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POSSIBLE US MILITARY INTERVENTION IN IRAQ EXACERBATES TURKISH NIGHTMARES ABOUT KURDISH STATE

THE rumours and leaked information circulating about the next country to be hit by the United States in their anti-terrorist campaign, following their defeat of the Taliban in Afghanistan, has revived, in Turkey, an old nightmare: the creation, on its Southern borders, of a Kurdish State. The spectre of a breaking up of Iraq, following an armed confrontation with the United States, has returned to the

forefront, and Turkish military and civilian leaders have been hastening, over the last few days, to express their opposition to such an eventuality.

Thus, on 26 December 2001, the Chief of Staff of the Turkish Armed forces, General Huseyin Kivrikoglu, considered that an extension of the US anti-terrorist campaign to Iraq could provoke the creation of an independent Kurdish State on the

territory of that country - an event which Turkey categorically opposes. "*Such an eventuality could provoke the creation of an independent Kurdish State*" he declared to the journalists.

He specified that "*not only are all the Arab countries but also Russia are against dividing Iraq and the creation of a country on an ethnic basis*".

The Turkish general, moreover, considered that American military intervention in Iraq would have even more serious repercussions for Turkey than at the time of the Gulf War in 1991. "*There would be more*

problems for Turkey — and they are not limited to trade and the oil pipeline” between Iraq and Turkey, he added.

Moreover, during a Press Conference on 26 December, with the Emir of Qatar, Hamad ben Khalifa al-Thani, Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer declared that *“Turkey attaches great importance to the territorial integrity of Iraq and to the protection of its national unity”*. However, Mr. Sezer called on Baghdad to co-operate with UNO and the international community so as to put an end to his people's “sufferings”.

Turkey considers that its economy has lost over \$ 35 billion since the beginning of the embargo on Iraq. An oil pipeline links Iraq's Kirkuk oil fields to the Turkish terminal of Ceyhan, on the Mediterranean. The pipeline, closed by decision of the Security Council following Iraq's occupation of Kuwait, was reopened in 1996, in the context of the “Oil for Food” programme. Thus, the chief of the Turkish Employers Association, TUSAID, Tuncay Ozilhan, declared his opposition to any air strikes which might damage Turkish economy. *“A military operation would put Turkey in a difficult position”* he stressed.

Since the 11 September terrorist attacks, Ankara has repeatedly expressed to the United States its opposition to strikes against Iraq. But the Minister of Defence, Sabahattin Cakmakoglu, has recently stated that “new conditions” could lead to “new evaluations”.

The Turkish authorities fear any destabilisation of Iraq which could result is the creation of a Kurdish State in Northern Iraq, which has been controlled, since the end of the Gulf War in 1991, by two Kurdish parties. Such a state, according to Ankara, would stimulate the separatist aims of Kurds in Turkey, whereas Ankara is ferociously opposed to any mention of Kurdistan or even of the Kurds themselves. This Turkish fear goes

back to an attempt in this direction, sponsored by the West at the beginning of the 20th Century, and described in the 1920 Treaty of Sevres between the victorious Allies and the Ottoman Empire. This Treaty formalised the dismembering of the Ottoman Empire and the creating of an independent “Kurdistan” in accordance with US President Woodrow Wilson's principle of the self-determination of nations.

KURDISH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF IRAQ CONDEMNS TURKISH INTERVENTION THREATS



A declaration dated January 16, 2002, addressing various European institutions, parliaments, and the United Nations, is denouncing the media-driven Turkish political campaign which is spreading fears for their future and their holdings, which *“includes allegations against the independent Kurdish state within Iraq, menacing the lives, property, and liberty of Turkish citizens..”*

“We are compelled to scrutinise with suspicion the reasons and motives behind this lying and unjust campaign ... (which serves as a pretext for) intervening in the Iraqi people's private affairs, specifically targeting the people of Kurdistan, disparaging their democratic experiment and denying the impartiality of national rights” states the open letter. *“On October 22 1992, the National Assembly of Kurdistan of Iraq unanimously adopted a decision to establish federally based relations with the central (Iraqi) government, within a democratic*

republic of Iraq, within which the Iraqi, of which Iraqi Kurdistan would comprise one of the regions” the Kurd Assembly states.

“Secondly, there are, along with the Kurds, other national minorities such as the Turkomen, Assyrians, Chaldeans and Arabs in Kurdistan, (...) The regional government respects this reality and protects their rights. These groups have their own political parties, their own cultural and social institutions. They study in their own language, publish their own newspapers and magazines, and play their own radio and TV stations. They are involved in local administration and other institutions of the region, to a degree never before achieved since the founding of the Iraqi state” the declaration reveals.

Through its president, Dr. Roj N. Shaways, the Representative Assembly invites qualified representatives *“to visit Kurdistan to observe the situation”* for themselves

"by meeting representatives of political parties and, in particular, the Turkmen parties".

"In the name of the National Assembly of Kurdistan of Iraq, we entreat you to help our people learn the facts and to help them attain their legitimate democratic rights" concludes the declaration.

Also on 16 January, the heads of the representative offices in Ankara of the KDP and the PUK published a joint statement, reprinted in the Kurdish daily *Brayetî* (Fraternity or Brotherhood) on the 17th in which can be read : *"Over the last few weeks the Turkish media have extensively raised the fear that, in the event of an American attack on Iraq, an independent Kurdish State be set up in Northern Iraq. Meanwhile they accuse the Kurdistan political parties of working towards this end. The Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan firmly condemn these unfounded accusations. We insist on stressing that both parties are engaged in the defence of the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of a federal and democratic Iraq in which a permanent solution to the Kurdish problem may be found".*

The Turkish press took hardly any notice of this statement, which contradicts the press campaign orchestrated by the Army hierarchy to impress the Americans and raise the stakes so as to be in a better position to bargain over its inevitable support for any eventual intervention by Washington.

On 1 January, at a New Year Press Conference, the KDP President,

Massoud Barzani, had also clearly expressed himself on this subject in the following terms : *"Like every people, every nation, the Kurds must enjoy their rights. At the same time, we must be realistic, we must know our limitations. We understand full well the regional and international situation. We Kurds, have not asked for a Kurdish State. That does not mean we don't have the right to one, but we know that our situation is not suited for embarking on such claims. Our demand is the settlement of the Kurdish question on the basis of federalism, that is what the elected Parliament of Kurdistan demanded in 1992. We are talking here*

of an Iraqi Kurdistan within a democratic Iraq. The Kurdistan Parliament embodied the popular will. There is no doubt that if security and stability prevails in the Kurdish region, they will have an impact on the surrounding regions as well. The more the rights of the Kurds are respected, the better will the security of the surrounding countries be assured'.

For his part, Jela Talabani, the PUK leader, speaking at a meeting on 17 January with the fourteen local Kurdish parties stated *"the fears the Kurds are today playing a controversial role have no reason to exist".*

COUNCIL OF EUROPE GENERAL SECRETARY CALLS FOR RETRIAL OF LEYLA ZANA AND COLLEAGUES

ON 23 January 2002, in the course of a briefing during the sittings on the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly, Walter Schwimmer, the Council of Europe's General Secretary, called on Turkey to carry out and apply the rulings of the Strasbourg European Human Rights Court. *"The Human Rights Court has handed down a ruling regarding the lack of justice and the partiality of the trial of the Kurdish Members of Parliament of the Party for Democracy (DEP) and, consequently called for their retrial ... We expect Turkey to conform to the rulings of the European Court"* declared Mr. Schwimmer. To date Turkey has satisfied itself, in this case, by paying a symbolic fine without tackling the question of the arbitrary detention of Leyla Zana and her colleagues which has lasted, so far, for 8 years. All this,

despite the fact that successive Prime Ministers, from Tansu Ciller to Mesut Yilmaz have committed themselves to observing the rulings and verdicts of the European Human Rights Court.

On 16 January in a meeting of the ANAP parliamentary group the deputy from Diyarbakir, Sebgetullah Seydaoglu, declared that the time had come for the Kurdish deputies imprisoned in Turkey for eight years to be freed.

Questioned by the press the next day, he said that the former deputies' medical conditions justified their being granted amnesty, adding that this time Leyla Zana would accept such a decision if her colleagues also benefited from it. *"I have spoken with them, and Leyla Zana wants to be granted amnesty, along with the*

other Kurdish deputies. If President Sezer decides to grant amnesty, Leyla Zana will accept it", he declared.

Amnesty for Leyla Zana, who suffers from osteoporosis and

circulatory problems, was on the agenda in 1998, but Ms. Zana refused special treatment in relation to her colleagues, rejecting the Turkish President's offer even before the procedure had been completed.

IRAQ IS INTENSIFYING ITS POLICY OF ARABISING THE KURDISH PROVINCES IT CONTROLS

WHILE complaining of the tragic consequences for the civilian population of the sanctions regime, Baghdad continues and intensifies its policy of forces Arabisation of the Kurdish territories that remain under its control and which represents about 40% of the area of Iraqi Kurdistan.

This policy shows itself with particular virulence in the oil rich city of Kirkuk, where the Iraqi government has just launched a project of building 2,200 new housing units for Arabs. The Ministry of the Interior has given the city's Governor orders to prepare 1,500 more building plots for his staff in the Yak Azar and al-Sina wards. Along side of this, 575 Kurdish families are to be expelled.

According to PUK sources, the Iraqi regime recently built 24 hamlets in the Kurdish district of Daquq in which 1,317 Arab families were settled ; ten other hamlets have been built at Touz Khurmatou, near Kirkuk, to house another 323 Arab families. The Iraqi Ministry of Agriculture and irrigation is distributing Kurdish farm land to Arab families and granting them

credits for buying machinery.

Since the general census of the population five years ago, the Iraqi authorities have been distributing "forms for rectification of nationality" (sic) to non-Arab inhabitants — Kurds, Turkomen, Assyrio-Chaldean. Those who refuse to fill them and call themselves Arabs are considered suspect, banned from any public employment and then expelled to the Kurdish administered zones. They are not allowed to sell their property to non-Arabs before their expulsion. In the majority of cases their property is purely and simply confiscated.

Those expelled are settled by the Kurdish authorities in camps where they live in precarious material conditions since these internally displaced people do not come under any classification covered by UNO's aid programme under the "Oil for Food" Resolution 986.

On 29 December, several thousands of these people displaced from Kirkuk demonstrated in front of the UN offices in Suleimaniah to denounce this bureaucratic

aberration and demand that UNO act urgently to supply them with the help and services needed for their survival. They also called on the General Secretary of UNO to take measures to make Iraq to put an end to "its campaign of ethnic cleansing in the regions of Kurdistan still under its control".

On 23 January, a High Committee to fight the Arabisation of Kurdistan was set up in Irbil. According to its President, Arif Tayfur, this committee, which insists on its non-partisan character, will work with any organisations and individuals wishing to fight against the planned policy of the Iraqi Government to forcibly change the ethnic composition of Kurdistan. A colloquium to study the issues was held at the Irbil University Faculty of Education on 29 January.

According to the Kurdish daily Brayetî of 29 January, which quotes official statistics, to date 22,955 families, i.e. over 120,000 Kurds, expelled from Iraqi-controlled Kirkuk province have been settled in the Kurdish-administered Irbil Governorate. The number of expelled people received by the Suleimaniah Governorate is even greater.

The Iraqi regime, for all that it is exhausted and besieged, has thus succeeded in driving out of the zones it controls over 250,000 Kurds. (For further information on this subject, see the Iraqi Kurdistan Despatch site www.ikurd.info).

