue.

An official at the state-run Iraqi Airways confirmed the flight resumption to The Associated Press, but said that Iraq had hoped the first flight would be by "a brotherly Arab plane."

The United States, Britain and the UN Sanctions Committee maintain that civil flights to and from Iraq constitute an economic resource whose reinstatement is a breach of the sanctions in place since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

At least 35 people detained in raids on Kurdish party buildings

ANKARA, Sept 15 (AFP) - 17h17 - Turkish security forces detained Friday at least 35 people in raids on buildings of the pro-Kurdish People's Democratic Party (HADEP) across the country, a party official told AFP.

"Ten people were taken into custody in (the southeastern city of) Diyarbakir and more than 25 in Istanbul," HADEP secretary-general Mahmut Sakar said, adding that not all of the detainees were party members.

He explained that the raids on party buildings in the two cities as well as in Adana and Mersin in the south and Van in the east were based on a search order by an Ankara state security court issued earlier in the day.

The order followed a court decision banning the distribution of declarations HADEP had printed on the occasion of September 1, international peace day, calling for "democratic and constitutional rights" for the Kurds, Sakar said.

"We condemn the raids which were carried out because of declarations that we stopped distributing 15 days ago," he added.

HADEP, which says it is in favor of a peaceful resolution to the Kurdish question in Turkey and recognition of cultural rights for the Kurds, faces a possible ban for alleged links to the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which Ankara considers a "terrorist organization."

The PKK has fought for self-rule in southeast Turkey since 1984, but declared an end to its armed campaign last September upon peace calls from its leader Abdullah Ocalan, on a death row in Turkish jail.

Since then fighting between Kurdish rebels and government troops in the region has significantly scaled down. The conflict has claimed some 36,500 lives.

Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

Bureau for International Relations

18 September 2000

PKK Provokes Confrontation in Iraqi Kurdistan

Throughout the last two weeks, armed bands of the PKK have been attempting to infiltrate KRG administered region through Iraqi Government controlled territory. A group of PKK elements managed to take position at Mount Karadagh, south of Suleimni. By 13 September, KRG Peshmarga command obliged the PKK band to leave back to their base in Iraqi controlled Makhmour, south west of Irbil.

On 14 September in an unprovoked attack, PKK militiamen attacked without warning a group of unsuspecting PUK Peshmarga at the village of Aliash, near Qala Diza, killing 9 Peshmarga. Public opinion in the region has reacted with anger and disappointment at this callous act of brutality by the PKK. Further, PKK bands attacked PUK positions at mount Asoz and Karouhk.

Reports from the region today indicate that Iraqi military is facilitating the transport of PKK militiamen to the frontline with the PUK region at Kadir-Karem, northeast of Kirkuk. These coincide with persistent reports of Iraqi military preparations to attack the PUK.

These reckless acts by the PKK come in the wake of escalating rhetoric from Ocalan and his senior lieutenant against the self-governing institutions of Iraqi Kurdistan. Abdullah Ocalan, from his prison quarters in Imarali, characterized Iraqi Kurdistan as "feudal domain of Talabani and Barzani." In earlier statements, he vowed to destroy the

Kurdistan Regional Government for "being dagger in the back of Turkey at the behest of the imperialist powers!" Osman Ocalan and Jamil Bayek, a senior PKK official, echoed similar positions vowing to "liberate Iraqi Kurdistan and end the rule of Talabani and Barzani!"

These acts appear to be part of a sustained and deliberate campaign by the PKK to destabilize the situation in Iraqi Kurdistan. It is only fair to ask why? And who is to benefit from such reckless policies? Further, it is truly ironic that this zealous and extremist PKK rhetoric comes at a time when Ocalan has abandoned any notion of Kurdish national struggle and has offered himself as a defender of Kemalist ideology.

Observers of the Kurdish scene recognize that the PUK has sought to avoid conflict with other Kurdish parties, and notably the PKK. Throughout the last few years, Turkey has often accused the PUK of supporting the PKK. The Turkish military has even battled the PUK in 1997 causing the loss of more than 300 Peshmarga.

During the recent events, the Kurdistan Toilers Party and the Iraqi Communist Party, sought to dissuade the PKK from this course of action. The PKK has refused to heed their advice determined to escalate a confrontation. On 17 September, the Kurdistan

Toiler's party, together with 4 other Kurdish parties known for their cordial relations with the PKK, issued a stern denunciation of PKK's belligerent posture.

The PKK must realize that it cannot use Iraqi Kurdistan as a base of operations. This cannot be tolerated as this contravenes international law and it defies the laws of the region. The PUK will defend legitimate authority of the KRG and will not tolerate PKK meddling in the affairs of Iraqi Kurdistan. We call upon all sincere Kurds and friends of the Kurdish people to denounce these reckless policies of the PKK leadership, and ensure that Iraqi Kurdistan will remain safe, secure and a domain for civil society and rule of law.

####

Rioters rampage during Khatami's speech: report

AFP - 18 Sept 2000

TEHRAN, Sept 18 (AFP) - More than 100 rioters smashed buses and robbed shopkeepers with swords during a speech in the western Iranian city of Orumiyeh by President Mohammad Khatami, press reports said Monday. Chanting "Freedom! Freedom!" and berating shop-owners for not closing down to attend Khatami's speech on Saturday, gangs destroyed vehicles and then broke into and robbed the city's gold bazaar, the Resalaat paper said.

It said some seven kilos (15.4 pounds) of gold were taken by robbers who threatened merchants with swords and left two people wounded.

Witnesses told the paper that some of the mob had angrily demanded to know why the shops had remained open while Khatami was in town to deliver a speech during a short visit to the provinces. Khatami supporters have frequently charged that their conservative rivals orchestrate public unrest in a bid to undermine the president's bid for re-election next year.

* * * * *

United States: No Change in North Iraq No-Fly Zone

18 September 2000

ANKARA, Turkey (Reuters) - The United States said Monday it was maintaining its flights over a northern Iraqi no-fly zone at unchanged levels and had detected no unusually high activity by Iraqi air defense units.

Nervousness has been growing in the West over the situation in northern Iraq, with some fears that President Saddam Hussein might increase his challenges to the exclusion zone enforced by U.S. and British aircraft as November U.S. presidential elections approach.

Last week's accusation by Baghdad that Kuwait was stealing Iraqi oil, reminiscent of charges made on the eve of its 1990 invasion of Kuwait, served only to increase fears on markets.

A spokeswoman for U.S. forces at Turkey's Incirlik air base, used to enforce the no-fly zone above the 36th parallel, said flights followed established patterns. She gave no details. "Nothing has changed in regularity and rules of engagement," she said. "As far as violations and provocations go, we see a fairly consistent level of activity (from the Iraqis)."

The zone of Iraq north of the 36th Parallel and a separate southern Iraqi zone are the only areas where U.S. and Iraqi forces currently confront each other. Britain also participates in the patrols.

The zones were set up soon after the 1991 Gulf War which saw a U.S.-led alliance drive Iraqi forces from Kuwait. The northern zone is intended to protect a Kurdish enclave, though Baghdad sees it as part of an attempt to bring Iraq to its knees. Iraq does not recognize the exclusion zones.

Since 1998, U.S. aircraft patrolling the zone have fired on Iraqi air defense units that target and lock onto them. Iraq says it has hit 10 Western planes since 1998, portraying the patrols as aggressive forays frequently attacking civilian targets. The U.S. and Britain deny their aircraft have suffered any damage and insist they target only military units that challenge them.

Iran Dissident Alarms Clerics With Calls for 'Islamic Democracy'

By Elaine Sciolino
New York Times Service

TEHRAN — Despite his turban and cloak, or perhaps because of it, Mohsen Kadivar is a "dangerous man" for the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The 41-year-old cleric and confidant of President Mohammed Khatami trained at Iran's best theological seminary and taught at some of the best universities in the country.

He was active in the Islamic revolution that toppled the shah 21 years ago and has written heavy tomes on Islamic philosophy and law.

But that was before he was banned from teaching, before he was tried and sentenced to prison on charges of disseminating lies, defaming Islam and disturbing public opinion with his newspaper commentaries.

In those commentaries, he suggested that the rule of the clerics had become as tyrannical as the rule of the kings.

Now, after 18 months in prison, Mr. Kadivar is free — in a manner of speaking. He was released in July but he is still banned from teaching. He has been told that he faces new criminal charges, but he does not know what they are or when they will be filed.

Most of the reformist newspapers for which he wrote are closed. Many of the journalists and clerics he counts among his friends are behind bars.

And his attempt to give a speech with another leading reformer in the western industrial city of Khorramabad in August was blocked by armed vigilantes, causing riots that left a policeman dead and 100 people wounded.

"I truly believe in the things I have said," he said in a three-hour conversation over sour cherry juice and platters of fruits and sweets. "And I have already paid the price for it."

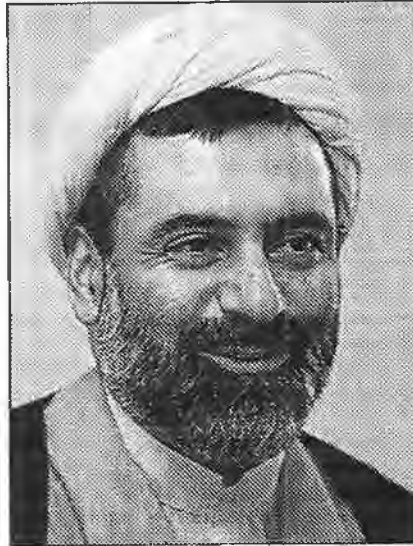
The bearded, midlevel cleric has refused to obey the dictum of the clerical court that convicted him — that he keep his pen still and his mouth shut.

"I have no intention of listening to them," he said. "If they want to act against me again, this time it is they who will have to pay the price."

Mr. Kadivar is dangerous because he is armed with one of the key weapons of the Islamic Republic: religion.

Iran is locked in an intense struggle between reformers who want to make the system more responsive to the will of the people and conservatives, supported by armed street vigilantes, determined to keep their hold on power through their rigid interpretation of Islam.

Mr. Kadivar comes to this ideological



Behrouz Mehri/Agence France-Presse

Mohsen Kadivar, summing up his philosophy, said: "I believe democracy and Islam are compatible."

battlefield armed with Koranic verses and complex theological scholarship.

When he talks of democracy, he does not demand the overthrow of the Islamic Republic and its replacement with a secular administration.

"I believe in a religious democratic state," he said. "I believe democracy and Islam are compatible. But a religious state is possible only when it is elected and governed by the people."

"And the governing of the country should not be necessarily in the hands of the clergy. So what I support is the healthy state the reformers are promoting as an Islamic Republic, not what exists now."

And what exists now, he continued, is a system in which one man, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has too much power, under a system of government known as the "rule of the Islamic jurist."

Under the Iranian Constitution, Ayatollah Khamenei wields more power than the president, controls the national police and the security agencies, and appoints the leaders of the military, the Revolutionary Guards, the judiciary, national television and radio, and the foundations — ostensibly charitable — that control hundreds of companies and industries.

But there are Islamic thinkers, Mr. Kadivar included, who argue that the power structure has become distorted over the years.

Proof of that came last month, Mr. Kadivar said, when Ayatollah Khamenei stunned the popularly elected Parlia-

ment — and much of the nation — when he decided that the Parliament would be prohibited from amending a restrictive press law.

"This is the meaning of the absolute authority," Mr. Kadivar said, referring to the ayatollah's position.

"If one person is going to rule the same way the monarchy did, well, it was not the goal of the revolution to have one-person rule, even if he is a fair and knowledgeable man."

In the current political climate in Iran, such criticism is breathtakingly bold.

Essentially, Mr. Kadivar is arguing that the official interpretation of Islam developed under the Islamic Republic is misguided.

But he speaks so openly in part because that is what he is trained to do.

The clerical system in Shiite Islam is a democratic, nonhierarchical, even rowdy one in which students are trained to speak their minds and challenge the authority of their professors.

Still, in clerical circles, Mr. Kadivar is an odd fit. He began his studies in electrical engineering at the prestigious University of Shiraz, where he learned English, and turned to religious studies in the dusty, provincial holy city of Qum only after the secular universities were closed in the revolutionary crackdown.

INTERNATIONAL
Herald Tribune

SEPTEMBER 19, 2000

Statement from the Command of Peshmarga Forces on PKK Provocations

PUK - 17 Sept 2000

(Suleimani, 14 September 2000) -- Once again the PKK is propagating baseless reports that the Peshmargas Forces of Kurdistan (PFK) has attacked PKK in a mountain near Suleimani. Such reports are part of a disinformation campaign by the PKK against the PUK, and are meant to avoid responsibility for the callous policies of the PKK.

Earlier, Osman Ocalan (Abullah Ocalan's brother) stated that PUK has received \$80 million from the KDP as a reward for fighting the PKK. Thereafter, Cemil Bayik, senior PKK official, comes along alleging that the PUK and the Turkish army have jointly attacked the PKK. The public in Kurdistan clearly knows that such reports are baseless and utter fabrications. As for our Kurdish communities in the Diaspora, we are obliged to refute these unfounded allegations and clarify the following facts: It has been a while since the PKK have been agitating to fight the PUK, especially since Abdullah Ocalan denounced publicly the federal rule in Iraqi Kurdistan as "feudal federalism aimed against Turkey." Earlier, before his apprehension, Ocalan told the Arabic weekly Al-wasat Magazine "federalism in [Iraqi] Kurdistan is a dagger put to the side of the Arab nation with the help of imperialism."

In later statements, Ocalan, who had by now converted into a Kamalist, proclaimed that "he is for Turkey and that Barzani and Talabani constitute danger for Turkey." Ocalan also declared his readiness to stand and fight against the KDP and the PUK in order to put an end to the federal structures of Iraqi Kurdistan and end the "rule of the feudal warlords Talabani and Barzani?". He furthers claims that if the PKK could not bring Barzani and Talabani to their knees, he and his followers will fight them to the end.

Acting upon these threats, Osman Ocalan has been sending PKK militiamen to the areas of Tuzele, Karukh, Asos, and amazingly to Qaradakh district from Makhmour and Qadirkerem. This is despite clear promises Osman Ocalan made to the Kurdistan Toilers Party (KTP) and other Kurdish political organizations, to stay at Dola Goka - and not move into areas administered by the PUK.

Surely, sending forces to Qadirkerem, from Makhmour through Iraqi Government controlled territories of Kirkuk and Qadirkerem, raises serious doubts and question, especially at this time when there are reports of Iraqi military mobilizations to attack Suleimani. Why is the PKK leadership attacking the PUK? Why are they forgetting PUK's good deeds toward them? Why are they forgetting PUK's dilemmas with the US, UK and Turkey regarding the PKK? Why the leadership of the PKK is initiating a fight with the PUK, which is adamant to avoid killing of Kurds by Kurds? Why is the PKK aggressively abusing and breaking its promised accords?

We believe that the true answer falls within the maniacal policies of Abdullah Ocalan who portrays himself as the supreme leader of the Kurdish people, and his avowed hostility towards the self-governing institutions of Iraqi Kurdistan.

Otherwise, when he broke down in the Turkish courthouse, Ocalan abandoned any real claims to Kurdish rights. Henceforth, why does he need armed squads in Iraqi Kurdistan and far away from Turkey? Why does he need armed forces in the areas of the PUK? Among PKK's provocations was the deployment of its forces in the liberated areas of Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). In response, the PUK has sought to avoid conflict. We did not use force, but rather chose political means. We asked the PKK through the KTP, the Kurdistan Communist Party (KCP) and other Kurdish dignitaries abroad to move its forces to Dola Goka, located outside the liberated areas of KRG. Two PKK armed squads, one in the Karukh area and the other in the Qaradakh area were surrounded by the PFK and without fighting were approached to leave their locations to their

bases in Dola Goka. The squad in the Karukh area did obeyed the orders, but the other in the Qaradakh have chosen to disobey.

Despite all sincere attempts made here and abroad to avoid bloodshed, the leadership of the PKK is still agitating for a confrontation. While the PUK has committed itself to the petitioning of one hundred Kurdish intellectuals to avoid fighting, the PKK ignores their call and is eager to fight. In other words, not only the PKK refuses to leave the areas of the KRG, but also, in the last days, have been approaching the foothills of Qaradakh and today at 1:30 p.m. local time have attacked the PFK bases in Razga and Maradu. Thus, they have initiated an unjust war against the PFK that only themselves (the PKK) will be responsible for the outcome.

We call upon Kurdish patriots all around the world to recognize that the PUK can protect its regions, not only from a dazzled and demoralized forces like those of the PKK, but also from forces of other countries. Therefore, our call is only to avoid the bloodshed and to avoid the unnecessary preoccupation of the PFK with conflicts that the leadership of the PKK is eagerly seeking to impose them on us. The PUK has the will and power to defend its regions and stop the aggressors. Yet, the PUK is eager to avoid the bloodshed of Kurds by Kurds. We implore all sincere Kurds to call upon the leadership of the PKK to stop their aggression. And, we welcome everyone and each delegate who wants to investigate the true situation in Kurdistan.

* * * * *

Khatami visit Mukri Kurdistan

Kurdish Media - 17 Sept 2000

BUKAN, Kurdistan (KM) - Mohammad Khatami the Iranian president started a four day visit to Mukri Kurdistan in Iran on Saturday.

Immediately after the FUK-PKK clashes in Kurdistan, the Iranian president started a four day visit to Mukri Kurdistan region in Iran. Khatami will inaugurate a number of water supply and electricity projects in Bukan, Tekab, and other impoverished cities of the province which is populated by a majority of Sonni Kurdish population, a minority of Shiite Azeri speakers and some thousands of Christians.

Bukan, with a population of over 187,000, is located 257 km south of the provincial capital Orumiyeh.

The historical name of the province from Mukri Kurdistan was changed to West Azerbaijan during Rezashah reign and after the revolution the name has not been changed. Rezashah also changed the international name of the country from Persia to Iran parallel to suppressing the national feelings of non-Persians in the country.

So far Khatami has skipped visiting Mahabad in his tour and has used West Azerbaijan in referring to the province name in his speeches in the Kurdish cities. Khatami failed to endorse any official change of the province name to Northern (or Mukri) Kurdistan which was proposed by his governor in Kurdistan province in his latest interview. Mahabad in Mukri Kurdistan is the birth place of Kurdistan republic in 1946.

"Khatami forgot Kurdish regions during the first three years of his presidency" commented a Kurdish observer. "He has forgotten his many promises to Kurds in his visits before becoming president and is now in Kurdistan in an early presidential campaign for next year elections."

It is interesting to note that Khatami's first visit to (Ardalan) Kurdistan, last month, happened a week after Khatami announced his plan for running for presidency for a second run. This happened after 12 July visit of Khatami to Berlin in Germany. This year 12 July in Iranian calendar coincided with the 10th anniversary of the assassination of Dr Ghasemlou, the leader of the Iranian Kurdistan Democratic Party. Dr Sharafkandi another KDPI leader was assassinated in Berlin Mykonos restaurant in 1992. Dr Ghasemlou and Dr Sharafkandi were both from Mukri Kurdistan in Iran.

Iranian minorities call for equal cultural and religious rights

IPS - 18 Sept 2000

LONDON 18TH Sept. (IPS) A group of prominent political, intellectual, scholar and media personalities of Iran's Turkish speaking community warned the authorities against what they describe as "continued social and cultural hegemony" by the "domineering" Fars against the Turk community of Iran.

Farsi, or commonly known as Persian, is Iran's unique official language thought in schools and spoken all over the country. In an open letter handed to President Mohammad Khatami who is touring Western and Eastern Azarbaijan Provinces, several personalities, including MPs from the region, denounce the "century-long nefarious pan-Farsism hegemony and monopoly" over the Iranian Turkish speaking community, estimated at more than 30 millions, or roughly half the nation's inhabitants, by the signatories.

Parts of the letter were read Saturday by the Persian service of the BBC.

"Pan-Farsism chauvinism, hegemony, racist attitude towards the (Iranian) Turks has brought the Turkish speaking Iranians to their knee and placed the (province of) Azarbaijan into a cultural, social and economic boycott", the letter said.

Observers said though representative from Iranian religious and ethnic minorities often speak about wide-spread discriminations they suffer under the Islamic regime, but this is certainly the first time that they go as far as to express their resentments in a letter to the head of the state.

While members of religious minorities that includes Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians and Baha'is are considered as citizen of second class compared to the Shi'a Muslims, the ethnic communities like the Azeris, Kurds, Arabs, Baluchs and Turkmen mostly struggle for cultural rights, including that of education in their own language alongside Farsi.

So far, no other languages except Farsi are allowed in schools throughout the country and all official communications are carried in this language.

However all ethnic languages like Azeri, Kurdish, Arabic or Baluchi are widely spoken in their respective regions and many current senior clerical rulers, including Ayatollah Ali Khameneh'i himself, are either Azeri or Turkish speaking.

Criticising President Khatami for having "neglected" his electoral promises, signatories called on the government to officialise the teaching of Turkish language at all primary, secondary and university levels and end all discriminations against the Azeris.

Observers said if the authorities do not heed the legitimate demands of the minorities for equal rights, secessionist currents could easily exploit their discontent and anger, especially since all the ethnic minorities are citing on Iranian borders with Pakistan and Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Republic of Azarbaijan, Turkey and Iraq.

But if Iranian Turkish speaking minority is granted the demands they are pushing for, the likelihood is that other minorities would immediately press for same demands, something the authorities are reluctant to grant.

Levon Davidian, an MP for the Armenian community said as a result of harsh Islamic laws, Iranian Christians are living Iran at the rate of more than a thousand a month.

>From a peak of more than 350.000 before the Islamic revolution of 1979, the Armenian popu-

lation of Iran has dwindled to 110.000 only, sources indicated.

Mr. Davidian told BBC that while Iranian Armenians face all kind of cultural, social, economic and administrative difficulties, Armenian organisations abroad do their best to attract Iranian Armenians and Christians out of the country they lived in since 1600.

The Jews, reckoned as among the oldest inhabitants of Iran, have seen their number cut by four, down to 25.000 from around 100.000 before the Islamic revolution.

"Jewish emigration from Iran has been accelerated by the trial of 13 Iranian Jews accused of espionage for Israel as well as by Government's refusal to employ Jews and other religious minorities", Mr. Maurice Motamed, the sole MP for the Iranian Jewish community told Iranians in Los Angeles. The situation of the Baha'is, an offshoot of Shi'ia sect, is even worse, as not being recognised by the mullahs, they are subject to annihilation, their temples and places of worship destroyed and members of the faith coerced into Islam.

Iranian lawyers, jurists and experts confirm that though Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians are officially recognised by the Islam-based regime as "religions of the Book", yet giving them same rights as Muslims is forbidden by Islam and for this simple reason none Shi'ia Iranians are systematically barred from public offices and administrations, officially discriminated and often insulted and humiliated.

* * * * *

Mert Gozde Kurds dissatisfied with Southeast action plan

Ankara - Turkish Daily News September 18, 2000

In accordance with a decision made at a meeting of the National Security Council (MGK) in December last year, all the state's institutions and organizations have had to contribute to the East and Southeast Action Plan; but the plan itself has dissatisfied politicians of Kurdish origin.

People's Democracy Party (HADEP) leader Ahmet Turan Demir, referring to comments in the press that "the state is going into action in the Southeast," gave his assessment of the plan as, "A draft that is no improvement on previous ones and that does nothing more than create disappointment among the people of the region."

Serafettin Elci, leader of the Democratic Mass Party (DKP), which was closed down by the Constitutional Court but still remains in existence because the justification paper for the verdict has not yet been published, said the state had made a wrong assessment of the region by approaching the Kurdish question from a security angle. Both Demir and Elci gave their assessments of the plan, which has now been put into effect officially with the signature of Prime Minister Ecevit, to the Turkish Daily News.

Demir: The plan doesn't warrant mentioning

"I have read those parts of the plan published in the papers again and again. What is written is nothing more than renewed disappointment. Not all the sections are there but what has been published doesn't even warrant mentioning," said Demir.

"The only concrete proposal is 'disbanding the village guards,' but even that is to be done in phases. 'We have to reform the guard system,' they say. It is a positive development but it should be abolished in one fell swoop, not in stages. Those people have to be used one way or another. But not as guards; in another capacities. There is a paragraph that says, 'Skilled civil servants are to be sent to the region.' I think they are wasting their time with absurdities. Very dissatisfactory," commented Demir.

The problem in the region is ethnicity

"The root of all the problems in the region is ethnicity," Demir said. "As long as you do not give this issue the attention it deserves and as long as you do nothing to really live up to the expectations of the people there, no plan will work.

"The people of the region also have terrible economic problems. Many people in Turkey, especially those in retirement, are on the verge of starvation but the very existence of the people in the Southeast hangs by a thread. The region's economy needs to be developed and investments need to be made. There needs to be incentives given for agricultural development. But there is nothing [in the plan] to this effect. Consequently, neither we nor the people of the region will be satisfied.

"Our esteemed prime minister has been speaking like a broken record for years. 'The problem is backwardness and the continuation of the feudal system,' he says. 'Regional development will solve everything,' he says. Other politicians have the same approach. But where is this development they speak of? To date, they have done nothing more serious than give speeches."

Let them ask the people

Demir further stated that: "Democracy dictates that you should ask the people of the region what they want before imposing such a plan on them. Alright, they didn't ask us, but they could have asked the duly elected mayors, professional institutions in the region and mass democratic organizations just what the people want. They are pretending not to notice the political and democratic dimensions of the issue. We have seen on occasion more positive approaches from governments or from the representatives of certain parties within the government. But this action plan just stifles these optimistic approaches."

Elci: State has got it all wrong

"There is nothing new or original in the action plan," Elci said. "It is a plan drawn up in accordance with the decisions of the MGK and within the framework of the National Politics Document. It approaches the Kurdish issue in the region entirely from a security angle.

"You can see the entire basic aim of the plan in this light. The authorities involved in the plan maintain that the battle against the Kurdistan Workers' Party [PKK] will not be considered won without first ensuring the economic and social development of the region.

"As can be seen, the aim of the plan is to completely crush the PKK. What is being stressed is not the resolution of the Kurdish question but success in the battle with the PKK. This is the essence of the plan."

Secret behind the plan's secrecy

Elci continued: "The real reason the plan is being kept secret is not to see the region developed by means thereof, nor to bring law and democracy to the region; it is to impose in a very authoritarian way the central administration's understanding that the Kurds do not exist.

"If the real reason for the plan had been to truly develop the region and to bring happiness to the people of the region through applying human rights, then they would not have kept it secret. Instead, they would have initiated a major propaganda campaign to inform the people about it.

"As can be seen, those who prepared the plan have only allowed the parts of it they want, to be leaked to the press and not the plan in its entirety. They have got the press to work to dispel any possible adverse reaction to the plan. Let us wait until it is being applied and we have seen some concrete results before we make any further assessment."

Le Monde

DIMANCHE 17 - LUNDI 18 SEPTEMBRE 2000

L'Irak à l'assaut de l'Iran

Il y a vingt ans, Saddam Hussein lançait ses troupes contre le régime honni de Khomeiny. L'obstination des deux autocrates enlisa leurs pays dans un conflit de huit ans, qui isola Bagdad et laissa ses dirigeants amers. Le Koweït allait bientôt en faire les frais



GUICHARD/SGMA

LA tentation est grande, à Bagdad, d'en finir une fois pour toutes avec le régime de l'"imposteur Khomeiny", affaibli par ses dissensions internes et par son isolement diplomatique grandissant», mais «l'effondrement du régime iranien n'est pas acquis, l'offensive irakienne pourrait tout aussi bien susciter en Iran une réaction nationaliste qui pourrait consolider le régime en neutralisant les oppositions». En quelques lignes, tout est dit. Le jour même de la décision du Conseil de la révolution irakien de lancer les forces armées contre l'Iran «pour dis-

A Téhéran, des prisonniers de guerre irakiens sont contraints de reconnaître leur culpabilité, un portrait de l'ayatollah Khomeiny épinglé sur la poitrine (ci-dessus).

Deux gardiens de la révolution iraniens ont été tués lors d'une contre-offensive irakienne dans une zone marécageuse à l'est de Bassorah (ci-contre). Sur les 25 000 soldats iraniens engagés dans cette bataille, seuls 250 auraient survécu.



PAVLOVSKI/SGMA

suader le régime raciste iranien de porter atteinte à la souveraineté irakienne », le bulletin de l'étranger du Monde émet l'hypothèse que vont vérifier les huit longues années d'une guerre inutile. Le pari de Saddam Hussein : renverser la révolution islamique voisine, est hasardeux. La guerre pour la patrie, loin de l'affaiblir, va donner au contraire à un régime iranien contesté la meilleure des légitimités.

Le président irakien qui a ponctué sa prise du pouvoir, un an auparavant, par l'exécution de ses opposants au sein du parti Baas, croit pourtant avoir l'avantage. En dix ans, son pays, enrichi par le pétrole, a opéré un fantastique décollage économique. L'Irak s'est couvert d'infrastructures et une large classe moyenne bénéficie des largesses d'un Etat-providence qui entend rivaliser avec les pays occidentaux. En France, Saddam Hussein séduit Jacques Chirac et intéresse Jean-Pierre Chevènement. Mais le régime a également soigné son appareil militaire. Si elle n'a pas encore vécu de conflit de grande ampleur, l'armée irakienne se fait la main depuis quelques années déjà en réprimant brutalement les mouvements séparatistes kurdes dans le nord du pays.

Au même instant, la République islamique d'Iran est secouée par des convulsions post-révolutionnaires. Les groupes hétéroclites dont l'alliance tactique a conduit au renversement du chah s'entre-déchirent. Les purges successives décapitent l'Etat, son administration et son armée. Pour Saddam Hussein, le moment est venu de réveiller la vieille haine qui oppose les Arabes aux Persans. Pour faire coup double. Apparaître tout d'abord à la face du monde comme le champion des Arabes, le gardien du Golfe comme il est des protecteurs des Lieux saints. L'Egypte mise au ban de la Ligue arabe après la signature des accords de Camp David a laissé une place de choix vacante, l'enjeu vaut bien une réconciliation avec l'Arabie saoudite, dont le conservatisme wahhabite n'a pourtant que peu d'affinités avec une doctrine baasiste mâtinée de culte de la personnalité. Saddam Hussein veut aussi priver de tout support sur le territoire irakien les mouvements contestataires qui ont déjà tenté d'assassiner le baasiste Tarek Aziz et qui espèrent gagner à leur cause la majorité chiite de l'Irak à la faveur de la révolution voisine.

Les deux voisins ont, il est vrai, de la suite dans les idées. De la bataille de Qadisiya, qui oppose en 637 la Perse sassanide à un compagnon du Prophète, aux visées sur la Mésopotamie de la dynastie des Safavides, sept siècles

Les deux voisins ont de la suite dans les idées. De la bataille de Qadisiya, qui oppose en 637 la Perse sassanide à un compagnon du Prophète, aux visées sur la Mésopotamie de la dynastie des Safavides, sept siècles plus tard, leur contentieux a la vie dure

plus tard, leur contentieux a la vie dure. En 1913, puis en 1937, des traités règlent de nouvelles disputes territoriales, notamment sur le Chatt el-Arab, formé du Tigre et de l'Euphrate, dans une région riche de gisements pétroliers. En 1975, une médiation algérienne permet d'éviter le pire. A titre provisoire. A partir du mois d'avril 1980, les incidents de frontières se multiplient. Le 17 septembre, Saddam Hussein dénonce le traité d'Alger. Cinq jours plus tard, le lundi 22 septembre au matin, l'Irak passe à l'attaque.

L'effet de surprise lui assure un avantage immédiat mais peu déterminant. Au vrai, les espoirs irakiens sont consommés au bout de quelques jours seulement. Après la prise de la ville iranienne de Khorramchahr, le 28 septembre, la percée attendue tarde. L'armée irakienne piétine. Dès le début de l'année 1981, ce sont au contraire les Iraniens qui engagent les premières contre-offensives. Effroyablement coûteuses en hommes, elles témoignent pourtant de la détermination des agresseurs. Va s'ensuivre alors le condensé d'un siècle d'horreurs militaires. Vagues de fantassins fauchés par la mitraille, usage intensif d'armes chimiques, « guerre économique », « guerre des villes », bombardements des civils, rien n'est épargné aux deux pays arc-boutés de part et d'autre d'un front tracé par le sang.

Non seulement l'Irak n'est pas parvenu à percer le rideau défensif iranien, mais il ne se montre pas capable non plus de conserver ses positions. A partir de mars 1982, Téhéran lance de grandes offensives qui lui permettent de libérer la quasi-totalité de son territoire. En mai, Khorramchahr est reprise. En juin, l'Irak prend acte du tour nouveau que prend la guerre en retirant la totalité de ses forces à l'intérieur de ses frontières et en décrétant unilatéralement un cessez-le-feu. Le Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies appelle alors à l'arrêt des hostilités. Peine perdue. En juillet, les

soldats iraniens pénètrent pour la première fois en Irak.

La guerre, alimentée au départ par l'ambition démesurée de Saddam Hussein, est prolongée par l'acharnement de Ruhollah Khomeiny à faire plier l'Irak, autant pour prendre une revanche personnelle contre un régime qui l'avait expulsé en 1978 de la ville sainte de Nadjaf, où il s'était réfugié dès 1964, que pour museler sa propre opposition et faire taire les pragmatiques. Le conflit lui a déjà donné l'occasion de se débarrasser des modérés comme le président Bani Sadr, qui a fui en France. L'imam impose la guerre à outrance.

La réplique irakienne ne tarde pas. La guerre économique est déclarée. Bagdad applique un blocus à l'île de Kharg, principal terminal pétrolier iranien. Téhéran menace alors de bloquer le Golfe. L'année 1983 se passe sans avancées notables. Chaque camp guette des signes d'usure. La guerre devient totale. Au début de l'année 1984, les Iraniens accusent pour la première fois l'Irak d'avoir utilisé des armes chimiques pour tenter de bloquer une offensive victorieuse sur les îles Majnoun, dans les marais du sud de l'Irak. Puis Bagdad déclenche la « guerre des villes » en tirant ses premiers missiles sur les villes iraniennes. Un peu plus tard, l'Irak inaugure également la « guerre des pétroliers » en s'attaquant à un tanker.

Pendant trois années, de 1985 à 1988, la ligne du front sud qui épouse grossièrement le Chatt el-Arab va vivre au rythme des attaques iraniennes et des combats désespérés livrés en retour par les Irakiens. Alors que l'Irak s'acharne sur Kharg, l'armée iranienne traverse le Chatt el-Arab et conquiert la presqu'île de Fao. Son armée campe aux portes de Bassorah, ravagée par les bombardements et vers laquelle convergent les vagues humaines iraniennes jetées contre les fortifications dressées à la hâte par Bagdad. Mais Bassorah tient et le second front ouvert dans le Kurdistan irakien par Téhéran qui s'appuie sur

les factions locales est également circonscrit.

Dans les eaux tourmentées du Golfe, où les belligérants mouillent désormais des mines, les bavures font craindre une internationalisation du conflit. Le blocage de la route du pétrole inquiète les pays occidentaux. Les Etats-Unis dépêchent leur marine et font passer les pétroliers koweïtiens sous pavillon américain. La France, qui rompt les relations diplomatiques avec l'Iran, prend également position. Alors que l'Irak est soutenu par une bonne partie des pays occidentaux, le scandale de l'« Irangate » éclate. Pour collecter des fonds à l'intention des antisandinistes au Nicaragua et pour tenter d'obtenir la libération des otages américains au Liban, l'administration américaine, le « Grand Satan », aidée par les Israéliens, a discrètement vendu des armes à son ennemi iranien... Le scandale, énorme, épargne pourtant Ronald Reagan et George Bush.

SUR le terrain, l'Irak a tenu. Après un revers en février 1988, dans le Kurdistan, à Halabja, ville martyre passée à l'arme chimique par les troupes irakiennes, l'armée de Bagdad reprend l'avantage : elle revient à Fao, rejette les troupes iraniennes au-delà du Chatt el-Arab et chasse celles qui se sont installées dans les marais, à l'est de Bassorah. La contre-offensive se poursuit dans le nord. En juillet le territoire irakien est presque entièrement libéré. Bagdad relance également la « guerre des villes » et, pour la première fois depuis le début du conflit, Téhéran est touchée. Le moral de la population iranienne tombe au plus bas. Le 3 juillet, le croiseur américain *Vincennes* abat par méprise, selon la thèse officielle, un Airbus civil iranien, causant la mort de 290 personnes.

Affaibli par la maladie, Khomeiny finit par accéder à la requête du président du Parlement, Hachémi Rafsandjani : il accepte le 18 juillet 1988 le cessez-le-feu stipulé par la résolution 598 des Nations unies, adoptée un an plus tôt et qui prévoit également le retour aux frontières de 1980 et l'échange des prisonniers. Des centaines de milliers de soldats et de civils - peut-être un million - sont donc morts pour rien. L'Iran, qui a mené l'essentiel de la guerre en terre étrangère, en sort affaibli mais non ruiné, au contraire de l'Irak qui se tourne vers les pétromonarchies pour éponger ses dettes. En vain. Se sentant floué, Saddam Hussein va bientôt lancer son pays dans une nouvelle aventure. La deuxième guerre du Golfe peut commencer.

Gilles Paris

Les unités anti-terroristes en reconversion après la fin du conflit armé



ISTANBUL, 15 sept (AFP) - 4h30 - Glaive de l'état, ils ont traqué pendant des années les rebelles kurdes dans les montagnes du sud-est anatolien: aujourd'hui, les membres de la police anti-terroriste turque se reconvertissent dans la chasse aux voleurs et criminels dans la rue.

La fin de la guerre lancée par le parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK) contre l'état turc les a mis en chômage technique, nécessitant une réorientation d'un appareil de sécurité proliférant.

Depuis que le PKK a jeté l'éponge en annonçant l'arrêt de sa lutte armée en septembre --après 15 ans de combats et plus de 35.000 morts-- et son retrait de Turquie, le calme règne dans le sud-est à majorité kurde, autrefois théâtre d'après combats, et le PKK n'a plus commis d'attentats depuis des mois.

La police d'Ankara a donc reçu en renfort 70 membres d'une unité anti-terroriste, qui patrouillent avec leurs collègues. Les membres des "équipes spéciales", qui ont la solide réputation d'être sans pitié et d'une brutalité parfois disproportionnée, brillent surtout dans la lutte contre les voleurs et les criminels. En une semaine, les équipes mixtes ont pris 20 criminels en flagrant délit.

Mais la reconversion n'est pas toujours aussi aisée. Le gouvernement n'a pas encore de plan pour l'avenir des quelque 70.000 "gardiens de villages", les miliciens kurdes qui se sont battus aux côtés de l'armée contre le PKK.

Avec l'arrêt des combats, ils se retrouvent inactifs dans une région pauvre qui ne s'est toujours pas relevée des destructions de la guerre. Les gardiens de village restent pourtant armés et salariés de l'état. Un mauvais début pour la reconstruction dans les régions kurdes.

De même, le retour des habitants dans leurs villages se fait au compte-goutte. L'argent et l'emploi font défaut.

Les Turcs commencent à peine à réaliser l'ampleur de la tâche dans le sud-est et le gouffre qui sépare l'ouest relativement prospère et l'est complètement déshérité.

Le jour même où les visiteurs se pressaient à la foire high-tech d'Istanbul, la ville d'Hakkari (60.000 habitants), dans l'extrême sud-est, recevait son premier feu de signalisation routière. Les habitants fascinés par la nouveauté, selon les journaux, s'immobilisaient plusieurs minutes devant le nouvel appareil pour suivre ses changements de couleur.

L'armée turque elle-même accorde plus d'importance au problème de la pauvreté qu'aux facteurs militaires, même si elle refuse de parler d'une fin de la menace du PKK.

Un récent rapport du Conseil national de sécurité (MGK) dominé par les militaires, qui réunit mensuellement généraux et dirigeants politiques, soulignait que la clef d'une solution aux difficultés dans le sud-est était économique. Mais les militaires refusent toute concession politique aux Kurdes, pas même une télévision dans leur langue.

Pourtant, les choses bougent: la semaine dernière, Devlet Bahçeli, chef du parti de la droite nationaliste MHP, membre de la coalition gouvernementale, a fait sensation lors d'une visite dans le sud-est: il a ouvertement applaudi le discours d'un représentant éminent du parti pro-kurde de la Démocratie du Peuple (HADEP), le maire de Diyarbakir Feridun Celik.

Un geste inusité car le HADEP est considéré par les autorités comme une excroissance politique du PKK et donc politiquement infréquentable. Et un signe que l'évolution ne concerne pas que les services de sécurité.

La peine capitale pour délit séparatiste doit rester, selon M. Bahçeli



ANKARA, 17 sept (AFP) - 15h52 - Le vice Premier ministre turc, Devlet Bahçeli, a laissé entendre dimanche que la peine de mort pouvait être abolie sauf pour un article du code pénal punissant les actes séparatistes et aux termes duquel a été condamné le chef rebelle kurde, Abdullah Ocalan.

"L'article 125 du code pénal doit rester tel qu'il est jusqu'à l'élimination totale du terrorisme" du Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK), a dit M. Bahçeli, leader du parti de l'Action nationaliste (MHP), membre de la coalition gouvernementale turque, cité par l'agence Anatolie.

Il a estimé que d'autres articles du code pénal turc, prévoyant aussi la peine capitale pour des actes non-séparatistes, pouvaient être modifiés.

"Mais l'article 125 ne doit pas figurer parmi eux étant donné les souffrances que la Turquie a du subir en raison du PKK", a-t-il précisé.

La Turquie, candidate à l'Union européenne depuis décembre dernier, est tenue d'abolir la peine de mort qui existe dans ses lois bien que non appliquée depuis 1984.

Le Premier ministre turc Bulent Ecevit se heurte à la vive opposition du MHP et en partie à celle de son troisième partenaire, le Parti de la Mère patrie (ANAP, centre droit) de Mesut Yilmaz pour abolir cette peine.

De nombreuses associations des familles qui ont perdu leurs fils dans les combats durant les 15 ans de rébellion armée du PKK font également pression sur le gouvernement pour que Ocalan, condamné à la peine de mort en juin 1999 pour trahison et séparatisme, soit pendu.

Le PKK a mis fin officiellement en septembre 1999 à sa rébellion armée à la demande de son chef mais l'armée turque s'est dite déterminée à pourchasser jusqu'au bout les rebelles qui seraient au nombre de quelque 500 dans les montagnes turques et 5.000 autres dans les pays voisins de la Turquie.

Quelque 36.500 personnes ont été tuées dans les violences entourant la lutte armée lancée en 1984 par le PKK en vue d'obtenir la création d'un Etat kurde indépendant dans le sud-est de la Turquie à majorité kurde.

Rentrée scolaire: la Turquie encore loin de ses objectifs égalitaires



ISTANBUL, 19 sept (AFP) - 9h24 - Sur cinq enfants, seuls les trois plus jeunes garçons d'Aziz Simsek ont effectué, comme 14 millions d'écoliers turcs, la rentrée scolaire dans un pays où les chances devant l'enseignement demeurent très inégales, notamment pour la population kurde.

Aziz, 50 ans, est manoeuvre dans une banlieue pauvre d'Istanbul depuis qu'il a fui son village, en 1994, dans le sud-est à majorité kurde, partiellement vidé pour les besoins de la lutte contre la guérilla séparatiste.

"Leur rentrée à chacun me coûte près d'un mois de loyer (100 millions de livres turques, 150 dollars), mais je voudrais au moins qu'ils apprennent à lire et à écrire", raconte-t-il. Ses deux enfants les plus âgés, auxquels il n'avait pas les moyens d'offrir l'école publique, aident la famille à joindre les deux bouts.