THE PRO-KURDISH HADEP PARTY AND THE FORMER MAYOR OF ISTANBUL BEING TARGETTED BY THE TURKISH LEGAL SYSTEM

ON 17 January, the Turkish Public Prosecutor, Sabih Kanadoglu, called on the Constitutional Court to ban the pro-Kurdish People's Democracy party (HADEP) for "*links with the armed Kurdish rebellion*".

After his hour-long indictment of the party, Mr. Kanadoglu told the press that he had shown the Court how HADEP had become a center of activity aimed at undermining the Constitutional principle of the indivisible unity of Turkey. "*We have examined the evidence in the case and I have asked the court to ban the party in view of the gravity, extent and nature of its activities*", he added.

On 2 January, Sabih Kanadoglu had asked to the Constitutional Court to deal with the procedures for banning Party (HADEP) as a matter of urgency.

In this case, which began in January 1999, HADEP is accused of having links to the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The formal charges state that HADEP acted according to the PKK's directions and served to disseminate propaganda for it, and that its offices had become "*recruitment centers*" for recruiting activists to the PKK's cause.

HADEP, which has no seats in Parliament because it failed to obtain the necessary 10% of the overall national vote, has been

running fifteen municipalities in Kurdistan since the 1999 Local Council elections. It states that it stands for a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question and rejects all accusations of links with the PKK. Hasim Kiliç, Vice-President of the Court stated, on 22 January, that the Court had decided to give HADEP a further month to prepare its defence, thus responding favourably to an application in this sense filed by the party's President Murat Bozlak. The Court had originally be due to hear HADEP's defence on January 30.

Furthermore, in Adana on 15 January, three members of a local section of HADEP were arrested for "*aiding a separatist organisation*". The three men, previously questioned by the anti-

terrorist police, were sent to the State Security Court which imprisoned them after charging them with "*aid to a separatist organisation*", a formula which refers to the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). A few days before, about 15 members of HADEP had been taken into custody in the same city of Adana.

Moreover the Constitutional Court is also due to examine, in the middle of January, the proceedings started against the former Mayor of Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, leader of the opposition Islamic Party for Justice and Development (AK), who had already served four months of a jail sentence for "*calling for sedition*". Public Prosecutor Kanadoglu had also petitioned the Court in his case, asking it to strip Mr. Erdogan of his office as President of the Justice and Development Party and banning him from all political activity.

TWO AMERICAN AUTHORS, JONATHAN RANDAL AND NOAM CHOMSKY, BANNED AND SUED BY TURKISH COURTS

ON 21 January the Istanbul State Security Court banned the Turkish version of Jonathan Randal's book "*After Such Knowledge What Forgiveness? My Encounters with Kurdistan*". (Mr. Randal was a leading journalist on the Washington Post for close on 30 years.) On the basis of Articles 86 and 5680 of the Turkish Penal Code, the Court also ordered that all copies of this book, published by

Avesta Editions, be seized. "*By mentioning the existence of a Kurdish nation in the heart of the territorial unity of the Turkish Republic and of a Kurdistan as a distinct state entity, the book openly spreads propaganda against the indivisibility of the State and Nation*" specifies the indictment which charges that this constitutes an attack on Article 28 of the Constitution. The publishers, for their part, express astonishment that a book, that has already been

published in English, Kurdish, Persian and Arabic should be banned in Turkish — and in a country that is a candidate for membership of the European Union and likes to present itself as "democracy's shop window in the Moslem world". Even though the author, in the preface, had written "of all the territories where the Kurds live, it is Turkey that offers the best hope for the future". Meanwhile, while waiting for this promising future, the present time consists of all kinds of bans and humiliations.

Furthermore, according to the Turkish daily *Hurriyet* of 25 January, which quotes the British daily *The Independent*, Noam Chomsky, world famous philosopher and linguist and Professor at the *Massachusetts Institute of Technology* (MIT) is preparing to go to Turkey to take part in the trial of his book "*American Interventionism*", published by Aram Editions and which is accused of "separatist propaganda". "I would like to test the degree of freedom in Turkey by going to Diyarbakir" Mr. Chomsky stated, adding that putting a book on trial was "the most serious attack against fundamental rights".

The book has aroused the Turkish authorities' fury by criticising Turkey's Kurdish policy. "The Kurds have been severely oppressed throughout the history of modern Turkey... In 1984 the Turkish government launched a vast struggle against the Kurdish population of the South-East. The result was striking: tens of thousands of people killed, two to three millions

exiled, a massive ethnic cleansing with some 3,500 villages destroyed" wrote Chomsky. Fatih Tas, the book's publisher, who must appear before the Istanbul State Security Court on 13 February, faces a year's jail and Noam Chomsky states he has already written to the Human Rights Commission of the United

Nations to denounce these Turkish laws.

"As if things weren't bad enough already, we have jumped straight into the shit of our own accord" headlined *Hurriyet* on its front page, continuing on the inside pages "We have shamed ourselves before the whole world".

REFORMED PENAL CODE MORE RESTRICTIVE TOWARDS FREEDOM OF SPEECH

THE penal reform, officially called a "mini-democratisation," undertaken by the Turkish government in the hope of achieving harmony with Copenhagen criteria, vital to acceptance into the European Union, has instead caused disillusionment in Europe and embarrassed the coalition government partners. The project of revising articles 312 and 159 of the Turkish penal code, criticised for already being repressive, is seen as becoming more so when compared with its original context.

The proposed draft of Article 159 sentences one to three years in prison (the present law allows up to six years) for any person defaming the "Turkish identity, the Republic, the Turkish nation, the Turkish state, the Turkish National Grand Assembly, the Council of Ministers, the ministers, the justice system, the military, the police and any other security forces of the state". With the approved reform of January 24 by the Parliamentary Commission of Justice, the term "Republic" was inserted in the text, while the term "democracy" had

been favored in the earlier debates. Moreover, the proposed law designates one to six months imprisonment for those "publicly insulting" the laws of the republic and the decisions of the Turkish Parliament, stressing that the sentence will be less by a third if the crime is committed abroad by a Turkish national.

On the other hand the Turkish government has not arrived at a consensus regarding the highly controversial article 312 of the penal code which condemns the "provocation of hatred".

The Turkish press and the intelligentsia, prime targets for these articles have loudly criticized the reform project. "The concept of mini-democratisation gives free rein to subjective interpretations of judges to act at their own discretion, simplifying their decisions prorata in conjunction with the political system" wrote Taha Akyol on January 31 in the daily paper *Milliyet*. "Serious criticism of the state will take a lot more courage now! the same for the National Security Council!" he continued.

The daily *Radikal*, in a kind of Honor Roll, inventoried its journalists potentially persecuted by these two articles. *"Ismet Berkan, charged by the Correctional Tribunal for voicing suspicions concerning the arrest of the official killers of Ugur Mumcu, in an article published June 9, 2000. I. Berkan may serve six years in prison for "offenses to state security forces."* Nese Duzel, charged by the state security court of Istanbul for press coverage entitled *"The young Alevis are driven to terror"*. N. Duzel also may risk six years in prison for an interview of Dr. Dogu Ergil entitled *"the state of emergency has brought back drugs"*. Mine Kirikkanat, charged among other things with *"contempt for the moral fiber of the government"*, based on article 159 in the penal code, for an

article written April 6 2000, entitled *"Would you please get out"...* Perihan Magden, for an article appearing May 12 2001, entitled *"Why doesn't it end"* and a second article called *"Another death, another news story"* concerning hunger strikes and conditions of Turkish prisons. She is charged with *"insulting the Minister of Justice"*. Celal Baslangic may face six years of prison for her book *"Shelter from Fear"*, relating human rights violations in Tunceli, Silopi, Cizre and Lice. Likewise for Yildirim Turker, who wrote a piece dated August 13 2000, criticizing the prison politics of the state with its Type-F prisons, entitled *"The darkest corners of Justice"* risks six years in prison for *"contempt for the Republic."*

Let us suppose: a strategy-thoughts, drawn up under the control of the General Staff and presented to our civilians could it fail to "think" in their heads?

Of course it could...

Here are some strategy-thoughts expressed by General Kivrikoglu, Chief of Staff since the inauguration:

"Corruption absolutely must be uprooted. (...) In Argentina, the political leaders, accused of the economic depression, are tried and sentenced, here we let them be tried by elections. Which is the better solution? (...)"

In my opinion the SAREM is an important development.

It is a blow against the 28 February coup.

Putting a "THINK" in front of the customary TANK is nothing else but a concealed intervention against those who, by innumerable blunders, have led the country into this crisis (...)"

READ IN THE TURKISH PRESS...

TURKISH PRESS: NEW ORGANISATION TO FACILITATE MORE SUBTLE INTERVENTION OF ARMY IN POLITICAL LIFE. Beaker Coskun, a journalist on the Turkish daily *Hurriyet*, turns, in his column of 10 January 2002, his caustic pen on the subject of the creation of the Centre for Strategic Studies and Research (SAREM). Here are extensive extracts from his article.

"(...) A few days ago, the SAREM started work after its inauguration by the Turkish General Staff. What is the SAREM?"

It is the Centre for Strategic Studies and Research, under the control of the

General Staff and consisting of a handful of officers and many civilians. A club for reflection where 57 academics and military specialists will permanently sit to elaborate the strategy-thought which will be put before the civilian authority (...)

Turkish Chief of Staff, General Kivrikoglu, stated during the inaugural ceremony, that the advice put forward by SAREM was consultative, that it was just a sort of club for alternative reflection and information, such as is called in the West A THINK TANK.

The TANK part we have already experienced. It has now been refined with some THINK.

AS WELL AS...

• **ANKARA ADMITS AT EUROPEAN HUMAN RIGHTS COURT TO ILL-TREATMENT DURING DETENTION.** On 18 December 2001, the Turkish Government chose to compensate, in an out of court settlement, two people suspected of being members of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) who had suffered from ill-treatment during detention. In a statement, Ankara said it "regrets

the occurrence, as in this case, of individual cases of ill-treatment, inflicted by the authorities upon persons in detention", despite "existing Turkish legislation and the determination of the Government to prevent such incidents". Furthermore, it commits itself "to publishing appropriate instructions and to adopting all necessary measures for guaranteeing that the interdiction of ill-treatment - which implies the obligation of conducting really effective enquiries - be observed in the future".

One of the victims, Nimet Acar, will receive a total compensation package of 28,660 euros and the other, Kemal Gundu, 29,117 euros.

The two men had been arrested in February 1994, along with about forty other suspects. They stated they had confessed under torture to links with the Kurdish PKK organisation. The two petitioners had complained, in particular of "blows, hanging, electrocution, beatings on the soles of their feet and cigarettes being stubbed out on their bodies" - which were broadly confirmed by medical certificates. The policemen involved have been declared "not guilty".

• **THE FIRST RESULTS OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST ILLITERACY IN IRBIL.** In the context of the campaign against illiteracy, launched by the Ministry of Education of the Irbil based regional government two years ago, 10,000 of the 13,000 who took part in classes provided by the Centres for Struggle Against Illiteracy last

year have won their graduation diplomas according to the daily paper Khabat of 25 January.

Over the last two years, over 43,000 people, both men and women aged 15 or over, have been enrolled in these centres. The percentage illiteracy is estimated at 30% in the Irbil and Duhok provinces, controlled by the Irbil Kurdish regional government.

At a reception for representatives of the year's graduates by the Minister of Education, the Prime Minister of the Regional Government, Nechirvan Barzani, declared that the high rate of illiteracy in the region "is due to the unique political situation from which Iraqi Kurdistan has suffered in the past, which has prevented education to develop" adding that fighting illiteracy "will ease the process of reconstruction and development towards an advanced civil society".

Nechirvan Barzani hailed the role of the teachers who have taken part in the campaign and re-iterated "the total support (of his government) for the Ministry of Education in its campaign to fight illiteracy and to raise the level of education in Iraqi Kurdistan".

• **"SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS, BUT STILL A LONG WAY TO GO", SAYS SULEIMANIYA - BASED MINISTER OF EDUCATION.** The educational system has been witnessing a significant progress in Iraqi Kurdistan in the past ten years, as compared to the period when the Kurdistan region was

under Iraqi control, said the Suleimaniya-based Kurdistan regional government Minister of Education, Narmeen Usman.

In an interview with KurdishMedia.com on 13 January, the minister said that "from 1921 to 1991, 524 schools were built in Koya [Koy Sinjaq] and the [PUK-controlled areas of the governorate of] Kirkuk and Sulemani, but now our Ministry of Education, in coordination with the relevant UN agencies, has built 1,153 schools between the years 1991-2000".

The minister stressed that "the schools are now better equipped ... We are also cooperating with UNESCO in the coordination of some training courses to increase local capacity in modernizing teaching techniques".

However, she pointed to some important measures still to be taken in educational field, particularly regarding children's education and illiteracy in the rural areas. She stated: "According to our survey, 57,227 children are not attending school. These children need specialised schools to facilitate their education, for they have been disfranchised from mainstream schools for a while and it will be hard to reintegrate them".

She also said: "We have 224,609 citizens between the ages of 16-45 who have never attended school, and they need special literacy programs".

The minister expressed her hope of seeing "more rural schools built, and better equipped urban schools with computers and laboratories". In order to combat illiteracy, she said "I

would like to see a more diverse sort of compulsory education, and by that I mean a mandatory age of attendance must be set up. For example it could be made mandatory for a child to attend school until the age of 16 years".

• **10,608 TURKISH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS DEMAND KURDISH LANGUAGE COURSE OPTION.**

According to the Turkish daily *Radikal* of 18 January, 10,608 students have already applied to the authorities of their colleges and to University Deans concerned to ask for the possibility having the Kurdish language available as an optional subject. Of these applicants, 6,425 have received flat rejections while 4,233 have had their requests officially recorded by the universities concerned.

Thus amongst the flat rejections, 1,560 are from Dicle University, 900 from Harran University, 257 from Inonu University, 2,050 from Yil University, 138 from Kocaeli University, 450 from Orta dogu Technical University, 260 from Ankara University, 140 from Istanbul Technical University, 160 from Yildiz University, 100 from Mimar Sinan University, 450 from Bogazici University, 550 from Istanbul University and 140 from Uludag University.

Thus officially recorded were: 140 at Firat University, 1030 at Cukurova University, 300 at the Anatolian Eskisehir University, 450 at Dokuz Eylul University, 450 at

Ege University, 400 at Hacettepe University, 450 at Marmara University, 500 at Istanbul University, 60 at Afyon-Kocatepe University, 120 at Sakarya University, 138 at Canakkale University and 325

at the Hatay Mustafa Kemal University. An internet site has been set up to this end by the students applying for Kurdish language teaching: www.anadil.8m.com

On 14 January hundreds of students were prosecuted for having asked the appropriate Turkish authorities for the teaching of Kurdish. Seventeen of the 270 students of the University of Van, who made this request to the Education Office, are still in detention, while others have been freed pending trial after appearing before the State Security Court (DGM).

Many other students from various Kurdish and Turkish provinces presented the same request to the Education Offices, which are threatening to expel the students. On 17 January, the Istanbul Police Directorate decided to charge 22 parents whose children, still in primary school, had requested the teaching of Kurdish. The Turkish authorities claim that 60 other people are still being questioned in Istanbul.

• **PRIME MINISTER CRITICISES EUROPEAN UNION FOR FAILING TO INCLUDE PKK AND DHKP-C ON LIST OF TERRORIST ORGANISATIONS.** On 29

December 2001, the Turkish Prime Minister violently attacked the European Union for failing to include, on its list of organisations considered to be terrorist, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and an illegal extreme Left group the People's Revolutionary Liberation Front-Party (DHKP-C), describing this omission as "unpardonable". "It is inconceivable. No one doubts the fact that the PKK and the DHKP-C are terrorist organisations" he declared.

Bulent Ecevit stated that he could not "understand" how these organisations were absent from the list published by the E.U. on 28 December, which also includes named individuals, as part of its decisions aiming at strengthening the activity of the European Union against terrorism following the 11 September attacks in the United States. "We are told that the PKK and DHKP-C are included in a second list. But the fact that they are not mentioned in the first list is unpardonable" added Mr. Ecevit.

This list, published by the Official Journal of the European Community contains about thirty names of individuals, including about twenty "ETA activists" and thirteen European and Near Eastern "Groups and bodies".

• **45TH VICTIM OF HUNGER STRIKE IN TURKISH PRISONS.** Zeynel Karatas, aged 25 years, detained in the new high security prison of Tekirdag for "links with several banned leftist movements" died on 6 January as a

consequence of the hunger strike launched in the Turkish prisons at the end of the year 2000 against the government's reform of the prison system. His death brings the number of detainees who have died since the beginning of the campaign.

The hunger strike movement is intended to denounce a prison "reform" mainly aimed at replacing the big dormitories by small cells holding only one to three prisoners. The European Union, which Turkey aspires to join, has criticised the government's management of this crisis by the Turkish government and judges the number of victims intolerable. The Turkish authorities retort that the new prisons conform to European standards and refuse to negotiate with the protesters, that it describes as "terrorists".

• ANKARA, WHILE FLOODING OF HISTORIC KURDISH SITES, CRIES BARBARISM AT SAUDI DESTRUCTION OF OTTOMAN FORTRESS.

A dispute is raging between Turkey and Saudi Arabia, which tore down an Ottoman era fortress near the holy sites of Mecca. Turkey reacted with anger to the destruction which took place a few weeks ago, accusing the Wahhabite kingdom of "cultural genocide", while Turkish nationalist extremists burned pictures of the Saudi king. Turkey, heir of the Ottoman Empire, compared this destruction to the Taliban destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan, and promised to lodge a complaint with UNESCO.

On Monday, 14 January, the Saudi ambassador to Turkey, Mohammad Al Bassam, explaining that the fortress had been torn down to accommodate Moslem pilgrims, promised that the Chateau of Ajyad would be reassembled further away. That 18th century fortress was torn down to make room for a commercial and residential center among many mega-projects under way to modernise the holy city of Mecca, a project costing \$533 million, entrusted to a consortium of three companies, Mecca Construction, Bin Laden Group, and Saudi Oger. *"All decisions of the Saudi Arabian government are taken for the good of the pilgrimage and the security and comfort of the pilgrims"*, declared the ambassador, recalling nonetheless that the chateau is Saudi property. The ambassador further put his Turkish counterparts on the spot by saying that *"the fortress of Ajyad, built of mud & stones, is only 200 years old. The sites of Zeugma were much more ancient, but the Turkish government, in considering only the interests of its people, still went on with its project of building the dams. Remind me — what about the fortress of Sinopi?"*

Turkey strongly condemned the demolition of the fortress, announcing that, as a sign of protest, it planned a partial boycott of the pilgrimage to Mecca, where some two million faithful arrive from the four corners of the world every year.

• AGREEMENT ON MILITARY COOPERATION BETWEEN TURKEY AND RUSSIA. On 14 January, Turkey and Russia signed

an agreement of military cooperation aiming to strengthen bilateral relations, often strained by reciprocal accusations of support for each other's guerrilla groups, Kurdish and Chechen. *"This agreement, a sign of the friendship and cooperation between Russia and Turkey, will serve as a good example for other countries in the region"*, declared the Chief of Staff of the Turkish army, General Huseyin Kivrikoglu, before signing it with his Russian counterpart Anatoly Kvachnin.

The agreement creates a legal basis for cooperation between the Russian and Turkish armies and is to be followed by other agreements and protocols, declared General Kivrikoglu. General Kvachnin noted that the agreement would contribute to strengthening technical cooperation and cooperation in training military personnel. *"All this will benefit our states and people"*, he said.

Turkey, a NATO member, and Russia developed close commercial relations after the fall of the USSR, but their relations remain marked by frequent accusations of support for the separatist movements considered "terrorist" in each country, the Kurds in Turkey and the Chechens in Russia.

Turkey has long accused Russia of tolerating the presence of the PKK on its territory and Moscow reproaches Ankara with sheltering Chechen rebels, who in the last few years have carried out several hijackings of boats and planes from Turkey. In November 2001, the two

countries signed a plan of action to strengthen bilateral cooperation, including in the war on terrorism.

• **FOREIGN MINISTRY: DETENTION IN STATE OF EMERGENCY PROVINCES REDUCED FROM FIFTEEN TO FOUR DAYS.** On January 30, Turkey announced that rights conforming to European norms would be respected from now on

regarding detainees in the Kurdish provinces, where human rights have been severely restricted and flouted. The Minister of Foreign Affairs stressed, in a communiqué, to have rescinded the point of view of a statement addressed in 1990 to the European Council, which announced the suspension of Article 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights — concerning the conditions of detention — in

politically turbulent provinces.

In October Turkey began a revision of its constitution focused on aligning itself more closely with European norms, notably in the reduction of police custody from fifteen days to four. Four provinces are still in a state of emergency: Diyarbakir, Tunceli, Sirnak and Hakkari.

Moyen-Orient | Dans la foulée de l'Afghanistan, les Américains pourraient tenter de faire chuter Saddam Hussein

L'opposition irakienne se prend à rêver

Les chiites et les Kurdes irakiens se tiennent prêts à renverser Saddam Hussein s'ils reçoivent l'aide active des Américains. Selon «Newsweek», Washington aurait déjà préparé ses plans.

**SIYAVOSH GHAZI
TÉHÉRAN**

Le Conseil de sécurité a voté une série de résolutions, notamment les résolutions 688 et 949, pour obliger l'Irak à se plier à la volonté internationale et installer un pouvoir démocratique. Si le régime de Saddam Hussein se plie à ces résolutions, les Irakiens pourront décider de leur avenir. Mais dans le cas contraire la communauté internationale doit obliger l'Irak à le faire... y compris par des moyens militaires. Si les Américains aident les Irakiens à se débarrasser du régime irakien, nous sommes favorables, mais ce sont les Irakiens qui devront décider du futur régime irakien. Nous devons utiliser de toutes les occasions pour remplacer le régime actuel.

Celui qui tient ces propos est un vieil ennemi de Saddam Hussein. Mais il est loin d'être un ami des Américains. L'ayatollah Bagher Hakim dirige depuis une dizaine d'années le Conseil suprême de la révolution islamique d'Irak, une organisation qui se veut le représentant des chiites, majoritaires en Irak. L'ayatollah Hakim a fui l'Irak en 1979 et vit depuis en Iran. Le régime de Saddam Hussein a tué 50 membres de sa famille.

En tout cas, à l'heure où les menaces américaines contre l'Irak se font plus précises, les dirigeants de l'opposition irakienne reprennent espoir. Selon l'hebdomadaire «Newsweek», les responsables militaires américains travaillent sur un plan qui prévoit le déploiement de 50.000 militaires US sur la frontière nord de l'Irak et celui de 50.000 autres soldats sur la frontière sud. Une information qui n'a pas été confirmée officiellement.