Selon des statistiques publiées par le syndicat enseignant Egitim-Sen, 30% des enfants en âge d'être scolarisés travaillent et parmi ces derniers, 4 sur 5 ont totalement abandonné les bancs de l'école.

Le cinquième restant suit des cours pendant une demi-journée et a une activité rémunérée l'autre moitié du temps, grâce au système de la double vacation qui permet à un instituteur d'enseigner à deux classes le même jour.

Dans leur village proche de Batman, les enfants d'Aziz avaient la chance d'avoir une école et un instituteur, mais des classes surchargées de quelque 80 élèves.

A Yeni Bosna, quartier ouvrier d'Istanbul peuplé majoritairement de ces migrants venus du sud-est, la situation est peu différente: les deux filles de Halim Yemeneci, arrivé là en 1994, partagent leurs bancs avec plus de 60 camarades de classe.

Malgré un objectif affiché de 30 enfants par classe, la moyenne nationale est de plus de 50 écoliers.

Bahar et Hulya Yemeneci, 10 et 13 ans, ont pourtant plus de chance que leurs cinq frères et soeurs qui courent tous après les petits métiers pour aider leur père sans emploi.

Si elles jouissent, elles, de la possibilité d'étudier, c'est que, plus jeunes, elles ont pu commencer l'école primaire dans la métropole, alors que dans leur village, également proche de Batman, il n'y avait tout simplement pas d'instituteur pour leurs deux frères et leurs trois soeurs.

Ils font aujourd'hui partie de ces 21% de mineurs illettrés dans l'ensemble de la Turquie, un chiffre qui monte à 34% dans le sud-est du pays et même à 47% pour les filles, d'après les chiffres présentés par Egitim-Sen.

La raison, c'est "la guerre" - comme dit Aziz - qui a sévi pendant 15 ans de rébellion armée du Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK), laissant la région dans un état de sous-développement et de sous-équipement criant.

A l'occasion de cette rentrée 2000, la première depuis l'arrêt quasi-complet des hostilités entre PKK et armée turque, le syndicat enseignant fait un bilan affligeant de l'état de l'enseignement primaire du pays, notamment dans les provinces à majorité kurde.

Selon Egitim-Sen, il manque pas moins de 3.300 écoles dans 7 provinces du sud-est, sur un total national de 75.000 écoles. De même, ce sont quelque 14.000 instituteurs qui font là-bas défaut.

Une inégalité devant l'accès à l'enseignement qui ne fait que s'accroître à l'entrée au lycée, déjà réservée à seulement 22,4% des jeunes Turcs.

Ainsi à Diyarbakir, capitale du sud-est, il n'y a que 6.000 places en lycée pour 12.000 "diplômés" de l'école primaire chaque année.

Et l'érosion régulière de la part du budget pour l'Education Nationale dans les dotations ministérielles, passé de 13,2% en 1990 à 7,13% en 2000, n'est pas pour inverser la tendance.

Des manuels scolaires de Bagdad pour les écoles kurdes du nord de l'Irak



BAGDAD, 19 sept (AFP) - 17h49 - Le gouvernement de Bagdad va fournir deux millions de manuels scolaires aux écoles du Kurdistan irakien qui échappe au contrôle du pouvoir central à Bagdad, a annoncé mardi l'agence officielle INA.

Selon l'agence, des livres en langue kurde figurent dans la cargaison qui devrait être acheminée "dans les prochains jours" dans les provinces d'Erbil, Dahouk et Souleimaniyeh.

Depuis 1994, Bagdad annonce au début de chaque année scolaire l'envoi de manuels scolaires dans le Kurdistan, qui échappe à son contrôle depuis l'insurrection en mars 1991 qui avait suivi la guerre du Golfe.

Le Parti Démocratique du Kurdistan (PDK, de Massoud Barzani) et l'Union Patriotique du Kurdistan (UPK, de Jalal Talabani) se partagent le contrôle du nord de l'Irak. Ils avaient formé un gouvernement non reconnu internationalement après des élections en 1992.

U.S. Pressures Russia to Halt Laser-Technology Sale to Iran

By Judith Miller
New York Times Service

The United States has been pressing Russia not to proceed with plans to sell Iran laser technology that Washington says can be used to make fuel for nuclear weapons, according to administration officials.

Officials said that, since July, President Bill Clinton has raised the prospective sale of laser technology at least two times in meetings with President Vladimir Putin. The most recent occurred this month at the United Nations summit meeting.

Mr. Putin assured Mr. Clinton then that Russia would work with Washington to resolve the dispute, officials with knowledge of the discussions said. U.S. officials said they were encouraged by that pledge.

But they also called the response ambiguous, because Russian and U.S. technical advisers disagreed with each other over whether the equipment could help Iran in what Washington contends is a secret program to acquire nuclear bombs.

The administration officials said that Russian sales of nuclear technology to Iran had been a long-standing concern, but that the administration grew particularly worried about the laser equipment after a U.S. private fuel provider abandoned the product, deciding that it was not economically competitive in a civilian nuclear program.

And given America's own troubles in trying to develop a cost-efficient laser technology, the United States is said to believe that Iran is more likely to want to make weapons than to develop commercial plants.

As a result, the United States has been working for three months to dissuade Russia from allowing a center associated with the DV Efremov Institute of St. Petersburg, part of Russia's Atomic Energy Ministry, to proceed with a contract to sell the technology to Iran.

U.S. charges that Russia is providing critical technology to Iran has roiled their relations for years. American intelligence agencies long have believed that Iran has a secret program to develop nuclear weapons — as well as biological and chemical arms — dating back even to the rule of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, which ended with the 1979 revolution. Given its ample oil and gas resources, Iran's desire to generate electricity with nuclear power, the analysts argued, was automatically seen as suspicious.

Russian nuclear contacts with Tehran have expanded since 1995, when cash-strapped Moscow signed a contract with Iran to complete the Bushehr nuclear power station, which its German builders had abandoned in 1979 at the onset of the Iranian revolution. Despite pressure by the Clinton administration and sanctions by Congress, Russia has refused to abandon the project.

U.S. officials do not regard Bushehr

as a source of nuclear material that could be diverted to a bomb-making program, but the administration fears that the project will train a generation of Iranian physicists and engineers in nuclear technologies.

But last spring, the United States learned that the Science and Technology Center of Microtechnology, a unit of the Efremov Institute, had signed a contract to provide the laser equipment to Iran. Separating isotopes is a costly endeavor, intensive in time and energy, and is essential to making nuclear bombs or fuel for light water civilian power reactors.

The United States also had an extensive program to develop laser isotope separation technology for commercial purposes. It hoped that reactor fuel produced with this technology could be enriched using one-tenth as much electricity, a boon to the nuclear power industry.

But after investing almost \$2 billion in the technology, the Energy Department and the U.S. Enrichment Corp., America's privatized nuclear fuel provider, abandoned the technology last year, arguing that the method was too expensive to commercialize and probably would always be.

With that experience, Washington reacted with alarm to intelligence reports from multiple sources indicating that Iran was trying to buy such technology from Russia.

Oil Threats By Saddam Discounted In the West

By Joseph Fitchett
International Herald Tribune

PARIS — The Iraqi leader, Saddam Hussein, helped drive oil prices even higher this week with his threats of withholding Iraq's production or even disrupting Kuwait's, but Western officials and Arab diplomats said Tuesday that his threats were unlikely to lead to an energy crisis or military conflict.

"Saddam loves headlines and chose the moment to get some," according to a U.S. official, who said that the tension over rising oil prices had given special resonance to threats by Mr. Saddam to take unspecified actions against Kuwait because it allegedly has pumped oil from Iraqi-owned territory.

On Tuesday, fresh reassurances came from the oil-producing cartel about possible production increases if prices continued surging.

But in jittery markets, Iraq clearly has gained some psychological leverage thanks to its new position as the swing producer in a supply squeeze, analysts said. Its threats over recent days have had significant impact, Western officials acknowledged, because Iraqi oil has become essential in the current pressure of demand for more oil supplies.

But any actual Iraqi move by Baghdad to disrupt oil flows would almost certainly backfire quickly, an Arab ambassador said, noting that U.S., European and Arab forces could contain any military threat.

If Iraq decided to cut its own exports of petroleum under the terms of a United Nations oil-for-food plan, he and Western officials said, the threat of imminent shortage and market turmoil would create pressure on the Clinton administration to open the U.S. strategic reserve of petroleum, which is designed for such emergencies, the sources said.

"In that contingency, there would be sympathy for U.S. action from Saudi Arabia and other leading producers that

normally want to see the market operate without intervention," a European official said.

Baghdad radio, reporting on an Iraqi cabinet meeting late Monday, quoted Mr. Saddam as accusing the United States and its allies of exploiting the shortage of oil in world markets in order to tighten the Western grip on Arab and other petroleum-producing countries. The broadcast did not repeat the complaints, attributed to Mr. Saddam personally last week, that Kuwait was drilling wells at angles from its own territory and siphoning off oil from Iraq's reserves — exactly the charge that preceded Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

Defense Secretary William Cohen warned Mr. Saddam last weekend that the United States, Britain and its other allies in the Gulf "can certainly handle Saddam should he choose to take any kind of aggressive action."

Mr. Saddam may believe that he has room for maneuver because the United States has entered an election period, an Arab diplomat said. "It would be a miscalculation by Saddam, but he has made many mistakes in the past," he added.

U.S.-led forces in the Gulf, backed by British, French and Arab airpower, have already taken precautionary actions after the threats, according to a U.S. official.

Iraq's complaint, alleging a Kuwaiti theft of Iraqi oil, came shortly after Kuwait Petroleum Corp., the state-owned oil producer, filed a claim for \$15 billion in war reparations against Baghdad for damage to Kuwaiti facilities when its forces invaded and occupied Kuwait until the Gulf War in 1991. This week Kuwait denied Iraqi allegations about slant drilling, invited independent arbitration over the contested oil reserves and said that it was prepared to defend itself.

Top officials in OPEC reiterated Tuesday that they expected oil prices to start falling soon, pledging to pump more crude if the price continued to rise. Saudi Arabia, the world's largest producer, said again this week that it would utilize more of its unused export capacity unless prices started dropping back from their current levels, of about \$35 a barrel, to \$25.

Mr. Saddam has insisted that Saudi Arabia cannot meet world demand, emphasizing instead that world demand has created a situation favorable to the demands of oil-producing states.

It was unclear how Mr. Saddam might be able to turn his country's current market leverage to political advantage, analysts said, pointing out that Iraq re-

mains diplomatically isolated.

Iraq exported nearly 3 million barrels in August, its highest amount since the Gulf War in 1991 and equivalent to the recent production increases by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. So far, the additional oil in the market has failed to reverse the climbing trend that has carried prices to their highest level in a decade.

Uncertainties about Iraqi oil have increased amid a flurry of possibly related current developments, including reports — unconfirmed by Western intelligence sources — that Mr. Saddam has been diagnosed with potentially life-threatening cancer.

For the first time, an Iraqi opposition group based in Iran, the Council for Islamic Revolution, said Tuesday that it would back U.S. military action aimed at Mr. Saddam's overthrow. After a meeting in New York with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright last week, the front's leader, Mohammed Bager Hakim, was quoted Tuesday on Iran's state-run radio calling Mr. Saddam the supreme threat to the Iraqi people. The Clinton administration provides official but limited support to another opposition group, the Iraqi National Congress.

In recent weeks, apparently in anticipation that sanctions against Baghdad might be eased soon if UN weapons inspectors can return to Iraq, Russia has obtained UN approval for two humanitarian flights direct to Baghdad.

At the same time, France warned last week that sanctions cannot be modified until Iraq complies with UN demands for access for arms inspectors — a reminder, diplomats said, that rash moves by Mr. Saddam could push the French government and Russia to shelve their efforts to find a compromise easing the pressures on Baghdad.

Syrians Find Life a Bit Easier Under Assad's Son

By Howard Schneider
Washington Post Service

DAMASCUS — From raising salaries for government employees to lowering taxes on cars and exhibiting an apparently growing tolerance for political debate, the new Syrian president, Bashar Assad, has moved quickly to start putting his stamp on the country his father presided over for 30 years.

Only three months into the young president's tenure after the death of his father, Hafez Assad, in June, local analysts and officials say it remains difficult to predict his ultimate direction: whether he will aggressively reform a stagnant, state-dominated system, or avoid decisions that challenge the financially and politically powerful. But in the meantime, they add, the tone has changed and new questions are being asked, even if the answers are uncertain.

Although Syrian officials talk more freely and in more detail about such issues as unemployment, they also cast many of their proposed solutions in terms of improving government enterprises and programs, not scrapping them for private business.

Nor is there any official talk of converting what has been a tightly run police state into a more democratic system.

Intelligence and military officials who bolstered the long tenure of Hafez Assad remain influential, and cautious about change. The technical state of war with Israel and Israel's occupation of the Golan Heights remain barriers to any radical departure in the attitude of the new government.

Although he appeared frequently in public before his elevation to the presidency, Bashar Assad, 35, has made virtually no public appearances since an inaugural address to Parliament. This has reform-minded Syrians and others concerned that he is falling into his father's cautious habits.

"He is a continuation," said a Western diplomat. "More active, with some new dynamism, but keeping the same fundamental structures in place."

Syria is a critical participant in the attempt to forge Arab-Israeli peace, so its internal policies are closely

watched by American and other diplomats.

Bashar Assad has concentrated so far on internal matters, beginning with economic changes likely to cement popular support. But he also directed a less intrusive Syrian role in the recent Lebanese parliamentary elections.

A 25 percent increase in public sector

salaries will pump about \$20 million a month into an economy that is at least in recession, if not outright depression. Parliament is due to debate laws to abolish rent control, allow private banking and establish a stock market.

The government is hoping changes such as these will encourage Syrians to repatriate an estimated \$50 billion or more held in Lebanese and other foreign banks. Rules banning the private importing of automobiles have been dropped, and a stifling 300 percent customs tax has been cut in half.

As fond as he is of his 1958 Opel, Adnan Zayn, a furniture maker, said the changes would prove popular in a country whose streets often resemble a 1950s drive-in: full of fin-tailed Chevrolets and Thunderbirds kept on the road not out of love for classic cars but by necessity.

Auto dealers say prices have fallen as much as 30 percent because of the new rules, and Mr. Zayn said he expected that the freer auto market would "take all the old cars away — they will be gone from the streets."

The atmosphere for political debate is also opening. The state-run newspaper now includes columns and letters to the editor critical of government policies.

In August, a trio of cabinet ministers appeared on Syrian television and discussed public finances. They even responded to sometimes biting questions about job conditions and salaries.

In perhaps the boldest test yet of the new limits, an estimated 150 writers, artists and intellectuals gathered in a suburban Damascus home last week to begin what they dubbed "the national dialogue" about the country's political structure.

While not overtly opposed to the government, organizers told those invited that they hoped to spark a broad debate about Syria's political system and how to build civil institutions in a country in which power was concentrated for three decades in one man and his allies.

Those are the very types of issues Bashar Assad has said he wants discussed.

While those in attendance joked that they were certain the intelligence agencies had monitored who attended and what was said, the four-hour discussion proceeded without interruption and included some sharp language.

"Government should take the sword off the backs of the people," a writer and university professor, Antone Maqdasi, one of the two speakers advertised on the invitation, told the gathering, according to participants.

Such a meeting would have been unlikely under Hafez Assad, who greeted organized opposition with force, jailed dissidents and created an atmosphere in which Syrians in conversation often replaced his name with a pronoun and a cautious roll of the eyes.

"Gradually we are trying to change these things," said Information Minister Adnan Omran, whose new guidelines to the state-run media included one from Bashar Assad himself: to stop the fawning praise and frequent photographs in daily newspapers.

"The idea is to have an information policy that respects citizens and their feelings," he said. "He wants to concentrate on issues, with objectivity."

Diplomats and local citizens say they notice some change already.

One economist here pointed out that, for the first time, government-controlled newspapers have conceded that there is an unemployment problem. The planning minister says the rate is 20 percent.

In an interview, the minister, Issam Zaim, was also — for Syria — uncharacteristically blunt in assessing the country's recent history. State-run industries are inefficient and technically backward, he said, the work force is underpaid and unmotivated and the bureaucracy is stifling and corrupt.

Iran arrests member of outlawed Kurdish democratic party

TEHRAN, Sept 21 (AFP) - 10h40 - A member of Iran's outlawed opposition Democratic Kurdish Party (IDKP) was arrested carrying grenades and various arms, the conservative Tehran Times paper reported Thursday.

It said Hossein Pourmand had clashed with security forces in the city of Piranshahr, in the northwestern province of West Azerbaijan, before being arrested "carrying grenades and arms."

The paper did not give the exact date of the incident nor any further information.

The outlawed opposition Iran's Democratic Kurdish party was created in 1945 by Qazi Mohammad and, in the past, represented Iran's most important Kurdish opposition movement. The party's main goal was the creation of an independent Kurdish state.

Le lent réchauffement des relations gréco-turques

UN AN après les tremblements de terre qui ont frappé successivement la Grèce et la Turquie, le rapprochement entre les deux pays se poursuit. La détente avait commencé avant les catastrophes, mais celles-ci ont donné une assise populaire au changement politique voulu par Athènes, après des années d'une hostilité qui a failli déboucher à plusieurs reprises sur un conflit armé (la dernière fois en janvier 1996). Formés dans les mêmes écoles, les deux ministres des affaires étrangères, Georges Papan-dréou et İsmail Cem, ont établi des relations personnelles qu'ils cultivent à toute occasion. Ces bonnes dispositions ont abouti en décembre dernier au Conseil européen par l'inclusion de la Turquie dans la liste des candidats à l'Union européenne, après que la Grèce eut levé le veto qu'elle opposait jusqu'alors.

La « diplomatie du tremblement de terre » n'a pas que des partisans, à Athènes comme à Ankara, et les critiques du gouvernement Simitis soulignent qu'aucun des sujets fondamentaux de litige n'a été réglé ni même abordé. « Il faut de la patience, il faut insister sur notre effort », a reconnu le premier ministre grec lors de son discours de rentrée à la foire de Salonique. « La Turquie n'a pas encore accepté l'idée que, devenant candidate à l'Union européenne, elle doit changer son comportement. Certains s'attendent qu'on puisse changer d'un jour à l'autre cette situation. On ne peut pas changer d'un jour à l'autre, a précisé Costas Simitis au cours d'un entretien avec *Le Monde*. C'est pourquoi on a commencé les discussions avec la Turquie. Beaucoup de gens nous disent : qu'est-ce que vous avez gagné ? Rien ! Outre les accords que nous avons signés, nous avons gagné un changement de mentalité dans l'opinion publique grecque. Nous avons besoin du même changement dans l'opinion turque, dans les classes dirigeantes et chez les militaires. »

MESURES DE CONFIANCE MILITAIRES

Les accords bilatéraux portent sur la protection de l'environnement, la coopération des marines marchandes, les échanges culturels, le commerce, la lutte contre la criminalité organisée, le trafic de drogue, l'immigration clandestine et le développement du tourisme. Le nombre de visiteurs grecs en Turquie est en hausse de 60 % depuis le début de l'année ; les touristes turcs fréquentent les îles proches de leurs côtes, mais le flux est freiné par l'obligation de visa, liée à la participation de la Grèce à l'accord de Schengen. La prochaine étape du rapprochement devrait concerner les mesures de confiance militaires en mer Égée, pour éviter le renouvellement d'incidents autour d'îlots dont la possession reste une des principales pommes de discorde entre les deux pays. Le sujet était à l'ordre du jour de la rencontre Papan-dréou-Cem à New York, en marge de l'Assem-

blée générale des Nations unies. La partie turque propose la création d'une commission mixte, tandis que les Grecs veulent laisser la discussion sur les questions militaires au sein de l'OTAN, dont les deux pays sont membres. Les contacts diplomatiques sur le sujet se sont poursuivis tout au cours de l'été, nous a confirmé M. Simitis.

Cette amélioration générale du climat n'a pas pour autant fait disparaître la suspicion qui marque les relations entre les deux pays depuis des décennies et n'a pas permis le moindre progrès sur les trois dossiers fondamentaux : la délimitation du plateau continental en mer Égée, la délimitation des espaces aérien et maritime dans la même région et la division de Chypre. Au contraire, le chef de la diplomatie turque a jeté un froid pendant l'été en publiant, dans le quotidien italien *La Stampa*, un article où le point de vue traditionnel de son pays était exposé comme si rien ne s'était passé depuis un an. Les milieux grecs les plus favorables au rapprochement ont tenté de minimiser la signification de ce texte en le traitant comme un exercice de politique intérieure turque. Considéré, même à Athènes, comme un « Européen convaincu », M. Cem se serait senti obligé de donner des gages aux militaires, d'autant plus que l'arrivée de l'ancien premier ministre Mesut Yılmaz dans le gouvernement Ecevit, avec la charge des relations avec l'Union européenne, aurait affaibli sa position.

Quoi qu'il en soit, les contacts bilatéraux semblent avoir épuisé leurs effets. Les questions délicates, concernant la sécurité et la défense, doivent être traitées dans un cadre multilatéral, à l'OTAN et dans les institutions européennes, nous a affirmé Akis Tsohatzopoulos, ministre grec de la défense. Réservé dans un premier temps sur l'intérêt du changement stratégique opéré par son collègue des affaires étrangères, M. Tsohatzopoulos considère que la décision prise à Helsinki a ouvert une « perspective européenne » à la Turquie qui devrait pousser ce pays à revoir son comportement. La coopération dans l'ex-Yougoslavie, la présence des deux pays dans la « brigade balkanique », la participation à des manœuvres de l'OTAN dans les deux pays constituent l'amorce d'une coopération militaire, qui ne suffit toutefois pas à rassurer complètement la partie grecque.

Dans les derniers mois, les Turcs comme les Grecs peuvent se targuer d'avoir remporté un succès diplomatique. Les premiers en faisant accepter leur candidature à l'UE ; les seconds en transformant leur problème turc en une question européenne. « Dans l'environnement fluide où se trouve la Grèce, l'Europe constitue un pôle de stabilité », explique M. Tsohatzopoulos. Pour espérer adhérer à l'Union, Ankara doit en effet respecter des critères démocratiques à l'intérieur et des règles de conduite avec leurs voi-

sins, dont les Quinze sont en quelque sorte devenus les juges. La remarque vaut aussi à propos de Chypre, où la situation est dans l'impasse depuis 1974, et l'occupation turque du nord de l'île. A Helsinki, les Quinze ont appelé toutes les parties à faire un effort tout en affirmant, pour la première fois, que la division de l'île ne serait pas, « en elle-même », un obstacle à l'adhésion de la République de Chypre (grecque). Les Chypriotes grecs et turcs en sont à leur quatrième – et infructueux – round de « pourparlers indirects », sous l'égide de l'ONU et sous l'œil vigilant des Américains. Mais rien de décisif ne devrait se passer avant la fin des négociations d'adhésion de la République de Chypre à l'UE, sans doute vers 2003-2004. La Turquie sera alors placée devant un choix : laisser les Chypriotes grecs bénéficier seuls de la participation à l'UE, ou s'opposer à l'adhésion au risque de compromettre leur propre entrée dans l'UE, ou bien encore favoriser un compromis entre les deux communautés de l'île. En soutenant la candidature de la Turquie à l'UE, M. Simitis a fait un pari raisonnable.

Didier Kunz et Daniel Vernet

Le Monde

JEUDI 21 SEPTEMBRE 2000

IRAK Pour en finir avec l'embargo et les sanctions

Bagdad agite l'arme du pétrole

LE FIGARO JEUDI 21 SEPTEMBRE 2000



Installations pétrolières proches de Bagdad. L'Irak est, avec l'Arabie Saoudite, l'un des deux pays de l'Opep qui dispose d'une importante capacité inexploitée. (Photo Jassin Mohammed/AP.)

Crise du pétrole aidant, l'Irak est de nouveau au centre de spéculations dont Saddam Hussein essaie de tirer parti pour desserrer l'étau des sanctions.

Claude Lorieux

Saddam Hussein affectionne les étés finissant pour sortir de sa boîte et exiger la levée de l'embargo qui frappe son pays depuis dix ans. On se souvient de 1994 (tension à la frontière koweïtienne), de 1996 (offensive sur le Kurdistan) et de 1998, quand le refus du raïs de coopérer avec les inspecteurs du désarmement conduisit, fin décembre, aux raids de l'US-Air Force sur Bagdad.

Ces crises démarraient généralement sur un conflit lié à l'arsenal militaire de l'Irak. Le débat n'est pas clos. Mais il a été mis entre parenthèses. Les bombardements de 1998 ont débarrassé durablement les Irakiens des inspecteurs qui retournaient leurs dossiers et

feuillaient leurs usines. Ni les Russes ni, ce qui est plus surprenant, les Américains ne sont très pressés de les voir revenir. Hans Blix, le patron de la nouvelle Commission du désarmement, a été prié de patienter.

Trop d'événements se profilaient cette année – sommet du Millénaire, conseil de l'Opep, réunion de la commission des compensations au Koweït, élections américaines – pour que Saddam Hussein n'y trouve pas l'occasion de rappeler, dramatiquement comme toujours, son opposition aux sanctions.

Le raïs a choisi le levier du pétrole. Bagdad pourrait en effet réduire sa production (3 millions de barils par jour) au risque de relancer la flambee des prix. Cette hypothèse est le cauchemar des marchés. En revanche, l'Irak pourrait accroître sa production à condition d'être autorisé à rénover ses installations sinistrées par l'embargo. Avec l'Arabie Saoudite, c'est le seul pays de l'Opep qui dispose d'une im-

portante capacité inexploitée. La dernière poussée de fièvre dégage une forte odeur de pétrole !

La tension entre l'Irak et ses voisins du Golfe montait depuis la fin juillet. Saddam Hussein s'en était pris aux Saoudiens et aux Koweïtiens. Il dénonça ces « traîtres » qui laissent les chasseurs-bombardiers américains et britanniques décoller de leur territoire « pour frapper la forteresse des Arabes », l'Irak. Kussai Saddam Hussein, homme de confiance de son père, prit le relais en offrant de lui reconquérir le Kurdistan, qui est autonome depuis le printemps 1991. Le 4 septembre, un avion irakien violait même, discrètement, l'espace aérien saoudien...

La suite est connue. Reprenant une accusation antérieure à l'invasion d'août 1990, l'Irak accuse à nouveau le Koweït de lui soutirer du pétrole en pompant, horizontalement, sous la frontière. Les Koweïtiens crient « au loup ! ». Les Américains, qui ont 20 000 hommes et soixante avions, dans le Golfe,

froncent les sourcils. « *Nous sommes prêts* », proclame le secrétaire américain à la Défense, William Cohen. Pour faire bon poids, Washington ressort même de ses cartons le vieux projet de traîner le maître de Bagdad devant « un tribunal criminel international ». Aucun camp n'a le monopole de la rhétorique.

Les experts ne croient pas – pas encore du moins – que ces gesticulations déboucheront sur une nouvelle confrontation armée. « *La campagne électorale ne permet pas aux Etats-Unis de faire des actions décisives et l'Irak le sait* », explique Amir al-Anbari, ancien ambassadeur irakien aux Nations unies, puis à l'Unesco. « *Je n'imagine pas d'issue militaire* », renchérit un diplomate occidental. « *C'est la rhétorique habituelle* », conclut un homme d'affaires de Bagdad.

Saddam Hussein n'en paraît pas moins décidé à se débarrasser des sanctions, ou tout au moins à les diluer encore davantage. Hubert Védrine a

beau tonner que le Conseil de sécurité exigera le retour des inspecteurs du désarmement à Bagdad avant d'envisager la le-

« La campagne électorale ne permet pas aux Etats-Unis de faire des actions décisives et l'Irak le sait »

vée des sanctions, le rais constate qu'il y a « du mou » dans l'embargo.

Bravant Washington, un chef d'Etat, le Vénézuélien Hugo Chavez, a osé venir à Bagdad, le 9 août. Un avion russe, puis un second se sont posés sur l'aéroport de Bagdad, enfin rouvert. Des Français rêvent d'y aller à leur tour. L'officier américain Scott Ritter, le plus acharné de tous les inspecteurs du désarmement

qu'ait connu l'Irak, en vient lui aussi à plaider la fin de l'embargo !

Le président irakien voit la faille dans le dispositif. Il s'efforce de l'élargir. Il se démène d'autant plus que la « Commission d'indemnisation » de l'ONU examine la semaine prochaine la plainte de la Compagnie koweïtienne du pétrole (KPC). Bagdad pourrait être condamné à verser à « KPC » quelque 15,9 milliards de dollars de dommages de guerre, un peu moins de la moitié des exportations irakiennes de brut depuis 1976 (34 milliards de dollars). Si les Koweïtiens obtiennent gain de cause, les revenus irakiens seront sérieusement amputés. Madeleine Albright les évalue maintenant entre 16 et 20 milliards de dollars par an.

S a d d a m Hussein a donc une raison urgente de batailler. Mais

comment ?
« Si l'Irak veut provoquer une crise, il lui suffit d'interrompre sa pro-

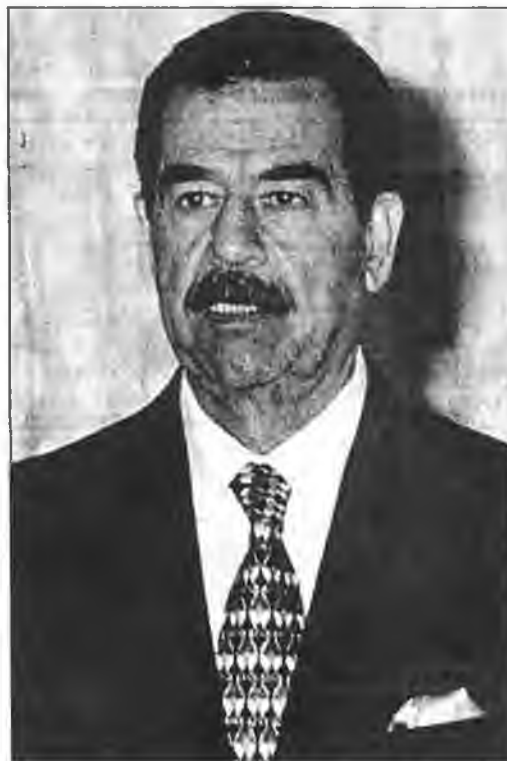
duction », admet l'ambassadeur al-Anbari, en soulignant que son pays ne se trouverait pas pour autant sans ressources. Il a des réserves en devises : une dizaine de milliards de dollars bloqués dans une banque française par le Comité des sanctions. « Couper les robinets, ce serait la politique du pire. Les Irakiens s'exposeraient à des représailles », prévient un diplomate occidental. Dont acte.

L'ex-ambassadeur al-Anbari, qui est aussi un expert du pétrole, souligne aussi que les capacités de production de l'Arabie Saoudite ont des limites et qu'elles seront atteintes l'an prochain. Une nouvelle crise menace donc « sauf si l'Irak peut augmenter sa

production ». C'est possible, mais à une condition : « que l'ONU facilite l'exportation des pièces détachées » nécessaires à la remise en état des installations mal entretenues.

A moins qu'elle ne retombe comme un soufflé (et cela s'est déjà vu), la crise ne se résoudra pas sans un marchandage. A sept semaines des élections présidentielles américaines, c'est moins qu'évident...

Saddam Hussein, malade ou pas ?



Les rumeurs sur l'état de santé de Saddam reviennent souvent. (Photo I. Fassbender/Reuters.)

« Le cancer de Saddam Hussein ? J'en entends parler depuis mon premier séjour en Irak, avant la guerre du Golfe », ironise un diplomate interrogé sur les « révélations » faites, en pleine tension pétrolière, par deux journaux du Golfe, un saoudien et un koweïtien. Personne ne se risque ni à confirmer ni d'ailleurs à démentir le « cancer des ganglions lymphatiques » diagnostiqué par Asharq al-Awsat.

Un diplomate irakien souligne qu'agé de 63 ans, le rais est « en bonne santé », qu'il « surveille son régime alimentaire et fait de l'exercice ». Un Irakien, qui l'a rencontré récemment, ne l'a trouvé « ni malade ni soucieux ». Un autre a noté que son discours de la fête nationale avait été nettement plus court que d'habitude. C'est peu.

Curieusement, le dernier scoop de la presse du Golfe n'a guère eu d'écho à l'étranger. Pourtant si friande des nouvelles d'Irak, la presse israélienne s'est quasiment tue. Quant à la venue possible de médecins occidentaux, français notamment, les experts se demandent s'ils sont venus soigner Saddam, ou son fils Oudaï, victime d'un attentat en 1996. A Bagdad, confessait un jour un ambassadeur, « on a au moins l'avantage d'être à l'abri de l'information ».

C. L.

PKK rebel group left to die

- Hamili Yildirim, the leader of a 150-strong group of terrorists refusing to comply with the PKK cease fire, was injured in a military operation last March and then spirited out of the country for treatment. He is now back in Tunceli
- Yildirim refused to comply with a PKK directive telling its militants to 'either leave Turkey or surrender to the authorities' and is reportedly waiting for a general amnesty to be issued so that he and his 150 followers can surrender

Mert Gozde

Ankara - Turkish Daily News

Hamili Yildirim was the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) commander for the Tunceli region when he was injured in Operation Spring, mounted by the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) last March.

He was spirited out of the country to undergo medical treatment but has now returned to Tunceli. Yildirim and his 150-strong band of militants refused to comply with the PKK Central Council's directive to "either leave Turkey or surrender to the Turkish authorities." Rather than leave Turkey, they want to surrender but are reportedly expecting Parliament to issue a general amnesty before they do so.

According to a reliable source in Tunceli, somebody close to Yildirim asked him to hand himself over to the authorities. However, it is alleged that Yildirim said, "At this moment I would rather be killed than surrender."

Yildirim allegedly told this person that he is waiting for Parliament to issue a general amnesty before he surrenders and that he will not comply with the PKK directive to leave the country.

Meanwhile, the PKK Central Council have criticised Yildirim and his band to the people in the region for refusing to comply with their directive. A communique distributed throughout the region and bearing the letterhead "PKK Central Council" tells the people that Yildirim's actions are not serving the cause of peace started with the moderating of the general atmosphere and asks them not to assist him or his group in any way.

The PKK Central Council reportedly expect Yildirim to desist from any terrorist actions, not to ask the people to help him and to stay put where he is.

Following the capture of Abdullah Ocalan in Kenya and his being brought to Turkey, the PKK issued a directive telling PKK terrorists to either leave Turkey or surrender. Yildirim refused to comply, instead preferring to stay in Turkey and carry on fighting.

Clashes leave six dead in eastern Turkey

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey, Sept 25 (AFP) - Five rebels from the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and one soldier were killed during fighting in the eastern Turkish province of Bingal, a government official said Monday.

The fighting, in which two soldiers were also wounded, occurred near the village of Dinarbey in the southeastern part of the country, according to a statement from police authorities in Diyarbakir tasked with coordinating the fight against the PKK.

The statement did not provide details on the clashes.

The PKK has fought for self-rule in southeast Turkey since 1984, but declared an end to its armed campaign in September following peace calls from its leader Abdullah Ocalan, on death row in Turkish jail.

Since then fighting between Kurdish rebels and government troops in the region has significantly scaled down. The conflict has claimed some 36,500, according to Ankara.

L'opposition irakienne annonce une attaque imminente du régime au Kurdistan



DUBAI, 23 sept (AFP) - 11h32 - Un groupe de l'opposition irakienne a indiqué samedi que le régime de Saddam Hussein s'apprêtait à lancer une offensive contre les régions kurdes du nord de l'Irak qui échappent à son contrôle depuis 1991.

Dans un communiqué parvenu à l'AFP, le Parti communiste irakien (PCI) affirme que l'attaque serait menée par une division de la Garde républicaine, troupes d'élite du régime, et viserait notamment la région de Souleimanieh, contrôlée par l'Union patriotique du Kurdistan (UPK, de Jalal Talabani).

Souleimanieh est située hors de la zone d'exclusion aérienne imposée par les Alliés au nord du 36ème parallèle pour protéger selon eux la population kurde.

Les unités de la Garde républicaine, actuellement déployées à la limite du Kurdistan, seront appuyées dans cette offensive "imminente" par l'artillerie lourde et des avions de combat, ajoute le PCI en citant des sources "liées au régime", selon le PCI.

"Le régime renforce depuis plusieurs mois sa présence militaire dans cette zone", a-t-il ajouté.

Ces informations n'ont pas pu être confirmées de source indépendante.

L'UPK et le Parti démocratique du Kurdistan (PDK, de Massoud Barzani) se partagent le contrôle du nord de l'Irak depuis la fin de la guerre du Golfe en 1991. Ils avaient formé un gouvernement non reconnu internationalement après des élections en 1992.

L'UPK contrôle la partie est du Kurdistan d'Irak, frontalière de l'Iran, alors que le PDK, tient le secteur proche de la Turquie. De sanglants affrontements ont opposés les deux formations depuis 1994, faisant plus de 3.000 morts.

Selon le dernier recensement effectué en 1986, le Kurdistan irakien compte quelque trois millions d'habitants.

Les Etats-Unis avaient tiré en septembre 1996 des missiles de croisière contre l'Irak en riposte à une offensive de ses troupes au Kurdistan.

Washington a menacé le 20 septembre de recourir à la force contre Saddam Hussein s'il menaçait ses voisins ou attaquait les Kurdes.

"Si l'Irak relance ses programmes d'armes de destruction massive, menace ses voisins et l'armée américaine, ou agresse les Kurdes, nous disposons d'une force fiable dans la région et nous sommes prêts à agir en temps et lieu voulus, que nous choisirons", a déclaré le porte-parole du département d'Etat Richard Boucher.

Le parti pro-kurde HADEP s'inquiète du sort de 11 militants interpellés



ANKARA, 25 sept (AFP) - 18h14 - Le parti pro-kurde de la démocratie du peuple (HADEP) s'est déclaré préoccupé par le sort de onze de ses membres interpellés à la fin de la semaine dernière dans la province de Sirnak (sud-est) dans le cadre de ce qu'il appelle une "campagne d'intimidation".

"Le président de notre bureau de Sirnak et dix autres responsables locaux ont été interpellés samedi par la police à leur retour d'une réunion du parti dans une province voisine", a dit à l'AFP le secrétaire général du parti, Mahmut Sakar.

Une source des services de sécurité à Diyarbakir, plus importante ville du sud-est anatolien, a expliqué les interpellations par la saisie dans l'une des voitures appartenant au convoi du HADEP de trois grenades et un fusil automatique.

Selon M. Sakar, les efforts pour s'informer sur le sort de ces personnes et sur les raisons de leur interpellation se sont soldés par un échec.

"Nous avons saisi d'urgence Amnesty international et le comité du Conseil de l'Europe pour la prévention de la torture afin de leur communiquer nos préoccupations car la torture existe toujours à Sirnak", a-t-il souligné.

M. Sakar a affirmé que ces interpellations s'inscrivaient dans le cadre des efforts des autorités pour empêcher l'implantation du HADEP à Sirnak.

"Il nous a fallu huit mois pour ouvrir un bureau dans le chef-lieu de Sirnak car le gouvernorat et la police rejetaient constamment nos demandes légitimes", a-t-il ajouté.

Le HADEP n'est pas représenté au parlement faute d'avoir obtenu les 10% de voix nécessaires au niveau national, mais a obtenu la direction de toute une série de municipalités dans le sud-est à majorité kurde lors d'élections en 1999.

Il fait l'objet d'une procédure d'interdiction en justice pour "liens organiques" avec le Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK).

Le PKK a mis officiellement fin en septembre 1999 à sa rébellion armée à la demande de son chef, Abdullah Ocalan, condamné à mort en juin de la même année.

The Other Revolution / Hot Market for Nose Jobs

For Iran's Women, a Welcome Radical Reshaping



Elaine Sciolino/The New York Times

A proverb says, 'The beautiful face soothes the tired heart and opens the closed door.'

By Elaine Sciolino
New York Times Service

TEHHRAN — The law in Iran requires women to cover their hair and to conceal the shape of their bodies in loose clothing. So a cool thing to do in Tehran these days is to get a nose job.

So cool that unlike women in many places, who hide the chiseling and sawing and stretching done to their faces, Iranian women wear their postsurgical bandages like badges of honor, or at least indicators of a certain degree of wealth.

And when only the face of a woman shows, it is not hard to detect who has been redone. Iranian women tend to have noses on the straight and strong side, so a button nose is likely to be man-made.

"It just like women's clothing — things go in and out of fashion," said Dr. Ali Akbar Jalali, a leading plastic surgeon in Tehran who spent the summer getting laser training in Cleveland. "And what's in fashion right now is getting the nose done. After that come face-lifts."

"Only a small percentage of women want body work because there are so few opportunities in Iran to see women's bodies. No seashore, no swimming pools — except for women. So if women do body work, it's for their husbands. The face is really the only part that can be seen."

For centuries, a woman's beauty has been an essential component of Iranian culture. "Kill me, but make me beautiful," an Iranian proverb goes. "The beautiful face soothes the tired heart and opens the closed door," goes another. The poetry of the medieval poets Hafiz and Saadi is filled with deep longing for beautiful women, although the clerics insist that the images of perfumed hair and luminous faces refer to spiritual, not temporal, love.

Lili is typical of the women who believe in artificial enhancement. She has had her nose fixed to make it smaller and straighter — twice. She has had her eyebrows tattooed to darken them. And she has bought nonprescription contact lenses in four different hues — blue, dark green, light green and hazel — to accessorize her clothing and reflect her moods.

Lili, a 30-year-old mother of two, is rail thin, a result of constant dieting and aerobics and swimming classes at a swank women-only gym that doubles as a social club. Her long nails (implants that last for months) are painted pearly white. The Islamically correct coat and matching scarf she wears over a black miniskirt and snug shirt are from Italy.

"Part of the reason for spending so much attention on the way I look is that it's in our culture," Lili said. "It's in the nature of Iranian women to want to look beautiful. Part of the reason is that I don't have anything else to do. It's not like you — who have interesting places to go for work or

entertainment. Here, my only job is to cook and take care of my home. So I spend time on myself."

Obviously, many Iranian women are too busy working or studying to concern themselves with their appearances as much as Lili does. But neither do they fit their ubiquitous image in the West: dour creatures swathed from head to toe in black.

Rhinoplasty, in particular, has become so widespread that the feminist magazine *Zanan* devoted an eight-page article to the subject in its August issue. The cover showed an artificial nose superimposed on the face of a woman. The headline read, "Young Women and Men and the Hot Market in Nose Jobs."

The article included interviews with women who had undergone the surgery. "Unfortunately, in my family, everyone has bad noses," said Haleh, 20, after she had had her nose shrunk. "This is a very, very serious flaw. Their faces change after the operation. They suddenly look beautiful. So all our family members are very sensitive about the shape of our noses, and everywhere we go we make comments about people's noses."

The mother of a 17-year-old whose nose has been changed surgically said: "We did her nose so she could become more beautiful and enjoy her face for the rest of her life. I could see that she had a flaw in her face, and I was very glad we could get rid of it."

Another young woman, named Golnush, spoke of a computer image of herself that her fiancé had made for the doctor — with red hair and blue eyes and without the bump on her long nose.

The boom in cosmetic surgery is aided by enthusiastic surgeons, many of whom have trained in the United States. After performing seven cosmetic surgeries one day, for example, Dr. Jalali told a visitor that she should consider shortening her forehead a centimeter and having the horizontal and vertical lines on her forehead removed. He even un-Islamically pulled back her head scarf and stretched her skin to show how he would do it.

HE TOLD her young Iranian colleague with drop-dead good looks: "You have a delicate nose. It only needs a bit of the hump removed. And when you smile a horizontal line forms on your upper lip and a flare at the tip of your nose that is not very beautiful."