Selon le général de corps d'armée Paul Mikolashek, responsable des forces terrestres dans la région, cité par l'hebdomadaire, pour prendre Bagdad et renverser Saddam Hussein il faudrait 169.000 militaires américains, soit au moins autant que lors de l'opération «Tempête du désert» en janvier 1991, qui avait permis de libérer le Koweït.

« Nous devons installer un gouvernement provisoire avec tous les groupes »

Pour l'ayatollah Hakim, les forces de l'opposition irakienne peuvent coopérer avec les Américains si ces derniers respectent l'indépendance politique de l'Irak. Le régime irakien est un régime terroriste et en principe, dans la guerre contre le terrorisme, il doit également être visé. Mais nous avons l'impression que les Améri-

cains hésitent à cause de la situation en Palestine, de l'opposition russe et de la réticence des voisins, notamment arabe, de l'Irak vis-à-vis d'une attaque militaire, affirme-t-il encore.

Certains dirigeants du monde arabe craignent en effet une réaction de leur opinion publique. Avant et après le 11 septembre, nous avons eu des contacts avec les Kurdes, les groupes sunnites et les autres groupes. Nous pensons que le futur régime irakien doit être parlementaire. Nous devons installer un gouvernement provisoire pendant un an avec la participation de tous les groupes. Ce gouvernement organisera un référendum. Les Kurdes veulent un gouvernement fédéral. Nous ne sommes pas contre. Les Irakiens devront décider. Nous voulons aussi que le pays soit débarrassé des armes de destruction massive et avoir des relations amicales avec nos voisins, nous a-t-il encore affirmé.

Le Conseil suprême de la révolution islamique d'Irak, qui dispose de commandos clandestins dans le sud de l'Irak et surtout de plusieurs milliers de combattants armés en Iran, n'est pas la seule force de l'opposition irakienne. En effet, en Irak même, il faut compter avec les forces kurdes qui contrôlent partiellement les régions kurdes du Nord.

Pour les deux principales formations kurdes, l'Union patriotique du Kurdistan (UPK) de Jalal Talebani et le Parti démocratique du Kurdistan d'Irak (PDKI) de Massoud Barzani, pas question

non plus de s'engager si les Américains ne présentent pas un plan clair pour renverser le régime de Saddam Hussein. Les Kurdes comme les chiites se rappellent la féroce répression de l'armée irakienne en 1991 lorsque les Américains n'ont pas soutenu les soulèvements populaires des régions chiites et kurdes. A l'époque les insurgés comptaient sur le soutien américain pour renverser le régime irakien. Des officiers américains ont récemment visité la région du Kurdistan...

Enfin, il y a le Conseil national irakien (CNI) qui regroupe théoriquement l'opposition irakienne depuis son congrès à Salahaddine, au Kurdistan irakien, en octobre 1992. Il y a quelques jours, le CNI a officiellement demandé à Washington d'agir contre le régime de Saddam Hussein. Mais très affaibli par les dissensions au sein de l'opposition, le CNI a perdu une grande partie de son influence. Il reste néanmoins un instrument privilégié pour les Etats-Unis. Son président, Ahmed Chalabi, qui a su établir des relations privilégiées avec les membres du Congrès américain et avec des personnalités éminentes de l'administration de Washington, vit aujourd'hui à Londres. En cas d'attaque américaine, il pourrait devenir un partenaire privilégié de Washington. En effet, c'est à son organisation que le Congrès a alloué la somme de 97 millions de dollars pour renverser Saddam Hussein. ●

TIME, DECEMBER 24, 2001

■ DIPLOMACY

NEXT TARGET IRAQ?

Some Bush aides want to topple Saddam Hussein, but the European allies are unenthusiastic

By J.F.O. McALLISTER LONDON

THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN SEEMS nearly won. The war against terror, President George W. Bush keeps reminding us, has hardly started. In September he promised it will continue "until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated." Last month he said the Afghan war "was just the beginning." So where will the mighty juggernaut of American power steer next?

The question is making many world leaders shift uncomfortably—and not just those who might be Washington's next targets. America's closest allies in Europe are anxious that Bush, emboldened by his Afghan success, may become besotted with military force. They acknowledge his sober conduct of the war so far, contrary to the caricature of him that prevailed in Europe before Sept. 11 as a jejune cowboy. But still the signals from Washington are making them jittery. Military and intelligence sources tell *TIME* that the Pentagon is preparing a range of contingency plans for throttling an array of global bad guys, ranging from Hizballah fighters in Lebanon to the Abu Sayyaf rebels in the Philippines to diffuse cells linked to al-Qaeda in Somalia. Two weeks ago, Bush

ratcheted up warnings toward North Korea, a rogue nation with a suspected nuclear program but no known ties to al-Qaeda. Other countries where al-Qaeda has operated, such as Sudan and Yemen, may also surface on America's hit list. But when Bush injected a new wrinkle into his elastic definition of terror, saying that "if [countries] develop weapons of mass destruction that will be used to terrorize nations, they will be held accountable," he was unmistakably addressing an audience of one: Saddam Hussein.

War with Iraq? The world has grown used to an uneasy coexistence with Saddam since the Gulf War. No direct link has been proved between Iraq and the attacks on Sept. 11, though there are intriguing bits of circumstantial evidence, including two meetings in Prague between Mohamed Atta, who piloted American Airlines Flight 11 into the World Trade Center, and a senior Iraqi intelligence officer. Solid proof would virtually guarantee an onslaught against Saddam. Even without it, there's a powerful argument for using force to topple him. He has been trying to build weapons of mass destruction for decades, and three years ago kicked out the international inspectors who were slowing him down. He used chemical weapons against Iran and his own peo-

ple. He runs a police state more vicious than the Taliban's. As U.N. sanctions atrophy, he is getting richer and more able to buy weapons technology and expertise abroad. He lusts to avenge his defeat in the Gulf War. "That wound sits deep," his former chief of staff Nazar Khazraji told *Der Spiegel*. To advocates of "regime change" in Baghdad, the argument is a no-brainer: Why wait until this proven and mortal danger gets a chance to land the first blow?

They make one other argument: victory will be cheap. "Saddam can be brought down a lot faster than many people assume," says Richard Perle, a veteran bureaucratic warrior who advises Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld as chairman of the Defense Policy Board, a haven for hawks. He argues that 10 years of sanctions and continued bombing of Iraq's air defenses by the U.S. and Britain have eroded the regime's ability to beat back an attack. "Saddam's security is very brittle," says a top U.S. official familiar with Iraq. "Loyalty of his forces is built on fear, and if there was a decisive American attack a lot of it would melt away." Afghanistan is the model: heavy U.S.



PALEH KHEIBER—REUTERS

STILL DEFIANT Saddam is pursuing weapons of mass destruction

“Saddam can be brought down



GETTING READY
It lost big in 1991, but Iraq's army, left, is still much tougher than the Taliban

COLLUSION?
Iraq's embassy in Prague, above, where Atta met twice with a senior spy

AT LOGGERHEADS
Richard Perle, above right, wants a war that Gerhard Schröder thinks is deeply unwise



bombing to support local forces, in this case Kurds in the north, Shi'ites in the south and anti-Saddam defectors in the center, who would soon be welcomed by cheering crowds in Baghdad.

Europe remains profoundly unconvinced. German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder said bluntly last week that "we are against an extension of the fight [in Afghanistan]." A senior aide to French President Jacques Chirac said that "no one has any fondness for Saddam, and we'd be as happy as anyone to see him atomized once and for all. But an attempt to extend this operation beyond Afghanistan would be catastrophic," by destroying the coalition. Vladimir Putin may want to get closer to Bush, but Saddam has told his officials to consider Russia an "especially friendly country," and his delegation to Moscow recently got red-carpet treatment as it dangled \$35 billion in commercial contracts once U.N. sanctions disappear. Even stalwart Tony Blair is signaling discreetly he'd like Bush to curb his hard-liners.

Europe's skepticism may flow in part from an unwillingness to witness more concrete proof of U.S. hegemony. But it is also fueled by strong doubts that Saddam

will keel over with one shove. Michael O'Hanlon, a military expert at the Brookings Institution in Washington, says the élite Republican Guard knows their fate is bound up with Saddam's and are far better armed and more disciplined than any Taliban forces. "Overthrowing Saddam means a war in Baghdad," he says, "and that's going to be much harder than anything we've done in Afghanistan"—requiring at least 250,000 troops, perhaps 500,000.

Arab governments loathe Saddam too—but paradoxically, they hate the idea of fighting him just as much. Unless the war succeeds instantly, they fear both internal unrest and a long period of regional instability as Iraq breaks apart into ethnic fiefs. U.S. backing for Israel as it steps up its fight against Yasser Arafat will make it doubly hard to ally with Washington against another Arab country. Arab League Secretary General Amr Moussa has told TIME that "you will find no Arab country willing to play ball with this." That includes Saudi Arabia, whose extensive military infrastructure was essential to the Gulf War—though Washington might sweeten the pot by quietly offering to give up its bases in the kingdom once Saddam is gone.

Bush has kept the coalition together the same way he has quelled the Iraq fight in his Administration: by focusing on the immediate, and substantial, task of destroying al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Secretary of State Colin Powell stuck to that approach on a diplomatic mission last week. In Turkey, whose President Ahmet Necdet Sezer had denounced an American war against its neighbor Iraq just before he arrived, Powell said that Bush "has made no decision" about the next phase of the antiterror campaign. The Pentagon has sent a battle plan to the White House, but senior officials in Washington say any decision remains in the distant future. The focus for now is on a diplomatic push to force Saddam to readmit weapons inspectors. For an effort no one expects to succeed, it has surprising support. Doves back it because it buys time; hawks are sure it will prove Saddam's truculence, thus bringing closer the day when George Bush, with allies or alone, can tackle an ugly job inherited from his father. —With reporting by Bruce Crumley/Paris, James Graff/Brussels, Scott MacLeod/Cairo, Mark Thompson/Washington and Regine Wosnitza/Berlin

a lot faster than many people assume.77

La hantise turque de la création d'un Etat kurde ranimée



ANKARA, 26 déc (AFP) - 14h21 - Les rumeurs et les informations qui circulent sur le prochain pays qui serait frappé par les Etats Unis dans le cadre de leur lutte anti-terroriste après la déroute des talibans en Afghanistan a ranimé en Turquie une vieille hantise: la création à sa frontière sud d'un Etat kurde.

Le spectre d'un éclatement de l'Irak, suite à une confrontation armée avec les Etats-Unis, est revenu sur le devant de la scène en Turquie et les dirigeants militaires et civils se pressent ces derniers jour pour faire des déclarations exprimant leur opposition à une telle éventualité.

"La Turquie accorde une grande importance à l'intégrité territoriale de l'Irak et à la protection de son unité nationale", a dit le président turc Ahmet Necdet Sezer lors d'une conférence de presse avec l'émir du Qatar Hamad ben Khalifa al-Thani.

M. Sezer a cependant appelé Bagdad à coopérer avec l'ONU et la communauté internationale afin de mettre un terme aux "souffrances" de son peuple.

La puissante armée turque a de son côté mis en garde par la voix de son chef d'état-major, le général Huseyin Kivrikoglu, contre une extension de la campagne antiterroriste des Etats Unis à l'Irak qui "peut provoquer la création d'un Etat kurde indépendant".

La Turquie ne veut à aucun prix d'un Etat kurde dans le nord de l'Irak voisin contrôlé depuis la fin de la guerre du Golfe en 1991 par deux factions kurdes rivales.

Un tel Etat risquerait, selon elle, de stimuler les velléités séparatistes des Kurdes de Turquie, alors qu'Ankara a lutté pendant 15 ans contre la rébellion armée du Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK).

Cette hantise turque repose sur une tentative en ce sens sous le parrainage des Occidentaux, remontant au début du siècle et qui a figuré dans le traité de Sèvres, signé en 1920 entre les puissances alliées victorieuses et l'empire Ottoman.

Ce texte, qui a traumatisé les Turcs, consacrait le démembrement de l'empire et prévoyait la création à terme d'un "Kurdistan" indépendant.

Celui-ci ne devait jamais voir le jour, le traité de Sèvres ayant été annulé et remplacé par celui de Lausanne en 1923, après la victoire sur la Grèce de Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, fondateur de la république turque. Lausanne ne prévoyait plus la naissance d'un Etat kurde.

"Ce n'est pas une coïncidence si les autorités turques font des déclarations sur l'Irak ces jours-ci, le sujet sera évoqué lors de la visite du Premier ministre (Bulent) Ecevit" à Washington en janvier, souligne un diplomate turc sous couvert d'anonymat.

Selon lui, même si "tout le monde ne partage par les craintes de la classe politique, un démembrement de l'Irak ne peut qu'ammener des ennuis pour la Turquie et la stabilité régionale".

Un Etat kurde qui serait créé dans le nord de l'Irak ne serait pas viable car il serait asphyxié par la Turquie, la Syrie et l'administration de Bagdad, estiment d'ailleurs généralement les observateurs.

Les Turcs sont en outre aujourd'hui conscients qu'une action militaire contre l'Irak ne peut que porter un coup dur à leur économie déjà en pleine crise.

Ainsi, le chef de l'organisation patronale turque Tusiad, Tuncay Ozilhan, s'est déclaré opposé à des frappes qui nuiraient à l'économie turque. "Une opération militaire mettrait la Turquie dans une position difficile", a-t-il dit aux journalistes.

La Turquie, qui a renoué des relations commerciales avec l'Irak, avait participé à la coalition alliée de la guerre du Golfe en 1991. Elle estime que l'embargo imposé par l'ONU lui a fait depuis perdre plus de 35 milliards de dollars.

Le Premier ministre turc fustige une liste européenne du terrorisme



ANKARA, 29 déc (AFP) - 13h21 - Le Premier ministre a violemment dénoncé samedi l'Union européenne (UE) pour n'avoir pas inclus dans sa liste d'organisations considérées comme terroristes les séparatistes kurdes du PKK et un groupe clandestin d'extrême gauche, le DHKP-C, qualifiant cette attitude d'"impardonnable".

"C'est inconcevable. Personne ne doute du fait que le PKK (Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan) et le DHKP-C (Front-Parti de libération du peuple révolutionnaire) sont des organisations terroristes", a-t-il dit, interrogé par des journalistes.

Bulent Ecevit a déclaré de pas "comprendre" comment ces deux organisations ne figurent pas dans la liste publiée vendredi par l'UE, qui comporte également des personnes nommément désignées, dans la foulée d'autres décisions visant à renforcer l'action européenne contre le terrorisme après les attentats du 11 septembre aux Etats-Unis.

"On nous dit que le PKK et le DHKP-C seront inclus dans une deuxième liste. Mais le fait qu'elles ne soient pas mentionnées dans la première liste est impardonnable", a ajouté M. Ecevit.

Cette liste, publiée par le Journal officiel des Communautés européennes (JOCE) compte une petite trentaine de noms de personnes, dont vingt et un "millitants de l'ETA", et treize "Groupes et entités", européens et proche-orientaux.

Le PKK a mené 15 ans de rébellion sanglante contre l'Etat turc pour la création d'un Etat kurde indépendant dans le sud-est anatolien à majorité kurde. L'organisation a abandonné en septembre 1999 sa lutte armée, à l'appel de son chef Abdullah Ocalan condamné à la peine capitale par la justice turque.

Le DHKP-C est impliqué dans de nombreux attentats contre les représentants de l'Etat turc qui ont fait des dizaines de morts dans les années 90, dont deux anciens généraux et un ex-ministre.

L'organisation passe en outre pour être le cerveau d'un mouvement de grève de la faim de détenus et de leurs proches en Turquie, qui a fait plusieurs dizaines de morts depuis octobre 2000.

Questions and Answers:

Iraqi Opposition Leader Seyyed Hakim Iran-based Hakim opposes Saddam Hussein but is cautious about international intervention vs. internal rebellion

NEWSWEEK.com December 26, 2001

Ayatollah Seyyed Mohammad Baqer Hakim is the leader of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), the largest Shiite political party in the country. The Iraqi government has accused SCIRI of acting as Iran's fifth column and have jailed and executed many of its members since the start of Iran-Iraq war in 1980.

AYATOLLAH HAKIM, WHO has been living in Iran for the past 22 years, claims that his followers are the most active opposition to Saddam Hussein's government working inside Iraq. Although Iran has repeatedly expressed its opposition to a military attack against Iraq as the next step in war against terrorism, Ayatollah Hakim welcomes international intervention to topple Saddam. But he says that "any unilateral action will remain futile." Ayatollah Hakim is both highly regarded and heavily guarded in his host country. He takes part in most official gatherings of the Iranian clergy; interview requests go through an approval process very similar to what a high-ranking Iranian official would command. NEWSWEEK's Maziar Bahari met the ayatollah at SCIRI's compound in central Tehran.

NEWSWEEK: You've said that your ultimate goal is "to change the internal situation in Iraq and liberate it from the grip of Saddam Hussein." How do you want to achieve that?

Seyyed Hakim: I believe we can achieve this through carrying out United Nation's Security Council resolution No. 688. This resolution was proposed to the Security Council by France, Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran after the gulf war in 1991. The resolution obliges the Security Council to interfere in case of violent suppression of civilians. But unfortunately this resolution has not been put in force. If the international community had made a firm decision in carrying out its obligations the Iraqi people would have been able to change the internal situation in Iraq. I believe the American secretary of State, Colin Powell with all due respect was wrong in saying, "the Iraqi opposition forces are weaker than [Afghan] Northern Alliance" and that "Saddam Hussein is stronger than the Taliban." I believe the Iraqi opposition forces are much more organized and stronger than the Northern Alliance. Furthermore, Saddam's regime is even more unpopular than the Taliban was.

Why then have the opposition forces been unable to topple Saddam Hussein's government?

Because of violent suppression of people. [Iraq's] intelligence and information forces. The intelligence strata in Iraq are very complicated. There are many security and information organizations including Mokhaberat (the central information organization), Military Information, the Baath Party's Information Organization, etc. And each of these organizations has a military arm of its own. There are also different armies like the People's Army and the Quds Army, which Saddam has created as a gesture, as if he's going to defend the Palestinian struggle.

So you need foreign interference to stop the suppression?

Foreign interference led by the Security Council, not a unilateral decision by a single country. The international community has a responsibility to act against suppression. It already interferes in Iraq's internal affairs: it controls its wealth, it controls its trades, etc. So it has to act upon its obligation to stop the violent suppression of Iraqi people, as well.

Whenever we talk about international pressure it requires American involvement to make it a success. How do you feel about an American-led coalition to change the government in Iraq?

The main factor here is that it is the people of Iraq who should play the main role. The people of Iraq are very strong and they are ready to topple the regime. We witnessed that when the people of Iraq rose up against Saddam Hussein after the gulf war. But the uprising was violently smashed by Saddam's regime. If the allied forces didn't support the regime the people would have definitely changed Saddam's government. We expect the world community to pressure Saddam Hussein politically and militarily to comply with U.N. resolutions the same way they did in Kosovo. Putting political pressure first, and when it proves unsuccessful, exert military pressure.

Next Up: Saddam

What if the international community doesn't want to get involved and the Americans do it on their own? Would you support that?

That depends on the political situation and timing of the attack. We cannot prejudge future events before they happen. But a unilateral decision will not take us very far.

There was an article in New Yorker magazine by Seymour Hersh about London-based Iraq National Congress leader Ahmad Chalabi's claim that the government of Iran "has agreed to permit INC forces and their military equipment to cross the Iranian border into southern Iraq." And that "the United States would then begin an intense bombing campaign, as it did in Afghanistan, and airlift thousands of Special Forces troops into southern Iraq."

I haven't read the article and I don't know anything about it. Who are the sources in the article?

I guess Chalabi, the INC as well as State Department and CIA officials. Do you know of any deals between the INC and the Iranian government?

There seems to be no agreement. You're a journalist. You know that sometimes people tell the press certain things in order to find out how others react to a certain hypothesis. But you have to ask where are those men who would carry out the operation. We would have known of them if they existed. Where have they hidden them so far? You need a real organization to lead an army prepared for such military operation.

How united are different opposition groups in Iraq at the moment?

There is a great unity among different opposition forces inside and outside Iraq.

What do you think about the INC and Ahmad Chalabi in particular?

I don't find it right to talk about specific groups and personalities. We have good relations with all opposition groups inside and outside Iraq. There are two kinds of Iraqi opposition groups. There are those groups who are active inside Iraq and have political and military organizations inside the country, namely the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), the Kurdish groups in northern Iraq and some other groups inside Iraq. There are also other opposition groups who are very active politically in other parts of the world. All these groups have very good relations with each other. Even if there are some minor problems they would be solved when there is a real change inside Iraq like what we witnessed during the gulf war.

Do all these different groups agree about the shape of the future government in Iraq?

We have been negotiating with all different groups from different parts of the country.

How strong is SCIRI inside and outside of Iraq?

The most active groups inside Iraq are SCIRI forces. SCIRI doesn't have its own military forces, but there are many military opposition groups inside Iraq that take political guidance from SCIRI.

Do you receive military and financial help from Iran?

Iran has welcomed us as its guests and we are thankful for it.

How about military and financial support?

Iran has political relations with Iraq, it doesn't interfere in Iraq's internal affairs and respects international laws in its relations with Iraq.

But there have been attacks against People's Mujahedin [an Iraqi-based Iranian military opposition group] inside Iraq's territory. Last summer there was an attack against their offices in Baghdad. There were reports that Iran financed these attacks and they were carried out by SCIRI forces.

The munafeqqin [hypocrites, a Quranic term used by the Iranian government to describe the mujahedin] helped Saddam suppress Shiite and Kurdish uprisings in 1991. For the opposition forces inside Iraq the munafeqqin is a legitimate target. People of Iraq hate them and according to recent reports Saddam is planning to use the munafeqqin in case of a future uprising. But those forces that attack the munafeqqin inside Iraq are not supported by Iran. The government of Iran doesn't even allow our forces to cross the border. The fact of the matter is that Saddam is trying to use the munafeqqin as a bargaining chip in the relations with Iran. He doesn't want us in Iran. He wants us to leave for Europe or somewhere else in world and cut our close ties with the people inside Iraq.

Has the fight between the United States and Iraq been reduced to a personal animosity with Saddam? Is it possible that if Saddam is toppled one of his sons, Qusai, Udai or another person close to him, might come to power?

Unfortunately it is possible. But the people of Iraq will not support changing Saddam while the structure of the regime remains intact. Furthermore that will not solve anything. But you can expect anything from the American government. The American government has been trying to get rid of Saddam Hussein for the past 10 years but it has not been successful.

What do you think were the United States' shortcomings in the past and what should it do now?