His fees are \$1,000 for a nose job, \$3,000 for a radical face-lift, \$1,200 for a breast reduction or an abdominal tuck. They are high by Iranian — but not by American or European — standards, and many of his clients are Iranian expatriates who come to Iran for the summer and go back home "refreshed."

"A few years ago all my friends seemed to be having hysterectomies," said an Iranian woman in her 50s. "You

couldn't say hello to a doctor without him suggesting that you have a hysterectomy. Now it's nose jobs and face-lifts."

Even if they do not resort to plastic surgery, Iranian women often invest heavily in hairdressers, aerobics classes, makeup, clothes and lingerie. Colored contact lenses, made in America and available without a prescription at pharmacies for about \$15 a pair, are best-sellers for both women and men. Bookstores stock books like "Face-Lifts Without Surgery" and "The Secrets of Being Young and Beautiful."

Women are rarely stopped on the street any longer by morals policemen for wearing makeup, prompting many young women to apply clownlike colors to their faces.

One of the most important private meeting places for women is the beauty salon, where they can take off their head scarves, relax and socialize. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the father of Iran's revolution, once tried to ban all beauty parlors, calling them "dens of corruption." In the end, all he did was put male hairdressers — and female barbers — out of business.

Salons offer haircuts, coloring and blow drying; facials, massages and makeup treatment; manicures and pedicures; tattooing of the eyebrows, eyelids and lip lines; and a variety of techniques for bleaching, tweezing and removal of facial and body hair. It takes about five hours to get a bride coiffed, painted, depilated, manicured, creamed and perfumed. The cost is equivalent to almost two months of an average government worker's salary.

"Just because women have to cover their heads doesn't mean they don't want to get their hair done or their eyebrows shaped," said Goli, 42, the owner of one of Tehran's fanciest beauty salons, a warren of rooms with the windows covered in a space far from the gaze of men. "In fact, women do it to feel human."

Some women visit their beauty salons as often as once a week.

"When so little hair can be revealed in public, there's nothing worse than dark roots," said a customer. Other women cut or color their hair in wild colors as an act of rebellion, allowing the bangs to show. "I saw my stepsister the other day and she had dyed her hair yellow!" exclaimed Lili. "Not blond, yellow."

And there are accounts in Iranian newspapers from time to time about teenage girls who cut their hair short and dress like boys to rebel against the restrictive dress code.

As for Lili, she continues her quest to become more and more beautiful. "I want a smaller nose, like a doll's nose," she said. "I'm willing to pay lots of money to a plastic surgeon to give me a new look. I don't want to have any faults in my face. I'd like to look beautiful, like Marilyn Monroe."

Cinq rebelles du PKK et un soldat tués lors de combats dans l'est



DIYARBAKIR (Turquie), 25 sept (AFP) - 9h25 - Cinq rebelles kurdes du Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK) et un soldat ont été tués, et deux autres soldats blessés dans des affrontements dans la province de Bingol (est), a-t-on annoncé lundi de source officielle.

Les affrontements se sont déroulés près du village de Dinarbey, indique un communiqué de la superpréfecture de Diyarbakir (sud-est), chargée de coordonner la lutte contre le PKK, sans préciser quand ils se sont produits.

Les affrontements dans l'est et le sud-est ont très considérablement diminué depuis que le PKK a annoncé en septembre 1999 qu'il mettait fin à ses quinze ans de lutte armée pour la création d'un Etat kurde indépendant, répondant à l'appel de son chef Abdullah Ocalan, condamné à mort en juin de la même année pour trahison et séparatisme.

Quelque 36.500 personnes ont été tuées dans les violences entourant la rébellion du PKK, selon un bilan officiel.

Très vives réactions au vol Paris-Bagdad préparé par une organisation non gouvernementale

Washington et Londres se disent indignés par l'attitude officielle de la France

De vives critiques ont été adressées à la France, en particulier par les Etats-Unis et la Grande-Bretagne, après que Paris eut simplement informé

le Comité des sanctions de l'ONU d'un vol Paris-Bagdad organisé vendredi 22 septembre par une organisation non gouvernementale fran-

çaise. Cette affaire ravive le débat sur la portée des sanctions imposées à l'Irak qui, disent Paris, Moscou et Pékin, excluent les vols passagers.

NEW YORK (Nations unies) de notre correspondante

L'attitude officielle de la France à propos du vol Paris-Bagdad organisé vendredi 22 septembre par une organisation non gouvernementale (*Le Monde* du 23 septembre) a suscité de vives réactions, en particulier aux Etats-Unis. Le département d'Etat américain a dit « ne pas comprendre » la position française. « Les Français ont vite été récompensés ! », ont ironisé les journaux américains, faisant allusion à la décision de Bagdad de négocier l'achat de vingt Airbus. L'ambassadeur de Grande-Bretagne à l'ONU s'est indigné de voir que Paris n'a pas tenu compte des réactions éventuelles du Comité des sanctions des Nations unies. Pour le président de ce comité, l'ambassadeur des Pays-Bas Peter van Walsum, la France a fait preuve d'un « manque de respect pour les autres pays membres du Conseil de sécurité ».

Paris, a rétorqué l'ambassadeur de France à l'ONU, Jean-David Lévitte, « a notifié le Comité des sanctions (...), ce qui est conforme au paragraphe 6 de la résolution 670 et ainsi ne constitue pas une demande d'autorisation. Une procédure de non objection n'était pas requise ». Il a souhaité que le Comité des sanctions se réunisse « tranquillement » pour débattre des aspects légaux des vols vers l'Irak, réunion prévue lundi. La Russie – qui, en la matière est sur la même longueur d'onde que la France – a l'intention d'envoyer, dès samedi, un avion à Bagdad, a annoncé M. Lévitte. « Il y en aura d'autres », a-t-il ajouté. Son assurance, disent sous couvert d'anonymat des juristes, tient au fait qu'il est « sur un terrain juridique très solide », car rien dans les

résolutions de l'ONU relatives à l'Irak n'interdit des vols passagers dès lors qu'ils ne transportent pas de marchandises.

Cette affaire a révélé des évolutions à l'extérieur du Conseil de sécurité. Ainsi, le gouvernement italien, qui, comme d'autres gouvernements, a été exhorté par Washington de refuser le survol de son espace aérien par l'avion français, a-t-il sèchement refusé. La Syrie, elle, a carrément donné l'autorisation de survol à l'appareil, « probablement pas », estime un diplomate, au nom des « intérêts de la population civile irakienne », mais plutôt pour protester contre l'absence de progrès dans le processus de paix sur le Golan.

D'autres sources diplomatiques

relèvent un « assouplissement », pour des « raisons d'ordre national », de la position d'autres pays voisins de l'Irak, tels que la Jordanie et la Turquie, qui seraient de plus en plus disposés, « au minimum, à fermer les yeux sur la multiplication des vols et au mieux à les autoriser ».

ESPACE AÉRIEN

A en croire des diplomates américains, la Turquie et Chypre ont accepté le survol de leur espace aérien à l'avion français, mais d'autres diplomates onusiens assurent, eux, que l'attitude de la Turquie à l'égard de la stratégie américaine en Irak a « nettement évolué » : tout en permettant aux avions américains et britanniques de bombarder l'Irak à partir de leur bases militaires en

Turquie, Ankara « serait prêt à fermer les yeux sur des vols "humanitaires" ».

La nécessité de désarmer l'Irak continue en revanche de faire l'unanimité des membres du Conseil de sécurité. Les cinq membres permanents sont d'accord pour ne pas en parler, convaincus, tout comme Bagdad, qu'aucune évolution politique n'est envisageable avant l'élection présidentielle aux Etats-Unis. Ainsi les membres du Conseil se sont-ils bornés vendredi à écouter le président de la commission du désarmement de l'Irak, Hans Blix, qui a annoncé que son équipe est désormais prête pour commencer les inspections.

Afsané Bassir Pour

Paris a une lecture « légaliste » des résolutions de l'ONU

SAUF IMPRÉVU, un second vol Paris-Bagdad – mais il faudrait peut-être dire un deuxième si d'autres projets sont en gestation – est prévu vendredi 29 septembre à l'initiative de quatre organisations non gouvernementales françaises. Il devrait emporter à son bord, selon les organisateurs, près de 150 personnalités des mondes politique, universitaire, associatif, artistique, juridique, qui entendent protester contre l'embargo aérien « illégalement » en vigueur contre les vols passagers à destination de l'Irak. Ils devraient demeurer 48 heures à Bagdad avant de regagner Paris, toujours par la voie des airs, contrairement à ce que prévoient de faire ceux du vol Paris-Bagdad du vendredi 23 septembre, qui rentreront par la route à Amman.

Les autorités françaises rappellent que les vols Paris-Bagdad sont des initiatives « privées », qu'il n'y a pas lieu de contrecarrer dès lors qu'elles ne contreviennent pas aux résolutions de l'ONU. Aussi, à la différence de Londres, qui, en 1999, avait purement et simplement interdit un vol du même genre organisé par le député travailliste George Galloway, Paris, après avoir informé le Comité des sanctions de

l'ONU, s'est-il borné vendredi à demander aux douanes de « vérifier l'absence de tout fret et le caractère non commercial du vol » à destination de Bagdad.

Les autorités françaises se sont en cela conformées à la lettre de la résolution 670 adoptée par le Conseil de sécurité le 25 septembre 1990. Celle-ci dispose que « tous les Etats aviseront en temps voulu le Comité du Conseil de sécurité de tout vol entre leur territoire et l'Irak ou le Koweït », qui était alors encore occupé. Quant aux vols interdits, il s'agit de ceux qui transporteraient « toute cargaison autre que des denrées alimentaires acheminées en raison de circonstances d'ordre humanitaire ». La France a toujours eu une lecture « légaliste » des résolutions du Conseil de sécurité relatives à l'Irak. Elle juge par exemple que les sanctions économiques devront être levées dès lors que Bagdad aura rempli toutes les conditions de son désarmement, conformément à la résolution 687 de l'ONU. Ce qui, à ce jour, n'est pas l'avis des Etats-Unis ni de la Grande-Bretagne.

Mouna Naïm

Vives réactions en Turquie contre la résolution du Congrès américain sur le génocide des Arméniens

25-26 SEPTEMBRE 2000



Le vote jeudi dernier par une sous-commission des Relations internationales de la Chambre des représentants des États-Unis d'une résolution appelant le président Clinton à "désigner comme un génocide l'anéantissement systématique et délibéré de 1 500 000 Arméniens" a fait les gros titres des journaux turcs, qui ont accordé une large place aux réactions de la classe politique turque et ont tiré à boulets rouges dans leurs commentaires sur le texte législatif américain dont ils annonçaient par ailleurs qu'il serait soumis le 26 septembre au vote de la Commission des relations internationales de la Chambre des Représentants. Depuis le président turc Ahmet Necdet Sezer jusqu'au ministre de la justice Hikmet Sami Turk, en passant par le premier ministre Bulent Ecevit et le ministre des affaires étrangères İsmail Cem, les réactions de la classe politique turque sont unanimes pour condamner la mise en place de cette procédure législative accusée de porter préjudice aux relations de partenariat stratégique entre les États-Unis et la Turquie mais aussi de compromettre une normalisation des relations entre la Turquie et l'Arménie et au-delà, la stabilité et la paix dans la région du Caucase. Le président Sezer devait ainsi appeler l'administration américaine à déployer davantage d'efforts pour empêcher la procédure d'aller plus avant, comme il l'avait fait à la veille du vote, en évoquant personnellement le sujet avec son homologue américain Bill Clinton lors d'un entretien à New York en marge du sommet du millénaire à l'ONU. Le premier ministre Bulent Ecevit dénoncera pour sa part cet "épisode triste et regrettable" non sans exprimer la conviction que l'administration américaine, embarrassée par cette résolution, "saura montrer la juste voie aux Représentants américains". Dans un entretien accordé à la presse, le chef du gouvernement turc souligne que le passage d'un tel texte nuirait aux relations turco-américaines, en s'étonnant de ce qu'une "grande puissance mondiale telle que les États-Unis compte des hommes politiques aussi irresponsables et disposant de tant d'influence sur sa politique étrangère". M.Ecevit ne s'est pourtant pas étendu sur la nature des représailles que pourrait décider la Turquie, en laissant l'évaluation aux responsables américains, tant pour ce qui concerne l'utilisation de la base turque d'Incirlik dans le cadre des opérations contre l'Irak que pour les projets d'achat par la Turquie d'hélicoptères de combat à la compagnie américaine Bell Textron. Même son de cloche au ministère des affaires étrangères, où l'on évoque un possible refroidissement des relations entre les partenaires de l'OTAN et le coup porté aux espoirs de normalisation entre la Turquie et l'Arménie. Le sous-secrétaire du ministère turc des affaires étrangères, Faruk Logoglu, aurait eu un entretien téléphonique avec l'ambassadeur des États-Unis en Turquie, Robert Pearson, qui l'aurait informé des efforts de l'administration américaine en vue de bloquer le texte législatif. M.Logoglu n'a pas voulu dire aux journalistes qui l'interrogeaient s'il y aurait de nouvelles mesures contre l'Arménie, sans pour autant en écarter l'éventualité dans la perspective de nouveaux développements dans cette affaire et en rappelant que la Turquie disposait d'autres leviers, et pourrait ainsi en appeler à ses partenaires de l'OTAN pour faire pression

sur les membres du Congrès américain. Le ministre de la justice Hikmet Sami Turk, de son côté, a mis en avant le fait que des assemblées législatives n'avaient pas autorité pour statuer sur des faits historiques. Lors d'une conférence de presse, M.Turk a mis en parallèle cette procédure législative et les prochaines échéances électorales aux États-Unis, montrant ainsi du doigt le "lobby arménien", un argument d'ailleurs largement repris par la presse turque, qui dénonce le caractère électoraliste de cette résolution. Le ministre de la justice a néanmoins rappelé que de telles procédures étaient en cours dans les Parlements d'autres pays, non sans souligner le caractère partial selon lui du texte de la résolution américaine, qui "ne fait jamais mention des actes de cruauté commis par les Arméniens". Il poursuit en indiquant que si les autorités de Erévan sont derrière le lobby arménien aux États-Unis, il faut alors s'attendre à de nouveaux développements dans les "allégations arméniennes, fondées sur la distorsion des faits historiques". Les "historiens objectifs n'appuient pas de telles allégations", indique M.Turk, qui recommande donc l'ouverture des archives turques à ces chercheurs, "afin d'infirmer les allégations arméniennes" qui vont s'accompagner selon lui de la demande de compensations financières pour "les prétendus un million et demi de tués" et territoriales, pour "les terres dont les Arméniens revendiquent la prétendue propriété depuis 2500 ans". La Turquie n'acceptera jamais de telles exigences" conclut le ministre de la justice. Dans un de ses articles très attendus, le célèbre journaliste turc Mehmet Ali Birand parle lui aussi de la nécessité pour la Turquie de changer de fusil d'épaule dans sa stratégie face aux revendications sur le génocide arménien, en ouvrant par exemple ses archives et en faisant ainsi éclater la vérité historique aux yeux du monde. C'est dans ce contexte qu'un centre d'études sur les relations turco-arméniennes et "le prétendu génocide" aurait ouvert ses portes au sein de l'université Atatürk d'Erzurum.

Pour le moins embarrassé, le patriarche des Arméniens de Turquie, Mesrob II, a estimé que personne n'a intérêt à voir cette résolution votée au Congrès américain, en ajoutant que cela nuirait aux relations entre l'Arménie et la Turquie. Les Arméniens et les Turcs doivent eux-mêmes faire le douloureux inventaire de leur passé, a ajouté le chef spirituel des 70 000 Arméniens de Turquie, en appelant à un dialogue arméno-turc dans lequel parlements ou pays tiers n'ont pas à s'ingérer. Mesrob II laissait du même coup entendre que de telles initiatives à l'étranger mettaient en difficulté la fragile communauté arménienne de Turquie, et appelait aussi le gouvernement turc à régler les problèmes qui se posent dans la communauté arménienne de Turquie, comme ceux liés à l'héritage, sans se laisser influencer par ce qui peut se passer à l'étranger.

Enfin, des manifestants turcs se sont rassemblés dimanche à l'appel de plusieurs associations devant le consulat turc à Adana où ils ont brûlé un drapeau arménien et détruit des biens de consommation américains en signe de protestation contre la résolution américaine sur le génocide arménien.

Saddam's Victories

A decade ago Iraq invaded Kuwait. Operation Desert Storm in 1991 expelled Saddam Hussein's troops and left Iraq subject to an embargo that can be lifted only when the United Nations certifies that Iraq has abandoned weapons of mass destruction. Yet Saddam Hussein himself has remained in power, invulnerable, seemingly, to either internal revolt or external economic pressure. As the war he provoked recedes into history, the coalition of Western and Arab states that once opposed him has weakened, and with it, international support for sanctions. All this has happened despite the fact that Saddam Hussein continues to torture and murder his own people and has never provided a full accounting of his proscribed weapons programs. Consequently, the United States has been obliged to acquiesce in a loosened sanctions regime that permits Saddam Hussein to sell essentially unlimited quantities of oil on the world market. When President Bill Clinton ordered four days of air and missile strikes in December 1998 to punish Iraq for its defiance of a UN weapons inspection mission, only Britain joined in the attack.

Small wonder that, as the U.S. presidential election approaches, Saddam Hussein feels emboldened to challenge American resolve further through provocative rhetoric and behavior. In recent days, he has refused to admit a new UN weapons inspection team, even though it was created under a 1999 Security Council resolution brokered by Iraq's sympathizers on the council, France and Russia, and designed to ease Iraq's path

toward the lifting of the already-diluted sanctions. He has even refused entry to UN experts who were supposed to help Iraq assess its humanitarian needs and to facilitate the provision of food and medicine. On Labor Day, defying the U.S.- and British-patrolled no-flight zone in southern Iraq, Saddam Hussein dispatched a fighter plane to penetrate not only off-limits Iraqi air space but Saudi Arabia's air space as well. (U.S. pilots were taking the holiday off.) He

has begun accusing Kuwait of extracting oil that rightfully belongs to Iraq, one of the charges he leveled shortly before he launched the 1990 invasion. And it has been almost two years since any outside weapons inspector set foot in Iraq, meaning Saddam Hussein has had that much time to rebuild and conceal weapons of mass destruction.

The Clinton administration says that, for all his posturing, Saddam Hussein remains effectively contained, confined to his "box" by the remaining sanctions and a heavy U.S. military presence in the Gulf. But increasingly it is U.S. policy that is boxed in. The United States had to announce that it would not use force if Saddam Hussein continues to refuse to admit the weapons inspectors. Nor does the administration have any intention of investing in the Iraqi opposition, which it regards as hopelessly incompetent. Neither presidential candidate has articulated a particularly convincing way out of the current dead end. Al Gore is saddled with the Clinton administration's record, while George W. Bush is being counseled by many of

the same people (most prominently his running mate, former defense secretary Dick Cheney) who let Saddam Hussein survive in power at the end of the Gulf War. Meanwhile, Russia and France are making new and increasingly craven overtures to the dictator. The West's panic over increasing oil prices only increases his leverage.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright gamely pointed out that Iraq has used the UN oil-for-food program to import vast quantities of whiskey and other luxury items for Saddam Hussein's loyalists; there are also credible reports that Iraq has been selling food and medicine abroad while refusing humanitarian donations from Europe or letting them rot in warehouses. For all intents and purposes, however, Iraq has won that particular propaganda war. As long as Saddam Hussein remains in power, there is always the danger that Iraq will try to win a real war, too.

—THE WASHINGTON POST.

Herald INTERNATIONAL **Tribune**
PUBLISHED WITH THE NEW YORK TIMES AND THE WASHINGTON POST

SEPTEMBER 26, 2000

Trois organisations dans « Un avion pour l'Irak »

DES QUATRE organisations non gouvernementales qui s'étaient associées en juin pour organiser « Un avion pour l'Irak », il n'en restait plus que trois, lundi 25 septembre ; mais elles ont confirmé qu'un vol passager pour Bagdad aura bien lieu le 29 septembre avec à son bord « entre 80 et 100 personnes ». L'annonce en a été faite dans un communiqué cosigné par les trois associations – Enfants du monde-droits de l'homme, Codéveloppement tiers-monde, Coordination internationale pour la levée de l'embargo –, ainsi que par les anciens ministres Claude Cheysson (PS), Françoise Hostalier (DL) et Anicet Le Pors (ancien ministre communiste), la députée RPR Roselyne Ba-

chelot, l'ancienne ambassadrice auprès de l'Unesco Gisèle Halimi.

Le communiqué ne fait aucune allusion aux Amitiés franco-irakiennes, association qui, dès le mois de juin, avait participé au lancement du projet et en était partenaire il y a quelques jours encore. A fortiori, aucune explication n'est fournie sur cette « disparition ». D'après certaines sources, un désaccord aurait surgi à propos de la date du vol et de son financement. Gilles Munier, secrétaire général des Amitiés franco-irakiennes, n'était pas joignable, lundi soir, pour explication.

Selon les signataires, « entre 80 et 100 personnes » prendront part au vol. « Parmi elles se trouveront de nombreuses personnalités politiques

françaises et européennes, appartenant à la plupart des partis politiques, dont plusieurs anciens ministres, deux anciens coordinateurs de l'ONU à Bagdad, des personnalités du monde intellectuel et scientifique, des autorités religieuses, des artistes et des juristes. » Le vol sera affrété par « une compagnie charter, partenaire d'Air France ». Le retour est prévu le 1^{er} octobre, toujours en avion depuis Bagdad, à la différence des passagers d'un premier vol Paris-Bagdad organisé le 22 septembre, qui ont décidé de prendre la route par petits groupes pour Amman ou Damas avant de regagner Paris par avion (*Le Monde* du 23 septembre).

Mouna Naïm

LE MONDE / MERCREDI 27 SEPTEMBRE 2000 /

Turkey and Syria reaffirm unity against PKK

- After meetings between the delegations, the two ministers make a brief press statement saying that security issues, the fight against terrorism, organized crime and smuggling were discussed

Ankara - Turkish Daily News

Turkey and Syria are seeking to develop their relations, despite past disputes over Syria harboring Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) terrorists and conflicts over sharing the waters of the Fırat (Euphrates) River.

After Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer's attendance at former Syrian President Hafez al-Assad's funeral in June and Turkish Foreign Ministry Deputy Undersecretary Ugur Ziyal's visit to Syria last March, Syrian Interior Minister Mohammad Harba came with a Syrian delegation to Ankara yesterday as guests of Turkish Interior Minister Sadettin Tantan.

After a meeting between the delegations, the two ministers made a brief press statement saying that they had discussed security issues and the fight against terrorism, organized crime and smuggling.

The two ministers have reportedly agreed to continue the common struggle against PKK terrorism. Turkey also reportedly asked Syria for PKK archives that have been kept in the Syrian capital, Damascus.

Stating that relations between the two countries go far back in time, Minister Tantan said that there was a security cooperation agreement between the two countries and that the two ministers had decided to improve cooperation over security issues.

Visiting Minister Harba also said that the two countries shared an 800-kilometer border, which necessitated cooperation on security issues.

Asked if they had discussed the water disputes, Harba said that he had not come to Turkey to discuss water, but added that both countries were aware of the issue's importance.

A statement from the Turkish Interior Ministry said that the first day's discussions focused on domestic security issues concerning both countries with the aim of developing cooperation in this arena.

Following the meeting with Tantan, Harba was also received by Deputy Prime Minister Husamettin Ozkan on Tuesday.

Turkish officials close to the government told the Turkish Daily News that the visit was a regular one, being part of the security mechanism established between the two countries.

The two countries have been at odds for years over Turkish charges that Syria was harboring PKK terrorists. Relations have improved since Ankara forced Damascus to expel Ocalan two years ago.

Turkey is currently negotiating with Syria for the release of an additional statement to follow up the October 1998 Adana Accord signed by Turkey and Syria in which Syria pledged to stop supporting PKK activities on its territory.

One of the most important issues between Syria and Turkey is the sharing of the waters of the Fırat River. Turkey is building dams along the river, which Syria claims could sharply reduce the flow of water to northern Syria.

Turkey has been pursuing a tactical war over the controversial water issue with the aim of furthering the sale of water from the Manavgat River rather than from the Seyhan and Ceyhan rivers. The government is also trying to force Syria to allow water to flow from the Orontes River into the Amik Plateau in southern Turkey for urgently needed irrigation.

Syria has blocked the flow of the Orontes River in reaction to Ankara's refusal to make a binding agreement with Damascus on the amount of water that will be allowed to flow into Syria from the Fırat River.

Les relations Iran-Irak se réchauffent grâce à l'Opep

REUTERS

29 septembre 2000



[agrandir la photo](#)

CARACAS (Reuters) - La rencontre, vendredi à Caracas, entre le président iranien Mohammad Khatami et le vice-président irakien Taha Yassin Ramadan a permis de réaliser des progrès sur la voie d'un règlement du contentieux bilatéral, a annoncé aux journalistes Mohammad Ali Abtahi, secrétaire général de la présidence iranienne.

"L'ensemble du dossier des relations bilatérales a été soulevé", a-t-il précisé à propos de la rencontre, qui a eu lieu en marge du sommet de l'Opep et constitue le contact officiel au plus haut niveau depuis neuf ans.

L'Irak et l'Iran se sont fait la guerre de 1980 à 1988 et les relations entre les deux pays restent depuis très tendues.

Le porte-parole iranien a précisé que les discussions de Caracas avaient notamment porté sur l'accord signé en 1975 à Alger entre Téhéran et Bagdad sur la cession à l'Iran d'une partie du Chatt el Arab en échange de l'abandon du soutien iranien aux Kurdes irakiens.

La décision du président Saddam Hussein en 1980 de rompre cet accord avait été à l'origine de la guerre, qui a fait un million de morts.

"Les deux parties sont tombés d'accord sur l'accord d'Alger", a assuré Abtahi.

Heavy fighting Between PUK And PKK in Southern Kurdistan

The Kurdistan Observer
Sep 29, 2000

On the night of Sep 29, 2000, heavy fighting erupted between the forces of the PUK and PKK in several areas of Qaladiza and Raniya, a stronghold of the PUK, according to a Kurdish source in southern Kurdistan.

The source said that the PKK forces have overrun PUK positions in the north and north west of Qaladiza, as the result, over 80 fighters were killed on both side.

Also, The PUK has issued a statement today stating that the fighting was continuous from 1:30 PM to the early hours of the morning. However, the statement did not mention the number of casualties, it only said that several Kurds were killed for no reason.

"It appears that the PKK-leadership are determined to fulfill the orders of their defeated-leader, Ocalan, who openly fights against liberated (southern) Kurdistan. Ocalan has announced defeat and ceased struggle in northern (Turkish) Kurdistan, and yet encourages his forces to attack peshmargas of Kurdistan and shed Kurdish blood," said the PUK statement.

Appropriations Committee Chairman Bob Livingston, are lobbying against the resolution.

The Clinton administration already has dissociated itself from the resolution, which as a nonbinding measure does not go on to the Senate or president for approval.

Relations between Turkey and the United States -- two of NATO's closest allies -- may be seriously damaged by the resolution.

Turkey has proven its readiness to retaliate when a similar bill was put forward in 1998 by the lower chamber of the French Parliament. The Turkish government halted all negotiations with French companies on defense contracts. Ever since, the bill has been inactive.

Although many fear that public pressure may push Turkey's government into a rash reaction, Foreign Minister Ismail Cem said that Turkey would be careful not to fall into that trap. "Of course, we will not remain silent in the face of this move," Cem said on Tuesday. "But we will also not be pulled into the game of those Americans or Armenians who organized this provocation."

KDP and Iran approachment continues

29 September 2000 Kurdish Media

ERBIL, Kurdistan (KM) - A high ranking Iranian army commander visited Kurdish areas under the control of the Kurdistan Democratic party (KDP).

The visit by the Iranian army commander to Erbil, comes after this year visit of a high ranking KDP delegation headed by Nachirvan Barazani to Tehran. The KDP move further weakens its rival Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) in the region and reflects a change of policy of Iran towards Kurds in Northern Iraq.

"The Kurdish policy of Iran in Kurdistan was a mirror of its policy in Afghanistan. Supporting the PUK party of Talabani in Kurdistan and supporting the Anti-Talaban forces in Afghanistan. In both Afghanistan and Kurdistan, Iran has been investing on the losing party in order to prolong the conflict and instability. After the failure of that policy in Afghanistan, Now Iran is changing its Kurdish policy." Commented a Kurdish analyst. The emergence of an Afghanistan ruled by Talaban who executed more than 20 of Iranian diplomats in Afghanistan is a security threat for Iranian eastern border.

The reemergence of Saddam and its expanding relations with Syria is also turning into a new national security threat for Iran on its western border. Iran has lost Syria as an Arab ally who helped Iran during Iran-Iraq war and now Iranian security arrangements in its western borders are in trouble if Saddam attacks.

In a war scenario, both Iran and Iraq will try to attract Kurds to their side. In the last Iran-Iraq war, the Kurds in Iran and Iraq failed to unite and ask both warring states a single package of independence as a condition for alliance. The clashes between Kurdish parties weakened the Kurdish side and the alliance of the Kurds in Iraq with Iran only brought for them the Halabja massacre of Kurds by Saddam. Kurds failed to analyse the situation correctly.

The creation of a Kurdish state bordering western regions of Iran, strengthens the nationalist feelings of Kurds in Iran, but historically Kurdish tribes have safeguarded the western borders of the Iranian plateau from the Greeks, Arabs and Turks.

The British engineered project of Iran needs a correction. The project is in conflict with the history of the region and the aspirations of the Iranian speaking people and the emerging states in the political map of the region.

PKK asks for more assistance from Armenia

- Stuck in northern Iraq as a result of Turkish military operations, the PKK asks Armenia to provide more accommodation facilities

Ankara - Turkish Daily News

The separatist Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) has reportedly demanded more assistance from Armenia, since it is now in a difficult situation in northern Iraq, the Anatolia news agency reported on Thursday.

According to the reports, PKK so-called Presidential Council member Osman Ocalan has sent a letter to the Armenian Foreign Ministry stating that the organization is going through a difficult period and is facing many serious problems, the most important of which being accommodation.

"We want you to know that the PKK attributes a special importance to its relations with your country. We have always supported your pursuing your interests against Turkey. And you have not hesitated to provide support for the PKK in return. But our party, the PKK, has been going through a difficult period for the last year. The most important problem we have been facing is that of accommodation. We are stuck in northern Iraq as a result of the Turkish military operations and the operations of two Kurdish parties in the region. We would be glad if you could increase the number of accommodation facilities in your territory for us," said the letter, according to the reports.

The Armenian authorities have not yet responded to the letter, but efforts are underway to expand the two PKK camps already in Armenian territory.

US administration continues strong opposition to so-called genocide resolution

- In addition to President Bill Clinton and Pentagon officials, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said that the resolution recognizing the so-called Armenian genocide should not be taken further

Ankara - Turkish Daily News

In a statement directed toward the U.S. Congress, U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said that the resolution recognizing a so-called Armenian genocide should not be taken further.

"I should express sincerely that this resolution may damage U.S. national interests and our relations with Turkey. Being a NATO member, Turkey has close cooperation with the United States in Cyprus, Nagorno-Karabakh and Iraq. Therefore I place great importance on not taking the resolution further," Albright said on Wednesday.

Sandy Berger, a special advisor to U.S. President Bill Clinton on national security issues, said in a meeting with Turkish Ambassador Baki Ilkin that the Clinton administration is doing what they can to block the resolution.

Turkish Union of Chambers and Commodities Exchanges (TOBB) Chairman Fuat Miras said in a letter to Clinton that historical events should not be used as election tools. Stressing that the decision of the House subcommittee has created great sadness in the Turkish private sector, Miras asked Clinton for more efforts. Meanwhile, Virtue Party (FP) Deputy Musa Uzunkaya on Thursday proposed a parliamentary investigation of native American genocide claims.

The nonbinding resolution, approved by a House International Relations subcommittee last week, calls for Clinton to label the deaths of a number of Armenians early in the 20th century a genocide, and to provide education for U.S. executive branch employees on the so-called Armenian genocide

Two powerful former congressman, former Rules Committee Chairman Gerald Solomon and former

Le maire de Diyarbakir dénonce la destitution de trois maires au Kurdistan



RENNES (France), 28 sept (AFP) - 19h51 - Le maire de Diyarbakir, principale ville du Kurdistan turc (sud-est de la Turquie), a dénoncé mercredi à Rennes (ouest de la France) la "déstitution" de trois de ses collègues de la région par les autorités turques.

"Trois maires kurdes ont récemment été destitués par les autorités, alors qu'ils avaient été démocratiquement élus, ce qui est un coup porté à la démocratie et aux droits de l'Homme en Turquie", a déclaré Feridum Celik, maire de Diyarbakir et président de l'Union régionale de l'Anatolie du sud-est, en tournée européenne pour renforcer la coopération décentralisée.

Les destitutions des maires d'Agri, d'Ozalp et de Lice (membres du parti démocratique populaire HADEP), sont survenues en juin 1999, en mars et en juin 2000, a précisé M. Celik au cours d'une rencontre avec Edmond Hervé, maire de la ville de Rennes, qui entretient depuis plus de vingt ans des rapports de coopération avec Diyarbakir.

M. Celik, qui a également effectué une visite en Allemagne, a alerté la Fédération mondiale des cités unies (FMCU), dont le siège est à Paris, de cette situation politique.

La FMCU, qui regroupe quelque 1.500 villes d'une centaine de pays, a prévu d'organiser à la fin du mois un séminaire à Diyarbakir sur "l'autonomie locale au service du citoyen", a-t-on appris auprès des responsables.

La Syrie veut tourner la page du PKK avec la Turquie



ANKARA, 28 sept (AFP) - 11h26 - La Syrie veut éliminer le manque de confiance dans ses relations avec sa voisine la Turquie, avec laquelle elle était arrivée au bord d'un conflit armé il y a deux ans pour son soutien au Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK), a déclaré jeudi à Ankara le ministre syrien de l'Intérieur, Mouhammed Harba.

"Nous voulons tourner la page avec la Turquie. Cette question (PKK) est terminée", a-t-il dit, cité par l'agence Anatolie, au deuxième jour de sa visite en Turquie lors d'une conférence de presse conjointe avec son homologue turc Saadettin Tantani.

Les deux hommes ont signé un protocole de coopération contre le terrorisme et la lutte contre le crime organisé, le trafic de stupéfiants et le blanchiment d'argent sale.

M. Tantani a qualifié le protocole de "très important".

La visite de M. Harba est la première d'un ministre syrien de l'Intérieur en Turquie depuis qu'Ankara et Damas ont signé en octobre 1998 à Adana (sud de la Turquie) un accord qui avait marqué une détente après plusieurs semaines de vive tension entre les deux pays.

La Turquie avait alors menacé la Syrie d'action militaire si elle n'arrêtait pas son soutien au PKK et à son chef Abdullah Ocalan.

Après avoir été chassé du sol syrien, Ocalan a été capturé en février 1999 au Kenya et condamné en juin de la même année à la peine de mort par la justice turque.

Les deux pays ont depuis octobre 1998 tenu une série de réunions de sécurité à Ankara et Damas dans le cadre d'un dialogue régulier.

Outre M. Tantani, M. Harba s'est entretenu mardi avec le vice-Premier ministre turc Husamettin Ozkan. Il passera jeudi après-midi à Istanbul pour un volet touristique de sa visite.

Acquittement d'une journaliste poursuivie pour atteinte au moral de l'Armée



ISTANBUL, 29 sept (AFP) - 17h34 - Une cour d'assise d'Istanbul a acquitté vendredi une journaliste, dont le livre sur la lutte contre la rébellion kurde dans le sud-est était accusé de porter atteinte au moral des forces armées turques, ainsi que son éditeur, qui risquaient tous deux de deux à douze ans de prison.

La cour, qui avait ouvert le procès il y a un an exactement, a jugé que les faits reprochés n'étaient pas avérés.

Nadire Mater était poursuivie pour son livre "Mehmedin kitabi" ("Le livre du soldat"), publié en mai 99, qui compilait les témoignages de 42 appelés ayant eu à combattre la rébellion kurde du PKK (Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan).

"Nous sommes heureux, mais cela ne veut pas dire que toutes les violations de la liberté d'expression ont disparu en Turquie", a déclaré Nadire Mater après l'audience, à laquelle assistait un public nombreux.

La maison d'édition Metis, qui avait vendu près de 20.000 exemplaires de l'ouvrage, voit également levée l'interdiction qui frappait "Le livre du soldat".

"Notre victoire est plus que symbolique: c'était un procès contre l'Armée, puisque c'est le commandant de l'Armée de terre en personne qui avait lancé la procédure contre nous", a commenté l'éditeur, Huseyin Semih Sokmen.

Le procureur de la République a une semaine pour faire appel de la sentence.

La Turquie, candidate à l'adhésion à l'Union Européenne, est régulièrement critiquée pour ses entraves à la liberté d'expression et ses atteintes aux droits de l'Homme.

Le PKK a pris les armes en 1984 pour l'indépendance du sud-est du pays à majorité kurde. En réponse, l'Armée y a déployé des dizaines de milliers de soldats, et notamment de nombreux conscrits.

Le conflit, qui a fait officiellement 36.500 victimes, a donné lieu à de nombreuses violations des droits de l'Homme de part et d'autre.

Dans ce livre, les soldats interviewés sous couvert de l'anonymat évoquent ouvertement des saccages de villages et l'oppression des populations civiles comme une méthode de l'armée face au PKK.

Le 6e prix Ludovic Trarieux remis à l'avocat turc Esber Yagmurdereli



BORDEAUX (France), 30 sept (AFP) - 17h58 - Le 6e Prix international des droits de l'Homme Ludovic Trarieux, décerné en mars à l'avocat et écrivain turc Esber Yagmurdereli, actuellement emprisonné en Turquie pour son action en faveur des Kurdes, a été remis à Bordeaux (sud-ouest de la France) à son fils Ubur, a-t-on appris samedi auprès des organisateurs du prix.

Selon les organisateurs, "Esber Yagmurdereli purge actuellement une peine de prison pour avoir prôné une solution pacifique au problème kurde".

D'une valeur de 30.000 francs (4.573 Euros), le prix Ludovic Trarieux – du nom de l'avocat fondateur en 1898 de la Ligue française des droits de l'Homme, à l'origine de toutes les ligues créées depuis dans le monde –, est décerné tous les deux ans par l'Institut des droits de l'Homme du barreau de Bordeaux et l'Union des avocats européens, à un avocat qui s'est illustré dans la lutte pour les droits de l'Homme.

Condamné à 23 ans de prison, Esber Yagmurdereli, 54 ans, a été incarcéré en octobre-novembre 1997, puis à nouveau depuis juin 1998. Il avait déjà passé 13 ans dans les geôles de son pays, de 1978 à 1991, après une condamnation pour "activité subversive armée".

Le premier lauréat du prix Trarieux, en 1985, avait été Nelson Mandela, alors emprisonné en Afrique du Sud. En 1998, il a été attribué à l'avocat chinois Zhou Guoqiang.

Il faut en finir avec le blocus qui dévaste l'Irak. Mais attention à ne pas offrir un soutien implicite à Saddam Hussein.

Non à l'embargo, non au tyran

par FRANÇOIS LONCLE

Les initiatives se multiplient pour briser l'embargo qui accable l'Irak depuis dix ans. En août, le président vénézuélien Hugo Chavez a été le premier chef d'Etat à effectuer une visite à Bagdad depuis la fin de la guerre du Golfe. A son tour, son homologue indonésien Wahid a annoncé sa prochaine venue en Irak. Une délégation russe conduite par un vice-ministre s'est posée sur l'aéroport de Bagdad qui venait de rouvrir. La Turquie envisage, elle, d'établir une liaison ferroviaire avec son voisin méridional. Enfin, quatre associations françaises, soutenues par des personnalités issues de divers horizons professionnels et politiques, affrètent ce vendredi un avion reliant Paris à Bagdad, dans le but de « violer légalement l'embargo aérien sur l'Irak » (lire aussi page 10).

Il faut en effet suspendre les sanctions contre l'Irak. Elles sont « cruelles, inefficaces et dangereuses », comme l'a réaffirmé Hubert Védrine dans un récent entretien au journal arabe *Al-Hayat*. Cruelles, parce qu'elles affectent surtout le peuple. Inefficaces, parce qu'elles n'infléchissent pas la position de Saddam Hussein. Dangereuses, parce qu'elles désespèrent toute une jeunesse, « génération perdue » selon un diplomate occidental. Après une décennie d'embargo draconien, l'Irak est isolé, brisé, anémié. Pour un pays qui, avant la guerre, importait près des trois quarts de ses moyens de subsistance, les sanctions ont eu un effet dévastateur. Des pénuries alimentaires et de médicaments ont fortement pénalisé les Irakiens, au point de nuire gravement à leur santé. Des enfants naissent avec des malformations; la plupart souffre de malnutrition; nombreux sont ceux qui meurent de maladies guérissables: l'Unicef estime que la mortalité infantile a plus que doublé en dix ans.

Institué en 1996, le programme « pétrole contre nourriture » – qui permet à l'Irak d'échanger du brut contre des produits de première nécessité – a quelque peu soulagé les affres de la population dont la vie quotidienne reste soumise à un strict rationnement en vivres, en eau potable et en électricité. La situation s'est de nouveau détériorée en décembre 1998. Depuis cette date, les forces américaines et britanniques bombardent presque chaque jour des cibles irakiennes dans les deux zones d'exclusion aérienne situées au nord et au sud du pays et instaurées en avril 1991 pour protéger respectivement les Kurdes et les chiites. Ces raids auraient fait 422 morts et plus de 900 blessés, d'après un décompte de l'AFP qui cite l'exemple d'un berger de Mossoul et des six membres de sa famille écrasés sous leur tente.

Cet acharnement anglo-américain est « inutile et incompréhensible », pour reprendre les termes de Hubert Védrine. La politique américaine apparaît mé-

me contradictoire, puisqu'elle a atteint le contraire de ce qu'elle recherchait: le désarmement de l'Irak n'est plus sous contrôle de l'ONU depuis le déclenchement des frappes aériennes et le retrait de l'Unscorm, la commission internationale chargée de cette mission. Et la nouvelle commission, l'Unmovic, bien que techniquement opérationnelle, n'est pourtant pas prête de reprendre les inspections. Quant au renversement de Saddam Hussein, il semble tout aussi hypothétique. Réprimée par le pouvoir et déchirée par des luttes internes, l'opposition n'offre aucune alternative crédible, malgré les abondantes subventions américaines. On peut finalement se demander si la stratégie américaine ne vise pas plutôt à conserver l'épouvantail irakien, afin d'entretenir l'inquiétude et faciliter la pénétration des Etats-Unis dans la région. Mais cette politique montre ses limites et ses incohérences. L'embargo bénéficie doublement à Saddam Hussein: d'une part, il tire des profits substantiels de la contrebande de pétrole; d'autre part, il « exploite la souffrance des civils » comme l'admet Madeleine Albright. En outre, les experts estiment que l'Irak a été très largement désarmé. Le Pentagone a d'ailleurs reconnu que l'Irak « ne menace plus ses voisins ». Dans ces conditions, les sanctions ne se justifient plus. Il convient du reste de s'interroger sur les finalités et les modalités d'une politique d'embargo dont les dégâts humanitaires sont inversement proportionnels à leur impact politique.