America should have an honest approach to the problems of the region. Especially regarding its total support of the Zionist regime [Israel], which has shattered America's image in the region. Also the U.S. has followed a wrong policy towards the Islamic Republic of Iran since the [1979] revolution. Regarding Iraq, America should have allowed the people of Iraq to decide their own future. The people of Iraq were close to creating their own government three times in the past 10 years, and each time America's interference blocked their efforts. After the gulf war in 1991, the U.S. allowed Saddam's forces to suppress the uprising of the people of Iraq. There was also a plan to assassinate Saddam and stag[e] a coup d'état, the so called "silver bullet" plan, in 1995. The Americans revealed this plan to the regime, and it was defeated. Another time different groups within the Iraqi Army made an agreement to stage a coup and change the government. This plan was also exposed by the Americans. And Saddam's government managed to assassinate Talib Al Soheil, the brain behind the plan, in Beirut.

Some American politicians were afraid that another Islamic Republic, like Iran, would come to power in Iraq if Saddam was defeated.

But that was not the main reason that the gulf war coalition allowed Saddam to suppress the uprising. Many Americans confessed that it was a collective decision of some countries in the region.

Which ones?

Some of them. I know that [Egyptian president] Mr. Hosni Mubarak said that we didn't want a change of government. What you just mentioned is a wrong assumption by some American politicians. Before the gulf war, SCIRI and 26 other Iraqi opposition groups took part in a conference in Damascus in January 1990. In that conference after months of negotiations we reached an agreement that after Saddam's regime, there will be a multiparty parliamentary interim government for one year. After that there would be a referendum about the future government of Iraq. We decided that Iraq should rid itself of weapons of mass destruction, should have friendly relations with neighboring countries, and should respect international laws. The U.S. and the rest of the world knew about the outcome of the conference and our agreement.

Do all 27 groups still respect this agreement?

Yes we do. There have been subsequent meetings in other places and we have insisted on the validity of the agreement reached in Damascus in 1990. One of the most important issues in the agreement is the unity of Iraq. Saddam

is trying to imply that after him there will be a break-up. But it is just a ploy to scare the world community regarding the consequences of his fall. The truth is that there are Shiites, Kurds and Sunnis all over Iraq so the idea of a break-up is just an illusionary threat created by Saddam's government. Furthermore I don't think the world community nor the countries of the region would agree with the break-up of Iraq into three parts.

* * * * *

Afghanistan : le « rôle modérateur » de l'Iran.

Téhéran abat ses cartes

L'Iran, qui a soutenu militairement et financièrement les différentes factions de l'Alliance du Nord et les milices chiites, entend aujourd'hui récupérer sa mise

De notre envoyé spécial,
Gilles Anquetil

« **N**ous ne remercions jamais assez Ben Laden, ironise un journaliste réformateur de Téhéran. Grâce à lui et à sa folie du 11 septembre, l'Iran a retrouvé sa place dans le grand jeu régional. » Depuis quelques semaines, le ministre des Affaires étrangères de la République islamique, Kamel Kharazi, ne sait plus où donner de la tête : les diplomates du monde entier, venus saluer « le rôle modérateur » de l'Iran, ne cessent de frapper à sa porte. Depuis la déroute des talibans, conservateurs et réformateurs jubilent pour la première fois de concert. L'Iran, hier mis au ban des nations pour activisme terro-



Le président de l'Etat islamique d'Afghanistan Rabbani

riste, est aujourd'hui considéré, aux dires d'un diplomate européen, comme une puissance régionale « fiable et raisonnable ».

Les journaux de toutes tendances célèbrent avec délectation les victoires quotidiennes de

l'Alliance du Nord et la déconfiture d'un régime taliban honni par les autorités iraniennes. Le coup de pouce, pourtant déterminant, des bombardements américains est cependant passé sous silence. Qu'on le sache : le valeureux peuple afghan s'est libéré tout seul, et ce sont les amis et alliés de l'Iran qui gouvernent désormais provisoirement le nouvel Etat « islamique » – la presse insiste beaucoup sur cet adjectif – d'Afghanistan.

Aujourd'hui, fort du soutien militaire et financier qu'il apporte depuis de nombreuses années aux différentes factions de l'Alliance du Nord et aux milices chiites du Hesb-e-Warhdat, Téhéran entend récupérer, voire doubler, sa mise. Non content d'être débarrassé d'un exécrable voisin taliban et de voir le Pakistan affaibli, l'Iran voit dans la nouvelle donne afghane l'occasion de peser de tout son poids dans la reconstruction politique et économique du pays et affirme son intransigeance sur deux points : il refuse à la fois le retour, même symbolique, de l'ex-roi Zaher Shah – « Ce serait une insulte au peuple iranien qui a chassé les Pahlavi » – et toute présence en Afghanistan de forces militaires multinationales d'interposition, même placées sous le contrôle de l'ONU.

En revanche, l'Iran ne s'interdit pas, de faire entrer fort discrètement en Afghanistan, par le poste frontière de Dogharoun, des milices chiites composées de réfugiés afghans formés et entraînés en Iran.

Téhéran ne voit que des avantages à l'installation d'un pouvoir ami à Kaboul. La pacification d'un Afghanistan

hier sous la coupe pakistano-pachtoune devrait permettre, à plus ou moins longue échéance, le rapatriement de la majorité des Afghans réfugiés depuis vingt ans en Iran – un million et demi selon le HCR – qui pèsent très lourd sur l'économie nationale. Et aussi d'endiguer le trafic d'héroïne et d'opium, de démanteler les réseaux de passeurs surarmés qui ont, en deux décennies, tué plusieurs centaines de gardes-frontières iraniens. L'Iran est le pays qui, dans l'indifférence internationale générale, accueille le plus grand nombre de réfugiés dans le monde. Aux Afghans, s'ajoutent 500 000 chiites irakiens chassés au moment de la guerre du Golfe. Téhéran souhaiterait que « sa générosité », comme on le dit ici, soit enfin reconnue.

Téhéran brûle également de participer activement à la reconstruction de son voisin. Ses entreprises de travaux publics, très performantes, sont déjà prêtes à rebâtir routes, canaux d'irrigation et barrages. Bref, les autorités iraniennes ont quelques raisons d'espérer que leur « bon choix » dans le conflit leur offrira un fructueux retour sur investissement. Il y a longtemps que l'Iran n'a pas été dans le camp des vainqueurs. Ses dirigeants entendent profiter de cette aubaine avec délectation. Et sans modération.

G. A.

Réfugiés : le racket des passeurs

Toshiro Odashima, directeur du bureau du Haut Commissariat aux Réfugiés des Nations unies (HCR) de Mashad, ne cache pas son soulagement. Les bombardements américains en Afghanistan n'ont pas provoqué la catastrophe humanitaire qu'il redoutait, dans un pays qui abrite déjà un million et demi de réfugiés afghans. « Nous avions prévu que 400 000 Afghans tenteraient de passer la frontière par la province du Sistan-Balouchistan. Il n'y en a pas eu plus de 20 000. Mieux encore, grâce à notre programme de retour volontaire, du 1^{er} septembre au 31 octobre, plus de 30 000 Afghans sont retournés dans leur pays. »

De nombreuses ONG basées en Iran doutent du caractère volontaire de cette dé-

marche fortement encadrée par les Iraniens. Va-et-vient de commerçants, retours avant l'hiver de travailleurs saisonniers sont étrangement comptabilisés dans ces chiffres exagérément optimistes. Le vrai problème des néo-réfugiés est leur prise en otage par des passeurs particulièrement féroces auprès desquels ils se sont lourdement endettés. C'est ainsi que dans chaque famille, un enfant, une sœur ou un frère est fait prisonnier par les passeurs. Ils ne seront libérés qu'une fois la dette, souvent énorme, éteinte. Le grand retour des centaines de milliers d'Afghans n'est pas encore pour demain. Au poste frontière de Dogharoun, ils sont à peine 300 par jour à avoir « choisi » de retourner chez eux. ■

G. A.

RÉPONSES DES MINISTRES AUX QUESTIONS ÉCRITES

AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES

*Politique extérieure
(Turquie - droits de l'homme - Kurdes)*

68545. - 5 novembre 2001. - M. Bernard Birsinger attire l'attention de M. le ministre des affaires étrangères sur la situation de Leyla Zana, lauréate du prix Sakharov, et des anciens députés d'origine kurde emprisonnés pour délit d'opinion en Turquie. La Turquie a demandé à entrer dans l'Union européenne. Le Parlement européen a émis des conditions à l'adhésion de la Turquie. Par rapport au peuple kurde, il a notamment demandé au gouvernement turc la libération de Leyla Zana et des anciens députés d'origine kurde emprisonnés pour délit d'opinion. Le 25 septembre dernier, les députés turcs ont adopté un amendement constitutionnel qui ouvrirait la voie à une plus large utilisation du kurde. L'amendement, adopté par la grande majorité des

voix de 397 députés contre 28, prévoit la levée de l'interdiction d'utiliser « des langues interdites » dans l'expression et la diffusion de la pensée. Layla Zana a précisément été condamnée pour avoir parlé la langue kurde dans l'enceinte du parlement turc. Au vu des évolutions à l'œuvre en Turquie, il lui demande d'intervenir

auprès du gouvernement turc pour demander sa libération ainsi que celle des anciens députés d'origine kurde emprisonnés pour délit d'opinion.

Réponse. - La France est intervenue à plusieurs reprises auprès des autorités turques au sujet de la situation des parlementaires de l'ancien parti de la démocratie (parti pro-kurde) encore emprisonnés, à titre bilatéral ou en qualité de membre de l'Union européenne. A ce jour, quatre députés demeurent en prison dont Mme Leyla Zana. En juillet dernier, la Cour européenne des droits de l'homme a condamné la Turquie dans cette affaire en jugeant que le procès avait été « inéquitable » en raison de la présence d'un juge militaire au sein du tribunal. L'objectif de la France demeure la libération de tous les élus et elle continuera d'agir en ce sens auprès des autorités d'Ankara. L'adoption par la Grande Assemblée nationale turque, le 3 octobre dernier, de trente-quatre amendements constitutionnels est une avancée positive pour la situation des droits de l'homme dans ce pays qui doit maintenant se traduire dans la réalité. La France sera attentive à la mise en œuvre effective de ces réformes.

Un procureur appelle la Cour constitutionnelle à trancher le cas du HADEP



ANKARA, 2 jan (AFP) - 15h13 - Le procureur général de la Cour de cassation Sabih Kanadoglu a saisi mercredi la Cour constitutionnelle lui demandant de se saisir d'"urgence" de la procédure d'interdiction contre le Parti pro-kurde de la Démocratie du Peuple (HADEP), rapporte l'agence Anatolie.

"Selon la constitution, il est du devoir de la justice d'aboutir les procédures le plus rapidement possible", souligne le procureur dans une lettre adressée à la Cour constitutionnelle, précise l'agence. Il demande ainsi l'"accélération" de cette procédure qui traîne depuis trois ans afin qu'elle soit débattue d'"urgence" par la Cour, selon l'agence.

La procédure contre le HADEP, principale formation pro-kurde du pays, avait été lancée en janvier 1999 par le prédécesseur de M. Kanadoglu, M. Vural Savas, qui accusait le parti "d'avoir des liens organiques" avec le Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK, séparatiste et interdit).

M. Kanadoglu accuse à son tour le HADEP de ne pas "craindre de présenter le leader de l'organisation terroriste (ndlr: Adullah Ocalan, chef du PKK) comme le président d'une formation légale".

M. Kanadoglu demande à la Cour constitutionnelle de décider soit d'une interdiction du HADEP et de l'"éloigner de la vie démocratique" soit de faire disparaître la menace d'une fermeture qui "pèse comme une épée de Damoclès" sur ce parti.

Le HADEP, qui affirme plaider pour une solution pacifique à la question kurde, rejette l'accusation de liens avec le PKK qui a mené pendant quinze ans une lutte armée dans le sud-est en vue de créer un Etat kurde indépendant dans le sud-est anatolien à majorité kurde.

Le PKK, considéré comme une organisation terroriste par Ankara, a abandonné en septembre 1999 sa lutte armée, à l'appel de son chef Abdullah Ocalan, condamné à mort par la justice turque en juin de la même année. Depuis les combats dans le sud-est ont depuis considérablement diminué.

Plusieurs membres du HADEP ont déjà été condamnés par des tribunaux turcs pour liens présumés avec le PKK. Le HADEP, créé en mai en 1994, avait succédé à un autre Parti pro-kurde, celui de la Démocratie (Dep) qui avait été interdit un mois plus tard.

Voice of America

Should the US Go After Saddam Hussein?

VOA News

By Motabar Shirwani January 2, 2002

Washington - The debate over whether Iraq should become the next target of U.S. military action has intensified in Washington, encouraged by the success of the military campaign in Afghanistan. Regional policy experts say toppling Saddam Hussein poses a host of problems, including opposition by Iraq's neighbors and setting up a credible government in Baghdad.

Graham Fuller is the former vice chairman of national intelligence at the CIA and currently a senior consultant at Rand, a nonprofit research institution. He says Saddam Hussein is one of the worst rulers in modern history of the Middle East. A tyrant at home and a threat to regional stability, Mr. Fuller says, Saddam Hussein waged wars against two of Iraq's Muslim neighbors, Iran and Kuwait. For Mr. Fuller, Saddam Hussein should be removed from power. The question is when and how. "I think right now it would be very difficult and undesirable to move against Saddam Hussein directly," he says. "I think many preparations, diplomatic and political, have to take place long before any action is taken against Saddam." The preparations include rallying the support of Iraq's neighboring countries, especially Turkey, but also Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Professor Edmond Ghareeb, an expert in Kurdish studies at the American University in Washington, says, "I think the Turkish support is going to be very important. Actually, it is going to be very difficult for the United States to move into the area without [it]. If it [U.S.] wants to go in militarily to try to bring down the regime, it is going to be impossible unless you have the support of the neighbors."

Mr. Fuller says Turkey is afraid toppling Saddam Hussein's regime would endanger its own integrity. He explains: "Well, Turkey for example, has always opposed efforts to overthrow Saddam Hussein because they are afraid that Iraq might break up. This would lead to instability in Iraq and to the creation of a Kurdish independent state perhaps in the North. Turkey is very afraid of this possibility because of [its] problems with [its] own Kurdish minority. This problem has not been solved inside Turkey."

As to Iran, Mr. Fuller says, the challenge is reassuring Tehran that changing the government in Baghdad would not be a move against Iran. Mr. Fuller says Iran does not want to see a pro-American, puppet regime there. The Saudis, in turn, are nervous because establishing a democratic government in Iraq would make Saudi Arabia and other non-democratic countries in the area look bad.

Then there is the question of who should rule post-Hussein Iraq. Mr. Fuller believes that the London-based Iraqi National Congress is interested in establishing a democratic regime. But, as Henry Barkey, professor of International relations at Lehigh University, points out, the INC does not have a grass-roots structure in Iraq.

"The problem with the INC at the moment is that the INC only exists in Washington and London," says Mr. Barkey. "But it doesn't exist on the ground. On the ground you have the Shiite forces, but mostly they're in Iran not many of them are in Iraq, and the Kurdish forces. But those are nominally part of the INC. But they have in recent years moved somewhat away from the INC. In a way, I think, it would be unfair to say the INC is composed of the Kurds and the Shiite forces in the South because it isn't anymore. And that, unfortunately, is a weak point of the INC."

Sharif Ali Bin-Al Hussein, the INC spokesman and member of its leadership council, disagrees. "The INC is the coalition of the most important political forces opposing Saddam Hussein inside Iraq and outside," he says. "We have our own networks inside Iraq and we have been confronting the regime at many levels. Of course, what the world sees is the visible part of our activities and that's the activities outside - the media activities, the diplomatic and the political activities. Any reasonable person would understand that it would be impossible to reveal or to highlight any of the activities that we do inside Iraq because of the potentially lethal consequences [for our infrastructure inside the country]." Mr. Sharif stresses that the INC represents the entire political, ethnic and religious spectrum of Iraqi society. "I would guess about 80 percent of the Iraqi opposition is affiliated, one way or the other, to the INC," he said. "We have all the significant Kurdish parties involved. We have nationalists and of course a cross section of the Arab Sunni community as well in the leadership, in the council, and in the national assembly."

Meanwhile, Iraqi officials themselves say they are not concerned Saddam Hussein might become the next target of the U.S.-led war against terrorism. An Iraqi representative to the Arab League told the VOA correspondent in Cairo recently that possibility is just media speculation.

Arabs' United Stance Against U.S. Attack On Iraq May Mask Nuances, Resignation

Wall Street Journal January 4, 2002

By YAROSLAV TROFIMOV

AMMAN, Jordan -- As Arab leaders repeat the mantra that they won't accept a U.S. war on Iraq, the focus in the region already is shifting from preventing such a campaign to making sure it doesn't spin out of control.

Officially, the U.S. hasn't decided whether to target Iraq next in its war on global terrorism. But the growing consensus among Iraq's neighbors is that some sort of military action is inevitable, that it could come as soon as this spring -- and that most Arab states and Turkey would fall in line with such a U.S. move.

A strike on Iraq "is not a question of whether it's going to happen, but when -- and it is coming," says Ali K. Shukri, a retired Jordanian general who headed King Hussein's private office and Jordan's military communications.

"If the Americans insist, nobody can tell them, 'Don't overfly' or 'Don't use your bases.' What choice do [Iraq's neighbors] have?"

Iraq's call for an emergency Arab summit last month fell on deaf ears in most Arab capitals. But while many Arab officials privately say they won't shed any tears for Saddam Hussein, few would openly endorse a U.S. campaign and incur the Iraqi dictator's wrath without ironclad guarantees that he will actually be dislodged -- as he was not when the U.S. led a war on Iraq in 1991, after Iraq invaded Kuwait. Jordan, for one, still hasn't forgotten the bitter lesson of 1996. Then, believing U.S. assurances that Saddam Hussein was about to be overthrown, King Hussein offered incautious support to Washington -- and paid the price, as Iraq redirected some of its oil trade. "You can't expect Arab leaders to say that they support U.S. bombing in Iraq before the U.S. decides to bomb," says Sharif Ali bin Hussein, one of the leaders of the Iraqi National Congress, a London-based Iraqi opposition group.

Yet many Arab political analysts, retired officials and columnists urge looking beyond official pronouncements against the war on Iraq and say the much-vaunted "Arab street," which failed to rise after the outbreak of the Palestinian intifada in September 2000, will react with even more apathy to a decisive American strike against Baghdad.

"Removing Saddam is a must and is imminent because of the regime's actions," says Waheed Hashem, a specialist on terrorism and regional security at Saudi Arabia's King Abdel Aziz University. "Civilian casualties in such a campaign may produce some discontent, but I don't believe that this discontent will lead to actions of an aggressive nature." The greatest regional unrest Mr. Hashem expects is a few student demonstrations in Egypt.

President Bush has said Iraq is a possible target in the U.S.-led war on terror. There is no conclusive proof that Iraq played a role in the Sept. 11 attacks, and Baghdad rejects all such accusations. But the country, long designated by Washington as a sponsor of international terrorism, does harbor a variety of terrorist groups and is believed to be producing weapons of mass destruction. The new Gulf state sentiment holds, however, only if the campaign is seen as clearly focused on Saddam Hussein, whose popularity in the region has long declined since its heyday in 1990, and not as a new punishment for the Iraqi people. All of Iraq's neighbors have suffered because of economic sanctions on the once prosperous country -- and, adding to the resignation in the region, there is a growing awareness that the U.S. won't allow these sanctions to be lifted as long as Saddam Hussein remains in power. In a vivid reminder, the first thing a visitor to Jordan sees is a half-dozen Iraqi Airways planes that have been rusting on the Amman airport tarmac for the past decade.

"Saddam's only success is that he has managed to present himself as a victim," says Radwan Abdullah, a Jordanian political analyst and commentator. "So the best thing that can happen to him is that the Americans attack again and he stays in power. I'm sure that he's praying for this."

The other key condition of most of Iraq's neighbors is that the country stay in one piece. Turkey has vociferously argued that Iraq's self-ruled Kurdish part mustn't become an independent state with irredentist claims on ethnically Kurdish areas of Turkey itself. And the Sunni-ruled Gulf monarchies are more than a little skittish about Iraq's Shiite majority seizing political power or creating in southern Iraq a Shiite state that would be allied with Shiite Iran. "This would be a big problem for Saudi Arabia," warns Waleed M. al Tabtabai, a Sunni Islamist parliamentarian in Kuwait. "Iran's influence will be stronger there, in Kuwait, in Bahrain ... maybe even some regimes will fall."

While few in the region doubt that America can, and probably will, invade Iraq and oust Saddam Hussein, however, there is no shortage of arguments for why it shouldn't. The most salient is, again, the risk of bolstering Iran -- a country that, despite recent overtures to Washington, still tops America's list of state sponsors of terrorism. Until 1990, the oil-rich Persian Gulf states were allied with Iraq against Iran. "Now, if the Gulf states know that Iraq is absent, they will accept the leadership of Iran -- and this is not in America's, and not in Israel's, interest," says Mr. Abdullah, the Jordanian analyst.

"From all I know, the regime in Iraq isn't worse than the one in North Korea," where Washington's policy has largely been one of negotiation and economic help, says Mr. Shukri. "Why can't the U.S. use the same engagement approach with Saddam, giving him the Ten Commandments? Nobody has been talking to the guy in 10 years. Maybe it's time to try. War is not the only option."

* * * * *

Israel asks America to strike western Iraq first, if it decides to fight Saddam

Ha'aretz

January 02, 2002 By Amir Oren

Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer paid a visit to the secretive Ness Ziona Biological Institute yesterday.

The Home Front commander, Maj. Gen. Yosef Mishlav, said recently that the plan to transfer the Home Front to the Ministry for Public Security has been frozen, so defending the population from nuclear, chemical, and biological warfare is still in the hands of the defense minister.

Ben-Eliezer was accompanied to the institute by an unusually small entourage, to keep a low profile. Presumably, the concern about a possible attack by Iraq, with unconventional payloads delivered by either missiles or planes, was one of the main subjects in the briefing given the minister by his hosts.

According to security sources participating in Israeli preparations for a possible American move on Iraq, any decision by President George W. Bush about when to attack Iraq depends on three main elements: building the case against Saddam, including charges and evidence; identifying an alternative ruler to replace Saddam; and building up the forces that will execute the planned attack.

The defense establishment here believes that the Bush administration has given up trying to find an Iraqi version of Afghanistan's Northern Alliance, so Washington is busy studying intelligence profiles of top Iraqi army commanders who could take control in Baghdad concurrent with or immediately after the start of an American campaign.

In a U.S. attack, Saddam won't hurry to attack Israel, say defense sources, because, among other reasons, he won't want to expose the weaponry that he managed to hide - and deny he had - over the past decade.

The sources note that unlike the spring of 1990, when Saddam was already threatening to "burn half of Israel" (before he invaded Kuwait) if attacked, no such threats toward Israel have been coming out of Baghdad.