Céuvrons plutôt à la réinsertion d'un Irak pacifique, stable et prospère au sein de la communauté internationale.

l'implacable réalité du régime irakien, au risque de l'absoudre ou pire de le cautionner. Telle qu'elle est présentée par ses organisateurs, l'initiative « Un avion pour l'Irak » constitue un soutien implicite à Saddam Hussein, dans la mesure où aucune allusion n'est faite à ses crimes et à ses exactions. Il est étonnant que des personnalités attachées aux droits de l'homme apportent leur appui à une initiative ambiguë. L'aveu-

glement des uns, l'antiaméricanisme primaire des autres n'autorisent pas à passer sous silence la terreur que fait régner Saddam Hussein, ni à oublier son écrasante responsabilité dans la tragédie vécue par son peuple. En refusant de coopérer avec l'ONU, il n'a cessé de retarder la levée de l'embargo. Faisant preuve d'une obstination criminelle, il n'a consenti qu'en avril 1996 à la formule « pétrole contre nourriture ». Autocrate brutal et cruel, il pressure ses compatriotes, piétine les libertés, élimine toute résistance. Le dernier rapport d'Amnesty International énumère les violations des droits de l'homme perpétrées en Irak: arrestations arbitraires, tortures systématiques infligées aux prisonniers (comme la *falaga*, qui consiste en coups violents assénés sur les pieds), expulsions de familles kurdes, exécutions sommaires, épuration des régions chiites, assassinats de dirigeants kurdes... De son côté, un service spécialisé des Nations unies fait état de plus de 16000 cas de disparitions forcées. Au lieu de risquer de se compromettre avec un régime criminel, œuvrons plutôt à la réinsertion d'un Irak pacifique, stable et prospère au sein de la communauté internationale. Pour que soit enfin levé cet embargo inhumain, pour que cessent les souffrances du peuple irakien, soutenons les efforts du gouvernement français qui préconise un système d'examen global du désarmement de l'Irak. C'est assurément le meilleur moyen pour que puissent voler, non pas un, mais des avions pour l'Irak ■

François Loncle, député PS est président de la commission des Affaires étrangères de l'Assemblée nationale.

Syrian Intellectuals Call for Freedom

By Howard Schneider
Washington Post Service

CAIRO — Ninety-nine Syrian intellectuals published a demand Wednesday for more democracy and freedom of expression in their country, a rare direct appeal for political reform in a nation ruled tightly by President Hafez Assad until his death this summer, and now led by his son, Bashar Assad.

After 37 years under a state of emergency used to limit political discussion in the country, the group said it was time for Syria to join the world's "common language" of expanding freedom, lifting the emergency law itself, liberalizing the press, and freeing what they estimated as 1,500 political prisoners.

"Democracy and human rights" is the common language of today, proclaimed an essay published in Beirut newspapers and signed by leading Syrian writers and artists, including the poet known by the penname Adonis and the artist Nizar Sabour.

"Any reform, whether economic, administrative or legal will not achieve stability if it is not accompanied by political reform," the group wrote.

The appearance of the essay in Beirut newspapers is evidence of continued limits on the Syrian press, still controlled by the government and hesitant to touch on the most sensitive issues.

But it is also one of the surest signs yet of a gradual expansion of political discourse in a country where challenges to the regime have for the last 30 years been spoken in whispers, not printed for mass distribution.

The young Assad has indicated he wants people to engage in substantive discussion about the country's future and to open its economy. And Syrians are starting to take him seriously.

People in Damascus talk with more openness about issues they have suppressed in the past, like unemployment, the depressed state of wages and the endemic corruption. The newspapers have started a campaign against government employees abusing state-owned vehicles — a small but important point in a country where kickbacks and bribes are routine — and some political prisoners are gradually and being released with little fanfare.

Customs and immigration officials seem less wary of foreigners arriving at Damascus International Airport.

And perhaps most telling, jokes about the late President Assad have begun to circulate, a marked departure from the caution Syrians typically used when speaking his name.

"People aren't as afraid as they used to be," said Hamdan Hossein, a journalist who recently published his own call for reform in a Lebanese newspaper, suggesting that the Ba'ath Arab Socialist Party's governing coalition become more diverse in its membership and policies.

"People are raising questions," he said. "There are different lines of thinking."

Whether it lasts, how far it goes, is another matter. When it comes to the likelihood of serious change in a country like Syria, the signals are hard to read — a matter of guessing whether a new program or policy or cabinet shuffle is a sign of new direction, or more a matter of display, announced with fanfare but ultimately ineffective.

So far, the atmospherics, at least, are positive.

One of the first things the new president did was tell the Minister of Information to stop the daily use of his photograph in the official press and to

tone down the fawning rhetoric — a blow for humility in a region where the hubris of leaders is epic.

Or consider Mr. Assad's relations with neighbors like Jordan and Lebanon. His father distrusted King Hussein of Jordan, and each accused the other of various meddling and plots.

When King Hussein's heir, King Abdullah, met Mr. Assad's heir earlier this year, they hopped in Mr. Assad's 1954 Mercedes-Benz convertible and went tooling around the Mediterranean town of Lattakia — just a couple of guys with armies at their command.

When Lebanese politicians, conditioned to asking Syria's blessing, came calling in Damascus this summer during the campaign for a parliamentary elections, Mr. Assad took a more hands-off approach, telling them they would have to fight it out on their own. His major concern, according to Lebanese officials and analysts, was that the campaign had become too personal, lacking real substance.

He is, those who know him say, a different breed than his father: A physician instead of a career soldier, willing to splurge on hobbies like a classic car collection — he also owns a 1963 Jaguar and two vintage Cadillac convertibles — versus one hesitant even to change the furnishings in his house or office.

To some Damascus residents, one of the more encouraging signs of the summer was the sudden work under way around the late president's residential and work complex in the city center.

At last, they said, someone willing to update the neighborhood.

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE
SEPTEMBER 28, 2000

LIBERATION
29 SEPTEMBRE 2000

L'embargo contre l'Irak a du plomb dans l'aile

La multiplication des vols à destination de Bagdad divise humanitaires et politiques.

L'embargo économique contre l'Irak a-t-il vécu? Sans doute pas, mais la multiplication des vols à destination de Bagdad commence à lui porter des coups. Aujourd'hui, c'est un second avion français qui doit partir de Roissy pour Bagdad une semaine après le premier. Pour la première fois, il y aura à bord des personnalités politiques euro-

péennes. Une opération symbolique — visant à dénoncer l'embargo qui asphyxie la population irakienne — avec des desseins humanitaires sincères mais non dépourvus, chez certains, d'arrière-pensées économiques ou idéologiques. Ce vol succède à ceux organisés par la Russie et la Jordanie, premier pays arabe en dix ans à violer l'embargo. Du Yémen,

doit décoller, aujourd'hui, un avion pour Bagdad et l'on attend celui promis par Damas. Irritation de Washington. Ces vols sont salués comme autant de victoires par les dirigeants irakiens. «C'est le début de l'effondrement de l'embargo», a déclaré, hier, le vice-Premier ministre Tarek Aziz. En revanche, ils irritent Washington. «Nous sommes préoccupés

par les vols qui ont eu lieu», a déclaré, mardi, Madeleine Albright, devant la commission des Affaires étrangères du Sénat. Le premier vol civil français, avec à son bord une soixantaine de passagers dont une trentaine de médecins, avait d'ailleurs provoqué une polémique entre Washing-

ton et Paris. Lundi, le Comité des sanctions sur l'Irak n'a pu se mettre d'accord sur la politique à suivre face aux vols vers Bagdad. Les Etats-Unis et la Grande-Bretagne affirment qu'une autorisation de ce Comité est nécessaire, alors que la France, comme la Russie et la Chine, soutient que les résolutions de l'ONU n'imposent pas d'embargo aérien et qu'une simple notification suffit dès lors que les vols ne comportent pas de transactions financières ou commerciales.

Ces vols sont salués comme autant de victoires par les dirigeants irakiens. En revanche, ils irritent Washington.

Dans un communiqué, le père Yves Buannic, président d'Enfants du Monde-Droits de l'homme, l'une des trois associations qui affrètent l'avion, a dénoncé «les pressions de haut niveau [qui] essaient de faire annuler ce vol français [lequel] veut répondre aux appels au secours des enfants d'Irak». Les deux autres organisations associées sont Co-développement tiers-monde et Coordination internationale pour la levée de l'embargo. Une quatrième, les

Amitiés franco-irakiennes, s'est retirée après un désaccord sur le choix du groupe qui devait être responsable de l'affrètement. Deux anciens humanitaires de l'ONU en Irak, l'Irlandais Dennis Halliday et l'Allemand Hans von Sponeck, feront partie du voyage, ainsi que l'ancien ministre des Affaires étrangères Claude Cheysson et des parlementaires.

Régime responsable. Dans un communiqué, un collectif de l'opposition irakienne (parti communiste, Dawa, UPK,...), a reproché aux orga-

nismes d'ignorer la responsabilité du régime baassiste dans la situation de l'Irak. «Effets de l'embargo? Certes, mais l'explication n'est-elle pas un peu courte lorsque l'on connaît l'emprise totale de Saddam Hussein [...] sur tous les leviers politiques et économiques du pays, le système mafieux qui rançonne la population et les circuits du marché noir contrôlé par Oudaï, le fils aîné, le détournement de l'aide humanitaire, les sommes gigantesques englouties dans de luxueux palais présidentiels?» ●

JEAN-PIERRE PERRIN

IRAK

La corruption comme mode de fonctionnement

En Irak, l'Etat est en pleine déliquescence, aussi bien dans le domaine éducatif que judiciaire ou sécuritaire.

S'ajoute à cela la situation sanitaire et alimentaire déplorable due à l'embargo international qui frappe le pays.

AL HAYAT
Londres

A une époque comme la nôtre, où les cambriolages de domiciles ou de commerces particuliers sont devenus un banal événement quotidien, personne n'a plus l'idée saugrenue de s'adresser à la police. En effet, faire appel à des policiers pour ce genre d'histoires risque surtout de coûter au plaignant quelques milliers de dinars qu'il devra sortir de sa poche pour payer les timbres fiscaux permettant d'enregistrer officiellement sa plainte, ainsi que le papier nécessaire au policier pour écrire sa déposition. Pour autant, le plaignant ne sera pas quitte : il devra encore avancer de l'argent pour louer la voiture qui amènera les policiers jusqu'à son domicile cambriolé, ainsi que pour les nourrir, sans oublier un ou deux

paquets de cigarettes nécessaires au déroulement d'une enquête qui n'aboutira pas de toute façon.

Face à cette épidémie de corruption, les chefs de tribu ont réagi à leur façon pour mettre en place leurs propres lois alternatives et imposer leur autorité, que ne contestent plus ni la police ni les autres services de sécurité.

L'année passée, les autorités irakiennes ont fermé un hôpital spécialisé dans la transplantation de reins en raison de la corruption généralisée qui y régnait. En effet, des Irakiens nécessiteux venaient vendre leurs reins à des Arabes ou à d'autres étrangers capables de payer 5 000 dollars pour ce bien précieux. Pour autant, les autorités irakiennes ont permis la réouverture de "certaines salles" où, selon un médecin irakien qui vient récemment de quitter l'Irak, se déroulent des opérations chirurgicales ne respectant aucune éthique humaine ni aucune norme sanitaire et qui s'avèrent être des "opérations commerciales où la matière première est constituée par des corps humains".

Alors que des sources irakiennes très bien informées attribuent la responsabilité de la poursuite de ces "crimes" à des personnalités importantes bénéficiant d'une "couverture légale", des voyageurs de retour de Bagdad affirment que des prisonniers accusés d'être des partisans du chef spirituel chiite aujourd'hui décédé, l'ayatollah Mohammad Sadeq as-Sadr, ainsi que d'autres prisonniers politiques ont été soumis de force à des prélèvements de reins.

Il semblerait que la corruption règne en maître dans ce genre d'opération et que des médecins, des chirurgiens, des commerçants et autres intermédiaires y participent activement, illustrant ainsi la complète déliquescence de l'Etat. Les Irakiens ne reprochent pas seulement à cet Etat son incapacité à les protéger, mais considèrent que ses figures les plus en vue dans les domaines médical, judiciaire, policier ou éducatif participent à leur exploitation et à l'aggravation de leurs maux.

Ali Abdel Amir

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, SATURDAY-SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30-OCTOBER 1, 2000

Turkish Author Is Acquitted of Insulting Army

New York Times Service

ISTANBUL — In a case watched closely by advocates of press freedom and human rights, a Turkish journalist was acquitted Friday of charges that she insulted the military in a book about the war against Kurdish separatists.

Nadire Mater's work, "Mehmet's

Book," is an oral history based on interviews with 42 army veterans, many of whom expressed disillusionment at their roles in fighting Kurdish rebels in southeastern Turkey in the 1980s and '90s.

The words of the anonymous transcripts were explosive in Turkey, where criticizing the military is a crime, and the book was banned and confiscated in June 1999. Criminal charges were brought against Ms. Mater and her publisher, Semih Sokmen, three months later, and they faced as much as 12 years in prison.

But as the pair stood in a small, packed courtroom Friday afternoon, a three-judge panel ruled unanimously that no

crime had been committed, and the charges were dismissed. The judges also lifted the ban on the book but delayed implementing that order for a week to give the prosecutor time to appeal.

Ms. Mater expressed relief for herself but also concern for other Turkish journalists who face criminal charges.

Kati Marton, an author and board member of the Committee to Protect Journalists, based in New York, said in Istanbul, "This is a good day for journalists and a good day for Turkey."

Septembre 2000 - N° 152

LA LETTRE DE



é v é n e m e n t

Iran : "les pires moments de ma carrière"

"Ces derniers mois représentent les pires moments de ma carrière" explique **Nik Ahang-Kosar**, caricaturiste au quotidien *Azad*. En février 2000, il a été arrêté et détenu durant quelques jours pour un dessin représentant un dignitaire religieux conservateur sous les traits d'un crocodile. Pour plusieurs de ses confrères journalistes, la situation est encore plus difficile : treize d'entre eux sont actuellement emprisonnés et une vingtaine d'autres, poursuivis par la justice, sont menacés de l'être.

Les familles des journalistes emprisonnés ont décidé, à la mi-août, de créer une association pour obtenir la libération de leurs proches. "A l'exception de **Emadoldin Baghi**, journaliste au quotidien *Neshat* et **Latif Safari**, directeur du même quotidien, qui sont dans des dortoirs, reçoivent des visites deux fois par mois et peuvent téléphoner à leurs familles, les autres journalistes sont détenus dans des cellules individuelles", raconte **Isa Sahakhiz**, directeur du quotidien suspendu *Akhbar Eghtesad*. "Ceux-là n'ont, jusqu'à présent, pas été autorisés à voir leurs avocats et leurs familles", ajoute-t-il. L'épouse de **Machallah Chamsolvaezine**, rédacteur en chef de *Neshat*, emprisonné depuis le 10 avril, est donc inquiète depuis qu'elle a appris, le 20 août, que son mari avait été transféré dans un cachot individuel. Quant à **Hassan Youssefi Echkevari**, journaliste à *Iran-e-Farda*, il n'a pas pu se procurer les médicaments nécessaires pour soigner son diabète. D'autres informations sont encore plus préoccupantes. Selon un reporter qui a requis l'anonymat, plusieurs journalistes incarcérés auraient été torturés.

La victoire des réformateurs aux élections législatives de février 2000 avait pourtant laissé

entrevoir une libéralisation du régime, en particulier dans le domaine de la presse. Mais, le 17 avril, l'adoption par les conservateurs, encore majoritaires au Parlement, d'une loi extrêmement sévère sur la presse, a marqué le début de l'offensive contre la presse réformatrice. Les journalistes, mais aussi leurs publications, ont été lourdement sanctionnés.

Le 23 avril, la justice iranienne a suspendu neuf quotidiens afin de "dissiper les inquiétudes du peuple, du Guide de la Révolution islamique et du clergé". Au total, en l'espace de cinq mois, vingt-cinq publications

ont été suspendues par la justice, dominée par les conservateurs. La profession est aujourd'hui sinistrée.

Plus de mille journalistes seraient au chômage. Selon **Nik Ahang-Kosar**, "certains d'entre eux ont dû, pour vivre, vendre leurs bijoux, leurs tapis ou leur télévision". Le syndicat des journalistes a lancé un appel à la population pour qu'elle leur vienne financièrement en aide.

Sur les treize journalistes détenus au 27 août, seuls cinq ont été jugés. La peine la plus lourde a été prononcée contre **Emadoldin Baghi**, condamné à cinq ans et demi de prison pour "atteinte à la sécurité nationale" et "propagation de fausses nouvelles". "Malgré certaines déclarations du ministre de la Justice selon lesquelles les journalistes vont être libérés et les journaux vont reparaitre, je pense que la répression va se poursuivre au cours des prochaines semaines", déplore **Isa Sahakhiz**.

Signez la pétition demandant la libération des journalistes iraniens emprisonnés sur www.rsf.fr

Dessin de **Nik Ahang-Kosar**





septembre 2000

LIGUE INTERNATIONALE POUR LES DROITS ET LA LIBERATION DES PEUPLES
ONG dotée du statut consultatif auprès de l'ECOSOC et de l'UNESCO

INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR THE RIGHTS AND LIBERATION OF PEOPLES
NGO in consultative status with ECOSOC and UNESCO

LIGA INTERNACIONAL POR LOS DERECHOS Y LA LIBERACION DE LOS PUEBLOS
ONG con estatuto consultivo ante el ECOSOC y la UNESCO

Populations kurdes déplacées en Turquie et en Irak

Rappelant les paroles de Yilmaz Ensaroglu, président de Mazlum-Der: «On ne peut pas ignorer les milliers de familles qui sont obligées de faire mendier leurs enfants», la LIDLIP a encore une fois attiré l'attention de la Sous-Commission sur les mensonges de la Turquie quant à la rectification de certains chiffres et le redressement ainsi du tableau d'ensemble. Au fait, alors que l'observateur gouvernemental prétendait que le nombre de villages évacués était d'environ 800, plus 1'600 autres petits hameaux, la Commission parlementaire turque elle-même faisait état de 3'428. En outre, selon la déclaration de la Turquie, 5% seulement des évacuations auraient été causées par la pression des autorités, alors que 60% auraient été dues à des décisions volontaires, à cause de la pression du PKK ou de quelque catastrophe naturelle. On lit en revanche dans le rapport de la Commission parlementaire que: «Les évacuations ont été effectuées par les forces de sécurité et ont été largement employées dans la période 1992-1994». D'après Hasan Perihanoglu, membre du Bureau exécutif de Van CIC: «La principale raison de l'exode réside dans les carences dans les domaines de la sécurité, de l'instruction et de la santé. La majorité des gens souffrent aussi de manque de vivres, de services sanitaires et éducatifs et de possibilités d'emplois. Les maladies contagieuses et autres problèmes de santé sont très répandus parmi ces gens et ces problèmes se propagent aux autres régions du pays.» Les chiffres officiels montrent que 3'313 villages ont été évacués et 401'328 personnes ont émigré. Etant donné que la plupart de ces réfugiés ne font pas entièrement confiance à la sécurité dans leurs villages et que leurs maisons sont en ruines, ils ne veulent pas rentrer. (Ce qu'a affirmé la LIDLIP coïncidait d'ailleurs avec les conclusions de Françoise Jane Hampson, experte de la Sous-Commission).

La Turquie a annoncé triomphalement le projet «Retour au village» (modèle semblable à celui du hameau stratégique au Vietnam), se vantant du fait que 2 millions de dollars ont été dépensés pour la reconstruction de deux grands «villages centraux», Konalga et Yslamköy. A vrai dire, ce projet, comme l'a affirmé la LIDLIP, est un échec total pour plusieurs raisons. Premièrement, il n'a pas été pris au sérieux car il ne se fonde pas sur une action volontaire mais sur une initiative de l'Etat. Deuxièmement, les personnes sont obligées de devenir des gardiens de village comme condition préalable pour pouvoir rentrer chez eux. Or, bien qu'il soit connu que les villages ont été construits pour les gardiens de village, pendant longtemps même ces derniers ont refusé d'y vivre à cause du manque de sécurité malgré les mesures militaires prises, comme la grande station de police qui emploie 1'000 soldats. Au fait, la logique qui sous-tend le projet de village est de mettre en place une surveillance constante ainsi qu'un contrôle des villageois.

Akin Birdal, président de l'Association des droits de l'homme, de nouveau en prison, a eu l'occasion de dire: «Nous avons découvert trois raisons pour l'émigration. Les personnes ont été forcées d'émigrer primo, suite aux violences imposées par l'Etat par intermédiaire de ses services de sécurité; secundo, pour des raisons essentiellement économiques à cause d'une interdiction de faire paître les animaux sur les hauts plateaux; et tertio, l'incapacité à fournir des conditions de sécurité aux personnes vivant dans la région – la non garantie du droit de vivre sans menaces.» Ainsi, le problème kurde dépend étroitement de la résolution démocratique et pacifique de la question. Si l'existence de ce problème n'est pas reconnue, on ne pourra pas trouver de solution. Peu importe la façon dont on l'appelle, c'est malgré tout une conséquence du refus de l'identité, de la culture et de la langue du peuple kurde. «L'élimination des raisons pour lesquelles ces gens ont été obligés

d'émigrer et l'élimination des conséquences de cette émigration passent à travers une solution démocratique et pacifique de la question kurde.» Ces commentaires conduisent à une seule conclusion: si la Turquie appliquait les critères de Copenhague et remplissait les conditions requises par les traités internationaux dont la Turquie est signataire, les Kurdes et les Turcs pourraient vivre ensemble en paix.

Dans un autre contexte, la LIDLIP a réaffirmé que le droit au retour n'a pas été accordé aux 10'000 Kurdes qui se sont enfuis en 1998 et vivent maintenant à Makhmour, un camp dans le nord de l'Irak. Malgré leur désir de rentrer dans leur propre pays, ils estiment que certaines conditions devraient d'abord être assurées, comme le lever de l'état d'urgence dans les provinces kurdes et une attitude différente du gouvernement turc vis-à-vis de la culture et la langue kurde en général.

Et pourtant on exécute !

Depuis 1984 existe, en Turquie, un moratoire sur les exécutions capitales. Mais, par ailleurs, de nombreuses exécutions extrajudiciaires continuent à être signalées... Zoom sur un pays aux portes de l'Europe.

Actuellement, près de cinquante personnes sont condamnées à mort en Turquie, dont Abdullah Öcalan, le leader kurde. Certains signes laissent cependant à penser que la Turquie pourrait abolir, dans l'avenir, la peine capitale : par exemple, le fait qu'elle ait été acceptée en tant que candidate à l'entrée de l'Union européenne.

Et pourtant...

Et pourtant, des exécutions extrajudiciaires continuent à être signalées.

Ce fut le cas à Kizitelpé, en février 1999, lors de manifestations non violentes demandant un procès équitable pour Öcalan : les forces de sécurité ont abattu un jeune manifestant de dix-sept ans ! à Van, un vendeur des rues de treize ans aurait été battu à mort par des

policiers. Citons encore qu'au moins vingt-neuf homicides arbitraires ont été attribués à des groupes d'opposition armés.

Et pourtant, des hommes meurent en prison.

En septembre dernier, l'armée et la police turques ont attaqué la prison d'Ulucanlar à Ankara. Un groupe de détenus résistait à une perquisition et avait pris en otages des gardiens, pour faire entendre leurs revendications. Bilan : douze prisonniers tués, vingt autres blessés grièvement. Dans le *Kurdish Observer* du 10 juillet 2000, on pouvait lire : « Ne les laissez pas mourir. » Il s'agissait de quatre jeunes prisonniers en grève de la faim depuis cinquante-quatre jours dans la prison de Kirklareli — ces jeunes demandaient à être



transférés dans la même prison que leurs collègues accusés du même délit.

« [...] En Turquie, qui se dit État de droit et frappe à la porte de l'Union européenne, aucun des auteurs de plus de 4 500 meurtres politiques non élucidés, perpétrés depuis 1991, n'a encore été arrêté. Dans mon pays, les assassins courent les rues, tandis que les intellectuels sont derrière les barreaux [...]. » Ainsi parlait Akin Birdal, président de l'Association des droits de l'homme de Turquie (IHD), fin 1998.

MARCELLE ADDÈS

SOIGNER ET DÉFENDRE LIBREMENT LES VICTIMES

■ Des actions conjointes avec d'autres ONG se concrétisent depuis mai 2000 : c'est ainsi qu'est né le collectif Soigner et défendre librement les victimes de la torture en Turquie, qui regroupe l'ACAT, AI, l'association Primo Levi, France libertés, Juristes sans frontières, Médecins du monde, FIDH, OMCT et Trêve.

Les membres de ce collectif veulent être présents lors des procès en Turquie de militants de la Fondation turque des droits de l'homme qui prennent en charge des personnes ayant été torturées — ce qui leur est vivement reproché par les autorités turques. Les accusés, souvent des professionnels de la santé, demandent au collectif de continuer son action, malgré le réquisitoire du procureur qui utilise la présence d'observateurs étrangers comme argument à charge.

M. A.



SEPTEMBRE-OCTOBRE 2000. N° 208



SOURCES : RAPPORTS RÉCENTS DE : AI, OFK (OBSERVATOIRE FRANCO-KURDE), FRANCE LIBERTÉS, CILDEKT (COMITÉ POUR LA LIBÉRATION DES DÉPUTÉS KURDES EMPRISONNÉS EN TURQUIE).

MILITARY WITH POLITICAL POWER

Turkey's modern pashas

The Turkish president, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, has refused to ratify a government decree authorising the immediate dismissal of civil servants suspected of sympathising with those described as Kurdish separatists or Muslim fundamentalists. His veto challenged the military high command, who influence the political system and are unused to any such resistance.

BY ÉRIC ROULEAU

THE spectacle of former conspirators celebrating the anniversary of their coup would be unusual in any democratic country. But earlier this year some 20 former Turkish officers commemorated the 40th anniversary of the "democratic revolution" of 27 May 1960 with events that seemed so ordinary that the local media paid almost no attention. They laid a wreath on Atatürk's tomb. In his capacity as president of the 1961 Constitution Foundation, Numan Esin, a former army captain and now a successful business leader, organised a public conference. The gathering was the occasion for speeches vibrant with pride and nostalgia, followed by a republican banquet for about 100 civil and military personalities, all well over retiring age. The event was fraternal, congenial and militant — and culminated in patriotic songs.

This would surprise only those unfamiliar with Turkey's culture, in which the armed forces always played a key role in politics, under the Ottoman empire and the republic. The troops of the Sublime Porte, and particularly the Janissaries before the 19th century, did not hesitate to assassinate, overthrow or enthrone sultans. Sometimes they intervened to uphold privileges and, less frequently, to promote progress.

At the end of the first world war General Kemal Atatürk drew on the support of part of the armed forces to oust the rulers, and in 1923 he founded a resolutely modern republic. Of the 10 presidents who have succeeded him as head of state, six have been high-ranking members of the military. Ever since "radical" young officers seized power in May 1960, Turkey has undergone a series of military conspiracies and coups; the most recent, in February 1997, was referred to as "virtual". Twenty "recommendations" by the general staff were enough to end the coalition government headed by an Islamist, Necmettin Erbakan. In a rush of enthusiasm, some of the Turkish media deferentially began to call their heroes — high-ranking officers — "pashas", a title reserved for Ottoman imperial generals (1).

Pashas of the left and right have repeatedly meddled in the politics of the republic, invoking Kemalism as a justification. Since Atatürk died in 1938 the term Kemalism has been used incessantly: in constitutional documents drawn up by the military, in laws based on them, in political speeches, and in the oath sworn by the president of the republic, members of parliament, judges

and leading civil servants. Any opinion or initiative concerning foreign or internal policy must comply with real or imaginary concepts and wishes expressed by the founder of the republic.

Atatürk was a pragmatic man, a visionary and statesman, who frogmarched Turkey into the developed world, and was inspired by both the French Revolution and the state organisations of contemporary totalitarian powers. So it would be a mistake to see Kemalism as an ideology; if it had been, his successors would not have reversed some of the main tenets of his policy. They replaced his one-party system with a multi-party regime, relinquished state control of the economy in favour of market forces, came to the defence of Turkish minorities abroad (in Cyprus, Bulgaria and Greece) and supported Muslim peoples (in Bosnia, Kosovo and Chechnya). This ran counter to the principle established by Atatürk that the republic should at all costs avoid defending Turkish, let alone Muslim, citizens of other countries. Above all, the "father of the Turks" banned anyone serving in the armed forces from involvement in public affairs (2).

Atatürk's successors decided to transform him into a figurehead, after eliminating anything they felt was outdated or troublesome. They turned Kemalism into a state dogma, retaining exclusive rights on its interpretation, and so were able to define government systems and political conduct as it suited them, and sanction anyone who contested their power. The dogma, couched in simple terms but conveniently vague in content, is presented as an absolute value. It can be summed up briefly: integrity of national territory, unity of the nation, and a secular republic. These are honourable principles that everyone is sure to support, but only the army may act as their guardian.

The officer corps, which carries out the will of the dogma and its interpretations, is an elite group (3). Candidates for a military career begin in adolescence, undergoing strict selection before intensive training in special schools. The ministry of education has no control over what they are taught. Besides military training, cadets attend undergraduate courses in history, political science, economics, sociology and foreign languages. Officers in the regular army earn much higher salaries than civil servants of comparable rank. They shop in cut-price army stores, qualify for special mortgages, and take their holidays in hotels and clubs reserved exclusively for them.

The 1982 constitution, currently in force, was drawn up by the generals who seized power two

years earlier and institutionalised the political power of the armed forces. The National Security Council, sometimes referred to as a shadow government, meets once a month, with six members from the military — five generals and one admiral, in full dress uniform — and five civilian leaders (4). The council is empowered to submit its views (in practice, orders) to the government on questions of "national security". According to a recent memo issued by the general staff, "practically everything in public life is related to national security" in foreign and internal policy (5).

The council's deliberations, and sometimes even its decisions, are kept secret. Erbakan signed his government's death sentence in February 1997 when he asked parliament to approve the council's 18 recommendations for eradicating "religious reaction". His mistake was to have pretended not to understand that this was an ultimatum preparing for the virtual coup. He had obviously forgotten that under the Ottoman Empire, sultans knew that their time was up when the Janissaries overturned their cauldrons (their communal cookpots) to show their anger.

The constitution grants the armed forces a degree of autonomy that no democratic state would tolerate (6). The chief of the general staff takes precedence over the ministry of defence and all the other members of the government. The prime minister comes first in order of protocol but wields less real authority in the most sensitive areas. The chief of the general staff decides appointments and promotions within the armed forces, supervises internal and external security, decides defence policy, and manages the production and purchase of arms, the cost of which does not appear in the state budget. So only by chance did we learn (from *Defense Week*, 14 February 2000) that modernisation of the armed forces would cost about \$70bn over the next 15 years. Traditionally, the budget for the army's running expenses (alluded to only briefly, although it accounts for one-third, or more, of state revenue) is approved without debate, by acclamation. The entire assembly then addresses its congratulations and good wishes to the head of the general staff.

The constitution, and the corresponding laws, give the general staff direct or indirect control over higher education and most of the judiciary. Misdemeanours and crimes against the state are handled by state security courts, with high-ranking military on the bench until recently. Legislators, university rectors, public prosecutors and judges are required to comply with the limited definition of freedom that appears in the preamble to the constitution: "No protection shall be afforded to thoughts or opinions contrary to Turkish national interests... Turkish historical and moral values... the principles, reforms and modernism of Atatürk".

Article 13 provides a more detailed definition of these values: "The indivisible integrity of the State with its territory and nation, national sovereignty, the Republic, national security, public order, general peace, the public interest, public morals and public health." Article 14 goes one step further: "None of the rights and freedoms embodied in the Constitution shall be exercised

Éric Rouleau is a journalist.



Remembering Atatürk: Turkish officers gather at his mausoleum last year to commemorate the 61st anniversary of the death of the republic's founder

with the aim of violating the indivisible integrity of the State with its territory and nation." The courts will not only punish acts, but also reprehensible "thoughts or opinions". Article 130 goes so far as to stipulate that "scientific research and publication" may be banned by university deans if contrary to the values above (7). The electoral law, promulgated just after the 1982 constitution, and all the laws covering political parties, professional bodies and unions, contain restrictions that supposedly comply with Kemalist dogma.

The political power of the pashas would not be so deeply rooted if it did not also draw on substantial economic and financial resources (8). The army owns a vast holding, called Oyak, about 30 large companies involved in manufacturing, distribution and export in sectors as varied as cars, cement, food, pesticides, oil, tourism, insurance, banking, property, supermarkets and high technology. These companies employ about 30,000 people directly, as well as giving work to partner companies. One of the group's star performers, Oyak-Renault, boasts an annual production capacity of 160,000 cars (9).

Oyak, one of the top three or four holdings in Turkey, is generously funded. It takes a mandatory 10% of the salary of all members of the

armed forces and reaps the profits from its own companies, reputed to be some of the most successful in the country. This is hardly surprising, for Oyak is exempted from all taxes and duties, a privilege that other organisations in the private sector view as unfair competition. Major companies have learned to live with this arrangement, for Oyak has drawn them into its activities, by interest and design. Taha Parla, a professor at Bosphorus University, has identified several powerful holdings among Oyak partners, including those of the Koç and Sabancı families, known as the emperors of industry and trade, and the Taskent family, the barons of merchant banking. Private companies also give retired senior officers management jobs as a reward, and as a way of maintaining connections with officers in the army. This has sealed a tripartite alliance between the military elite, big business (in Turkey and abroad) and state bureaucracy.

The TSKGV (Turkish Armed Forces Foundation), which also belongs to the army, is Oyak's sister organisation, some 30 industrial companies enjoying the same privileges as Oyak. The foundation concentrates exclusively on arms production, employs 20,000 people, and provides work for tens of thousands of others in subcontracting

companies. More than 80% of its revenue is paid into a fund thought to amount to tens of billions of dollars. As Parla points out, this is an original way of accumulating (military) capital beyond that which is accrued by the (civilian) private sector.

The triumvirate of the army, big business and bureaucracy is protected by constitutional and legal provisions. Its influence increases when the balance of political power leans in its favour, when opposition in society declines, or when — as has been the case in recent years — politicians are increasingly discredited. Under these circumstances the political parties, parliament, government and media merely acquiesce when the military disregards the rule of law. They made no objection when the pashas refused to show parliament the texts of agreements with Israel. Nor did they react when Turkish forces launched a massive incursion — without informing the government — into northern Iraq to fight Kurdish nationalists of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party). Nothing was said when the pashas vetoed a postponement of the elections, despite the support of a majority of members of parliament. The military met no opposition when it halted attempts to suppress articles in the penal code contrary to human rights, or blocked inquiries

into scandals (notably into repugnant aspects of the fight against the Kurds) that might have tarnished the reputation of the armed forces. Appearances were saved, for the injunctions generally take the form of views or wishes expressed by a member of the general staff, not precluding less subtle forms of pressure behind the scenes.

Two major problems have conveniently replaced those that once gave the army an excuse to play a leading role in public life. The cold war threats of the Soviet Union and communism have given way to fear of Islamic "fundamentalism" and Kurdish "separatism" — both of which confirm the legitimacy and popularity of the pashas, as the accredited defenders of secularism and territorial integrity. The PKK combatants strengthened the official line by taking up arms for an independent Kurdish state in the south-eastern provinces of Turkey and proclaiming Marxist-Leninist values. The PKK, led by Abdullah Öcalan ("Apo"), later gave up its most extreme demands. In recent years it has made numerous offers to negotiate federal status, self-government, or a democratic process securing basic rights for the Kurds. It even declared unilateral truces, but each time its efforts have been ignored or presented as a trap (10). Kurdish and Turkish intellectuals who supported recognition merely of their cultural rights ended up in court accused of

"separatism" or "conspiring with the PKK".

So the war began in 1984 and continued for 15 years, until Apo was arrested in Kenya last year. It brought atrocities on both sides, the destruction of 2,000 Kurdish settlements, the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of their inhabitants, mass arrests, torture, and assassinations committed by death squads probably sponsored by the state, itself infiltrated by organised crime. The war was pointless, disastrous, and did nothing to solve the Kurdish problem. It had a negative impact on civil liberty, and its cost, estimated at \$150bn, jeopardised economic development and living standards. And, above all, far from cementing national unity, it widened the gulf between Kurds and Turks.

The conflict with the PKK is not unconnected with the conflict between the army and the Islamists. In the aftermath of the 1980 putsch, a campaign was launched against the far-left, to which the PKK belonged, while positive signals were made to the Islamist movement, seen as a rampart against communism. Religious instruction was made compulsory in state primary and secondary schools, and the pro-Islamist Refah Partisi (Welfare Party) was legalised. With its first election successes in 1994-95, that party became the main enemy. Two paradoxes make it difficult to understand the conflict. The first con-

cerns the meaning of the word secular in Turkey — the word means not the separation of religion from state, but its control by the authorities, who may even use it for their own ends (11). The department of religious affairs, generously funded by a state budget, manages 500 secondary schools (*imam hatip*), separate from ordinary state schools and intended to train future imams. They provide in practice a religious education for hundreds of thousands of future civil service and private sector executives.

The same organisation has built thousands of mosques at taxpayers' expense with the aim of promoting an enlightened form of Islam in line with Kemalist principles — a distinctly dubious undertaking. Religion must be mentioned on all identity cards even though the constitution states that: "No one shall be compelled . . . to reveal religious beliefs and convictions". Is the state taking over Islam, as those who defend the system maintain, or is Islam taking over the state, as its opponents suggest?

Another major paradox is the precise nature of the Islamist party, which has been accused of all kinds of ills: this is now the Fazilet Partisi (Virtue Party), which succeeded Refah, outlawed after the virtual coup in 1997. Turkey's successive Islamist parties, set up by Erbakan with Refah, are anything but "fundamentalist". Erbakan is a political veteran and a long-standing member of parliament; twice he served as vice-president of the council of ministers — in rightwing and leftwing coalition governments. The Virtue Party certainly has Muslim leanings, after the fashion of Christian Democrats in western Europe, but it supports the republic, and defends, in the words of its founder, French-style "secular principles", as well as parliamentary pluralism and human rights.

Fazilet fills the gap in the political spectrum left by destruction of the left after decades of repression (12), and claims to defend the poor, workers, and lower middle classes in the towns and country, particularly the Anatolian inhabitants from outlying regions of Turkey. Fazilet also contests, admittedly only implicitly, the army's political power, and the refusal to recognise the identity of the Kurds, who vote massively for the party each time a pro-Kurdish formation is prevented from running. Clearly the basic issues of the confrontation between Fazilet and the military have nothing to do with the defence of secularism.

It is easy to see why the general staff thinks the threats to the republic — the joint demands of the Anatolians and Kurds — persist, despite the rout of the PKK and Fazilet's defeat at the last elections. The continuation of these threats also explains why the competent authorities have done nothing to initiate the democratisation that the European Union has demanded for years, specifically at the Helsinki summit last year. But Turkey must comply with the "Copenhagen criteria" within five years. Only then can the negotiations for its admission to the EU really start (13). The task will be particularly arduous, always assuming that it is undertaken seriously, for it will involve carrying through a revolution to dismantle a solidly established, tightly knit state system.

Translated by Harry Forster

A country divided

TURKISH civil society attracts little attention abroad. It is barely heard and largely misunderstood, but it is gradually coming to life as the deadline for joining the European Union approaches. The differences between republicans — who support the prevailing state system — and democrats — who propose fundamental changes — are growing clearer through the debate among politicians, intellectuals and the media. Both camps claim to be inspired by differently defined Kemalism: for the "republicans", Kemalism cannot be dissociated from the political power of the army. The "democrats" see it as a historical reference that can serve as the basis for a regime similar to those in western Europe.

The balance of power seems to tip heavily in favour of the republicans. They are the dominant elite, the guardians of orthodox Kemalist thinking and the beneficiaries of several centuries of military culture fostered by the pashas of the armed forces. The democrats are divided and cautious, staying out of the limelight by design or need. Their presence is tolerated, and they can express themselves freely in the media, but only in tiny doses. All the newspapers, radio stations and television channels have one or two unorthodox journalists, protected by their talent, fame, or their editor's concern for objectivity.

Some of them, supported by academics and members of the professions, have formed a collective. In January it launched an initiative for a civil constitution. Its aim is to prompt nationwide debate on Turkey's

need for a new basic law, not imposed from on high (some form of military authority has been behind all the republic's previous constitutions). Groups supporting the initiative have formed, and within three months about 40,000 people have visited its internet site.

Other branches of civil society, with other motives, are campaigning in different ways for the same objective. The 1961 Constitution Foundation, which represents the authors of the May 1960 coup, responsible for Turkey's most democratic constitution, is busily organising seminars and publications, and lobbying parliament to liberalise the 1980 constitution. Despite differences between conservatives and modernisers, Tusiad, an association representing top businessmen, has presented a daring democratisation programme that even the EU would approve.

Human rights pressure groups and Kurdish publications are campaigning for democracy. More surprisingly, Islamist movements and institutions are also enthusiastic supporters of the EU, which they believe will secure them rights they are currently denied. Although it is difficult in such a repressive environment, a silent war is being waged by innumerable organisations with Islamist leanings: business associations (Musiad and its rival, the Lions of Anatolia), the Sufi orders (*tarikats*), influential in the secular parties, and the Islamist party, Fazilet, the third largest political group in parliament. As EU enlargement comes closer, two different Turkey's are facing off across a minefield.

ER

(1) See Panayotis Gavras, "The role of the military in Turkish society", a thesis presented to the Department of Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University, April 1989.

(2) With one exception, for the chief of staff was entitled to attend cabinet meetings.

(3) See Mehmet Ali Birand, *Shirts of Steel: An anatomy of the Turkish armed forces*, I.B. Tauris, London, 1991. This unique field study of the armed forces reveals some of what goes on

behind the scenes.

(4) For the military, the chief of general staff, commanders of the army, navy, air forces and police, and a general acting as the secretary general of the council (the last cannot vote); on the civilian side, the president of the republic, prime minister and the ministers of defence, foreign affairs and the interior. In the case of a 5:5 vote, the president of the republic has the final say. Chief of General Staff Huseyin Kivirkoglu recently said that he had no objection to introducing "even 100 civilians to the Security Council if that is the wish of the EU" since its decisions are taken "not by the majority of votes, but by consensus".

(5) *Los Angeles Times*, 9 March 2000.

(6) See Umit Sakalliglu, lecturer at Bilkent University, Ankara, "The anatomy of the Turkish military's autonomy", *Comparative Politics*, New York, vol. 29, No 2.

(7) It will come as no surprise that no Turkish authors have published works or university theses providing an overall analysis of the army's role in politics. The absence is undoubtedly due both to the lack of transparency and to the prudence of academics.

(8) Taha Parla, "Mercantile militarism in Turkey 1960-1998", *New Perspectives on Turkey*, Istanbul, autumn 1998.

(9) Oyak, which stands for *Ordu Yardimlasma Kurumu* (the armed forces pension fund), was founded in January 1961 by the leaders of the coup of May 1960. Its industrial and commercial activities really took off after the 1980 putsch, thanks to economic deregulation.

(10) See Kendal Nezan, "No justice for the Kurds", and Michel Verrier, "The Kurdish people put on trial", both in *Le Monde diplomatique*, English edition, March and June 1999.

(11) Umit Sakalliglu: "Parameters and strategies of Islam-State interaction in Republican Turkey", *Journal of Middle East Studies*, Cambridge, No 28, 1996. The author explains that Atatürk first used Islam for his own ends when he declared a *jihad*, or holy war, in support of the war of national liberation against the allied governments and the Ottoman Empire. Atatürk's aim was to rally Anatolian notables, religious leaders and the peasants to his cause.

(12) See Wendy Kristiansen, "Secular Turks search for reform", *Le Monde diplomatique*, English edition, February 1999.

(13) See Niels Kadritzke, "Greece's earthquake diplomacy", *Le Monde diplomatique*, English edition, June 2000.

LE MONDE DIPLOMATIQUE il manifesto - SETTEMBRE 2000

LA REPUBBLICA DEI «PASCIA» L'opprimente potere dei militari turchi

In agosto il presidente turco Ahmet Necdet Sezer, ex presidente del Consiglio costituzionale, ha rifiutato di ratificare il decreto governativo che prevedeva il licenziamento, inappellabile, dei dipendenti statali sospettati di avere simpatie per i «separatisti» curdi o per i «fondamentalisti» musulmani. Il veto è stato interpretato come una sfida lanciata agli alti comandi delle forze armate – poco abituati a ricevere rifiuti del genere – che continuano a influenzare pesantemente un sistema politico che poco corrisponde alle norme dell'Unione europea.

di ERIC ROULEAU*

In qualsiasi paese democratico, lo spettacolo potrebbe sembrare quanto meno insolito: ex golpisti che celebrano l'anniversario del loro colpo di stato. Una ventina di ex ufficiali turchi hanno celebrato il quarantesimo anniversario della «rivoluzione democratica» del 27 maggio 1960 con varie manifestazioni, che hanno a malapena attirato l'attenzione dei media locali, tanto l'avvenimento sembrava loro banale: corona di fiori deposta solennemente al mausoleo di Atatürk, conferenza organizzata dall'ex capitano Numan Esin, diventato un importante uomo d'affari, nelle vesti di presidente della Fondazione della Costituzione del 1961, discorsi apologetici, manifestazioni di orgoglio e di nostalgia, seguiti dal tipico pranzo repubblicano – fraterno, caloroso, militante – coronato da canti patriottici intonati in coro da un centinaio di personalità militari e civili, tutti di età ben al di là della pensione.

Tutto ciò potrebbe destare stupore solo se si ignorasse la cultura dominante

forgiata nel corso dei secoli, il posto privilegiato che ha sempre occupato l'esercito nel mondo politico, sotto la repubblica come ai tempi dell'impero ottomano. L'esercito della Sublime Porta infatti – in particolare i giannizzeri prima del XIX secolo – non si faceva scrupoli ad uccidere, destituire o insediare i sultani. A seconda delle circostanze agiva in favore dei privilegi o, raramente, in direzione del progresso.

Così il generale Kemal Atatürk alla fine della prima guerra mondiale cercò l'appoggio di una parte delle forze armate per cacciare gli occupanti e fondare, nel 1923, una repubblica volta con decisione verso la modernità. Su dieci presidenti che si sono succeduti nel paese, sei sono stati militari di alto rango. Dalla presa del potere da parte dei giovani ufficiali «radicali» nel maggio 1960, la Turchia ha conosciuto una successione di complotti militari, di colpi di stato, l'ultimo dei quali, nel febbraio 1997, fu definito «virtuale»: per liquidare il governo di coalizione presieduto da Necmettin Erbakan bastarono venti «raccomandazioni» dello stato maggio-

re. Fu in quel periodo che alcuni media turchi, in un impeto di entusiasmo, cominciarono a definire i loro eroi, gli ufficiali di grado elevato, con il deferente appellativo di «pascià», titolo al quale una volta avevano diritto i generali dell'impero (1).

I «pascià» della repubblica, di «destra» o di «sinistra», hanno immancabilmente fatto irruzione sulla scena politica innalzando il vessillo del «kemalismo». Del resto dalla morte di Atatürk nel 1938 il termine è onnipresente nei vari testi costituzionali stabiliti dai militari, nelle leggi, nei discorsi politici, così come nel giuramento prestato dal presidente della repubblica, dai parlamentari, dai giudici e dai grandi funzionari dello stato. Qualunque opinione o iniziativa di politica interna o estera deve necessariamente corrispondere ai concetti e ai voleri, reali o presunti, del fondatore della repubblica.

Sarebbe azzardato definire il kemalismo un'ideologia, conoscendo il pragmatismo di Atatürk, visionario e uomo di stato che, per proiettare la Turchia nel mondo sviluppato, si ispirò sia all'esperienza della rivoluzione francese sia alle strutture statali delle potenze totalitarie dell'epoca. D'altra parte, se il suo comportamento si fosse fondato su un'ideologia, i suoi successori non avrebbero certo contraddetto alcuni aspetti fondamentali della sua politica, ad esempio sostituendo al sistema del partito unico un regime multipartitico e all'economia nazionalizzata quella di mercato, purché le difese delle minoranze turche all'estero (Cipro, Bulgaria, Grecia e così via) e dei popoli musulmani (bosniaco, kosovaro, ceceno, ecc.), nonostante il principio di Atatürk secondo il quale la

* Giornalista.

repubblica non doveva occuparsi della difesa dei turchi e, ancora meno, dei musulmani di paesi stranieri. In particolare il «padre dei turchi» vietava ai militari qualunque ingerenza negli affari pubblici (2).

I successori di Atatürk scelsero comunque di idealizzarlo, dopo aver cancellato dalla sua eredità tutto ciò che ritenevano anacronistico o fastidioso. Fecero del «kemalismo» un dogma dello stato, di cui si attribuirono il monopolio dell'interpretazione. Poterono così creare sistemi di governo e comportamenti politici e condannare quelli che li contestavano. Il dogma, semplice nel suo enunciato, vago nel suo contenuto, è presentato come un valore assoluto. Si può riassumere in poche parole: integrità del territorio, unità della nazione, laicità

della repubblica. Principi rispettabili ai quali chiunque può aderire, ma di cui l'esercito si erge a garante esclusivo.

Concorrenza sleale

IL SUO STRUMENTO, il corpo degli ufficiali, costituisce la casta d'élite per eccellenza (3). I candidati alla carriera militare sono presi da adolescenti, selezionati in base a rigidi criteri, costretti a una dura formazione in scuole a loro dedicate. I corsi non sono sottoposti né all'autorizzazione né al controllo del ministero dell'Istruzione nazionale. Oltre all'addestramento militare, i cadetti compiono studi di livello universitario in

storia, scienze politiche, economia, sociologia, e possono inoltre scegliere tra diverse lingue straniere. In qualità di ufficiali di carriera hanno stipendi molto più alti di quelli dei dipendenti statali; si riforniscono a prezzi ridotti nei negozi dell'esercito; beneficiano di mutui vantaggiosi; frequentano luoghi di vacanza, alberghi, club che sono loro esclusivamente riservati.

La Costituzione del 1982, attualmente in vigore, confezionata dai generali che si erano impadroniti del potere due anni prima, istituzionalizza il potere politico delle forze armate. Il Consiglio nazionale di sicurezza, soprannominato talvolta «governo ombra», riunisce una volta al mese sei militari – cinque generali e un ammiraglio – in alta uniforme e cinque dirigenti civili (4). Ha la facoltà di presentare al governo dei «pareri» – in pratica ordini senza appello – sulle questioni importanti di «sicurezza nazionale». Una nozione che, precisava una recente circolare dello stato maggiore generale, «riguarda teoricamente tutte le questioni di interesse pubblico», sia di politica estera che interna (5).

Le delibere – e talvolta anche le decisioni – del Consiglio sono tenute segrete. Il leader islamico Necmettin Erbakan firmò la condanna a morte del suo governo nel febbraio 1997 quando cercò di sottoporre al parlamento le diciotto «raccomandazioni» del Consiglio volte a sradicare la «reazione islamista». Aveva avuto il torto di fingere di non capire che si trattava di un ultimatum che avrebbe aperto la porta al colpo di stato «virtuale», dimenticando così che sotto l'impero ottomano i sultani sapevano che i loro giorni erano contati quando i giannizzeri rovesciavano i loro paoli per manifestare la loro collera.

La Costituzione accorda inoltre all'esercito un'autonomia che nessun altro stato democratico concederebbe (6). Il capo di stato maggiore generale «soprintende» al ministro della difesa e a tutti gli altri membri del governo: da un punto di vista del protocollo viene dopo il primo ministro, la cui autorità però è minore in tutti i settori più delicati. Alla massima autorità militare spetta inoltre il compito di procedere alle nomine e alle promozioni nelle forze armate, di vigilare sulla sicurezza interna ed esterna, di definire la politica di difesa, di gestire la produzione e l'acquisto di armi, i cui costi non figurano nel bilancio dello stato.

Si viene così a sapere per caso, sulla rivista *Defense Week* del 14 febbraio 2000, che la modernizzazione delle forze armate costerà nei prossimi quindici anni circa 70 miliardi di dollari. Tuttavia la tradizione vuole che il bilancio delle spese correnti dell'esercito (presentato in forma indiretta, sebbene si attribuisca un terzo o più delle entrate dello stato) sia adottato senza discussione, per accla-

«Democratici» contro «repubblicani»

POCO VISIBILE, a malapena udibile, poco apprezzata all'estero, la società civile in Turchia si anima via via che si avvicina la scadenza dell'adesione all'Unione europea. La separazione tra «repubblicani», sostenitori del sistema statale in vigore, e «democratici», favorevoli a una sua riforma radicale, si precisa nel corso dei dibattiti che si svolgono nel mondo politico, negli ambienti intellettuali e nei media. I due schieramenti affermano di ispirarsi al «kemalismo», ma ne danno un'interpretazione molto diversa: per i primi si tratta di un dogma indissociabile dal potere politico dell'esercito, per i secondi un riferimento storico che deve servire a produrre un regime analogo a quelli dell'Europa occidentale.

Il rapporto di forze sembra, a prima vista, squilibrato. Élite dominante e custode dell'ortodossia, erede di una cultura plurisecolare mantenuta dai «pascià» delle forze armate, i «repubblicani» occupano le prime file della scena politica. Divisi e prudenti, i «democratici» recitano un ruolo da comprimari con una discrezione obbligata o calcolata.

Tollerati, i democratici si esprimono liberamente, in dosi «omeopatiche», sui media. I giornali, le radio, le reti televisive contano uno o due giornalisti eterodosi, protetti dal loro talento, dalla loro notorietà o dalla preoccupazione di «obiettività» del loro proprietario. Alcuni di essi, ai quali si sono uniti professori universitari e alcuni liberi professionisti, hanno creato un collettivo che ha lanciato nel gennaio 2000 una «iniziativa per una costituzione civile». L'obiettivo (modesto) è quello di suscitare un dibattito nazionale sulla necessità di dotare la Turchia di una nuova Legge fondamentale non «imposta dall'alto» (le varie Costituzioni della repubblica sono state tutte patrocinate dal potere militare). In diverse regioni del paese si sono formati gruppi favorevoli all'iniziativa. In tre mesi il sito Internet del collettivo è stato visitato da circa 40.000 persone.

Altri settori della società civile sono impegnati con motivazioni diverse ma con lo stesso obiettivo: la Fondazione della Costituzione del 1961 – che raggruppa gli artefici del colpo di stato del maggio 1960, instauratori la Costituzione più democratica che la Turchia abbia mai conosciuto – moltiplicano i convegni, le pubblicazioni e le iniziative in parlamento per ottenere che la costituzione del 1980 sia liberalizzata. Sebbene divisa tra conservatori e progressisti la Tusiad, associazione del grande padronato laico, ha presentato un coraggioso programma di democratizzazione che farebbe certamente la gioia dell'Unione europea.

Se è nell'ordine delle cose che le organizzazioni che si battono per i diritti della persona e le pubblicazioni filokurde militino in favore della democrazia, i movimenti e le istituzioni di sensibilità islamica non sono, paradossalmente, i sostenitori meno entusiasti dell'Unione europea, l'unica a loro avviso in grado di garantire quelle libertà di cui sono privati. Innumerevoli organizzazioni islamiche, soprattutto le associazioni imprenditoriali – il Musiad e la sua rivale, i Leoni d'Anatolia – le confraternite musulmane (che grande influenza hanno all'interno dei partiti «laici»), il Fazilet, terza forza politica del parlamento, conducono una lotta sotterranea e difficile in un ambiente repressivo. Di fatto due Turchie si affrontano su un terreno disseminato di insidie.

E. R.

mazione, prima che l'assemblea unanime rivolga al capo di stato maggiore le sue «congratulazioni» e i suoi «auguri».

D'altra parte la Costituzione e le leggi che ne derivano garantiscono, direttamente o indirettamente, allo stato maggiore generale il controllo dell'istruzione superiore e del sistema giudiziario – i reati d'opinione sono di pertinenza dei tribunali di sicurezza dello stato, occupati fino a poco tempo fa da militari di alto rango. I legislatori, i rettori delle università, i sostituti procuratori, i procuratori generali e i giudici sono tenuti a ispirarsi alla definizione restrittiva della libertà che la Costituzione contiene nel suo preambolo: «Nessuna opinione o pensiero può essere protetto se è in contrasto con gli interessi nazionali turchi (...), i valori tradizionali e spirituali del popolo turco (...), i principi e le riforme moderniste di Atatürk».

Questi valori sono, per così dire, precisati nell'articolo 13: «L'unità indivisibile dello stato, la sovranità nazionale, la repubblica, la sicurezza nazionale, il mantenimento dell'ordine, l'interesse pubblico, i sani costumi, la sanità pubblica». L'articolo 14 va ancora più lontano vietando «l'abuso» dei diritti e delle libertà riconosciute come legittime. Non solo gli atti, ma anche le «opinioni» e i «pensieri» riprovevoli possono essere perseguiti dai tribunali. L'articolo 130 prevede anche che le «ricerche e le pubblicazioni a carattere scientifico», se ritenute contrarie ai valori citati in precedenza, possono essere vietate dai rettori universitari (7). Promulgate sulla scia della Costituzione del 1982, la legge elettorale, quella sui partiti politici, sulle associazioni professionali e sui sindacati impongono restrizioni ritenute conformi allo stesso dogma kemalista.

Il potere politico dei «pascià» sarebbe meno forte se non si appoggiasse anche su considerevoli mezzi economico-finanziari (8). L'esercito possiede una holding tentacolare, l'Oyak, costituita da una trentina di grandi imprese di produzione, di distribuzione e di esportazione in settori che vanno dall'automobile ai cementifici, dall'agroalimentare ai pesticidi, dal petrolio al turismo, dalle assicurazioni alla banche, dall'immobiliare ai supermercati e all'alta tecnologia. Queste imprese danno lavoro a circa 30.000 persone, senza contare la manodopera delle società collegate. Uno dei fiori all'occhiello del gruppo, l'Oyak-Renault, dispone di una capacità produttiva di 160.000 vetture all'anno (9).

Protagonista dell'economia, l'Oyak, che figura tra le prime tre o quattro holding della Turchia, dispone di ingenti capitali. Beneficia dei contributi dei membri delle forze armate (che versano obbligatoriamente il 10% della loro paga), dei profitti delle sue imprese, che hanno un tasso di rendimento tra i più alti del paese. E non potrebbe essere altri-

menti: l'Oyak è esente da qualunque imposta o tassa, privilegio che altri soggetti del settore privato considerano come una forma di concorrenza sleale.

Disastrosa guerra in Kurdistan

TUTTAVIA il grande capitale lo accetta di buon grado, poiché l'Oyak lo ha associato, sia per interesse che per calcolo, alle sue attività. Nelle sue ricerche Taha Parla, professore dell'Università del Bosforo, ha evidenziato tra i partner dell'Oyak i nomi di diverse potenti holding, come quelle delle famiglie Koç e Sabancı, «imperatori» dell'industria e del commercio, e Taskent «barone» delle banche private. Inoltre le imprese private nominano ai posti direttivi alti ufficiali in pensione, così da ricompensarli per i servizi resi durante la loro carriera e/o per rinsaldare i rapporti con gli ufficiali in servizio. Così si è saldata l'alleanza tra l'élite militare, il grande capitale (nazionale e transnazionale) e la burocrazia statale, che costituiscono i tre pilastri dell'Oyak.

Sorella gemella di quest'ultimo, la Tskgv – sigla che indica la Fondazione per il rafforzamento delle forze armate turche – è costituita da una trentina di imprese industriali, che appartengono all'esercito e che beneficiano degli stessi privilegi dell'Oyak. Destinata esclusivamente alla produzione di armi, la fondazione dà lavoro a circa ventimila dipendenti e fornisce indirettamente lavoro ad altre decine di migliaia di persone nelle imprese di subappalto. Oltre l'80% dei redditi è versato a un fondo di riserva valutato in diverse decine di miliardi di dollari. Una maniera originale, osserva il professor Taha Parla, di procedere all'accumulazione di capitale (militare), diversa da quella generata dal settore privato (civile).

Protetto da un arsenale di disposizioni costituzionali e legislative, il triumvirato esercito-grande capitale-burocrazia statale beneficia anche di ulteriore influenza politica quando il rapporto delle forze politiche gli è favorevole, quando si indeboliscono i contropoteri nella società o quando si accresce – come è accaduto negli ultimi anni – il discredito della classe politica. Così i partiti, il parlamento, il governo, i media si piegano quando l'alta gerarchia militare si fa beffe della legalità.

Il mondo politico non muove, ad esempio, alcuna obiezione quando i «pascià» rifiutano di comunicare al parlamento i testi degli accordi che hanno concluso con Israele o quando le forze turche intervengono massicciamente – senza avvertire il governo – nel nord dell'Iraq per combattere i nazionalisti kurdi del Partito dei lavoratori del Kurdistan (Pkk). O, ancora, quando si oppongono al rinvio delle elezioni, voluto peraltro dalla maggioranza dei deputati, o quando considerano inopportuna la

soppressione di articoli del codice penale contrari ai diritti della persona o quando ostacolano lo svolgimento di inchieste su alcuni scandali (in particolare sugli aspetti particolarmente feroci della repressione antikurda) che rischiano di offuscare la reputazione delle forze armate. Le apparenze, è vero, sono rispettate: le ingiunzioni vengono spesso presentate come «pareri» o «auspici» espressi da questo o da quel membro dello stato maggiore, ma ciò non esclude pressioni dietro le quinte con mezzi più diretti.

Due grandi problemi si sono opportunamente sostituiti a quelli che un tempo avevano assunto per le forze armate un ruolo di primo piano. Alle angosce suscitate dall'Unione sovietica e dal comunismo durante la guerra fredda, sono succedute le paure del «fondamentalismo islamico» e del «separatismo kurdo»; entrambi confermano la legittimità e la popolarità dei «pascià», difensori accreditati della laicità e dell'integrità territoriale della repubblica.

In effetti i combattenti del Pkk hanno contribuito a rafforzare le tesi ufficiali, facendo ricorso alle armi per ottenere l'instaurazione di uno stato indipendente kurdo nelle province del sud-est della Turchia in nome di ideali marxisti-leninisti. L'abbandono da parte dell'organizzazione di Abdullah Öcalan (detto Apo) delle pretese massimaliste, le sue ripetute offerte degli ultimi anni di negoziare uno statuto federale o di autonomia, o anche una semplice democratizzazione che riconoscesse ai kurdi alcuni diritti elementari, le tregue che ha osservato unilateralmente, sono state ignorate o presentate come semplici espedienti (10). Gli intellettuali kurdi o turchi che chiedevano il riconoscimento dei semplici diritti culturali sono stati processati per «separatismo» e «complicità».

Così, la guerra iniziata nel 1984 è continuata per quindici anni fino all'arresto di Apo in Kenya nel febbraio 1999, con il suo seguito di atrocità perpetrate da una parte e dall'altra, di distruzioni di circa duemila villaggi curdi e l'espulsione di centinaia di migliaia di abitanti, arresti di massa, torture, omicidi commessi dagli «squadroni della morte» con tutta probabilità patrocinati dallo stato, esso stesso corrotto da gruppi mafiosi.

Eppure il problema kurdo rimane ancora in tutta la sua gravità. Ma questa guerra è stata disastrosa sotto molti altri aspetti: mentre l'esercizio delle libertà veniva sempre più ristretto, i costi, valutati in 150 miliardi di dollari, pregiudicavano lo sviluppo economico e il livello di vita dei cittadini. Invece di «cementare l'unità della

nazione», il conflitto ha approfondito il fossato che separa i kurdi dai turchi.

Il conflitto con il Pkk non è disgiunto da quello che contrappone l'esercito agli islamisti. Parallelamente alla lotta scatenata dai golpisti del 1980 contro l'estrema sinistra, alla quale apparteneva l'organizzazione kurda, si sosteneva il movimento islamico considerato un bastione contro il «comunismo». Così l'insegnamento della religione è stato reso obbligatorio nelle scuole pubbliche, primarie e secondarie, mentre era legalizzato il Refah, il partito di ispirazione islamica che sarebbe diventato il nemico da sconfiggere dopo le sue prime vittorie elettorali nel 1994-95.

Due paradossi complicano la comprensione del conflitto. Il primo riguarda il significato dato in Turchia al termine di laicità, che non significa la separazione dello stato dalla religione, ma l'integrazione e il controllo di quest'ultima da parte dell'autorità pubblica che, se necessario, la strumentalizza (11). La direzione degli affari religiosi, generosamente finanziata dallo stato, gestisce tra l'altro circa cinquecento licei (chiamati Imam Hatip) – distinti dalla scuola pubblica – destinati a formare gli imam ma che in pratica forniscono un'educazione religiosa a centinaia di migliaia di futuri quadri dirigenti dello stato e del settore privato.

Questa stessa istituzione statale ha edificato migliaia di moschee, sempre a spese dei contribuenti, con lo scopo di promuovere un islam «illuminato» conforme ai principi kemalisti, un'impresa che si è rivelata quanto meno ambigua. Ci si può inoltre interrogare sulla liceità della dichiarazione obbligatoria dell'appartenenza religiosa sulla carta d'identità, sebbene la costituzione preveda che «nessuno può essere costretto a divulgare le proprie convinzioni religiose». Si tratta della «statizzazione dell'islam», come pretendono i difensori del sistema, o di «islamizzazione dello stato», come sostengono invece gli oppositori?

Altro grave paradosso, la natura del tanto deprecato partito «islamista», demonizzato a piaciuto: l'attuale Fazilet, successore del Refah messo fuori legge dopo il colpo di stato «virtuale» del 1997. La formazione di Necmettin Erbakan, veterano della politica, parlamentare di lunga data, due volte vicepresidente del consiglio dei ministri in governi di coalizione di destra e di sinistra, è tutto tranne che «fondamentalista». Di sensibilità musulmana, il partito – sull'esempio dei cristiano-democratici occidentali – si dichiara repubblicano e

difende i principi della laicità «alla francese» – secondo i termini del suo fondatore – del pluralismo parlamentare e dei diritti della persona.

Colmando il vuoto politico lasciato da una sinistra disintegrata da decenni di repressione (12), il Fazilet afferma inoltre di voler difendere gli «emarginati», i lavoratori, la piccola borghesia delle campagne e delle città, in particolare quella della «Turchia profonda» di cultura anatolica e musulmana. Ma il partito contesta soprattutto – anche se implicitamente – il potere politico dell'esercito, la negazione dell'identità dei kurdi, dei quali raccoglie la maggior parte dei voti poiché nessuna formazione filokurda ha il diritto di presentarsi. Come si può vedere, i veri elementi del confronto non hanno nulla a che vedere con la difesa della laicità.

Si capisce quindi perché lo stato maggiore generale ritenga che i pericoli che minacciano la repubblica – le aspirazioni convergenti dei kurdi e degli «anatolici» – non siano stati ancora eliminati nonostante l'annientamento del Pkk e la sconfitta del Fazilet alle ultime elezioni. Queste «minacce» persistenti chiariscono anche la ragione per la quale le autorità competenti non sono riuscite a definire quella democratizzazione che l'Unione europea chiede da molti anni e in particolare dal vertice di Helsinki del dicembre 1999. La Turchia è tenuta a conformarsi ai criteri politici detti di Copenaghen entro cinque anni, e solo dopo questo potrà avviare i negoziati in vista della sua adesione all'Unione europea (13).

Un compito che, se portato a termine seriamente, sarà particolarmente difficile; si tratterà infatti di realizzare una rivoluzione destinata a smantellare un sistema statale coerente e solidamente ancorato.

ERIC ROULEAU

tolata «The Anatomy of the Turkish Military's Autonomy» e pubblicata in *Comparative Politics*, New York, vol. 29, n. 2, 1997.

(7) Così non ci si deve stupire troppo di non trovare un libro né una tesi universitaria di un autore turco che analizzi in modo complessivo il ruolo politico dell'esercito. L'assenza di trasparenza e la prudenza dei ricercatori ne sono sicuramente responsabili.

(8) Taha Parla, «Mercantile Militarism in Turkey 1960-1998», nella rivista *New Perspectives on Turkey*, Istanbul, autunno 1998.

(9) Oyak, sigla della holding Ordu Yardımlaşma Kurumu (organismo di fondi pensione delle forze armate), è stata fondata nel gennaio 1961 dagli autori del colpo di stato del maggio 1960. Le sue attività industriali e commerciali hanno avuto un grande sviluppo dopo il colpo di stato 1980, con l'avvio della liberalizzazione economica.

(10) Si legga Kendal Nezan, «Kurdi, ingiustizia è fatta» e Michel Verrier, «In Turchia, processo al popolo kurdo», *Le Monde diplomatique/manifesto*, rispettivamente di marzo e giugno 1999.

(11) Umit Sakallıoğlu: «Parameters and Strategies of Islam-State Interaction in Republican Turkey», articolo pubblicato sul *Journal of Middle East Studies*, Cambridge (Regno Unito), n. 28, 1996. Per l'autore, Atatürk aveva inaugurato la strumentalizzazione dell'islam rifacendosi alla «jihad» durante la guerra di liberazione nazionale condotta contro le forze alleate e l'Impero ottomano, e ciò allo scopo di unire alla sua causa i notabili anatolici, i dirigenti religiosi e il mondo contadino.

(12) Si legga Wendy Kristiansen, «La sinistra tra militari e islamisti» *Le Monde diplomatique/manifesto*, febbraio 1999.

(13) Si legga Niels Kadritzke, «Tra Grecia e Turchia, una prudente distensione» *Le Monde diplomatique/manifesto*, giugno 2000.

(Traduzione di A.D.R.)

(1) Si legga Panayotis Gavras, «The role of the military in Turkish society», tesi presentata al Dipartimento di studi medio-orientali dell'università di Princeton, aprile 1989.

(2) Con una sola eccezione: il capo di stato maggiore generale assisteva a pieno diritto alle riunioni del consiglio dei ministri.

(3) Si legga Mehmet Ali Birand, *Shirts of Steel. An Anatomy of the Turkish Armed Forces*, pubblicato da Taurus (Londra) nel 1991. Il libro, una ricerca sul campo unica nel suo genere, svela alcuni aspetti della vita interna, e segreta, delle forze armate.

(4) Da un lato il capo di stato maggiore generale, i comandanti delle forze terrestri, navali, aeree e della gendarmeria e un generale che presenzia in qualità di segretario generale del Consiglio; dall'altro il presidente della repubblica, il primo ministro, i ministri della difesa, degli esteri e degli interni. È facile indovinare come sono prese le decisioni «consensuali».

(5) *Los Angeles Times*, 9 marzo 2000.

(6) Si veda la ricerca di Umit Sakallıoğlu, professore dell'università di Bilkent, ad Ankara, inti-

TÜRKEI: DAS KRÄFTEMESSEN ZWISCHEN MILITÄR UND ZIVILGESELLSCHAFT

Die „Paschas“ als fragwürdige Erben des Kemalismus

DIE Weigerung von Staatspräsident Ahmed Necdet Sezer, ein Regierungsdekret über die Säuberung des öffentlichen Dienstes zu unterschreiben, hat die türkischen Militärs herausgefordert. Generalstabschef Kivrikoglu hat das Parlament ultimativ aufgefordert, ein entsprechendes Gesetz zu verabschieden, das die Vorstellungen der militärischen Führung bedient. Dies ist nur das jüngste Beispiel für die Einmischung der Generäle in die Politik, die sich dabei stets als die einzig legitimen und rechtgläubigen Hüter des Kemalismus aufspielen. Aber die türkische Zivilgesellschaft beginnt zu begreifen, dass die anmaßende Rolle der Armee das größte Hindernis auf dem Weg der Türkei nach Europa darstellt.

Von ÉRIC ROULEAU *

Dass Putschisten den Jahrestag ihres Staatsstreiches öffentlich feiern, würde man in einem demokratischen Land zumindest als seltsam empfinden. Als sich in der Türkei kürzlich zwanzig ehemalige Offiziere zusammenfanden, um in diversen öffentlichen Veranstaltungen den vierzigsten Jahrestag der „Demokratischen Revolution“ vom 27. Mai 1960 zu begehen, fand das Ereignis in den lokalen Medien kaum Beachtung. Vielleicht lief es aber auch einfach zu banal ab: die feierliche Niederlegung eines Blumengebindes am Atatürk-Mausoleum, eine öffentliche Konferenz, organisiert vom früheren Hauptmann Numan Esin, der inzwischen als Präsident der „Stiftung der Verfassung von 1961“ zum erfolgreichen Geschäftsmann aufgestiegen ist, ein paar apologetische, von Stolz und Nostalgie triefende Ansprachen. Und zum Abschluss ein typisch republikanisches Festbankett – die Atmosphäre kameradschaftlich, herzlich, kämpferisch –, dessen Höhepunkt darin besteht, dass an die hundert Persönlichkeiten, Militärs und Zivilisten jenseits der Pensionsgrenze, gemeinsam patriotische Lieder absingen.

Erstaunen über solche Szenen wird man freilich nur empfinden, wenn man nichts von der Herrschaftskultur weiß, die sich im Laufe der Jahrhunderte herausgebildet hat, und auch nichts von der privilegierten Position, die das türkische Militär in der Republik und davor bereits in der Ära des Osmanischen Reiches eingenommen hat. Die bewaffnete Macht der Hohen Pforte, bis zum 19. Jahrhundert vor allem die Elitetruppe der Janitscharen, hat es sich im-

mer wieder herausgenommen, Sultane zu ermorden, zu stürzen oder zu inthronisieren. In den meisten Fällen zielte ihr Eingreifen darauf, sich ihre Privilegien zu bewahren, doch zuweilen, wenn auch eher selten, erfolgte es auch im fortschrittlichen Sinne.

Letzteres gilt für General Mustafa Kemal, dem es nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg gelang, mit Hilfe eines Teils der Streitkräfte die griechischen Besatzungstruppen zu vertreiben und 1923 die türkische Republik zu begründen. Als erster Präsident (mit dem Ehrentitel „Atatürk“ als „Vater der Türken“ ausgezeichnet) orientierte Mustafa Kemal den jungen Staat entschieden auf die Moderne. Von den zehn Männern, die nach Atatürk das Amt des Staatspräsidenten bekleideten, waren sechs hochrangige Militärs. Seit dem Putsch junger, „radikaler“ Offiziere, im Mai 1960, erlebte die Türkei eine Folge von Verschwörungen und Staatsstreichen der Militärs. Ihren jüngsten Eingriff vom Februar 1997 hat man als „virtuelle“ Machtergreifung bezeichnet, insofern es lediglich der berühmten zwanzig „Empfehlungen“ des Generalstabs bedurfte, um die Koalitionsregierung des islamistischen Ministerpräsidenten Necmettin Erbakan zu Fall zu bringen. Damals begannen gewisse türkische Medien im Überschwang der Begeisterung, ihren Idolen an der Spitze der Armee den ehrfürchtigen Titel „Pascha“ zu verleihen, den bereits die Generäle des Osmanischen Reiches getragen hatten.¹

Die Paschas der Republik, ob „rechter“ oder „linker“ Couleur, haben sich jedes Mal, wenn sie aus der Kulisse auf die politische Bühne traten, mit der Fahne des Ke-

malismus drapiert. Seit dem Tod Atatürks im Jahre 1938 ist der Begriff Kemalismus allgegenwärtig: in sämtlichen von den Militärs diktierten Verfassungstexten, in den kemalistisch inspirierten Gesetzen, in den politischen Reden wie auch in der Eidesformel, die der Staatspräsident, die Parlamentsabgeordneten, die Richter und die hohen Staatsbeamten zu leisten haben. Jede politische Meinungsäußerung oder Initiative von innen- oder außenpolitischer Relevanz hat sich zwingend an die angeblichen oder tatsächlichen Vorstellungen des Vaters der Republik zu halten.

Warum Kemal kein Kemalist war

DAß es allerdings gewagt, den Kemalismus als eine Ideologie zu bezeichnen, denn Atatürk war vor allem ein Pragmatiker. Der Staatsmann und Visionär ließ sich in seiner Politik, mit der die Türkei den Anschluss an die entwickelte Welt schaffen sollte, von den unterschiedlichsten Modellen inspirieren, von der Französischen Revolution ebenso wie von den staatlichen Strukturen der totalitären Mächte seiner Epoche. Wäre Atatürk von einer Ideologie geleitet gewesen, dann hätten im Übrigen seine Nachfolger nicht umstandslos eine Reihe wichtiger Grundsätze seiner Politik revidieren können. Die haben zum Beispiel die Einheitspartei durch ein Mehrparteiensystem ersetzt oder das etatistisch orientierte Wirtschaftsmodell durch ein marktwirtschaftliches abgelöst. Und sie haben sich für die Rechte türkischer Minderheiten im Ausland (in Zypern, Bulgarien, Griechenland usw.) oder muslimischer Völker (Bosniaken, Kosovaren, Tschetschenen) engagiert, was dem Grundsatz Atatürks zuwiderläuft, wonach sich die Türkei mit der Verteidigung der Interessen von Türken oder gar von Muslimen, die Bürger anderer Staaten sind, keinesfalls belasten dürfe. Nicht zuletzt hatte der „Vater der Türken“ den aktiven Militärs auch jede Einmischung in die Staatsgeschäfte untersagt.²

Die Nachfolger Atatürks haben es dennoch vorgezogen, ihn zum Denkmal zu erheben, nachdem sie zuvor alles aus seinem Vermächtnis getilgt hatten, was ihnen überholt oder anstößig vorkam. Auf diese Weise machten sie aus dem „Kemalismus“ eine Staatsdoktrin, für die sie sich das Interpretationsmonopol zuschreiben. Damit

* Journalist

können sie alle möglichen Regierungsformen oder politische Entscheidungen nach Belieben rechtfertigen und zugleich diejenigen bestrafen, die dagegen Zweifel anmelden. Man hat also eine simpel formulierte und inhaltlich willkürlich verformbare Doktrin zum absoluten Wert erklärt. Diese Doktrin lässt sich in wenigen Worten zusammenfassen: territoriale Integrität, Einheit der Nation, laizistische Republik. Das sind ehrenwerte Grundsätze, denen man eigentlich nur zustimmen kann. Das Problem ist nur, dass sich die Armee als exklusiver Wächter dieser Grundsätze sieht.

Das Offizierskorps, das diese Rolle wahrnimmt, ist ein klassisches Beispiel für

eine elitäre Kaste.³ Die Anwärter auf eine Offizierslaufbahn werden bereits als Jugendliche in die Obhut der Armee genommen. Wer den strengen Auswahlkriterien genügt, erhält seine Ausbildung an einer der Oberschulen, die vom Militär unterhalten werden und deren Lehrpläne nicht der Zustimmung des nationalen Bildungsministeriums bedürfen. Abgesehen von der militärischen Ausbildung werden die Kadetten – auf universitärem Niveau – in den Fächern Geschichte, Politikwissenschaft, Ökonomie und Soziologie unterrichtet und können wahlweise auch mehrere Fremdsprachen erlernen. Die aktiven Offiziere beziehen ein Gehalt, das deutlich über den Bezügen vergleichbarer ziviler

Staatsbeamter liegt, außerdem können sie in Warenhäusern der Armee billig einkaufen, erhalten zinsgünstige Darlehen für den Immobilienerwerb und können speziell für das Militär reservierte Ferienanlagen, Hotels und Clubs besuchen.

Die derzeit geltende Verfassung von 1982 haben sich die Generäle so zuschneiden lassen, dass sie die politische Macht der Streitkräfte institutionell verankert. Einmal im Monat tritt der Nationale Sicherheitsrat zusammen. In diesem Gremium, das manche auch als „Schattenkabinett“ bezeichnen, sitzen die fünf ranghöchsten Militärs (vier Generäle und ein Admiral) fünf zivilen Amtsträgern gegenüber⁴ und formulieren für die Regierung in Fragen der „nationalen Sicherheit“ ihre „Anregungen“, die in der Praxis unwiderprüfliche Befehle sind. Wie kürzlich einem Rundschreiben des Generalstabs zu entnehmen war, umfasst der Begriff der nationalen Sicherheit „praktisch alle Angelegenheiten von öffentlichem Interesse“, in der Innen- wie in der Außenpolitik.⁵ Der Inhalt der Beratungen des Sicherheitsrats – und manchmal sogar seine Entscheidungen – werden geheim gehalten. Als der islamistische Parteiführer Necmettin Erbakan sich im Februar 1997 anschickte, dem Parlament die achtzehn „Empfehlungen“ des Rates zur Auslöschung der „islamistischen Reaktion“ vorzulegen, war damit das Ende seiner Regierung besiegelt. Er tat fatalerweise so, als habe er nicht verstanden, dass es sich bei diesem Ultimatum um die Ouvertüre des „virtuellen“ Staatsstreichts handelte. Offenbar hatte er vergessen, was im Osmanischen Reich gegolten hatte: Wenn die Tage des Sultans gezählt waren, erkannte er dies daran, dass die Janitscharen zum Zeichen ihres Zorns ihre Kochkessel umdrehten.

Dieselbe Verfassung gewährt den Streitkräften darüber hinaus eine Autonomie, wie sie in keinem demokratischen Land denkbar wäre.⁶ So steht der Generalstabschef über dem Verteidigungsminister und sämtlichen anderen Kabinettsmitgliedern, in der protokollarischen Rangordnung kommt er direkt nach dem Ministerpräsidenten und ist diesem außerdem in höchst sensiblen Entscheidungsbereichen übergeordnet. In die Zuständigkeit des Generalstabschefs fallen unter anderem die Ernennungen und Beförderungen in den Reihen des Militärs, die Wahrung der inneren und äußeren Sicherheit des Landes, die Festlegung der Verteidigungspolitik und die Entscheidung über die Produktion und den Kauf von Rüstungsgütern – deren Kosten im Übrigen nicht im Staatshaushalt aufgeführt werden.

Insofern ist es bezeichnend, dass man die Zeitschrift *Defense Week* vom 14. Februar 2000 lesen muss, um zu erfahren, dass für die Modernisierung der türkischen Streitkräfte in den kommenden fünfzehn Jahren rund 70 Milliarden Dollar vorgesehen sind. Auch ist es seit langem Usus, dass der Haushaltstitel für die laufenden Kosten der Armee (die nicht im Einzelnen ausgewiesen werden, obwohl sie ein Drittel oder mehr der staatlichen Einnahmen

Die Gegenkräfte

DAS allmähliche Näherrücken eines Termins für den Beitritt zur Europäischen Union hat, fast unmerklich und im Ausland kaum registriert, Bewegung in die türkische Zivilgesellschaft gebracht. Innerhalb der politischen Klasse, in den Medien und unter Intellektuellen entwickelt sich eine Diskussion, die den Graben erkennen lässt, der die „Republikaner“, die Anhänger des jetzigen staatlichen Systems, von den „Demokraten“ trennt, die dieses System von Grund auf erneuern wollen. Beide Lager berufen sich auf den „Kemalismus“, mit dem sie freilich sehr unterschiedliche Vorstellungen verbinden. Für die Republikaner handelt es sich um ein Dogma, das unerschütterlich auf die politische Macht der Armee setzt, für die Demokraten ist der Kemalismus dagegen eine historische Größe, aus der heraus sich ein System politischer Herrschaft nach westeuropäischem Muster herausbilden müsse.

Auf den ersten Blick sind die Kräfteverhältnisse eindeutig: Eindeutig tonangebend sind die „Republikaner“, sie stellen die herrschende Elite dar, sie wachen über die kemalistische Orthodoxie und damit zugleich über das Erbe einer jahrhundertalten kulturellen Tradition, die von den „Paschas“, also den Spitzen der Armee, hoch gehalten wird. Die „Demokraten“ sind vorsichtig und in sich uneins, und sie legen, teils bewusst, teils unfreiwillig, eine gewisse Zurückhaltung an den Tag.

Aber sie sind geduldet und können ihre Positionen in den Medien vertreten, wenngleich nur in homöopathischer Dosierung. Jede Zeitung, jeder Radiosender, jede Fernsehstation hält sich ein oder zwei Journalisten mit abweichender Meinung, die durch ihre Fähigkeiten oder ihren Bekanntheitsgrad geschützt sind, oder auch durch den Wunsch ihrer Chefs, eine gewisse „Objektivität“ zu demonstrieren. Einige von ihnen haben sich gemeinsam mit Universitätsangehörigen und Freiberuflern zu einer Gruppe formiert, die im Januar 2000 eine „Initiative für eine zivile Verfassung“ gestartet hat. Das beschiedene Ziel: In der ganzen Türkei eine Diskussion über die Notwendigkeit eines neuen Grundgesetzes zu initiieren, einer Verfassung, die nicht „von oben“ verordnet ist (wie die bisherigen Verfassungen der Republik, die allesamt von Militärregierungen diktiert wurden). In verschiedenen Regionen des Landes haben sich inzwischen Unterstützergruppen gegründet; die Internet-Seite der Gruppierung wurde innerhalb von drei Monaten rund 40 000 Mal angewählt.

IN anderen Bereichen der Zivilgesellschaft entstehen Initiativen, mit anderen Mitteln und anderer Motivation, für ähnliche Ziele. Die „Stiftung der Verfassung von 1961“ – getragen von den Initiatoren des Staatsstrechs von 1981, der die demokratischste aller türkischen Verfassungen hervorbrachte – bemüht sich über zahlreiche Tagungen, Veröffentlichungen und parlamentarische Petitionen, eine Liberalisierung der Verfassung von 1980 durchzusetzen. Trotz ihrer Spaltung in Konservative und Reformen hat auch der Verband der weltlichen Unternehmer Tusiad ein mutiges Demokratisierungsprogramm vorgelegt, das von der Europäischen Union anerkennend gewürdigt wurde.

Dass die Menschenrechtsorganisationen und die prokurdischen Publikationen für die Demokratie eintreten, versteht sich von selbst. Überraschender ist, dass zu den überzeugten Anhängern des EU-Beitritts auch islamisch geprägte Institutionen und Bewegungen gehören, weil sie sich davon die Sicherung jener bürgerlichen Freiheiten versprechen, die ihnen heute versagt werden. Unzählige islamisch orientierte Organisationen, so vor allem der Unternehmerverband Musiad und seine islamische Konkurrenzorganisation „Löwen von Anatolien“, aber auch die Muslimbruderschaften (die innerhalb der „weltlichen“ Parteien großen Einfluss besitzen), und die Fazilet-Partei, die drittstärkste Kraft im Parlament, führen einen stillen und komplizierten Kampf unter repressiven Bedingungen. Auf schwierigem Terrain stehen sich damit zwei deutlich unterschiedene Vorstellungen von Türkei gegenüber.

E. R.

verschlingen) vom Parlament durch Akklamation und ohne Debatte verabschiedet wird. Wobei die Versammlung anschließend dem Generalstab einmütig ihre „Glück- und Segenswünsche“ übermittelt. Weiterhin hat der Generalstab aufgrund der Verfassung und der entsprechenden Gesetze die direkte oder indirekte Kontrolle über das Universitätswesen und die entscheidenden Bereiche der Justiz. Strafverfahren wegen staatsfeindlicher Äußerungen und Aktivitäten werden vor Staatssicherheitsgerichten geführt, die bis vor kurzem mit hochrangigen Militärs besetzt waren. Parlamentsabgeordnete, Universitätsrektoren, Anwälte, Staatsanwälte und Richter, sie alle sind gehalten, sich jene restriktive Definition von bürgerlichen Freiheiten zu Eigen zu machen, die in der Verfassungspräambel formuliert ist: „Meinungen oder Äußerungen, die gegen die nationalen Interessen der Türkei [...], die traditionellen und geistigen Werte des türkischen Volkes [...] oder die auf Modernisierung gerichteten Grundsätze und Reformen Atatürks gerichtet sind, genießen keinen Schutz.“

Die damit gemeinten Prinzipien werden in Artikel 13 der Verfassung etwas näher, aber nicht unbedingt genauer bezeichnet: „Die unteilbare Einheit des Staates, die nationale Souveränität, die Republik, die nationale Sicherheit, die öffentliche Ordnung, das öffentliche Interesse, die guten Sitten, die öffentliche Gesundheit“. Artikel 14 geht noch weiter und untersagt den „Missbrauch“ von Rechten und Freiheiten, einschließlich solcher, die als legitim gelten. Wie man sieht, kann Anklage also nicht nur aufgrund von Taten erhoben werden, sondern auch wegen Meinungen und Äußerungen, die als verwerflich gelten. In Artikel 130 heißt es sogar, dass „Forschungen und Veröffentlichungen mit wissenschaftlichem Charakter“ von den Dekanen der Universitäten verboten werden können, wenn sie für unvereinbar mit den zuvor genannten Grundwerten erachtet werden.⁷ Restriktionen unter Berufung auf die kemalistischen Grundsätze stehen auch in einigen Gesetzen, die unmittelbar nach Inkrafttreten der Verfassung von 1982 verabschiedet wurden, also im Wahlgesetz, im Parteiengesetz und im Gesetz über die Berufsverbände und Gewerkschaften. Dass die politische Macht der „Paschas“ so gut abgesichert ist, liegt aber auch an ihrer bemerkenswerten wirtschaftlich-finanziellen Grundausstattung.⁸ Die Armee besitzt eine weit verzweigte Holding namens Oyak, die aus rund dreißig großen Industrie-, Handels- und Export-Unternehmen besteht. Sie ist in einer Vielzahl von Branchen engagiert, etwa in der Auto-, der Zement und der Nahrungsmittel-, Chemie- und Mineralölindustrie, aber auch im Tourismus, im Versicherungs-, Bank- und Immobiliengewerbe, in Supermarktketten und Unternehmen der Hochtechnologie. Etwa 30000 Menschen sind in diesen Unternehmen beschäftigt, nicht gerechnet die Mitarbeiter der Partnerfirmen. Oyak-Renault, ein Juwel innerhalb der Holding,

hat eine Produktionskapazität von 160000 Fahrzeugen im Jahr.⁹ Als einer der drei oder vier größten türkischen Konzerne ist Oyak von erheblicher volkswirtschaftlicher Bedeutung – und reichlich mit Kapital ausgestattet. Das stammt aus den Beiträgen der Armeeangehörigen, die 10 Prozent ihrer Bezüge in die Pensionskasse einzahlen müssen, und aus den Gewinnen der einzelnen Unternehmen, die angeblich zu den profitabelsten der Türkei gehören. Was kein Wunder ist, denn die Oyak zahlt keine Steuern und Abgaben. Ihre Konkurrenten aus dem privaten Sektor sehen in diesem Privileg zweifellos eine Form von unlauterem Wettbewerb. Doch das Großkapital hält still, weil es von der Oyak teils aus Eigeninteresse, teils aus taktischen Erwägungen an ihren Geschäften beteiligt worden ist. Professor Taha Parla von der Bosphorus-Universität in Istanbul hat herausgefunden, dass zu den Partnern der Oyak einige der mächtigsten Unternehmensgruppen des Landes gehören, darunter die Konzerne der Familien Koc und Sabanci, die als die „Tycoons“ von Industrie und Handel gelten, wie auch Taskent, der „Pate“ der Privatbanken. Diese privaten Partnerunternehmen versorgen überdies hochrangige pensionierte Offiziere mit Aufsichtsratsposten – teils um sich für Gefälligkeiten zu revanchieren, teils um die Verbindung zu den aktiven Militärs zu pflegen. Es gibt mit anderen Worten eine stabile Allianz zwischen der Militärelite, dem nationalen und internationalen Großkapital und der staatlichen Bürokratie, die zugleich die drei Pfeiler der Oyak-Konstruktion darstellen. Daneben gibt es noch die Stiftung für die Stärkung der türkischen Streitkräfte (TSKGV), die etwa dreißig Industrieunternehmen im Besitz der Armee zusammenfasst und die gleichen Sonderrechte genießt wie die Oyak. Die TSKGV beschäftigt 20000 Menschen, und da ihre Betriebe ausschließlich der Rüstungsproduktion dienen, schafft sie indirekt weitere Zehntausende von Arbeitsplätzen in Zulieferunternehmen. Die Profite der militärischen Unternehmen fließen zu über 80 Prozent in einen Rücklagefonds, der auf dutzende Milliarden Dollar geschätzt wird. Professor Taha Parla sieht darin eine originelle Art, die Akkumulation des (militärischen) Kapitals zu fördern, die sich von den Methoden im (zivilen) Privatsektor deutlich unterscheidet.

Der Wunsch ist Befehl

ARMEE, Großkapital und Staatsbürokratie haben nicht nur den Flankenschutz eines ganzen Arsenal verfassungsmäßiger und gesetzlicher Bestimmungen. Dem kemalistischen Triumphvirat kommt auch ein zusätzlicher Einflussbonus zugute, wenn sich die politischen Kräfteverhältnisse zu ihren Gunsten verändern, wenn also die Gegenkräfte im Zentrum der Gesellschaft geschwächt werden, weil die politische Klasse – wie in den vergangenen Jahren geschehen – ihre Glaubwürdig-

keit verspielt. Das führt dazu, dass die Parteien, das Parlament, die Regierung und die Medien kuschen, wenn das Militär Recht und Gesetz mit Stiefeln tritt. So protestierte zum Beispiel niemand, als die „Paschas“ nicht bereit waren, dem Parlament den Wortlaut der Verträge mitzuteilen, die sie mit Israel geschlossen hatten, oder als die türkischen Streitkräfte ohne Wissen der Regierung im Nordirak einen Großangriff gegen die Kräfte der Kurdischen Arbeiterpartei (PKK) eröffneten. Das Militär durfte auch unbeanstandet die Verschiebung der Wahlen verweigern, die immerhin von einer parlamentarischen Mehrheit befürwortet wurde; oder die Streichung von Artikeln aus dem Strafgesetzbuch, die gegen die Persönlichkeitsrechte verstießen, für unangebracht erklären; oder die Untersuchung von Skandalen blockieren (vor allem was die besonders schrecklichen Aspekte des Kurdenkrieges betrifft), die dem Ansehen der Streitkräfte zu schaden drohten. Und immer blieb der Schein gewahrt, denn die Anordnungen ergingen zumeist in Form von „Ratschlägen“ oder „Wünschen“, die das eine oder andere Mitglied des Generalstabs äußerte. Hinter den Kulissen dürften weniger dezente Druckmittel zum Einsatz gekommen sein.

Zum Glück für die Armee tauchten rechtzeitig neue riesige Probleme auf – als Ersatz für die Bedrohungen, die einst die zentrale Rolle der Armee legitimiert hatten. Auf die Angst vor der Sowjetunion und dem Kommunismus folgten die Schrecken des „islamischen Fundamentalismus“ und des „kurdischen Separatismus“, und schon war die Legitimation und Popularität der „Paschas“ als bewährte Verteidiger von Laizität und territorialer Integrität der Republik erneut bestätigt. Natürlich lieferten die Kämpfer der PKK die Bestätigung für die offiziellen Theorien, indem sie mit Waffengewalt versuchten, einen unabhängigen Kurdenstaat in den Südostprovinzen der Türkei zu schaffen und sich überdies auf den Marxismus-Leninismus beriefen. Als dann aber die Organisation von Abdullah Öcalan schließlich von ihren Maximalforderungen abrückte und immer wieder Verhandlungen über ein Autonomiestatut oder eine bundesstaatliche Lösung anbot, als sie gar nur noch eine Demokratisierung forderte, die den Kurden die elementaren Rechte sichern sollte, als sie wiederholt einen einseitigen Waffenstillstand ausrief, wurden alle diese Vorschläge von der Armee ignoriert oder als Kriegslist denunziert.¹⁰ Kurdische und türkische Intellektuelle, die für die Anerkennung wenigstens der kulturellen Rechte der Kurden eintraten, wurden unter der Anklage des „Separatismus“ und der „Komplizenschaft“ mit der PKK vor Gericht gestellt. So schleppte sich der Krieg, der 1984 begonnen hatte, bis zur Festnahme Öcalans im Februar 1999 fort. Eine Bilanz von fünfzehn Jahren mit Gräueltaten auf beiden Seiten; mit der Zerstörung von etwa zweitausend kurdischen Siedlungen und der Vertreibung von Hun-

derttausenden von Dorfbewohnern; mit Massenverhaftungen, Folterungen und den gezielten Mordaktionen der „Todesschwadronen“, die wahrscheinlich von Repräsentanten eines Staatsapparats gedeckt wurden, der seinerseits durch ein Geflecht mafiöser Beziehungen korrumpiert war.

Der sinnlose Krieg (der ja keine Lösung des Kurdenproblems brachte) hatte katastrophale Auswirkungen, und zwar in mehrfacher Hinsicht. Er führte nicht nur zu einer empfindlichen Einschränkung der Bürgerrechte, die Kriegskosten von schätzungsweise 150 Milliarden Dollar warfen die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung zurück und bewirkten eine Senkung des Lebensstandards. Und statt zur „Festigung der Einheit der Nation“ beizutragen, hat er den Graben zwischen Türken und Kurden nur noch weiter vertieft.

Der PKK-Konflikt hängt in gewisser Weise mit der Auseinandersetzung zwischen türkischer Armee und Islamisten zusammen. Als die Putschisten von 1980 den Kampf gegen die extreme Linke eröffneten, zu der auch die Kurdenorganisation gehörte, begünstigten sie zugleich die islamischen Gruppierungen, die als Bollwerk gegen den „Kommunismus“ galten. So machte man Religion zum Pflichtfach in den staatlichen Grund- und Oberschulen, man ließ die islamische Partei Refah zu – also genau die Partei, die dann nach ihren ersten Wahlerfolgen 1994 und 1995 zum entscheidenden Feind gestempelt wurde.

Dass dieser Konflikt so schwer zu begreifen ist, liegt an zwei Aspekten, die widersprüchlich und unklar sind. Zum einen geht es um den Begriff der Laizität, der in der Türkei nicht die Trennung von Staat und Religion meint, sondern vielmehr die Integration der Religion, ihre Kontrolle und nötigenfalls ihre Instrumentalisierung durch den Staat.¹¹ Das Amt für religiöse Angelegenheiten, das über erhebliche Mittel aus dem Staatshaushalt verfügt, ist unter anderem auch für die rund fünfhundert so genannten Imam-Hatip-Schulen zuständig. Diese höheren (nichtstaatlichen) Schulen dienen der Ausbildung von islamischen Geistlichen, in der Praxis sind sie jedoch Lehrstätten, in denen Hunderttausende, die später im Staatsapparat oder in der Privatwirtschaft leitende Positionen bekleiden, eine religiöse Bildung mitbekommen. Auch hat das Amt für religiöse Angelegenheiten aus Steuergeldern Tausende von Moscheen errichten lassen, um langfristig einen „aufgeklärten“ Islam zu fördern, der mit den Grundsätzen des Kemalismus vereinbar sein sollte. Den Erfolg dieses Projektes darf man inzwischen füglich bezweifeln, und ebenso kann man sich fragen, weshalb die Angabe der Religion auf den türkischen Ausweisen vorgeschrieben ist. Schließlich heißt es in der Verfassung, dass „niemand gezwungen werden darf, seine religiöse Überzeugung preiszugeben“. Hat hier also eine „Verstaatlichung des Islam“ stattgefunden, wie es die Anhänger des bestehenden Systems sehen, oder eher eine „Islamisierung des Staates“, wie seine Gegner behaupten?

Unklar ist auch, was es mit der jeweiligen „islamistischen“ Partei auf sich hat, die man so gern verteuelt – derzeit ist es die Fazilet-Partei (FP), die Nachfolgerin der nach dem „virtuellen“ Putsch von 1997 verbotenen Refah. Ihr Gründer Necmettin Erbakan ist ein altgedienter Politiker und Abgeordneter, der bereits in einer Linkskoalition und einer Rechtskoalition stellvertretender Ministerpräsident war. Auch die neue Partei kann man gewiss nicht als „fundamentalistisch“ bezeichnen. Sie mag islamisch orientiert sein, aber eher so, wie die Christdemokraten im Westen christlich sind: Sie bekennt sich zur Republik und dem Grundsatz der Laizität – „nach französischem Vorbild“, wie es ihr Gründer formuliert – sowie zum Mehrparteiensystem und zu den persönlichen Freiheitsrechten. Diese FP füllt auch das politische Vakuum, das die Zerschlagung der Linken in den Jahrzehnten der Repression hinterlassen hat.¹² Sie setzt sich für die „Verlierer“ ein, die Arbeiter, die kleinbürgerlichen Schichten in Stadt und Land und vor allem in der Provinz, im türkischen „Hinterland“ mit seiner eigenen, anatolisch und muslimisch geprägten Kultur. Damit trifft die Fazilet einen wunden Punkt, vor allem weil sie – wenngleich indirekt – die politische Macht der Armee in Frage stellt, aber auch die Leugnung der kurdischen Identität, die den Islamisten überall dort besonders viele Stimmen einbringt, wo prokurdische Gruppierungen nicht zu den Wahlen antreten dürfen. In jedem Fall ist der wahre Kern der Auseinandersetzung keineswegs die Frage der Laizität.

Daher ist es durchaus begreiflich, dass der Generalstab behauptet, die Gefahren für die Republik – die gleichermaßen von den Kurden und den „Anatoliern“ ausgehen – seien auch nach der Zerschlagung der PKK und der Niederlage der Fazilet-Partei bei den letzten Wahlen noch lange nicht gebannt. Diese anhaltenden „Bedrohungen“ liefern auch den Grund dafür, dass die zuständigen Staatsorgane noch keine Anstalten gemacht haben, jene Demokratisierung einzuleiten, die von der Europäischen Union seit Jahren, und vor allem seit dem Helsinki-Gipfel im Dezember 1999 gefordert wird. Allerdings ist die Türkei nunmehr angehalten, innerhalb von fünf Jahren die so genannten Kopenhagen-Kriterien zu erfüllen; erst dann können die Verhandlungen über ihren Beitritt zur Europäischen Union beginnen.¹³ Sofern man diese Bedingungen in Ankara ernst nimmt, wird es keineswegs leicht sein, sie zu erfüllen. Denn damit stellt sich die Forderung, eine Revolution zu Ende zu führen, die darauf hinausläuft, ein in sich geschlossenes und solide verankertes staatliches System zu demontieren.

dt. Edgar Peinelt

³ Siehe Mehmet Ali Birand, „Shirts of Steel. An Anatomy of the Turkish Armed Forces“, London (Tauris) 1991 (Originaltitel: „Emret Komutanım“, Istanbul 1986). Birands Buch ist eine in ihrer Art einmalige Feldstudie, die auf Interviews mit Armeangehörigen aller Dienstgrade beruht. Die Interviews waren nur mit Erlaubnis des Generalstabs möglich, der vor der Publikation allerdings vielfache Änderungen forderte. Da Birand den Text aber unzensuriert veröffentlichte, fiel er bei den Militärs in Ungnade, die bis heute andauern.

⁴ Die militärischen Vertreter sind der Chef des Generalstabs, die Kommandeure der Land-, See- und Luftstreitkräfte und der Gendarmerie sowie ein General, der die Funktion eines Generalsekretärs des Sicherheitsrates innehat; die zivilen Vertreter sind der Staatspräsident, der Ministerpräsident sowie Innen- Außen- und Verteidigungsminister. Obwohl der Generalsekretär nicht stimmberechtigt ist und bei Stimmengleichheit der Staatspräsident (als Vorsitzender) den Ausschlag gibt, ist das Gewicht der „militärischen“ Seite dominierend. Erst jüngst hat Generalstabschef Kivrikoglu erklärt, das Militär könnte im Nationalen Sicherheitsrat sogar hundert Zivilisten akzeptieren, da seine Entscheidungen „nicht mit Stimmmehrheit, sondern durch Konsens“ getroffen würden.

⁵ Los Angeles Times, 9. März 2000.

⁶ Siehe Umit Sakallioğlu (Professor an der Bilkent-Universität in Ankara), „The Anatomy of the Turkish Military's Autonomy“, *Comparative Politics*, Bd. 29, Nr. 2, 1997.

⁷ Es überrascht kaum, dass es keine wissenschaftliche Monographie oder Doktorarbeit von türkischer Seite gibt, die umfassend die politische Rolle der Armee in der Türkei analysieren würde. Das liegt nicht nur an dem undurchsichtigen Forschungsgegenstand, sondern zweifellos auch daran, dass sich kein Forscher an ihn herantraut.

⁸ Siehe Taha Parla, „Mercantile militarism in Turkey, 1980-1998“, *New Perspectives on Turkey* (Istanbul), Herbst 1998.

⁹ Oyak steht für Ordu Yardımlaşma Kurumu (Körperschaft der Pensionskasse der Streitkräfte). Die Holding wurde im Januar 1961 von den Militärs geschaffen, die im Mai 1960 die Macht ergriffen hatten. Ihren großen Aufschwung erlebte die Oyak mit ihren Industrie- und Handelsaktivitäten jedoch erst im Rahmen der wirtschaftlichen Liberalisierung, nach dem Putsch von 1980.

¹⁰ Siehe Kendal Nezan, „Appelle an Ankara sind nur fromme Wünsche“, *Le Monde diplomatique*, März 1999, sowie Michel Verrier, „Die Türkei macht den Kurden den Prozess“, *Le Monde diplomatique*, Juni 1999.

¹¹ Siehe Umit Sakallioğlu, „Parameters and Strategies of Islam-State Interaction in Republican Turkey“, *Journal of Middle East Studies* (Cambridge) Nr. 28, 1996. Der Autor weist darauf hin, dass es Atatürk selbst war, der die Instrumentalisierung des Islam einleitete, als er im nationalen Befreiungskampf zum „Heiligen Dschihad“ aufrief, um die anatolischen Notabeln, die religiösen Führer und die Bauern auf seine Seite zu bringen.

¹² Siehe Wendy Kristiansen, „Die doppelte Identität der Türkei“, *Le Monde diplomatique*, Februar 1999.

¹³ Siehe Niels Kadritzke, „Griechen und Türken entdecken die Vorteile guter Nachbarschaft“, *Le Monde diplomatique*, Juni 2000.

¹ Siehe Panayotis Gavras, „The role of the Military in Turkish society“, Dissertation am Department of Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University, April 1989.

² Mit einer Ausnahme: Die Teilnahme des Generalstabschefs an den Sitzungen des Ministerrats ist rechtmäßig.

La república de los "pachás" El peso del poder militar en Turquía

Durante el mes de agosto, el presidente turco Ahmet Necdet Sezer, antiguo presidente del Consejo constitucional, se negó a ratificar el decreto gubernamental destinado a despedir, sin otra forma de proceso, a los funcionarios sospechosos de simpatía por los "separatistas" kurdos o por los "fundamentalistas" musulmanes. Ese veto se interpretó como un desafío lanzado al alto mando de las fuerzas armadas, poco acostumbrado a semejantes resistencias. Porque los militares siguen pesando en un sistema político que coincide escasamente con las normas de la Unión Europea.

ERIC ROULEAU *

El espectáculo de viejos golpistas celebrando el aniversario de su golpe de Estado sería considerado al menos como un hecho insólito en cualquier país democrático. Una veintena de antiguos oficiales turcos celebraron el cuarenta aniversario de la "revolución democrática" del 27 de mayo de 1960 con distintas manifestaciones, que apenas atrajeron la atención de los medios de comunicación local, a los que el acontecimiento les pareció banal: corona de flores depositada solemnemente en el mausoleo de Atatürk; conferencia pública organizada por el ex-capitán Numan Esin, convertido en un importante hombre de negocios, en su calidad de presidente de la "Fundación de la Constitución de 1961"; discursos apologeticos, cargados de orgullo y de nostalgia, seguidos de un banquete típicamente republicano —fraternal, caluroso, militante— concluido con cantos patrióticos entonados a coro por un centenar de personalidades militares y civiles que habían rebasado ampliamente la edad del retiro.

La sorpresa sólo sería de recibo para quienes ignorasen que en la cultura dominante forjada en el transcurso de los siglos y el lugar privilegiado que han ocupado siempre las fuerzas armadas en el paisaje político, tanto durante la República como durante la época del Imperio otomano: las tropas de la *Sublime Puerta*, especialmente los jenízaros antes del

siglo XIX, no se privaron de asesinar, derrocar o entronizar a los sultanes. En la mayoría de los casos, actuaron para lograr privilegios, raramente con un sentido de progreso.

A este respecto, el general Kemal Atatürk se apoyó en una parte de las fuerzas armadas, al final de la primera guerra mundial, para echar a los ocupantes del poder y fundar, en 1923, una república resueltamente volcada hacia la modernidad. De los diez presidentes que le sucedieron a la cabeza de aquella, seis fueron militares de alta graduación. Desde la toma del poder por jóvenes oficiales "radicales" en mayo de 1960, Turquía ha conocido una sucesión de complots militares y de golpes de Estado, de los que el último, en febrero de 1997, fue calificado de "virtual": bastaron veinte "recomendaciones" del Alto Estado Mayor para liquidar al gobierno de coalición presidido por el islamista Necmettin Erbakan. En aquellos momentos algunos medios de comunicación turcos, en un exceso de entusiasmo, llegaron a calificar a sus héroes, los oficiales de alta graduación, con el vocablo deferente de "pachás", el título al que tenían derecho en el pasado los generales del Imperio (1)...

Los pachás de la República, de "derechas" o de "izquierdas", irrumpieron en el escenario político envueltos indefectiblemente en la bandera del "kemalismo". El término ha estado además omnipresente desde la muerte de Atatürk, en 1938, en los sucesivos textos constituciona-

les establecidos por los militares, en las leyes en que se han inspirado, en los discursos políticos y también en el juramento que prestan el presidente de la República, los parlamentarios, los jueces y los altos funcionarios del Estado. Cualquier opinión o iniciativa relevante en política interior o exterior tiene que responder necesariamente a los conceptos y a los deseos, reales o supuestos, del fundador de la República.

Sería arriesgado calificar al kemalismo de "ideología" conociendo el pragmatismo de Atatürk, visionario y hombre de Estado, que se inspiró a la vez en la experiencia de la Revolución francesa y en las estructuras estatales de las potencias totalitarias de la época para conducir a Turquía al mundo desarrollado. Por otra parte, si su comportamiento hubiese estado fundado en una ideología, sus sucesores no habrían defendido la opinión contraria en algunos aspectos importantes de su política, reemplazando por ejemplo el sistema de partido único por un régimen multipartidista, sustituyendo la economía estatizada por la de mercado, asumiendo la defensa de las minorías turcas en el extranjero (Chipre, Bulgaria, Grecia, etcétera) o de los pueblos musulmanes (bosnios, albanokosovares, chechenos, etcétera), a pesar del principio de Atatürk según el cual la República no tenía en ningún caso que asumir la defensa de los turcos, y aún menos de los musulmanes residentes en países extranjeros. Pero, por encima de todo, el "padre de los turcos" prohibió a los militares en activo cualquier injerencia en los asuntos públicos (2).

A pesar de todo, los sucesores de Atatürk decidieron ponerle en un pedestal, después de haber borrado previamente de su herencia lo que les pareció anacrónico o molesto. Hicieron del "kemalismo" un dogma del Estado, del que se atribuyeron el monopolio de la interpretación. De esa manera, pudieron definir sistemas de gobierno y comportamientos políticos según su conveniencia y perseguir, de paso, a los que se les oponían. El dogma, simple en su enunciado, moldeable a su gusto en el contenido, fue presentado como un valor absoluto. Algunos de sus términos: integridad del territorio, unidad de la nación, laicidad de la República, son principios honorables a los que cualquiera podría adherirse, pero de los que el ejército se con-

* Periodista.

sidera el guardián exclusivo.

Su instrumento, el cuerpo de oficiales, constituye una casta elitista por excelencia (3). Los candidatos a la carrera militar están controlados desde su adolescencia, seleccionados según criterios estrictos, sufren una formación intensiva en escuelas especiales. Los cursos no están sometidos ni al consentimiento ni al control del Ministerio de Educación Nacional. Además del entrenamiento militar, los cadetes llevan a cabo estudios, de nivel universitario, en historia, en ciencias políticas, en sociología, y aprenden, de forma optativa, distintas lenguas extranjeras. Los oficiales en activo reciben sueldos muy superiores a los de funcionarios civiles de su nivel; se aprovisionan con descuentos en almacenes del ejército, se benefician de préstamos inmobiliarios con costes ventajosos; frecuentan lugares de vacaciones, hoteles, clubes que les están reservados de manera exclusiva.

Un golpe de Estado virtual

La Constitución de 1982 actualmente en vigor, elaborada por los

generales que habían tomado el poder dos años antes, institucionalizó el poder político de las fuerzas armadas. El Consejo Nacional de Seguridad, considerado frecuentemente como un "gobierno en la sombra", reúne una vez por mes a seis militares —cinco generales y un almirante— con uniforme de gala y cinco dirigentes civiles (4) y está habilitado para presentar al gobierno "opiniones" —en la práctica, órdenes inapelables— sobre cuestiones referentes a la "seguridad nacional". Ésta, precisaba una reciente circular del Alto Estado Mayor, "*cubre virtualmente todos los asuntos de interés público*", tanto en política exterior como interior (5).

Las deliberaciones —e incluso a veces las decisiones— del Consejo se mantienen secretas. El islamista Necmetin Erbakan firmó la condena de muerte de su gobierno en febrero de 1997 cuando intentó someter al Parlamento las dieciocho "*recomendaciones*" del Consejo con vistas a erradicar la "*reacción islamista*". Cometió el error de fingir no entender que se trataba de un ultimátum que abrió el camino al golpe de

Estado "virtual", al olvidar además que, durante el imperio otomano, los sultanes sabían que sus días estaban contados cuando los jenízaros hacían sonar sus platos de campaña para manifestar su cólera.

La Constitución concede además a las fuerzas armadas una autonomía que ningún Estado democrático admitiría (6). El Jefe del Alto Estado Mayor "*tiene bajo su jurisdicción*" al ministro de Defensa así como a los demás miembros del gobierno: en el orden protocolario se sitúa después del primer ministro, cuya autoridad es, por otro lado, menor que la suya en los asuntos más sensibles. Depende de él, entre otros asuntos, proceder a los nombramientos y promociones en el seno de las fuerzas armadas, velar por la seguridad interior y exterior, determinar la política de defensa, gestionar la producción y la adquisición de armamentos, cuyos costes no figuran en los Presupuestos del Estado.

Fue de forma casual, a través de la revista *Defense Week* del 14 de febrero de 2000, como se supo que la modernización de las fuerzas armadas costará unos setenta millar-

"DEMOCRATAS" CONTRA "REPUBLICANOS"

Poco visible, apenas audible, mal percibida en el extranjero, la sociedad civil en Turquía parece animarse a medida que se aproxima el plazo para la adhesión a la Unión Europea. El distanciamiento entre "republicanos", partidarios del sistema estatal en vigor, y "demócratas", favorables de su reforma en profundidad, se amplía y se perfila, en el transcurso de los debates que se están desarrollando en el seno de la clase política, en los círculos intelectuales y en los medios de comunicación. Los dos campos adoptan la bandera del "kemalismo", pero dándole un contenido muy diferente: para los primeros, se trata de un dogma indisoluble del poder político del ejército, para los segundos, constituye una referencia histórica que debe servir para edificar un régimen análogo a los de Europa occidental.

A primera vista la correlación de fuerzas parece descompensada. Elite dominante y guardiana de la ortodoxia, heredera de una cultura de varios siglos que se sustenta en los "pachás" de las fuerzas armadas, los "republicanos" ocupan la delantera del escenario. Divididos y prudentes, los "demócratas" interpretan los segundos papeles con una discreción forzada o calculada.

Tolerados, estos últimos se expresan libremente en los medios de comunicación con dosis homeopáticas. Los periódicos, las radios, las cadenas de televisión, cuentan en cada caso con uno o dos periodistas heterodoxos, protegidos por su talento, su notoriedad o la preocupación por la "objetividad" de su propietario. Algunos de ellos, con la incorporación de universitarios y miembros de profesiones liberales, han creado el colectivo que lanzó en enero de 2000 una "iniciativa por una Constitución civil". El objetivo, modesto, es suscitar un debate nacional sobre la necesidad de dotar a Turquía de una nueva

ley fundamental, que no esté "impuesta desde arriba" (las sucesivas Constituciones de la República han sido todas patrocinadas por un poder militar). Se han creado grupos favorables a la iniciativa en distintas regiones del país.

El portal de Internet del colectivo fue visitado por unas 40.000 personas en los tres primeros meses.

Otros sectores de la sociedad civil, con diferentes motivaciones, militan de manera distinta con el mismo objetivo: la Fundación de la Constitución de 1961 —que agrupa a los autores del golpe de Estado de 1960, que instauraron la Constitución más democrática que ha conocido Turquía— multiplica los seminarios, publicaciones y gestiones cerca del Parlamento para conseguir que se liberalice la Constitución de 1980. La Tusiad, asociación de la gran patronal laica, aunque dividida entre conservadores y modernistas, ha presentado un audaz plan de democratización que no rechazaría la Unión Europea.

En este orden de cosas, las organizaciones de derechos de la persona, las publicaciones pro-kurdas que militan a favor de la democracia, los movimientos e instituciones de sensibilidad islámica, son paradójicamente los más entusiastas respecto a la Unión Europea, que, a sus ojos, sería garante de las libertades de que están privados. Innumerables organizaciones islamizantes, en particular las asociaciones patronales (la Musiad y su rival, los "Leones de Anatolia"), las hermandades musulmanas (influyentes en el seno de los partidos "laicos"), el partido Fazilet, la tercera formación en importancia en el Parlamento, están llevando a cabo un combate discreto, aunque difícil, en un entorno represivo. Decididamente, dos Turquías se enfrentan en un terreno sembrado de obstáculos ■

dos de dólares en el transcurso de los próximos quince años. La tradición ha establecido como norma que el presupuesto de gastos corrientes del ejército (presentado bajo una forma alambicada aunque se le dedica un tercio o más de los gastos del Estado) se adopte sin debate, por aclamación, antes de que la Asamblea, de manera unánime, haga llegar sus "felicitaciones" y sus "mejores deseos" al Jefe del Estado Mayor.

Por otra parte, la Constitución así como las leyes que la desarrollan aseguran, directa o indirectamente, el control por parte del Alto Estado Mayor de la enseñanza superior, así como lo esencial del sistema judicial, los delitos de opinión dependen de los tribunales de seguridad del Estado, de los que hasta hace poco formaban parte militares de alta graduación. Los legisladores, los rectores de la universidades, los altos funcionarios judiciales, los fiscales y los jueces deben tener en cuenta la definición restrictiva de las libertades que establece la Constitución en su preámbulo: "Ninguna opinión o pensamiento puede ser protegido si va en contra de los intereses nacionales turcos (...) de los valores tradicionales y espirituales del pueblo turco (...) de los principios y reformas modernizadoras de Atatürk".

Esos valores e intereses se precisan, si puede usarse esa expresión, en el artículo 13: "La unidad indivisible del Estado, la soberanía nacional, la República, la seguridad nacional, el mantenimiento del orden, el interés público, las buenas costumbres, la salud pública". El artículo 14 va todavía más lejos al prohibir el "abuso" de los derechos y de las libertades, incluso los reconocidos como legítimos. Como puede verse, no sólo los actos, sino también las "opiniones" y los "pensamientos" reprobables pueden ser llevados ante los tribunales. El artículo 130 estipula incluso que las "investigaciones y las publicaciones de carácter científico" pueden ser prohibidas por los decanos de las universidades si fuesen consideradas contrarias a los valores antedichos (7). Promulgadas siguiendo las líneas trazadas por la Constitución de 1982, la ley electoral, las que rigen tanto a los partidos políticos como a las asociaciones profesionales y a los sindicatos contienen restricciones que se esgrimen como acordes al propio dogma kemalista.

El poder político de los "pachás" estaría menos enraizado si no se apoyase igualmente en medios económicos y financieros considerables (8). El ejército posee un *holding* tentacular, el OYAK, compuesto por una treintena de grandes empresas

de producción, de distribución, de exportación en sectores tan variados como el automóvil, las fábricas de cemento, la producción agroalimentaria, los pesticidas, el petróleo, el turismo, las compañías de seguros, la banca, la construcción inmobiliaria, los supermercados, la alta tecnología. Esas empresas emplean a unas 30.000 personas, sin contar la mano de obra de sociedades asociadas. Uno de los más destacados del grupo, la OYAK-Renault, dispone de una capacidad de producción de 160.000 coches por año (9).

Gran protagonista de la economía, la OYAK, que figura entre los tres o cuatro primeros *holdings* de Turquía, está bien asentado. Se beneficia de las cotizaciones de los miembros de las fuerzas armadas (que cotizan obligatoriamente el 10% de sus salarios), de los beneficios generados por sus propias empresas, cuyos índices de rentabilidad están considerados entre los más altos del país. Y por supuesto: la OYAK está exenta de todos los impuestos y tasas, privilegio que otros agentes del sector privado juzgan sin duda como una forma de concurrencia desleal.

Sin embargo, el gran capital se conforma, puesto que la OYAK le ha asociado, tanto por interés como por cálculo, a sus actividades. En sus investigaciones, Taha Parla, profesor de la universidad del Bósforo, ha señalado que entre los socios de la OYAK los nombres de varios *holdings* importantes, como los de la familia Koç y Sabancı, "emperadores" de la industria y del comercio, de Tashkent, "barón" de los bancos privados. Por otra parte, las empresas privadas cooptan a puestos de dirección a oficiales superiores en la reserva, como forma de recompensarles por los servicios prestados o/y con objeto de perennizar sus relaciones con los oficiales en activo. Se ha sellado así la alianza de la élite militar con el gran capital (nacional y transnacional) y la burocracia estatal, que constituyen los tres pilares de la OYAK.

Hermana gemela de ese *holding*, la TSKGV —sigla que designa a la Fundación para el Fortalecimiento de las Fuerzas Armadas Turcas— incluye a una treintena de empresas industriales, pertenecientes también al ejército, que gozan de los mismos privilegios que la OYAK. Centrada exclusivamente en la producción de armamento, la Fundación emplea a unos veinte mil asalariados y proporciona trabajo indirectamente a otras decenas de miles de empleados en las empresas subcontratadas. Más del 80 % de los beneficios se utiliza en un fondo de reserva valorado en varias decenas de millares de dóla-

res. Una manera original, destaca el profesor Taha Parla, de proceder a la acumulación de capital (militar) diferente de la generada por el sector privado (civil).

La desastrosa guerra del Kurdistan

Protegido por un arsenal de disposiciones constitucionales y legislativas, el triunvirato ejército-gran capital-burocracia estatal, disfruta de un reaseguro de influencia cuando la relación de fuerzas políticas le es favorable, cuando se debilitan los contrapoderes en el seno de la sociedad, y cuando aumenta el descrédito de la clase política, como ha sucedido estos últimos años. Los partidos, el Parlamento, el gobierno, los medios de comunicación se inclinan cada vez que las altas jerarquías del ejército desprecian la legalidad.

No han planteado ninguna objeción, por ejemplo, cuando los "pachás" se negaron a comunicar al Parlamento los textos de los acuerdos que habían concluido con Israel o cuando las fuerzas turcas intervinieron masivamente en el norte de Irak, sin advertir al gobierno, para combatir a los nacionalistas kurdos del Partido de los Trabajadores del Kurdistan (PKK). Tampoco cuando se opusieron al aplazamiento de las elecciones, deseado sin embargo por la mayoría de los diputados, o cuando consideraron inoportuna la supresión de artículos del Código penal contrarios a los derechos de la persona o cuando obstaculizaron el avance en las investigaciones sobre escándalos (especialmente sobre aspectos especialmente repugnantes de la guerra antikurda), que corrían el riesgo de empañar la reputación de las fuerzas armadas. Las apariencias, es verdad, se salvan: las órdenes terminantes se presentan generalmente como "opiniones" o "deseos" expresados por uno u otro miembro del Alto Estado Mayor, lo que no excluye presiones de pasillo por medios menos sutiles.

Dos problemas de envergadura fueron oportunamente sustituidos por otros a los que, hasta hace poco, las fuerzas armadas no les habían otorgado un papel de primer plano. A la obsesión que suscitaron la Unión Soviética y el comunismo durante la guerra fría, le ha sucedido el miedo al "fundamentalismo islámico" y al "separatismo kurdo", confirmando uno y otro la legitimidad y la popularidad de los "pachás", defensores cualificados de la laicidad y de la integridad territorial de la República.

Los combatientes del PKK proporcionaron, es verdad, consistencia a las tesis oficiales, al haber recurri-

do a las armas para obtener la instauración de un Estado independiente kurdo en las provincias del sureste de Turquía y que se consideran seguidores todavía del marxismo leninismo. El abandono de la organización de Abdullá Ocalan (conocido como Apo) de sus pretensiones maximalistas, sus ofertas repetidas desde hace algunos años de negociar un estatuto federal o de autonomía, incluso únicamente una democratización que reconociese a los kurdos derechos elementales, las treguas que ha mantenido unilateralmente, fueron ignoradas o presentadas como artimañas (10). Los intelectuales kurdos o turcos que defendían únicamente el reconocimiento de sus derechos culturales fueron procesados por "separatismo" y "connivencia" con el PKK.

De esa manera, la guerra desencadenada en 1984, con sus consiguientes atrocidades, cometidas por una y otra parte, de destrucción de unos dos mil poblados kurdos y la expulsión de cientos de miles de sus habitantes, detenciones masivas, torturas, asesinatos cometidos por "escuadrones de la muerte", verosíblemente patrocinados por el Estado, gangrenado a su vez por grupos mafiosos.

Esa guerra inútil, dado que el problema kurdo continúa sin resolverse, fue también desastrosa en más de un aspecto: mientras que el ejercicio de las libertades ha retrocedido sensiblemente, los costes, estimados en 150 millardos de dólares, perjudicaron el desarrollo económico y el nivel de vida de los ciudadanos y sobre todo, lejos de "cimentar la unidad de la nación", ha profundizado la separación entre kurdos y turcos.

El conflicto con el PKK tiene también relación con el que enfrenta al ejército con los islamistas. Paralelamente a la lucha desencadenada por los golpistas de 1980 contra la extrema izquierda, a la que pertenecía la organización kurda, dieron apoyo a la oleada islámica, considerada como un escudo contra el "comunismo". Desde entonces se hizo obligatoria la enseñanza de la religión en las escuelas públicas, primarias y secundarias, al tiempo que se legalizaba al partido islamista Refah, el mismo que se convirtió en el enemigo a abatir tras sus primeras victorias electorales en 1994-1995.

Dos paradojas enturbian la comprensión del conflicto. La primera se refiere al sentido dado en Turquía al término laicidad, que no significa la separación del Estado de la religión, sino más bien la integración y el control de ésta por la autoridad pública, que, si es preciso, la instrumentaliza (11). La dirección de los asuntos religiosos, financiada generosamente por los presupuestos del Estado, gestiona entre otros a unos

quinientos institutos (llamados Imam Hatip) —distintos de la escuela pública— destinados a formar imanes mientras que, en la práctica, dispensa una educación religiosa a cientos de miles de futuros cuadros del Estado y del sector privado.

Esa misma institución estatal ha construido particularmente millares de mezquitas, siempre a costa del contribuyente, siendo el objetivo global promover un islam "ilustrado" conforme a los principios kemalistas, empresa que se ha revelado al menos dudosa. Podría plantearse incluso la inscripción obligatoria de la religión en los carnets de identidad, mientras que la Constitución estipula que "nadie puede ser obligado a divulgar sus convicciones religiosas". ¿"Estatización del islam", como pretenden los defensores del sistema, o "islamización del Estado", como sostienen los críticos?

Otra paradoja importante es la naturaleza del partido "islamista" que se sataniza: el actual Fazilet, sucesor del Refah, prohibido tras el golpe "virtual" de 1997, es legal. La formación de Necmettin Erbakan, veterano de la política, parlamentario desde hacia mucho tiempo, dos veces vicepresidente del Consejo de ministros en gobiernos de coalición de derecha o de izquierda, era cualquier cosa menos "fundamentalista". De sensibilidad musulmana, ciertamente, el partido —a la manera de los cristianodemócratas en Occidente—, defiende la República y sostiene los principios de la laicidad "a la francesa" —según palabras de su fundador—, el pluralismo parlamentario y los derechos de la persona.

Llenando el vacío político dejado por una izquierda atomizada por decenios de represión (12), ha pretendido además defender a las "víctimas", los trabajadores, la pequeña burguesía del campo y de las ciudades, en particular la de la "Turquía profunda", de cultura anatolia y musulmana. Esa especie de piedra en el zapato del régimen molesta todavía más porque ese partido se opone —ciertamente de manera "implícita"— al poder político del ejército, y a la negación de la identidad de los kurdos, de los que el partido recoge masivamente los votos en los lugares en los que se impide la presentación de una formación prokurda. Lo que de verdad se juega en el enfrentamiento no tiene nada que ver con la defensa de la laicidad.

Se comprende entonces por qué el Alto Estado Mayor estima que las amenazas que ponen en peligro a la República —las aspiraciones convergentes de kurdos y "anatolios"— no han desaparecido a pesar del fracaso

del PKK y de la derrota del Fazilet en las últimas elecciones. Esas "amenazas" persistentes ilustran también la razón por la cual las autoridades competentes no han comenzado la democratización exigida por la Unión Europea desde hace muchos años y especialmente a partir de diciembre de 1999 tras la cumbre de Helsinki. Ahora bien, Turquía tendrá que adaptarse a los criterios políticos, llamados de Copenhague, en un plazo de cinco años, ya que sólo después podrán comenzar las negociaciones con vistas a su adhesión a la Unión Europea (13).

La tarea será particularmente dura, suponiendo que se llegue a asumir seriamente: se trataría en efecto de llevar a cabo una revolución que consistiría en dismantelar un sistema estatal coherente y sólidamente establecido. E.R. ■

(1) Léase a Panayotis Gavras, "The role of the military in Turkish society", tesis presentada en el Departamento de Estudios sobre el Próximo Oriente de la universidad de Princeton, abril de 1989.

(2) Con una excepción añadida, el Jefe del Estado Mayor asistía, de pleno derecho, a las reuniones del Consejo de ministros.

(3) Léase a Mehmet Ali Birand, "Shirts of Steel. An Anatomy of the Turkish Armed Forces", publicada por Taurus (Londres) en 1961, la obra, un estudio de campo, único en su género, levanta el velo de algunos aspectos de la vida interna y secreta de las fuerzas armadas.

(4) El Jefe del Alto Estado Mayor, los comandantes en jefe de las fuerzas terrestres, navales y aéreas, y de la gendarmería, así como un general que actúa en calidad de Secretario General del Consejo, por una parte, por la otra: el presidente de la República, el primer ministro, los ministros de Defensa, de Asuntos Exteriores y de Interior. Puede adivinarse como se toman las decisiones "consensuadas".

(5) Los Angeles Times, 9 de marzo de 2000.

(6) Véase el estudio de Umit Sakallioğlu, profesor de la universidad de Bilkent, Ankara, titulado "The Anatomy of the Turkish Military's Autonomy" y publicada en *Perspectives on Turkey*, Estambul, otoño de 1998.

(7) Nadie se sorprenderá de las dificultades para encontrar una obra o una tesis universitaria de autores turcos que analicen globalmente el papel político del ejército. La falta de transparencia y también la prudencia de los investigadores son sin duda las responsables.

(8) Taha Parla, "Mercantile Militarism in Turkey 1960-1998", en la revista *New Comparative Politics*, Nueva York, vol. 9, núm. 2, 1997.

(9) OYAK, sigla del nombre del holding, Ordu Yardımlaşma Kurumu (organismo de fondos de pensión de las fuerzas armadas), fundado en enero de 1961 por los autores del golpe de Estado de 1960. Sus actividades industriales y comerciales se han desarrollado después del golpe de 1980, favorecidas por la liberalización económica.

(10) Léase a Kendal Nezan, "La injusticia con los kurdos", y a Michel Verrier, "Proceso al pueblo kurdo", en *Le Monde diplomatique*, edición española, de marzo y junio de 1999, respectivamente.

(11) Umit Sakallioğlu: "Parameters and Strategies of Islam-State Interaction in Republican Turkey", ensayo publicado en el *Journal of Middle East Studies*, Cambridge (Reino Unido), núm. 28, 1996. El autor informa que Atatürk había inaugurado la instrumentalización del islam apelando a la "yihad" cuando llevó a cabo la guerra de liberación nacional contra las fuerzas aliadas y el Imperio otomano, lo hizo con el fin de incorporar a su causa a los notables anatolios, los dirigentes religiosos y al campesinado.

(12) Léase a Wendy Kristianasen, "La izquierda turca, entre los militares y los islamistas", en *Le Monde diplomatique*, edición española, febrero de 1999.

(13) Léase a Nils Kadrizke, "Prudente distensión greoturca", *Le Monde diplomatique*, edición española, junio de 2000.

LA RÉPUBLIQUE DES « PACHAS »

Ce pouvoir si pesant des militaires turcs

DURANT le mois d'août, le président turc, M. Ahmet Necdet Sezer, ancien président du Conseil constitutionnel, a refusé de ratifier le décret gouvernemental destiné à licencier, sans autre forme de procès, les fonctionnaires suspects de sympathie pour les « séparatistes » kurdes ou les « fondamentalistes » musulmans. Ce veto a été interprété comme un défi lancé au haut commandement des forces armées, peu habitué à de telles résistances. Car les militaires continuent de peser de tout leur poids sur un système politique qui correspond peu aux normes de l'Union européenne.

Par **ÉRIC ROULEAU ***

Le spectacle serait jugé pour le moins insolite dans n'importe quel pays démocratique : d'anciens putschistes célèbrant l'anniversaire de leur coup d'Etat. Une vingtaine d'anciens officiers turcs ont marqué le quarantième anniversaire de la « révolution démocratique » du 27 mai 1960 par diverses manifestations, qui retinrent à peine l'attention des médias locaux, tant l'événement leur parut

* Journaliste.

banal : couronne de fleurs déposée solennellement au mausolée d'Atatürk ; conférence publique organisée par l'ex-capitaine Numan Esin, devenu un grand homme d'affaires, en sa qualité de président de la Fondation de la Constitution de 1961 ; discours apologétiques, empreints de fierté et de nostalgie, suivis d'un banquet typiquement républicain – fraternel, chaleureux, militant – couronné par des chants patriotiques entonnés en chœur par une centaine de personnalités mili-

tares et civiles ayant largement dépassé l'âge de la retraite.

L'étonnement ne serait de mise que pour ceux qui ignorent la culture dominante forgée au rythme des siècles, la place privilégiée qu'ont toujours occupée les forces armées dans le paysage politique, sous la République comme à l'ère de l'Empire ottoman : la troupe de la Sublime Porte, notamment celle des janissaires avant le XIX^e siècle, ne se privait pas d'assassiner, de renverser ou d'introniser les sultans. Selon le cas, elle agissait en faveur des privilèges ou, rarement, dans le sens du progrès.

Ainsi le général Kemal Atatürk s'appuya-t-il sur une partie des forces armées, à la fin de la première guerre mondiale, pour chasser les occupants et fonder, en 1923, une république résolument tournée vers la modernité. Sur les dix présidents qui se sont succédé à la tête de celle-ci, six furent des militaires de haut rang. Depuis la prise du pouvoir par de jeunes officiers « radicaux », en mai 1960, la Turquie a connu une succession de complots militaires, de coups d'Etat, dont le dernier en date, en février 1997, fut quali-



ANKARA, 1968

La place toujours privilégiée de l'armée dans le paysage politique

fié de « virtuel » : vingt « *recommandations* » de l'état-major général suffirent pour liquider le gouvernement de coalition présidé par l'islamiste Necmettin Erbakan. C'est à cette époque que certains médias turcs, dans un élan d'enthousiasme, se mirent à désigner leurs héros, les officiers de haut rang, par le vocable déférent de « pachas », le titre auquel avaient droit autrefois les généraux de l'Empire (1)...

Les pachas de la République, de « droite » ou de « gauche », ont immanquablement fait irruption sur la scène politique en se drapant de l'étendard du « kémalisme ». Le terme est d'ailleurs omniprésent, depuis la mort d'Atatürk, en 1938, dans les textes constitutionnels successifs établis par les militaires, les lois qui s'en inspirent, les discours politiques et aussi dans le serment prêté par le président de la République, les parlementaires, les juges, les grands commis de l'Etat. Toute opinion ou initiative relevant de la politique intérieure ou extérieure doit nécessairement correspondre aux concepts et aux vœux, réels ou supposés, du fondateur de la République.

Il serait hasardeux de qualifier le kémalisme d'idéologie quand on connaît le pragmatisme d'Atatürk, visionnaire et homme d'Etat, qui s'inspira tout à la fois de l'expérience de la Révolution française et des structures étatiques de puissances totalitaires de l'époque pour propulser la Turquie dans le monde développé. D'ailleurs, si son comportement s'était fondé sur une idéologie, ses successeurs n'auraient pas pris le contre-pied de certains aspects majeurs de sa politique, en remplaçant par exemple le système du parti unique par un régime multipartite, en substituant à l'économie étatisée celle du marché, en prenant la défense de minorités turques à l'étranger (Chypre, Bulgarie, Grèce, etc.) ou de peuples musulmans (bosniaque, kosovar, tchétchène, etc.), malgré le principe d'Atatürk selon lequel la République ne devait surtout pas prendre en charge la défense de Turcs, encore moins de musulmans, citoyens de pays étrangers. Surtout, le « père des Turcs » interdisait aux militaires en activité toute ingérence dans les affaires publiques (2).

Les successeurs d'Atatürk choisirent malgré tout de le statufier, après avoir gommé de son héritage ce qui leur paraissait anachronique ou gênant. Ils firent du « kémalisme » un dogme de l'Etat, dont ils s'attribuèrent le monopole d'interprétation. Ils purent ainsi définir systèmes de gouvernement et comportements politiques selon leur convenance et sanctionner, au passage, ceux qui les contestaient. Le dogme, simple dans son énoncé, flou à souhait dans son contenu, est présenté comme ayant une valeur absolue. Il tient en quelques mots : intégrité du territoire, unité de la nation, laïcité de la République. Principes honorables auxquels tout un chacun ne peut

qu'adhérer, mais dont l'armée se veut la gardienne exclusive.

Son instrument, le corps des officiers, constitue une caste d'élite par excellence (3). Les candidats à la carrière des armes sont pris en main dès leur adolescence, sélectionnés selon de stricts critères, subissent une formation intensive dans des écoles qui leur sont consacrées. Les cours ne sont soumis ni à l'agrément ni au contrôle du ministère de l'éducation nationale. Outre l'entraînement militaire, les cadets accomplissent des études de niveau universitaire, en histoire, en sciences politiques, en économie, en sociologie, et apprennent, au choix, diverses langues étrangères.

Officiers d'active, ils touchent des soldes bien supérieures à celles de fonctionnaires civils assimilés ; s'approvisionnent au rabais dans les magasins de l'armée ; bénéficient de prêts immobiliers avantageux ; fréquentent des lieux de vacances, des hôtels et des clubs qui leur sont exclusivement réservés.

Un coup d'Etat virtuel

LA Constitution de 1982 actuellement en vigueur, confectionnée par les généraux qui s'étaient emparés du pouvoir deux ans auparavant, institutionnalise le pouvoir politique des forces armées. Le Conseil national de sécurité, surnommé parfois « gouvernement de l'ombre », qui réunit une fois par mois six militaires – cinq généraux et un amiral – en grand uniforme et cinq dirigeants civils (4), est habilité à présenter au gouvernement des « avis » – dans la pratique, des ordres sans appel – sur des questions relevant de la « sécurité nationale ». Celle-ci, précisait une récente circulaire de l'état-major général, « *couvre virtuellement toutes les affaires d'intérêt public* », tant en politique étrangère qu'en politique intérieure (5).

(1) Lire Panayotis Gavras, « The role of the Military in Turkish Society », thèse présentée au département des études proche-orientales de l'université de Princeton, avril 1989.

(2) A une exception près, le chef de l'état-major général assistait, de plein droit, aux réunions du conseil des ministres.

(3) Lire Mehmet Ali Birand, *Shirts of Steel. An Anatomy of the Turkish Armed Forces*, publié par Taurus (Londres) en 1991. L'ouvrage, une étude de terrain, unique en son genre, lève le voile sur certains aspects de la vie interne, et secrète, des forces armées.

(4) Le chef de l'état-major général, les commandants des forces terrestres, navales, aériennes, et de la gendarmerie ainsi qu'un général agissant en qualité de secrétaire général du Conseil, d'une part, et de l'autre : le président de la République, le premier ministre, les ministres de la défense, des affaires étrangères et de l'intérieur. On devine comment sont prises les décisions « consensuelles ».

(5) Los Angeles Times, 9 mars 2000.

(6) Voir l'étude d'Umit Sakalliglu, professeur à l'université de Bilkent, Ankara, intitulée « The Anatomy of the Turkish Military's Autonomy » et publiée dans *Comparative Politics*, New York, vol. 29, n° 2 1997.

Les délibérations – et même parfois les décisions – du Conseil sont tenues secrètes. L'islamiste Necmettin Erbakan signa l'arrêt de mort de son gouvernement en février 1997 quand il tenta de soumettre au Parlement les dix-huit « *recommandations* » du Conseil visant à éradiquer la « *réaction islamiste* ». Il avait eu le tort de feindre ne pas comprendre qu'il s'agissait d'un ultimatum ouvrant la voie au coup d'Etat « virtuel », oubliant ainsi que, sous l'Empire ottoman, les sultans savaient que leurs jours étaient comptés quand les janissaires renversaient leurs chaudières pour manifester leur colère.

La Constitution accorde, en outre, aux forces armées une autonomie qu'aucun Etat démocratique n'aurait admise (6). Le chef de l'état-major général « coiffe » son ministre de la défense ainsi que tous les autres membres du gouvernement : il se situe dans l'ordre protocolaire après le premier ministre, dont l'autorité est d'ailleurs moindre que la sienne dans les domaines les plus sensibles. Il lui revient, entre autres, de procéder aux nominations et promotions au sein des forces armées, de veiller à la sécurité intérieure et extérieure, de déterminer la politique de défense, de gérer la production et l'acquisition d'armements, dont les coûts ne figurent pas dans le budget de l'Etat.

C'est incidemment, par exemple, que l'on apprenait, par la revue *Defense Week* du 14 février 2000, que la modernisation des forces armées coûtera quelque 70 milliards de dollars au cours des quinze prochaines années. La tradition veut cependant que le budget des dépenses courantes de l'armée (présenté sous une forme elliptique bien qu'il s'attribue un tiers ou davantage des recettes de l'Etat) soit adopté sans débat, par acclamation, avant que l'Assemblée unanime n'adresse au chef de l'état-major ses « *félicitations* » et ses « *vœux* ».

Par ailleurs, la Constitution ainsi que les lois qui en découlent assurent, directement ou indirectement, le contrôle par l'état-major général de l'enseignement supérieur ainsi que l'essentiel du système judiciaire – les délits et les crimes d'opinion relèvent des tribunaux de sécurité de l'Etat, dans lesquels siégeaient il y a peu des militaires de haut rang. Les législateurs, les recteurs des universités, les substituts de parquet, les procureurs et les juges sont tenus de s'inspirer de la définition restrictive des libertés que donne la Constitution dans son préambule : « *Aucune opinion ou pensée ne peut être protégée si elle va à l'encontre des intérêts nationaux turcs (...) des valeurs traditionnelles et spirituelles du peuple turc (...), principes et réformes modernistes d'Atatürk.* »

Celles-ci sont précisées, si l'on peut dire, dans l'article 13 : « *L'unité indivi-*

sible de l'Etat, la souveraineté nationale, la République, la sécurité nationale, le maintien de l'ordre, l'intérêt public, les bonnes mœurs, la santé publique. » L'article 14 va encore plus loin en interdisant l'« abus » des droits et des libertés, même reconnus comme légitimes. On l'aura relevé, non seulement les actes, mais aussi les « opinions » et les « pensées » répréhensibles sont passibles des tribunaux. L'article 130 stipule même que les « recherches et les publications de caractère scientifique » peuvent être interdites par les doyens d'université si elles étaient jugées contraires aux valeurs précitées (7). Promulgués dans la foulée de la Constitution de 1982, la loi électorale, celle qui régit les partis politiques comme les associations professionnelles et les syndicats, comporte des restrictions qui se veulent conformes au même dogme kémaliste.

Le pouvoir politique des « pachas » serait moins enraciné s'il ne s'appuyait pas également sur des moyens économico-financiers considérables (8). L'armée possède un holding tentaculaire, l'OYAK, composé d'une trentaine de grandes entreprises de production, de distribution, d'exportation dans des secteurs aussi variés que l'automobile, les cimenteries, l'agroalimentaire, les pesticides, le pétrole, le tourisme, les assurances, la banque, l'immobilier, les supermarchés, la haute technologie. Ces entreprises emploient quelque trente mille personnes, sans compter la main-d'œuvre de sociétés en partenariat. L'un des fleurons du groupe, l'OYAK-Renault, dispose d'une capacité de production de cent soixante mille voitures par an (9).

Acteur majeur de l'économie, l'OYAK, qui figure parmi les trois ou

quatre premiers holdings de Turquie, est bien doté. Il bénéficie des cotisations des membres des forces armées (qui versent obligatoirement 10 % de leurs soldes), des profits engendrés par ses propres entreprises, dont le taux de rentabilité est réputé être l'un des plus élevés du pays. Et pour cause : l'OYAK est exempté de tous impôts et taxes, privilège que d'autres acteurs du secteur privé jugent sans doute comme une forme de concurrence déloyale.

Le grand capital, cependant, s'en accommode puisque l'OYAK l'a associé, tant par intérêt que par calcul, à ses activités. Dans ses recherches, M. Taha Parla, professeur à l'université du Bosphore, a relevé parmi les partenaires de l'OYAK les noms de plusieurs puissants holdings dont ceux des familles Koç et Sabancı, « empereurs » de l'industrie et du commerce, et Taskent, « baron » des banques privées. En outre, les entreprises privées cooptent à des postes de direction des officiers supérieurs à la retraite, manière de les récompenser pour services rendus ou/et par souci de pérenniser les liens avec les officiers en activité. Ainsi a été scellée l'alliance de l'élite militaire avec le grand capital (national et transnational) et la bureaucratie étatique, constituant les trois piliers de l'OYAK.

Sœur jumelle de ce dernier, la TSKGV – ce sigle désigne la Fondation pour le renforcement des forces armées turques – compte une trentaine d'entreprises industrielles, appartenant elles aussi à l'armée, qui bénéficient des mêmes privilèges que l'OYAK. Vouée exclusivement à la production d'armements, la Fondation emploie une vingtaine de milliers de salariés et fournit indirectement du travail à d'autres dizaines de milliers employés dans les entreprises de sous-traitance. Plus de 80 % des revenus sont versés à un fonds de réserve évalué à plusieurs dizaines de milliards de dollars. Une manière originale, note le professeur Taha Parla, de procéder à l'accumulation du capital (militaire) autre que celui engendré par le secteur privé (civil).

Désastreuse guerre du Kurdistan

PROTÉGÉ par un arsenal de dispositions constitutionnelles et législatives, le triumvirat armée-grand capital-bureaucratie étatique bénéficie d'un bonus d'influence lorsque le rapport des forces politiques lui est favorable, lorsque s'affaiblissent les contre-pouvoirs au sein de la société, quand s'accroît – comme ce fut le cas ces dernières années – le discrédit de la classe politique. Les partis, le Parlement, le gouvernement, les médias, s'inclinent

« Démocrates » contre « républicains »

P EU visible, à peine audible, mal perçue à l'étranger, la société civile en Turquie s'anime au fur et à mesure que se rapproche l'échéance de l'adhésion à l'Union européenne. Le clivage entre « républicains », partisans du système étatique en vigueur, et « démocrates », favorables à sa refonte de fond en comble, se précise au fil des débats qui se déroulent au sein de la classe politique, des milieux intellectuels et des médias. Les deux camps se réclament du « kémalisme » mais en lui donnant un contenu très différent : pour les premiers, il s'agit d'un dogme indissociable du pouvoir politique de l'armée ; pour les seconds, une référence historique devant servir à engendrer un régime analogue à ceux de l'Europe occidentale.

Le rapport des forces paraît, à première vue, déséquilibré. Elite dominante et gardienne de l'orthodoxie, héritière d'une culture plusieurs fois séculaire qu'entretennent les « pachas » des forces armées, les « républicains » occupent le devant de la scène. Divisés et prudents, les « démocrates » jouent les seconds rôles avec une discrétion... contrainte ou calculée.

Tolérés, ces derniers s'expriment librement dans les médias, à dose homéopathique. Les journaux, les radios, les chaînes de télévision comptent chacun un ou deux journalistes hétérodoxes, protégés par leur talent, leur notoriété ou le souci d'« objectivité » de leur patron. Certains d'entre eux, auxquels se sont joints des universitaires et des membres de professions libérales, ont créé un collectif qui a lancé, en janvier 2000, une « initiative pour une Constitution civile ». Objectif (modeste) : susciter un débat rationnel sur la nécessité de doter la Turquie d'une nouvelle Loi fondamentale, qui ne serait pas « imposée du haut » (les Constitutions successives de la République ont toutes été patronnées par un pouvoir militaire). Des groupes, favorables à l'initiative, se sont créés dans diverses régions du pays. Quelque 40 000 personnes en trois mois ont visité le site Internet du collectif.

D'AUTRES secteurs de la société civile, avec d'autres motivations, militent autrement avec le même objectif : la Fondation de la Constitution de 1961 – qui regroupe les auteurs du coup d'Etat de mai 1960, lesquels avaient instauré la Constitution la plus démocratique qu'ait jamais connue la Turquie – multiplie séminaires, publications et démarches auprès du Parlement pour obtenir que la Constitution de 1980 soit libéralisée. La Tusiad, association du grand patronat laïque, bien que divisée entre conservateurs et modernistes, a présenté un audacieux programme de démocratisation que l'Union européenne ne renierait pas.

S'il est dans l'ordre des choses que les organisations des droits de la personne et les publications pro-kurdes militent en faveur de la démocratie, les mouvements et institutions de sensibilité islamique ne sont pas, paradoxalement, les partisans les moins enthousiastes de l'Union européenne, laquelle, à leurs yeux, serait garante des libertés dont ils sont privés. D'innombrables organisations islamisantes, en particulier les associations patronales – la Musiad et sa rivale, les Lions d'Anatolie –, les confréries musulmanes (influentes au sein des partis « laïques »), le parti Fazilet, la troisième formation en importance du Parlement, mènent un combat feutré, bien que difficile, dans un environnement répressif. Décidément, deux Turquies s'affrontent sur un terrain semé d'embûches.

E. R.

alors quand la haute hiérarchie militaire fait fi de la légalité.

Ils n'élèvent, par exemple, aucune objection quand les « pachas » refusent de communiquer au Parlement les textes des accords qu'ils ont conclus avec Israël ou quand les forces turques interviennent massivement – sans en avertir le gouvernement – dans le nord de l'Irak pour combattre les nationalistes kurdes du Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK). Ou encore lorsqu'ils s'opposent à l'ajournement d'élections, souhaité pourtant par une majorité de députés, ou quand ils jugent inopportune la suppression d'articles du code pénal contraires aux droits de la personne ou font obstacle à la progression d'enquêtes sur des scandales (notamment sur des aspects particulièrement répugnants de la guerre antikurde), qui risquent de ternir la réputation des forces armées. Les apparences, il est vrai, sont sauves : les injonctions se présentent le plus souvent comme des « avis » ou des « vœux » exprimés par tel ou tel autre membre de l'état-major général, ce qui n'exclut pas des pressions en coulisse par des moyens moins subtils.

Deux problèmes d'envergure se sont opportunément substitués à ceux qui, naguère, avaient donné un rôle de premier plan aux forces armées. Aux hantises que suscitaient l'Union soviétique et le communisme, durant la guerre froide, ont succédé les peurs du « fondamentalisme islamique » et du « séparatisme kurde », l'un et l'autre confirmant la légitimité et la popularité des « pachas », défenseurs attitrés de la laïcité et de l'intégrité territoriale de la République.

Les combattants du PKK donnèrent, il est vrai, consistance aux thèses officielles en ayant recours aux armes pour obtenir l'instauration d'un Etat indépendant kurde dans les provinces du sud-est de la Turquie et en se réclamant encore du marxisme-léninisme. L'abandon par l'organisation de M. Abdullah Öcalan (dit Apo) de ses prétentions maximalistes, ses offres répétées depuis quelques années de négocier un statut fédéral ou d'autonomie, voire seulement une démocratisation qui reconnaîtrait aux Kurdes des droits élémentaires, les trêves qu'elle observait unilatéralement, furent ignorés ou présentés comme étant autant de ruses (10). Les intellectuels kurdes ou turcs qui prônaient la reconnaissance des seuls droits culturels furent traduits en justice pour « séparatisme » et « connivence » avec le PKK.

Ainsi la guerre déclenchée en 1984 se poursuivra-t-elle quinze ans durant – jusqu'à l'arrestation d'Apo, au Kenya en février 1999 –, avec son cortège d'atrocités, commises de part et d'autre, de destructions de quelque deux mille agglomérations kurdes et l'expulsion de centaines de milliers de leurs habitants, d'arrestations massives, de tortures, d'assassinats commis par des « escadrons de la mort » vraisemblablement patronnés par l'Etat, lui-même gangrené par des groupes mafieux.

Vaine – le problème kurde demeurant entier –, cette guerre fut aussi désastreuse

à plus d'un égard : tandis que l'exercice des libertés régressait sensiblement, les coûts, évalués à 150 milliards de dollars, portaient atteinte au développement économique et au niveau de vie des citoyens. Surtout, loin de « cimenter l'unité de la nation », elle creusa le fossé entre Kurdes et Turcs.

Le conflit avec le PKK n'est pas sans rapport avec celui qui oppose l'armée aux islamistes. Parallèlement à la lutte déclenchée par les putschistes de 1980 contre l'extrême gauche, à laquelle appartenait l'organisation kurde, des gages étaient donnés à la mouvance islamique, perçue comme un rempart contre le « communisme ». L'enseignement de la religion a été dès lors rendu obligatoire dans les écoles publiques, primaires et secondaires, tandis qu'était légalisé le parti islamisant Refah, celui-là même qui devint l'ennemi à abattre dès ses premières victoires électorales en 1994-1995.

Deux paradoxes brouillent la compréhension du conflit. Le premier porte sur le sens donné en Turquie au terme de laïcité, qui ne signifie pas la séparation de l'Etat de la religion, mais bien l'intégration et le contrôle de celle-ci par l'autorité publique, qui, au besoin, l'instrumentalise (11). La direction des affaires religieuses, financée généreusement par le budget de l'Etat, gère entre autres quelque cinq cents lycées (nommés Imam Hatip) – distincts de l'école publique –, destinés à former des imams mais qui, dans la pratique, dispensent une éducation religieuse à des centaines de milliers de futurs cadres de l'Etat et du secteur privé.

Cette même institution étatique a notamment édifié des milliers de mosquées, toujours aux frais du contribuable, l'objectif global étant de promouvoir un islam « éclairé » conforme aux principes kémalistes, entreprise qui s'est révélée pour le moins douteuse. On peut s'interroger encore sur l'inscription obligatoire de la religion sur les cartes d'identité, alors que la Constitution stipule que « nul ne peut être astreint à divulguer ses convictions religieuses ». « Etatisation de l'islam », comme le prétendent les défenseurs du système, ou « islamisation de l'Etat », comme le soutiennent les contestataires ?

Autre paradoxe de taille, la nature du parti « islamiste » que l'on diabolise a souhait : l'actuel Fazilet, successeur du Refah, interdit après le coup d'Etat « virtuel » de 1997. La formation de M. Necmettin Erbakan, vétéran de la politique, parlementaire de longue date, vice-président du conseil des ministres à deux reprises dans des gouvernements de coalition de droite ou de gauche, est tout sauf « fondamentaliste ». De sensibilité musulmane, certes, le parti – à la manière des chrétiens-démocrates en Occident – se réclame de la République, défend les principes de la laïcité « à la française » – selon les termes de son fondateur –, du pluralisme parlementaire et des droits de la personne.

Comblant le vide politique qu'a laissé une gauche atomisée par des décennies de répression (12), il prétend en outre défendre les « laissés-pour-compte », les travailleurs, la petite-bourgeoisie des campagnes et des villes, en particulier celle de la « Turquie profonde », de culture anatolienne et musulmane. Le bât blesse d'autant plus que ce parti conteste – implicitement, il est vrai – le pouvoir politique de l'armée, la négation de l'identité des Kurdes, dont le parti recueille massivement les suffrages là où une formation pro-kurde est empêchée de se présenter. Les véritables enjeux de la confrontation n'ont rien à voir avec la défense de la laïcité.

On comprend dès lors pourquoi l'état-major général estime que les menaces qui mettent la République en péril – celles des aspirations convergentes des Kurdes et des « Anatoliens » – ne sont pas révoquées, malgré la déroute du PKK et la défaite du Fazilet aux dernières élections. Ces « menaces » persistantes éclairent aussi la raison pour laquelle les autorités compétentes n'ont pas ébauché la démocratisation exigée par l'Union européenne depuis de longues années et notamment en décembre 1999 au sommet d'Helsinki. Or la Turquie est tenue de se conformer aux critères politiques, dits de Copenhague, dans un délai de cinq ans, après quoi seulement les négociations en vue de son adhésion à l'Union européenne pourraient commencer (13). La tâche sera particulièrement rude, à supposer qu'elle soit assumée sérieusement : il s'agirait en effet de mener à son terme une révolution consistant à démanteler un système étatique cohérent et solidement ancré.

ÉRIC ROULEAU.

(7) Ainsi, on ne s'étonnera pas outre mesure de ne pas trouver un ouvrage ou une thèse universitaire d'auteurs turcs analysant globalement le rôle politique de l'armée. L'absence de transparence et aussi la prudence des chercheurs en sont sans doute responsables.

(8) Taha Parla, « Mercantile Militarism in Turkey 1960-1998 », dans la revue *New Perspectives on Turkey*, Istanbul, automne 1998.

(9) OYAK, sigle du nom du holding Ordu Yardımlaşma Kurumu (organisme de fonds de pension des forces armées), fondé en janvier 1961 par les auteurs du coup d'Etat de mai 1960. Ses activités industrielles et commerciales ont pris leur essor après le putsch de 1980, à la faveur de la libéralisation économique.

(10) Lire Kendal Nezan, « L'injustice faite aux Kurdes », et Michel Verrier, « En Turquie, un procès au peuple kurde », *Le Monde diplomatique*, respectivement mars et juin 1999.

(11) Umit Sakallıoğlu : « Parameters and Strategies of Islam-State Interaction in Republican Turkey », essai publié par le *Journal of Middle East Studies*, Cambridge (Royaume-Uni), n° 28, 1996. L'auteur rapporte qu'Atatürk avait inauguré l'instrumentalisation de l'islam en appelant au « djihad » lorsqu'il menait la guerre de libération nationale contre les forces alliées et l'Empire ottoman, et ce afin de rallier à sa cause les notables anatoliens, les dirigeants religieux et la paysannerie.

(12) Lire Wendy Kristiansen, « La gauche entre militaires et islamistes », *Le Monde diplomatique*, février 1999.

(13) Lire Niels Kadritzke, « Prudente détente gréco-turque », *Le Monde diplomatique*, juin 2000.

US DEPARTMENT OF STATE Briefing on Iraq Opposition

September 14, 2000

(Courtesy of Iraq Foundation <http://www.iraqfoundation.org/>)

Following is edited transcript of background briefing on Iraq provided in New York by two senior State Department officials following a meeting between Secretary Of State Madelene Allbright and a delegation of the INC that met with UN representative missions.

Senior State Department Official: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome I would like to introduce Senior Official Number Two. He's going to give us a rundown of the meeting the Secretary just had with the Iraqi National Congress, and then after that I'll give you a little bit of update Middle East peace process and we'll talk about planning.

Official Two: Let me start off, first, with who these Iraqis were and what they're doing in New York. The eight who have just arrived are the first team of a rotating delegation of free Iraqis who will be in New York over the next month or so. Their purpose is to advocate the interests of the Iraqi people and to disseminate the truth about Iraq as Iraqis experience it. The delegation is sponsored by the Iraqi National Congress, but it includes independents and members of other groups not formally under the INC umbrella. The delegation today did not include members of the INC Leadership Committee, for example, though some of those leaders of that organization may turn up to help with this mission in the coming weeks.

The eight Iraqis in this first team are quite representative of the ethnic and sectarian diversity of Iraq itself. They include Arabs and Kurds, a Turkoman and an Assyrian, from all parts of Iraq. They also include Sunni and Shiite Muslims and a Christian, Islamists, secularists, civilian and the military. [&]

Most of these visitors in today's group are in the Iraqi National Congress or otherwise support it from outside. One member who was from outside the Iraqi National Congress who is here today is Dr Hamid Al-Bayati, who is the representative in London of what is called the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, also known as SCIRI by its acronym.

Q He was here?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Yes, he was here. He joined the group. What did we discuss? The secretary's statement, which I think you all have, lays out the main points. Besides those, on our side, the Secretary reassured these representatives of the Iraqi people that US interests in Iraq are durable and will persist well into a successor [&] administration. She made clear that these interests include supporting the Iraqi people's aspirations for a change to a new government. Americans think that Iraqis deserve what they say they want: new leaders who will move Iraq toward democracy and the rule of law and who will restore their country to them. In fact, I believe the Secretary's exact words on this point about containment and regime change were . it's not enough just to contain Saddam Hussein with the Iraqi people stuck in the same cage with him; Saddam has got to go. . The Iraqis presented very thoughtful ideas - very articulately and very passionately- and I know they will be glad to present them publicly to any of you who are interested for themselves, and in great detail. And you can debate them with them. They are difficult in some cases. They are not easy. They were kind enough to invite the Secretary to Baghdad once it's free.

Q First just a small question. You're damned if the answer is yes, damned if it's no, but do these people come from Iraq or are they living in Paris and London, Vienna and other wonderful places?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Some come from Iraq. One Came from Erbil in the past couple of days.

Q If they come from spas, then I got a question how in touch they are and how serious they are. If they come from Iraq, I got a question how repressive the regime is if people can come back and forth and plot the overthrow of Saddam Hussein.

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: These people should not be mocked.

Q I'm not mocking them. I said if they're ex-patriots living well —

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: They're not.

Q I got to wonder if they're in touch. If they're in the country and they can get in and out, then I got to wonder how repressive is Saddam Hussein.

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Let me tell you the story of one of them, and you can talk with him if you can get an interpreter. ... He is cited in the Secretary's press statement. One is a general who left Iraq under duress a couple of years ago and has been living in a neighboring Arab country as a refugee, not a spa.

He has been writing about the causes of the Iraqi people's suffering. He wrote a book about the uprising in 1991. For this he's been getting threatening phone calls.

In June, he got a message in this Middle Eastern city he was living in . from which he has now been ejected, so he's twice a refugee . and the phone call said, come on down to the bus station, there's a package for you, there's a gift for you from Iraq. He got the gift, brought it home, went to show it . he sat down in his living room with his wife and his kid to watch it and realized something was wrong. This was not a family home video. He sent his wife and kid to bed and then he saw what it was. It was from the Iraqi intelligence service and it was a video of a female relative being raped. I also listened to the telephone conversation from the Iraqi intelligence officer telling him, we have this little gift for you. And if you don't desist, there will be more of that. So this is the kind of person we have . high caliber, serious people, in touch with what's going on inside and who pay a price for it.

Q But some have managed to . despite it all . to come here and they'll go home, right?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Some are established outside Iraq, yes. There is at least one American citizen among them who is established in this country for many years. I don't think he'll ever go back to Iraq. He is part of an Iraq . a sort of free Iraq lobby that is starting to take some root around the world. There are some people like that. You're absolutely right.

Q Can you be a little more specific from the Secretary's statement on what the proposed ways to ease Iraqi suffering? And then the second part, how much of the money that Congress allotted to you, or to your office, has actually been now distributed?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Okay, we discussed with them how go about developing greater world support for a tribunal or investigation for war crimes and crimes against humanity. We recognize some of the practical difficulties in doing that. What I would like to do is refer you to Ambassador David Scheffer, who is the czar of war crimes tribunals and crimes against humanity. He will speaking at the National Press Club on Monday in Washington. And he can go into great detail . he will go into great detail on our strategy and what we hope to do and how to do it. From the side of the Iraqi visitors, they simply urged more activity from the United States and they said they would be urging more activity from other countries here at the United Nations.

Q Wait, hold on. More activity . what does that mean? Collecting and compiling evidence?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Getting more diplomatic support in this case was most

of the topic today. There is work along those lines that the Iraqi opposition is doing and that the United States Government is supporting other NGOs in doing. That's going on. You can check some websites, in fact, that have some of these Iraqi intelligence documents on torture.

On sanctions, they have a specific proposal on that, about keeping Oil-for-Food, strengthening it, protecting the portion allocated to the north, where it's working very well since it's out of Saddam Hussein's control, and getting more international oversight to prevent Saddam Hussein from abusing it for his ends.

On the amount of money to the opposition. Let me clear one misconception that people persistently have. The Iraq Liberation Act does not provide money. There is no appropriation under the Iraq Liberation Act. The Iraq Liberation Act provides this famous figure that everyone has - \$97 million worth of authority to the President to draw down \$97 million worth of goods and services from the Defense Department in support of the Iraqi opposition.

We have begun the pipeline of trainees against that \$97 million worth of authority. You would have to check with the Pentagon to get the latest and most precise figure, but in ballpark terms we've got the pipeline rolling with something under 200 training candidates named to us, and most of them slotted into courses from now through the coming year. Of those, over 40 have either begun or completed their training. So that's underway. I couldn't put a dollar value on it.

Q What are they training to do?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: It's being offered by the Department of Defense. The course subject matter are things like logistics, medicine, non-lethal sorts of stuff. Not combat arms.

Q Why? Why not lethal?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Let me finish this and I'll get to that. War crimes investigations. They're taking JAG courses, judge advocate general courses, laws of war, so that they, too, will learn to respect laws of war in their fighting. And they're coming to know American military officers in the process. So we're developing a relationship with these Iraqis, who include Kurds and others, much as we develop relations with Arab military officers who come to the United States for training in the same sorts of courses.

There is money, however, that is being spent to support the Iraqi opposition outside the Iraq Liberation Act. There are congressional earmarks. I can go into tedious detail for you or I can give you a fact sheet when we get back to Washington.

Let me, in nutshell, tell you that we have provided the first direct funding to the Iraqi National Congress, \$268,000, to get them up and running administratively, do information programs, advocacy programs. And to develop a solid proposal for their next grant, we are working hard with the Iraqi National Congress now to conclude an \$8 million grant agreement we hope to have in the coming weeks.

In general terms, and they will announce and we will announce what that's all about. In general terms that's to support administration, information efforts, two-way information. I'm not talking about propaganda. I'm talking about getting information out of the country: video, tapes, documents, reporting, humanitarian relief inside Iraq and to Iraqis on the periphery and so forth. So the money is flowing now and it just takes a while to get it started. Did that answer all your questions?

Q Can I just follow up? It seems that if you wanted to roll back Saddam Hussein's regime you would need to give them like surface to air missiles and other kinds of military training? What's been the holdup on that? I mean, why? Why has it? I mean, how? If you're supporting this group, why are you not giving them the kind of guns and military support that I believe that they've said that they need all along?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Our policy is not to rule out where we might get in the

future but, for the moment, not to supply weapons, lethal aid.

Q Why?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Several reasons, the main one of which is they're not there yet. We're not interested in getting Iraqis killed needlessly, pointlessly, helping more blood flow among Iraqis. We want to see this organization grow and develop, be seamlessly linked between the forces inside that are dying and suffering and shedding their blood daily and those outside who can speak freely and who can meet freely. That organizational nexus has to grow and develop. And it's starting. It's hard to do. You have to overcome exile politics and the difficulties of communication, but they're getting there.

Q When you said they're not there yet --

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Let me add one pint on that. The subject of military assistance didn't arise from either side at the meeting.

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Exactly right. They didn't ask. They're not asking for any.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: They didn't ask, and we didn't make any special .

Q At that meeting they weren't asking, but I think .

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: No. You can go back a year ago when they came to New York and had their General Assembly, they made very clear afterwards, we are not at this time asking for lethal aid from the United States. That may be part of the long-term plan for some of them.

Q On the tribunal, I seem to recall that another senior official remarkably like you told us . gave us a time frame for setting this up. And it was a matter of months. And that was several months ago. Is this something that's imminent? [&] Are you preparing some resolution?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: I think you're mistaking me for Mr. Scheffer. Don't recall any senior official of the United States Government predicting a time line. Again, David Scheffer is speaking on the record on Monday and can give an idea .

Q Let me put it this way. Are you getting closer towards preparing a tribunal or an indictment?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Let me put it this way. There are different dimensions to this. On the dimension of collecting evidence, translating it, analyzing, protecting it and seeking national cooperation, as opposed to multilateral United Nations cooperation, there has been progress. Some of that you can see on the websites of various of these Iraqi organizations.

The Iraq Foundation website, for example, has some of these documents. And if they don't already have it . it depends on them fixing software glitches . they ought to have, I think, 400 original Iraqi documents in Arabic captured from the intelligence services which are intended to be used as evidence. Those have been translated into English and will be available for scholars. There has been a lot of hard, slogging, quiet work accomplished in this period. There is some work with other foreign prosecutors as well that they will not publicize, and rightly so.

Q But it would be UN . attached or UN . linked?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: As David Scheffer, I think, will explain, we are working on a couple of different tracks at the same time. There is the multilateral UN sort of track, which is hard

slogging, and then there is some individual work with other countries where there are Iraqis and where prosecutors are interested in following this up. But I don't think we're going to name those countries.

Q What were the historical ideas that you said were present?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: On sanctions, how to make them work better.

Q You said that they presented a lot of thoughtful ideas, presumably about regime change and what they would like to see go forward.

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Yes. In those three major areas, I guess I would say. On sanctions . on how to make Oil for Food work for the Iraqi people even better than it is now --

Q No, I understand those topics. I want to know what the ideas were, what they suggest.

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: It wouldn't be fair to me to present them to you in detail. They can. In general terms, on Oil for Food they were pushing the idea of an international body that would direct the use of this multi billion . I think it's \$8 or \$9 billion escrow fund and get that out of the control of Saddam Hussein's government . It isn't under the direct control; it's a UN escrow account, but Saddam's government chooses who gets the contracts and thereby buys a certain amount of influence. That's one thing.

On the tribunals, we talked about how to approach tribunals and investigations. On humanitarian relief, they are pushing for humanitarian relief to the Iraqi people beyond UN programs. And, again, they can tell you about that.

Q Very quickly, you mentioned this website. Is this the kind of thing that's being supported by the US in terms of .

SECOND STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: It is the kind of thing that is being supported by the United States. Again, we can give you a cheat sheet on the various grants we are giving out under different earmarks for economic support funds over the past couple fiscal years. We are working with a number of international non-governmental organizations, the Iraq Foundation, the Human Rights Association, which will be here in New York in ten days holding a conference, the Middle East Institute, others. They have websites. They're getting this information out. The Iraqi National Congress has a grant from us. They have a website. They're getting this information out.

Q Why is it so difficult to get a tribunal for this? I mean, during the war in Kosovo there was like a lickety . split indictment of Milosevic. You said you have 400 original documents here. You've got eyewitnesses.

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Sure. It's a great question, I don't know. I mean, it's probably a long answer. Scholars ought to study it. But it's something for David Scheffer.

Q Put it on television. It's not visible.

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: You've got a great correspondent in Baghdad. She's not allowed to go and see the bombed out villages. We can show . on our website you can look and see a village that existed one day in June last year, and in July there was shrubbery there, and in September, the shrubbery was gone. You can see it in our satellite photographs. But you can't see that on the ground there. We have another set of satellite photographs .

Q What does that indicate with the shrubbery being gone?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: That there isn't a trace of human existence there any more. It's flattened so completely that there isn't even that .

Q Why?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Because it was a village that had risen up against Saddam Hussein.

Q And this is recently?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Yes, it was a year ago. And there is another one from . there is another one we just put out, in fact, in a whole different village where you see . I forget the dates, I'm sorry . I think it was April . where the village exists one time. We checked some reporting from the Iraqi opposition that there was trouble there, that they had protested or risen up or rioted, and Saddam had gone in and obliterated it. We checked and . what do you know . the Iraqi opposition wasn't just passing rumors. You look at the satellite photos and you see there are no roofs there any more and the walls are down.

Q Have you released these photos?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Yes.

Q To us?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Yes, they're on the State website. I think David Scheffer will have them at the Press Club on Monday, too.

Q What the INC is doing, what it wants to do and what you're doing with them does not seem at all commensurate with the severity of what you say exists in Iraq. It seems like there is this great imbalance. I mean, how are you going to combat these things with a group that's not armed and there's tons of in-fighting and it's going at a snail's space, seemingly? And then you cite all these brash and extreme examples that I don't doubt you on, but it doesn't seem like there is any commensurate force to stop that, at least in this sort of forum.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: This is not the sole aspect of our policy. The Secretary made quite clear today . she made quite clear to them . she said our policy remains the same . containment and regime change. Iraq is subject to a whole series of international sanctions, no-fly zones, careful controls on purchases and things like that, which are all designed to at least reduce Saddam's ability to do these sorts of things. So this is . whatever he is able to do is done within the serious confinement that exists not only so that he doesn't threaten his neighbors but also that he doesn't threaten his own people.

Q I know there is probably a conviction that nobody could be worse than Saddam Hussein, but are you convinced that these people have democracy in mind or are they just- or are they mostly-opponents of Saddam Hussein, some democratic and maybe some not? Some of us remember the Afghan freedom fighters, and some of us were suspicious even then. But it was anti-Soviet so anything you did was fine in those days. I mean I don't know that you can put a litmus test on it, but do you think we have liberal democrats here?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: I think we have liberal democrats here, yes, who speak from conviction. But I think your question really is what are the prospects for democracy really in Iraq?

Q Would these people, should they succeed —

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Sure. Let me make clear . we've said this before . we're not dealing with the Iraqi National Congress or those who work with them as necessarily the next government of Iraq. We know the next government of Iraq is going to come from inside. We know it's going to be . and we have to presume it's going to be a very difficult situation for that government, wherever it's going to be.

But we've made clear through the Iraq Liberation Act and all our policy statements, and the direction that we'd like to see the future government of Iraq go if it is to have international support, and especially American support. We speak with a lot of Iraqis. Many of them don't know what democracy really means. They've heard about it. They've never experienced it if they are fresh from inside Iraq. There are other Iraqis in their Diaspora who know what democracy means, really believe in it, believe their countrymen can develop it, can get there eventually, and be held up as an objective. And there is nothing wrong with that. It will be hard to get there. We're not dreamy idealists. It won't be easy. But if you don't state it as an objective and support it as an objective, you won't get it.

Q Could I ask you one other thing? I know you used . humanitarian. and you used it in a real sense, like decimating villages. But, again, I have a little bit of a problem. Albright speaks of there's enough food, the caloric intake is . by letting Iraq sell all the oil it can pump, there is no reason anybody should go hungry, in fact, children are better off than they were at the time of the Persian Gulf War. I guess that can co-exist with killing people and blowing up villages, but I can't get a fix on what the US appraisal is of the humanitarian situation in Iraq. Well fed but repressed? Not well fed? Opposition villages are certainly not well fed?

SECOND SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Here is where we see exactly eye to eye with the Iraqi opposition people we speak with. Humanitarian relief, in our view, is not just food and medicine. People should live free. They deserve to be able to run their own affairs. They deserve to be treated with dignity by their own government, for heaven's sake.

We believe that just feeding them and letting them have medicine is not nearly enough. When the Iraqi opposition tells us we're not animals who just need food and medicine, we're people who need freedom, we salute that. We support that and that's what we want to see as relief. That kind of relief we think can only come with a change of regime.

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: Let me say one other thing on our question, that what the Secretary pointed out this afternoon is that in the north where the government does not impede the Oil . for- Food program that there is relative success. As a matter of fact, that's what these guys said. It's relative success in the north and that people are living better, and that's what the Secretary said this afternoon.

The problem is in the parts of Iraq where Saddam is able to control what's purchased and distributed, where there is suffering. And we have every sympathy with the suffering of the Iraqi people in that situation, both on the freedom side but also on the food and productivity side. The problem is when people sit down and start to address the issue, well, how do you relieve that suffering of the Iraqi people, frankly, it's not by easing sanctions. And that's what these people said today. Easing sanctions would be, in fact, counter-productive. If they're actually trying to take care of the Iraqi people, the only way to do it is to prevent Saddam from impeding the money from going to what the Iraqi people need.

Q So they say no easing sanctions, they say?

SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: That's what they say, very clearly, Make them tighter.

Q I just have what is probably a very silly question, but if you're saying that the Iraqi National Congress is probably not going to be the next government of Iraq, and we're not arming the Iraqi National Congress or members of them to overthrow Saddam Hussein, what is the purpose of supporting them?

Address of Ambassador Scheffer on Justice in Iraq

National Press Club, Washington, D.C.

September 18, 2000

David Scheffer, Ambassador at Large for War Crimes Issues, US Department of State addressed a conference sponsored by the Middle East Institute and the Iraq Foundation, at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. The conference, on the topic "Saddam Hussein: War Crimes and Crimes Against the Iraqi People" was attended by members of the policy establishment, the diplomatic community and the Arab and international media. Following link to full text of Ambassador Scheffer's remarks.

http://www.iraqfoundation.org/forum/events/2000/joctober/5_speech.html

Conference Report: "Saddam Hussein: War Crimes and Crimes Against the Iraqi People" hosted by the Middle East Institute and the Iraq Foundation.

National Press Club, Washington, D.C. September 18, 2000

(Report prepared by The Middle East Institute)

MEI President Roscoe Suddarth delivered welcoming remarks, and the panel was moderated by MEI Vice President David Mack

Ambassador David J. Scheffer gave the keynote address. His speech was followed by presentations by Kanan Makiya, Rend Rahim Francke, Sahib Al-Hakim, Dr. Latif Rashid, Dr. Christine Gosden, Dr. Hamid Al-Bayati, Dr. Hatem Mukhlis, and the Honorable Ann Clwyd, MP.

The Case for Justice in Iraq Ambassador David J. Scheffer, Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes Issues, U.S. Department of State

Ambassador Scheffer discussed the case for justice in Iraq and the pursuit of accountability for Saddam Hussein and his regime. First, he reviewed the criminal record of Saddam Hussein and his top associates, enumerating eight key areas. These, Scheffer noted, go to the very heart of why Saddam Hussein's conduct deserves an international response. According to Scheffer, Hussein and his forces used chemical weapons against Iran during the Iran-Iraq War killing 5,000 Iranians between 1983-1988. He also noted that in mid-1988 Hussein used chemical weapons against civilians in Halabja, a northeastern town in Iraq, killing 5,000. Additionally, Scheffer stated that Hussein ordered the Anfal campaign against the Iraqi Kurds killing 50,000-100,000 between 1987-1988. During the illegal invasion and occupation of Kuwait in 1990 Hussein and his forces killed over 1,000 Kuwait nationals, as noted by Scheffer. Additionally, Scheffer discussed the killing of an estimated 30,000-60,000 Iraqi civilians by Saddam's regime during the suppression of the 1991 uprising in the south. Scheffer continued his list of crimes by noting the deliberate draining of the southern marshes of Iraq by Hussein has rendered the land useless and inhibited the livelihoods of many Iraqi civilians, possibly constituting genocide. Additionally Scheffer discussed the documented campaign of ethnic cleansing against 'Persians' and non-Arabs of the northern districts. Lastly, Scheffer noted the unlawful killing of political opponents and the prevalent use of torture and intimidation against opposition groups. He listed twelve Iraqi officials, including Saddam Hussein, worthy of international indictment.

Secondly, Scheffer updated the audience on the work of the U.S. government in the promotion of accountability. The U.S. efforts, according to Scheffer, have concentrated on the development and preservation of evi-

dence of Hussein's crimes. The U.S. government scanned important documents and archives captured from Iraq onto 176 CD-ROM's in an effort to document and bring forth the case against Hussein. According to Scheffer, the U.S. government also intends to declassify materials proven valuable to a tribunal or commission against Hussein, such as satellite imagery documenting both historic and recent criminal conduct.

Although Hussein continues to commit war crimes and crimes against humanity, Scheffer argued that he recognizes his vulnerability to international prosecution and clearly fears the truth coming out. An international tribunal would end any international support Hussein receives in his efforts to regain the profits from the sale of Iraqi oil (currently dedicated to the U.N. oil-for-food program). Thus, argued Scheffer, although the US is committed to helping the Iraqi people, he can not foresee the suspension of UN sanctions except through the full compliance with Security Council resolutions which were adopted precisely as a result of Hussein's crimes against humanity, genocide, and war crimes.

Building the Case Kanan Makiya and Rend Rahim Francke, Iraq Research and Documentation Project

In a joint presentation Makiya and Rahim discussed the mounting evidence on the subject of Hussein's crimes now available through their recently constructed website, which contains scanned versions of all 173 CD-ROMs of Iraqi government documents provided by the U.S. government and other institutions. Makiya began by stating that the Iraqi regime, unlike other dictatorial regimes, has never put much stock in hiding its atrocities. Rather, the regime 'wants' to be seen as engaging in these atrocities, since they provide "cement" for the regime. According to Makiya, this cruel phenomenon is not vengeful or sporadic, but rather systemic. Makiya argued this criminality did not start with the Gulf War, as many argue, but rather was a foundation upon which the Baath party was built. The sheer openness in promulgating these atrocities as a means to legitimization through fear makes documenting the crimes rather easy on one level, argued Makiya. Yet the international political will and the internal organization among the Iraqi people are still missing, Makiya stated.

Rahim discussed the documents assembled by the Iraq Research and Documentation Project regarding Hussein's crimes. She noted the IRDP is an effort to collect and make public official Iraqi documents and to provide a human rights framework for analyzing these documents. According to Rahim, over 2.4 million documents were collected, assembled onto 173 CD-ROMs and then put on the IRDP website (<http://www.irdp.org>). The objective was not to find a single document with which to indict the regime, but rather to find evidence of a pattern of behavior that represented the systemic and often disguised policies of the regime. Rahim presented documents, available on the website, which discussed the deportation of Kurds from the northeast section of Kurdish Iraq, terrorism, the killing of twenty-five Kurds in northern Iraq and requests for "liquidation" of saboteurs. Rahim acknowledged a lack of documents dated after 1991, but noted that documents from Kuwait might possibly fill the void. According to Rahim, documents already received from Kuwait discuss the deliberate burning of oil wells, the presence of chemical weapons and the burning and looting of Kuwaiti homes.

Bringing the Case to the Public Sahib Al-Hakim, Organization of Human Rights in Iraq

Dr. Al-Hakim discussed the flagrant violations of human rights perpetrated upon the Iraqi people by Saddam Hussein since his ascent into power. Al-Hakim highlighted many of the mechanisms used by the Hussein regime to assert complete power and control. Al-Hakim showed slides of mass graves, destroyed villages, and victims of torture. According to al-Hakim, psychological and sexual torture, as well as beatings, amputations and repeated cigarette burns are common in Iraqi prisons. He also described prisoners being dipped into acid baths until their bodies disintegrated and prisoners eaten by dogs. Yet, he emphasized, Saddam Hussein's means of retaliation and suppression reach far beyond Iraq's borders. According to al-Hakim, Iraqi civilians who have defected to other countries have been killed by Hussein's forces while living abroad. Dr. Al-Hakim stated his belief that the only way to stop these criminal acts is the international indictment of Saddam Hussein. He called upon heads of state and religious leaders to play a more active role in stopping these atrocities and to help bring an international indictment of Saddam Hussein.

Case Study: Chemical Warfare Against the Kurds Dr. Christine Gosden, Professor of Medical Genetics, University of Liverpool Introduced by Dr. Latif Rashid, Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

Latif Rashid described the brutality of the Anfal campaign against the Iraqi Kurds from 1987-1988. According to Rashid, over 4,000 villages were destroyed during these campaigns, mainly through a 'scorched earth' policy implemented by Hussein's forces. Rashid pointed out, however, that the Anfal campaign also involved mass abduction and disappearances of civilians, mass executions, arbitrary arrest and jailing, forced displacement, destruction of Kurdish infrastructure and destruction of religious institutions.

According to Dr. Gosden, Saddam Hussein and his regime perpetrated over 281 separate chemical, biological and radiological attacks on the Kurdish people of northern Iraq just during the Anfal campaign of 1987-1988. In her presentation, Gosden chose to look at three phases of the very systematic policy of genocide against the Iraqi Kurds. Determining exactly which weapons were used during the attacks, and why, necessarily determines the course of action in helping the victims of this crime, noted Gosden. In her opinion, the use of chemical, biological and radiological weapons on the Kurdish population was an experiment by the Hussein regime. She noted that the main poison used during the Anfal campaign was mustard gas, which does not kill immediately but causes more long-term effects such as cancers and birth defects, heart problems, sterilization and spinal defects. This, she argued, was a deliberate attempt by the regime to understand the long-term effects of the gas as well as to ensure long-term, genocidal effects upon the population. In addition, Dr. Gosden pointed to evidence which suggested the use of a radiological weapon, zirconium, against the Kurds. In one document, according to Gosden, radioactive bombs covering one square kilometer could cause between 20-30% of the population to be sterilized. The genocidal effects on the population remain manifold. According to Dr. Gosden, who cited the World Food Program, the Kurdish region has lost 14% of their population aged 14 and younger, which could devastate whole communities. Lung cancer, esophageal cancer and colon cancers have all increased to 5-10 times the normal rate.

Given that the Anfal campaign was the single largest chemical attack on a civilian population, argued Dr. Gosden, the necessity for a medical study remains acute. Which segments of the population were affected the most? Which segments were the least vulnerable? Answers to these questions, asserted Gosden, would help to effectively treat patients now and in the future. Yet, according to Gosden, effective treatment must involve careful research into the illnesses of the population as well as the consent and active participation of the people. Gosden also noted the need for international recognition and international prosecution of Saddam Hussein and his regime for their crimes against the Kurds.

Case Study: Assault on Civil Society Dr. Hamid Al-Bayati, Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq

Dr. Hamid Al-Bayati discussed the crimes against humanity committed by Saddam Hussein's regime against Iraqi civil society, and with specific regard to the Shi'a religious community. Al-Bayati traced the assault on civil society to the military coup in which the Ba'ath Party took control of Iraq on July 17, 1968. Many Shi'a intellectuals and religious leaders were prevented from teaching, arrested, deported or killed, according to al-Bayati. He also pointed out that when Saddam Hussein became president, via a palace coup in 1979, violations against human rights and the assault on civil society increased dramatically, particularly among the Kurds and the Shi'a. Al-Bayati stated that Hussein's regime arrested and killed hundreds of religious scholars and activists in its early years, during the Iran-Iraq war and again at the onset of the Kuwaiti invasion. He also noted the continuation of arbitrary arrests, torture and execution all over Iraq as well as numerous assassinations in other countries. Al-Bayati blamed the US-allied forces for turning a blind eye to the uprising against the regime after the war with Kuwait. He further criticized the West for ignoring Saddam's domestic oppression and for allowing the genocide to continue unchecked.

Case Study: Violent Elimination of All Political Rivals Dr. Hatem Mukhlis

Dr. Mukhlis began his presentation by stating that "there has not been one family who has not been touched by the evil and torturous hand of Saddam Hussein." Mukhlis argued that the international press focuses on the Shi'a of the south and the Kurds of the north, but largely ignores the abuses perpetrated on the average Iraqi civilian. Dr. Mukhlis presented to the audience details of the violent elimination of Hussein's political rivals, listing many by name. Dr. Mukhlis, a native of Tikrit, noted that Saddam Hussein has been no less ruth-

less in moving against real of imagined rivals in Tikrit and in other Sunni Arab communities. He presented personal accounts of politicians and rivals tortured, arbitrarily arrested, executed and killed in fake car crashes. He concluded his presentation with a plea to the audience to continue to raise awareness about the crimes of Saddam Hussein's regime.

The Road to Justice Honorable Ann Clwyd, MP and Chair of the Board, INDICT Introduced by Kathryn Porter, Human Rights Alliance

Ann Clwyd spoke about the criminal case against Saddam Hussein and the work of INDICT, a non-governmental organization founded in 1997 to bring war criminals to justice. Clwyd discussed the systematic building of a case against Hussein and members of his regime through eyewitness testimony and statements, Iraqi documents, videos and photographs. According to Clwyd, INDICT, based on this evidence, built up a list of targeted individuals and created an "A List" and "B List" of suspects. She then announced to the audience that INDICT has been able to build a "copper-bottomed" case against five "A List" members and 31 "B List" members. Clwyd noted that INDICT can not overtly publicize all that it is doing, nor would it state when the indictments will be brought forth in the international community. She did acknowledge that within the next three months INDICT hopes to bring indictments against the Hussein regime for "grave breaches" of the Geneva Convention in ordering the chemical attack on Halabja. Additionally, Clwyd stressed that INDICT will not be seen as "foreign-court-shopping" when pursuing this indictment and will never pursue the same case in more than one country at any one time.

Secondly, Clwyd addressed the policy of sanctions on Iraq, stating that "it is Saddam Hussein, himself, that is responsible for the situation of his own people." Additionally, Clwyd stated that despite all of the criticisms, one sanction that would make it impossible for Saddam Hussein or other regime members to travel would be international indictments. Then, noted Clwyd, the responsibility would lie with other members of the international community to enforce the indictments. Clwyd stated that, as responsible human beings, we must realize Saddam Hussein's regime will continue to threaten its neighbors and its own people. We must say to Saddam Hussein and his regime, concluded Clwyd, that there are no hiding places in the world for people accused of the war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide for which you stand accused.

The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of the Middle East Institute, which does not take a position on Middle East issues.

Iraqi Foes To Receive Aid

Associated Press, 15 Sep 2000

NEW YORK (AP) The Clinton administration soon will provide \$4 million to political foes of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to help them try to end his rule, a senior State Department official said.

Congress was notified of the grant recently, and another \$4 million will be sent in stages under a program being worked out with the Iraqi National Congress, which is trying to oust the Iraqi leader, the official said Thursday night. The Clinton administration is not providing any weapons to the opposition, said the official who talked to reporters under rules that kept his identity secret.

Some 200 Iraqi dissidents are being schooled with Pentagon funds on legal and war-crime issues, the official said. And documents detailing human rights abuses are being collected for potential use by a war crimes tribunal. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright met with eight of the political foes, some of whom came here from Iraq. Others live in exile.

"They proposed ways to hold Iraq accountable" to the United Nations and "to the people of Iraq," Albright said in a statement.

"Anyone who really cares about the Iraqi people and the recovery of their once-great country must listen to free Iraqis like these who bravely speak the truth," she said.

The U.S. contributions are to be used to fund a newspaper, radio transmitters and other media operations. An additional \$268,000 was given to the Iraqi National Congress for administration.

Only the United States is providing this kind of assistance to opponents of Saddam Hussein, the official said. None of the Arab countries were willing to participate in what they view as an attempt by an external force; the United States; to bring down an Arab government, he said.

In a speech to the United Nations on Tuesday and on other occasions this week Albright has denounced Saddam and his government. She called him a villain and said at a news conference Thursday: "I genuinely have trouble believing one word out of the mouths of any Iraqi official." For the first time in more than a decade, at least one Iraqi fighter jet flew into Saudi Arabia airspace last week, a senior U.S. official said.

Albright said Iraq's purpose may have been to confront the United States during the U.N. Millennium summit. Trying to put pressure on Saddam Hussein, she met for 50 minutes with eight Iraqi opponents of his rule and discussed trying to build a legal case against him, possibly with the formation of a war crimes tribunal.

"The United States salutes the courage of Iraqis everywhere in the opposition," Albright said in a statement. "I wish them success in presenting to the world the true hopes and needs of the Iraqi people."

Albright warned Iraq, meanwhile, that if it rebuilt its arsenal of weapons of mass destruction or otherwise crossed U.S. "red lines" it risked a U.S. attack.

"We have a credible force in the region and we are prepared to use it at a time and place of our choosing," she said at a news conference.

At the same time, Albright ridiculed any suggestion that U.N. sanctions were denying food to the Iraqi people. She said oil revenues were so high "they import 12,000 cases of scotch each year."

"I am not sure if this is food or medicine," Albright added.

State Department says Iraqi opposition group "not ready" for military aid

United Press International 15 September 2000 By ELI J. LAKE

NEW YORK, Sept. 15 (UPI) - A senior State Department official told reporters Thursday that the American funded Iraqi opposition group known as the Iraqi National Congress was "not ready" for U.S. military assistance.

But INC officials fired back. The President of the Iraqi National Congress, Achmed Chalabi, told UPI, "The current administration has been less than enthusiastic in supplying us with the requirements for regime change despite its stated policy." One INC member was even less charitable. "There will be no regime change in Iraq, until there is administration change in Washington," the source said following a meeting with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

In 1998, the U.S. Congress passed and the president signed the Iraq Liberation Act which commits the Pentagon to dole out \$97 million worth of aid, including military support. But so far, the INC has received only a small portion of the aid, with most of the funds going to non-lethal activities like public relations training, office equipment and some humanitarian support.

The Clinton Administration has consistently complained that the INC is ineffective, divided, and would not merit military investment.

The INC arrived in New York this week to begin a month long lobbying effort to convince the U.N. to reform its sanctions against Iraq. The group wants to strip Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's authority to control the proceeds he receives from the oil for food program, and establish an independent agency within Iraq to distribute food and medicine to Iraqis purchased from the sale of oil.

Hussein currently controls the distribution of food and medicine purchased through the oil for food program, and to date has left \$9 billion dormant in the U.N. account in Paris. Throughout the month, the INC will target its lobbying primarily on those states that serve on the U.N. Security Council, which sets the Iraqi sanctions policy.

Thursday, eight members of an Iraqi opposition delegation met with Albright to discuss this plan and new lobbying efforts to convene a war crimes tribunal against Saddam Hussein. Chalabi was not present for the meeting. One source who attended the Albright meeting said the INC been asking for U.S. assistance in establishing the humanitarian agency within Iraq, but has yet to hear back from policy makers in the State Department.

Albright said in a statement following the meeting that the United States "salutes the courage of Iraqis everywhere in the Opposition. I wish them success in presenting to the world the true hopes and needs of the Iraqi people, and ultimately in bringing democracy and the rule of law to their country."

But a senior State Department official said Thursday that the State Department did not know if the INC would end up succeeding in its revolution. "The Iraqi National Congress could well play a role in the future of Iraq, who knows?," this official said. According to the official, the State Department thinks the INC "can play a role in promoting the transition itself, moving it forward, making it turn out right, telling people at the United Nations what it's really like, what Iraqis really want. And then telling the Iraqi people inside that there is support for change." That is a far cry from the plain language of the Iraq Liberation Act which states, "It should be the policy of the United States to seek to remove the regime headed by Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq and to promote the emergence of a democratic government to replace that regime."

As the Clinton era comes to an end, the INC is hoping the next administration might follow through on the promise of the Iraq Liberation Act. "We expect the next president of the United States to be more forthcoming in supporting effectively our goal of regime change," Chalabi said.

U.S. Department of State Office of the Spokesman REMARKS BY SECRETARY OF STATE MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT

September 14, 2000 New York, New York (excerpt on Iraq courtesy of Iraq News)

Q: Madame Secretary, there are reports coming out of Baghdad and Moscow today that the Russian and Iraqi Government have reached an agreement to resume Russian air -- civilian passenger air flights between Moscow and Russia (sic), possibly as early as October. And, also, the French Government has recently said that it will not stand in the way of humanitarian flights by French citizens to Baghdad.

Is this the beginning of an effort to try and chip away at the sanctions? What is the American view on these decisions, and would the US use air power to shoot down Russian civilian airplanes that are flying into Baghdad in violation of the sanctions?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: I remember you from before. (Laughter.)

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Let me say this. First of all, I think that what is very clear is that Resolution 1284 must be abided by. It was negotiated long and hard in the Security Council, and there is no question that it has the support. And if you go back in some statements that Foreign Minister Vedrine has made, he has made clear that he made clear also to Tariq Aziz that 1284 had to be carried out.

As I have said before, 1284 is the road map for Saddam Hussein to get out of the box, the sanctions box, if that's what he wants. We disagree with those who wish to fly into Iraq, and I will make that clear when I see Foreign Minister Ivanov in a little while. And I don't think it's a good idea.

I think it's very hard these days to kind of figure out what "humanitarian" means. As I have said to you before, those people that are concerned about the poor Iraqis and their lack of ability to have food and medicine, they are now pumping between \$16 and \$20 billion worth of oil this year, and I have just learned – authoritatively – that they import 12,000 cases per month of scotch whiskey. Now, at 12 bottles to a case, I'm not sure whether that's food or medicine.

But I think that these comments all the time about how the people are starving, there is plenty of money for Saddam Hussein to provide for his people. And I think those people – well-intentioned though they may be – who think that the Iraqi people are suffering because of United Nations sanctions need to know facts like that and need to know that there are new palaces and need to know that the elite is living well – very well.

So we are abiding by 1284. We expect others to do so also. . . .

Q: Madame Secretary, how do you interpret the Iraqi accusations that Kuwait is stealing its oil, which are reminiscent of what happened in 1990, and also the over-flights of Saudi territory? Do you see a new, provocative stance by Iraq in this?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, first of all, after almost 10 years of dealing with this issue, I genuinely have trouble believing one word out of the mouth of any Iraqi (official), for one. Second, I do think that there is some question that people have is whether these over-flights have not been carefully orchestrated in order to create a confrontational atmosphere during the Millennium Summit and during the General Assembly. And we have made quite clear any number of times that our red lines – which are that if there are attacks or provocations against the Kurds in the north, if there are threats against the neighbors and against our forces or a reconstitution of the weapons of mass destruction – that we do have a credible force in the region and are prepared to use it in an appropriate way and a place of our choosing.

But the bottom line here – it's very simple – the rules are laid out: 1284 is the clearest road map there is. And the way to proceed is not to threaten anybody or to make up stories, but to – as I have said before – pick up the key. And the key is Dr. Blix and UNMOVIC, and that is the way for sanctions suspension. . . .

Q: I don't know how long we'll see you here in this capacity and this role, Madame Secretary, I'm glad you remember The Washington Post correspondent. You've been – for seven years, you've made a lot of speeches and statements regarding Iraq, brooches, the whole approach. I wonder your sense that it appears President Saddam Hussein will be in office while you may not be, or the Clinton Administration – one never knows – in three months. And also since you were instrumental in the changeover in secretaries general from Boutros Boutros-Ghali to Kofi Annan, do you think he deserves a term – a second term?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: First of all, let me say that I think that the issue of Saddam Hussein is obviously one of the more troubling ones that the international community has dealt with. He is a – we didn't invent Saddam Hussein. Saddam Hussein crossed an international boundary, invaded another country, raped and pillaged, and helped to destroy the way that country operated. He took back prisoners of war. He took back loot of various kinds. He lied about the fact that he had weapons of mass destruction. He proceeded to work on reconstituting them. He prevented United Nations inspectors from going in. He has systematically tried to undermine the people in the south and the people in the north. He has refused to abide by the will of the inter-

national community. He is in a box. And I believe that what we have accomplished in the time is that we have kept him contained. And I think that it is important to do so.

Later this afternoon I am meeting with representatives of the Iraqi National Congress. There are people that are Iraqis that know the truth about what is going on. And whether I am in this office or on the outside or wherever, this is not an issue that is based on my tenure. It is one that is American policy, and we have worked very hard on it. .

Report on Meeting in New York Between INC and US Secretary of State

Al-Hayah 15 Sep 00 p1

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington – US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was slated to meet yesterday with a delegation from the oppositionist Iraqi National Congress [INC] in New York to discuss developments in the Iraqi issue and US efforts to support the Iraqi opposition.

Just before the meeting, sources from the delegation said its members would be raising the issue of humanitarian aid with Albright, adding that "the Iraqi regime is totally responsible for the Iraqi people's suffering and for the on-going sanctions, due to its refusal to implement the UN resolutions." They said the delegation will stress that "(Iraqi President) Saddam Husayn has been given greater resources that will not alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people." They added that the delegation will also raise the subject of setting up an international body to identify what humanitarian assistance the Iraqi people need, of transferring the funds collected through the oil-for-food program to this organization, and of introducing a mechanism to distribute these funds that will not come under the control of the Iraqi regime.

The delegation included INC Vice Chairman Emmanuel Qambar, Nizar Haydar of the Islamic Action Organization, Hamid al-Bayati of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI], Muhammad Aghwar of the Turcoman Front, Brigadier Najib al-Salihi, Farhad Barzani for the Kurdish Democratic Party [KDP], Barham Salih for the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], and delegation spokesman Mahdi al-Bassam.

West worries Iraq could wield oil weapon

September 15, 2000 Reuters

LONDON, Sept 15 (Reuters) - With exquisite timing, Iraq is reviving a quarrel with former Gulf War foe Kuwait to push its campaign against sanctions firmly back on the global agenda, energy analysts and diplomats said.

To make his point, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has no need to go to war with the tiny desert neighbour he occupied in 1990-91. He only needs to shut off crude exports to send already high world oil prices through the roof and pile pressure on Western governments hit by fuel protests and fears of economic damage.

"Iraq has plenty of reasons to do something silly," said a senior Western diplomat. "They would lose revenue by cutting off their exports. But they may figure they have nothing to lose politically," he said. "The higher prices go, the more their money goes to people who are not Iraqis via compensation payments, or to the Kurds, or it sits mostly unused in an escrow account." Iraq has a long list of complaints to address, most of them rooted in strict U.N. sanctions imposed after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait. A U.S.-led alliance ejected Iraq in 1991.

IRAQ RAISES STAKES

Iraq raised the stakes on Thursday by accusing Kuwait of drilling on the border to steal Iraqi oil – a clear echo of a decade-old grievance cited in 1990 as a motive for its invasion.

Kuwait says the accusation was, and remains, nonsense. But Iraq jangled nerves in Western capitals this week by saying it planned unspecified steps to stop the alleged theft.

Events on world oil markets have conspired to provide Baghdad with enough clout to threaten sharp short-term damage on Western economies if its campaign against sanctions is not heard. With all producers bar Saudi Arabia pumping at capacity, the loss of 2.3 million barrels daily of Iraqi exports worth almost five percent of world crude trade could light a fire under already red-hot prices.

"Timing is very, very important," said Mehdi Varzi, director of research at bankers Dresdner Kleinwort Benson.

"Iraq may catch the market at the peak of winter demand."

Rich and poor oil-importing nations are worried that oil's rally threatens world economic growth and may stoke inflation. Varzi said a complete Iraqi cut-off was unlikely short-term, but potential existed for major disruption when the current, eighth phase of Iraq U.N.-monitored exports ends on December 5.

Analysts say the market impact of an export rupture at that time would depend on whether heating oil demand has peaked – an issue that depends partly on how cold winter turns out to be.

Some suspect Saudi concern about Iraq's growing market clout lent momentum to the kingdom's push for a sizeable output hike agreed on Sunday by the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries. Throughout the 1990s Baghdad showed it was prepared to go to the brink of fresh conflict to gain attention for a multitude of grievances by triggering repeated border crises with Kuwait. Analysts said that for Iraq, commercial measures were now preferable to military gestures since a cessation of oil flows offered no pretext for armed Western reprisals.

OIL PRICES VULNERABLE TO IRAQ

One diplomat said a total export cut in coming days could not be ruled out, especially since Baghdad had taken note of how vulnerable prices had proved to earlier interruptions in flows.

"Iraq has repeatedly shown how comfortable it is when it confronts," he said. For Iraq, its latest threat has the added bonus of throwing a potential security complication into Kuwait's bid to win foreign investment for big oilfields near the Iraqi border. The diplomatic temperature could rise again later this month when Gulf War reparations officials meet to consider a recommendation by independent arbitrators that Iraq pay Kuwait \$15.9 billion for oil destroyed during its occupation.

Iraq has fired off a preemptive verbal barrage against Kuwait and its ally Saudi Arabia, accusing the Gulf War's main paymasters of bribery to prolong U.N. sanctions.

Baghdad has also lambasted the two states as "partners in the crimes" because they provide bases for U.S. and British planes which patrol a no-fly zone in southern Iraq. Iraq does not recognize no-fly zones set up by Western nations after the war to shield a Kurdish enclave in the north and Shi'ites in the south from potential attack by Iraqi troops.

Another issue is Iraq's dire need for spare parts to repair its dilapidated oil industry. It is chafing under restrictions imposed mainly by Washington on its purchases of new hardware for fear Baghdad will use it for weapons programmes.

Yet another is the larger issue of Iraqi opposition to moves to revive U.N. arms inspections, halted since December 1998 when U.S. and British forces made military strikes against Iraq. Iraq has so far said it will not let a new arms inspection team do its work, arguing it has already destroyed all banned weapons of mass destruction and sanctions should end. A 1999 U.N. Security Council resolution makes any easing of sanctions conditional on a return of arms inspectors to Iraq.

Under Iraq's U.N.-monitored oil for food exchange, two-thirds of proceeds are earmarked for buying humanitarian goods for Iraqi people, suffering under 10 years of economic sanctions. The remainder goes to compensation payments to victims of its occupation and to fund U.N. programmes in Iraq.

For Kuwait, the latest turbulence portends little good. "The latest Iraqi claims and threats sound exactly like language used in July prior to the invasion," a senior Kuwaiti official said.

New report looks at food and nutrition in Iraq



In May 2000 a joint FAO/World Food Programme (WFP) mission visited Iraq to assess the country's food and nutrition situation. The mission carried out nutrition surveys in three of Iraq's south and central governorates, where the government is responsible for implementing the UN oil-for-food programme. Surveys were also done in Erbil, in the semi-autonomous northern governorates, where the programme is implemented by the UN Inter-Agency Humanitarian

Programme on behalf of the Iraqi Government. Both FAO and the WFP participate in the inter-agency relief operation.

The mission found that since the implementation of the oil-for-food programme in 1997, "child malnutrition rates in the centre/south of the country do not appear to have improved and nutritional problems remain serious and widespread. Survey results indicate that more than 10 percent of the children under five show signs of wasting (their weight is too low for their height), a symptom of acute malnutrition. These levels are "unacceptably high", states the mission's report and they represent "only a marginal decrease for these governorates since the 1995 FAO/WFP assessment."

The survey also measured the prevalence of stunting (when children are too short for their age), a symptom of chronic malnutrition. In Baghdad, 12 percent of the children under five showed signs of stunting - a significant improvement over 1995, when the rate of stunting stood at 28 percent. However, rural areas have experienced setbacks. In Dhi Qar, for example, the mission found that the prevalence of stunting had risen from 20.6 percent to 27 percent over the last four years.

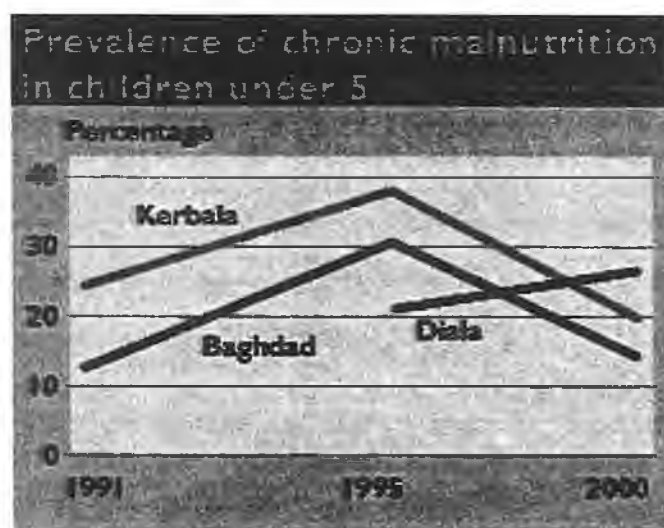
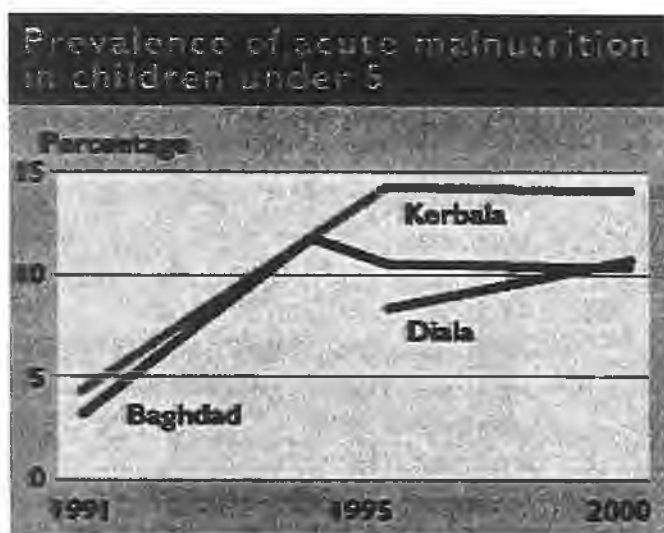
The situation is brighter in Iraq's three northern governorates of Dohuk, Erbil and

Al-Sulymeiniyah. In these areas, the report states that the oil-for-food programme has contributed to bringing about "significant improvements in health, mortality and nutritional status". In the north, wasting has almost been eliminated, and chronic malnutrition among children below five years old has fallen from 26 percent in 1996 to 18 percent in 1999. A 1999 UNICEF survey found that infant mortality rates had also declined, from 80 per 1 000 live births in 1984-89 to 72 in 1994-99. This progress is due not just to the oil-for-food programme rations but to overall economic growth in the area.

The monthly food basket

Since the oil-for-food programme came into effect in 1997, the nutritional quality of the monthly food basket provided by the government has improved significantly. However, the mission found that "the existing food rations do not provide a nutritionally adequate and varied diet."

Before the programme began, the energy content of Government rations was calculated at 1 295 kcal per person per day. Since then, the energy provided by the monthly food basket has increased steadily, to an average of 2 000 kcals and 43.3 grams of protein per person per day in 1998/99. During the last six months, the rations provided each person with 2 199 kcal and 48.2 grams of protein per day.



The rations are "reasonably adequate in calories and total protein", according to the report. However, the mission found that the monthly food basket rarely lasts the whole month. For example, a month's ration of wheat flour lasted for 21 days, milk

powder only 12 days and pulses (peas, beans, lentils) only a week. In addition, the mission reports that because the rations do not include a variety of fruits, vegetables, meat and dairy products, they lack a number of important vitamins and minerals, such as vitamins A and C, riboflavin, folate and iron.

Those who can afford it supplement the rations with food bought at local markets. Prices for foods included in the rations are generally low but for other items, such as meat, dairy products and vegetables, costs are much higher. The mission calculated that the average household spends 1 068 Iraqi dinars or 53 US cents (2000 Iraqi dinars buy one US dollar) each day on food. With monthly incomes of many public servants as low as 5 000 to 10 000 Iraqi dinars, or US\$2.50 to

US\$5.00, supplementing the rations is undoubtedly a considerable hardship for the poorest households.

Many families simply cannot afford to buy additional food. As a result these families remain particularly vulnerable to malnutrition.

Iraqi agriculture in crisis

Economic sanctions have limited Iraq's access to foreign investment and imported supplies, such as spare parts for farm machinery, fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides. To make matters worse the country is suffering through its second consecutive year of severe drought. As a result, "the agriculture sector has deteriorated significantly in the past few years," says the mission's report.

During the drought, the central and southern parts of the country have received one half to one third of the average rainfall. Water levels have fallen drastically in the country's waterways, some of which have virtually dried up. The Tigris is reported to be flowing at 40 percent of its normal volume, and the Euphrates is also very low.



The mission forecasts a record low cereal harvest of just under 800 000 tonnes. This is barely half of last year's harvest, which was already down more than 60 percent from the five-year average. In addition, vegetable production is expected to be down by a third from 1997 levels and fruit production by 13 percent.

Poor water and sanitation increase malnutrition

Malnutrition is usually not just a consequence of hunger; it results from a complex combination of factors. The mission found that "poor water supply both in quantity and quality as well as inadequate sanitation are key causative factors of frequent and repeated infections resulting in infant and child malnutrition throughout the country".

A household nutrition survey found that half the children under five had recently suffered from diarrhoea, and around 40 percent had acute respiratory infections.

The mission also found that major primary health centres were crowded with children suffering from malnutrition associated with infections.

"The addition of contaminated water to milk formula when bottle feeding young children is especially dangerous," warns the report. About 85 percent of children under six months are breastfed, but only 5 to 10 percent are exclusively breast-fed. More than 60 percent of the infants were given the infant formula distributed in the monthly food basket. Diluting the formula in order to make the supply last longer has contributed to infant malnutrition.

The prevalence of other serious water-borne disease is also on the rise in Iraq. Between 1997 and 1999, the Ministry of Health reported a 60 percent increase in cases of typhoid fever, and the number of cases of cholera rose from 486 to 2 398.

The other face of malnutrition

For Iraq's adult population, the mission found that the greatest cause for concern is overweight. More than half the adult population in Iraq is overweight to some degree. In Baghdad, 30 percent of the adults are severely overweight, while in Kerbala and Diala the rates are 27 and 18 percent respectively. Obesity is not just a 'disease of affluence'; it is found in both rich and poor communities, and it often results from diets high in carbohydrates and fats but lacking the diversity needed for good health, combined with a lack of physical activity. The report points out that "the major reported causes of death in adults are heart disease, hypertension and diabetes, all conditioned by obesity."

• 13 September 2000

©FAO, 2000

Le Monde

30 SEPTEMBRE 2000

Irak, pétrole et embargo

DEPUIS que les prix du pétrole ont renoué avec les sommets, certains redécouvrent opportunément l'embargo international qui pèse sur l'Irak, dont le sous-sol recèle les deuxièmes réserves mondiales. Les appels se sont multipliés pour que cet embargo soit levé au plus vite, l'afflux de brut irakien sur les marchés conduisant mécaniquement à une baisse des prix. Cette idée simple et séduisante se heurte pourtant à de nombreux obstacles.

Tout d'abord, la production irakienne n'est plus bridée par l'embargo, contrairement à ce qui était le cas dans les années qui ont suivi la fin de la deuxième guerre du Golfe. Depuis quatre ans, la résolution « Pétrole contre nourriture » permet à Bagdad d'exporter sous contrôle du pétrole pour acheter, également sous contrôle, des produits de première nécessité. Les exportations ont repris et à un rythme soutenu car le plafond des ventes autorisées n'a cessé d'être relevé pour tenter de faire face à l'urgence. Aujourd'hui, la production est en fait très proche de ce qu'elle était avant 1990. En août, elle serait même montée jusqu'à 3 millions de barils/jour (mbj). L'Irak avait un quota de 3,14 mbj au sein de l'OPEP avant la guerre du Golfe et, selon les

spécialistes, elle n'a jamais dépassé le maximum de 3,5 mbj.

Certes, les installations irakiennes ne fonctionnent pas de manière optimale. Suivant les recommandations d'experts indépendants mandatés par le secrétaire général des Nations unies, Kofi Annan, l'industrie pétrolière irakienne a pu recevoir au cours des derniers mois les indispensables pièces de rechange dont les contrats avaient été longtemps bloqués par les Etats-Unis ou la Grande-Bretagne dans le comité onusien qui en a la charge. Mais ces arrivées de pièces très précieuses se font au compte-gouttes, alors que la mise à niveau des moyens de production exigerait des milliards de dollars d'investissement, ce que ne permet pas la formule « Pétrole contre nourriture ». L'exploitation de nouveaux gisements, guignés par les plus grandes compagnies pétrolières internationales, pourrait faire franchir de nouveaux paliers à la production irakienne mais elle demanderait également du temps et des moyens considérables.

Plus fondamentalement, la levée de l'embargo suppose un consensus international introuvable. Selon le texte des résolutions des Nations unies, l'embargo ne sera levé que lorsque l'ONU aura la preuve du désarmement du pays. Mais la com-

mission chargée de cette tâche reste *persona non grata* en Irak : ce feu vert risque donc de ne pas être donné avant longtemps. Il faudrait que l'Irak change d'attitude et coopère alors que Bagdad campe sur une ligne dure.

CONTREBANDE MASSIVE

En l'espace de dix ans, le régime de Saddam Hussein s'est adapté à la situation créée par l'embargo. Il s'est efforcé de tourner ses contraintes à son profit, non sans succès. La distribution des rations alimentaires individuelles permise par la résolution « Pétrole contre nourriture » a ainsi donné l'occasion à Bagdad d'instaurer un contrôle strict de sa population (qui plus est sous les yeux des observateurs des Nations unies). De même, la contrebande massive de produits pétroliers, via la Turquie ou via le golfe Arabo-persique, a procuré au régime les ressources indispensables à sa survie. Aujourd'hui, l'embargo reste meurtrier pour la population civile, tout en étant inutile dans son objectif, faire plier Saddam Hussein.

Le prix élevé du pétrole sert la tactique du régime. Quel intérêt aurait-il à faire baisser le prix ? Pourquoi viendrait-il en aide à des pays occidentaux qui contrecarrent ses désirs

au Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies, quand ils ne bombardent pas son territoire à tout bout de champ, s'agissant des Etats-Unis et de la Grande-Bretagne, hors mandat international ? Saddam Hussein a décidé de ne pas entrer dans le marché que lui proposent les Nations unies. Selon lui, cette logique conduit inexorablement à une tutelle internationale durable sur l'Irak. Il espère au contraire qu'en restant intraitable cet embargo absurde finira par tomber de lui-même. Les dernières initiatives russes, l'arrivée de deux avions à Bagdad rompant un embargo aérien de fait ne peuvent que le conforter dans son choix.

Ces derniers jours, les menaces proférées par Bagdad à l'encontre du Koweït, accusé, comme en 1990, de « voler » l'or noir irakien en pompant subrepticement dans les nappes situées à la frontière, ont affolé des marchés qui n'avaient pourtant pas besoin de cela. La menace militaire n'a pas été prise au sérieux, mais ce faisant Saddam Hussein a rappelé à la communauté internationale qu'il conservait intacte une certaine capacité de nuisance. Et qu'il n'entendait pas renoncer à en faire usage.

Gilles Paris