However, should Saddam conclude that the Americans are about to topple him, he'll try to attack Israel with a barrage of missiles or airplanes. Topping Israel's worries are a possible ground-to-ground missile attack, with chemical or biological payloads.

The defense establishment reckons that much lower on the list of possibilities would be Iraq sending pilots on suicide missions, whether to drop non-conventional payloads, or to crash their planes. The loyalty of Iraqi pilots to Saddam, and their readiness to die for him, while his regime is crumbling, is not at all the same as that of Japanese kamikaze pilots, who were ready to die for their emperor at the end of World War II.

In contacts between Israeli and American defense officials over the past few weeks, the Pentagon's representatives were asked to plan their operations in Iraq in such a way as to minimize the Iraqi ability to move missile launchers into western Iraq, from which missiles can reach Israel. The Americans were told that Israel expects them to conduct operations, including on the ground, in western Iraq from the start of a campaign, and not to wait until Iraq starts launching missile attacks on Israel, as happened in 1991. Israeli officials say they believe the Pentagon will accede to this request.

The Pentagon meanwhile is very interested in technologies, weapons systems, and military doctrines developed in Israel over the past few years. In meetings in Washington with top defense officials and representatives of the Israeli defense establishment, led by Defense Ministry Director-General Amos Yaron, and including the head of weapons development and technology infrastructure Maj. Gen. Dr. Yitzhak Ben-Israel, videos were shown demonstrating examples of Israel's policy of "pinpoint targeting" in the territories. The emphasis was on combat helicopter attacks

that caused no collateral damage to anything other than the target, even if many civilians were in the area. American officers, from both the air force and special operations, visited Israel to learn about "pinpoint targeting" from IDF special operations commanders in the territories. Among other things, the Americans wanted to know about long-distance assassinations, along the lines of the operation - to kill Saddam Hussein - that foreign reports said was being rehearsed at the time of the Tze'elim 2 accident. The Americans were offered Israeli assistance in many areas, including inoculations against anthrax.

Along with the focus on Iraq, the defense establishment is keeping a close eye on developments in Iran. According to the latest Military Intelligence estimate, an event at Tarbit Madras University in Tehran a week ago, may be significant. Attended by government officials, including an adviser to Iranian President Muhamed Hatami [Ed: Khatami] parliamentarians, and academic experts, the event was devoted to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Most of the speakers opposed the conservative policy of the Iranian spiritual leader Ali Hamani [Ed: Khamani] and demanded moderation of the government line against Israel, a line that is more extreme than the Palestinians.

Military Intelligence's estimate appears to strengthen the position that Mossad chief Ephraim Halevy publicly stated last month when he said that there is hope for moderation in the Iranian regime.

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Senators Seek to Reassure Turkey Over Iraq

January 4, 2002

ANKARA (Reuters) - A delegation of U.S. senators said Friday that while they considered it essential to topple Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, any action should be taken in consultation with Turkey and other countries in the region.

The delegation of nine senators was led by Republican John McCain and Democrat Joseph Lieberman, who said he had assured Turkey that Washington would take into account Ankara's fears that any action against Baghdad might lead to a splinter Kurdish state in the north of Iraq.

McCain and Lieberman both signed a recent letter to President Bush urging him to make Iraq the next target in the U.S.-declared war on terrorism.

"I expressed the point of view, which I think is felt by many in the United States, that the war against terrorism will not end until Saddam Hussein is removed from power in Baghdad," Lieberman told reporters after meeting Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit in Ankara. Turkey is concerned that the establishment of a Kurdish state over the border would provoke unrest among the Turkish Kurds in the southeast where the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) has been fighting for independence since 1984.

"A change in the regime in Baghdad...does not mean that the territorial integrity of Iraq should in any way be changed from what it is today," Lieberman said. McCain said he was not in favor of the United States acting "in a way that would be viewed as unilateral."

"Any action taken by the United States vis-a-vis Saddam Hussein would be after a period of consultation -- and hopefully cooperation -- with particularly the Turkish government but also with the other governments in the region that are moderate," McCain said.

Turkey, fearing violence could spark a flood of refugees similar to the tens of thousands seen after the Gulf War, has repeatedly said it opposes military reprisals against Iraq over its refusal to allow U.N. weapons inspectors to return.

Bush recently warned Iraq to allow weapons inspections to resume or "find out" the consequences. Iraq is among the countries most often cited as a possible next target for U.S. action after the war in Afghanistan.

LE FIGARO VENDREDI 4 JANVIER 2002

Les tentatives pour déplacer le centre sont restées vaines, faute de municipalités candidates

« Trop d'hypocrisie »

Sangatte au bord de l'explosion

Smaïn Laacher, sociologue, chercheur au CNRS-EHESS, a procédé à cent entretiens avec les réfugiés de Sangatte.

LE FIGARO. – Vous réalisez une enquête dans le centre de la Croix-Rouge. Qui sont les réfugiés de Sangatte ?

Smaïn LAACHER. – J'effectue une étude à la demande du directeur du centre, afin de mieux connaître les populations accueillies. J'ai procédé à une centaine d'entretiens avec des résidents et les bénévoles de la Croix-Rouge ont fait remplir quelque trois cents questionnaires aux réfugiés.

Il est trop tôt pour dire des choses « définitives », mais je constate que beaucoup d'idées toutes faites circulent à leur égard.

Exemple, j'entends souvent dire que ceux qui sont au centre de Sangatte sont instruits, qu'ils occupaient dans leurs pays des professions valorisées : médecins, ingénieurs, architectes, intellec-

tuels, etc.

Ces personnes ne représentent pas la majorité, elles sont simplement plus « visibles » parce qu'elles sont plus cultivées, moins timides, parlent plusieurs langues. Les autres, les plus nombreuses, restent anonymes.

Leur présence est de plus en plus contestée à Sangatte. Que faire ?

Je n'ai pas de réponse. Il s'agit d'un problème d'Etat, de politiques en matière d'immigration et de droit d'asile. La seule chose dont je suis sûr, c'est que, si l'on ferme le centre, les réfugiés erreront dans les rues de Calais comme ils le faisaient avant son ouverture. Ce serait, en l'état actuel, un acte parfaitement irresponsable...

Je comprends les appréhensions de la population sangattoise. Le centre est un endroit unique en Europe et même au monde. Il s'agit d'une structure ambivalente : voilà un Etat qui accueille des étrangers en situation d'illégalité, les nourrit, les héberge et, d'une certaine manière, les protège – ce qui est tout à son honneur. Et

c'est pourtant en toute illégalité qu'il les laisse risquer leur vie tous les jours quand ils veulent traverser la Manche. On ne veut pas les renvoyer mais on ne veut pas les accueillir. Seul l'Etat peut trouver cette situation normale.

Mais que peut faire l'Etat, alors qu'ils ne veulent pas rester en France ?

Depuis le début, on nous dit qu'ils rêvent d'Angleterre. Leur impératif est en réalité de travailler mais, pour pouvoir travailler, il faut en avoir le droit, et disposer d'un toit. Si la France leur offrait des conditions d'asile semblables à celles de l'Angleterre, ils resteraient là.

Tout cela est donc bien hypocrite...

En matière d'immigration, depuis longtemps, c'est le règne de la mauvaise foi collective. Sangatte en est une illustration définitive.

Propos recueillis par M.- C. T.

Marie-Christine Tabet

« A Sangatte, tout peut arriver, la moindre étincelle menace de dégénérer et, chaque soir, on redoute de nouvelles actions des réfugiés. » Cette confiance d'un fonctionnaire traduit l'atmosphère qui règne désormais dans le Pas-de-Calais autour du centre de la Croix-Rouge, visité ce matin par son président. « Nous avons renforcé les moyens policiers pour faire face à toutes les éventualités », rassure du bout des lèvres Cyril Shott, le nouveau préfet du département qui a dépêché sur place, fin décembre, une troisième compagnie de CRS.

La tension est en effet à son comble dans l'ancien hangar désaffecté d'Eurotunnel, transformé depuis septembre 1999 en centre d'hébergement d'urgence. Là, sur une dalle de béton, dans des tentes kaki, dormant en rang d'oignons les



Toutes les nuits, des clandestins prennent tous les risques pour quitter le centre de Sangatte. Depuis trois ans, 85 % des réfugiés sont parvenus à rallier l'Angleterre. (Photo BEP/M. Rosereau/La voix du Nord.)

hommes candidats à l'exil. Les rares familles habitent dans des petites cabines. Seules distractions : le réfectoire, où il faut faire la queue pour les repas, et un seul téléviseur.

Une bagarre a opposé, pendant toute une nuit de novembre, plus de trois cents Kurdes et Afghans dans le centre. La prise d'assaut du tunnel par quelque quatre cents résidents au cours de la nuit de Noël a constitué un deuxième avertissement, pris très au sérieux par le gouvernement... qui pour l'instant n'a pas trouvé de solution à cet épineux dossier. Et hier après-midi, cinq clandestins kurdes ont été légèrement blessés par arme blanche à la suite d'une altercation.

Les tentatives pour déplacer le centre sont restées vaines, faute de municipalités candidates. La fermeture du site, demandée par les Sangattois, signifierait l'errance dans Calais et ses environs des réfugiés aujourd'hui regroupés. Guère plus acceptable. Quant à l'ouverture d'un centre d'accueil à Cayeux-sur-Mer pour les personnes désireuses de s'installer en France, elle n'a pas permis de désengorger Sangatte, une dizaine de familles seulement s'y étant présentées.

Arrivés ici au bout d'un très long voyage, quelque 1 300 réfugiés, principalement afghans et kurdes d'Irak, attendent donc de pouvoir rejoindre l'Angleterre. Entrés illégalement dans l'espace Schengen par l'Italie ou l'Allemagne, ils ne sont pas reconductibles dans leurs pays d'origine pour des raisons politiques et diplomatiques... mais n'ont pas plus le droit de franchir la Manche. Condamnés, donc, à rester, là... Sauf à demander l'asile en France.

En trois ans, moins de trois cents ont effectué cette démarche, sur les quelque 44 000 qui ont transité par le centre. La raison ? En fait, 85 % d'entre eux sont parvenus à passer la Manche en se cachant dans des camions embarquant à Calais ou en se faufilant dans les trains de marchandises en gare de Frethun et à l'entrée du tunnel de Coquelles. Avec 27 millions de voyageurs empruntant chaque année l'une de ces trois « portes » pour se rendre en Angleterre, le Calaisais est devenu l'une des plus importantes zones de trafic passagers dans le monde. Les clandestins se glissent dans cette foule.

Pour eux, l'enjeu est de taille : une fois sur le sol britannique, ils bénéficient de conditions

bien meilleures que celles offertes à l'intérieur des frontières de Schengen, avec notamment l'autorisation de travailler. Là-bas, ils retrouvent souvent des amis ou de la famille pour les accueillir. Mais les mailles du filet se font de plus en plus fines.

Depuis deux mois, il n'y a plus guère qu'une trentaine de personnes chaque nuit (contre soixante, il y a quelques mois) pour réussir à les franchir. La dernière semaine de l'année, les Britanniques n'ont même fait état que d'un seul passage. « Il y a peu, un réfugié réussissait à passer en quelques jours, explique un observateur, aujourd'hui il lui faudra près d'un mois. » La période est certes peu propice car, en fin d'année, les liaisons par bateau entre les deux pays sont quasiment arrêtées.

Le port et Eurotunnel ont surtout considérablement renforcé les moyens de sécurité pour protéger leurs accès. « Nous avions soixante agents de sécurité cet été, raconte Alain Bertrand, l'un des dirigeants d'Eurotunnel, aujourd'hui ils sont trois cents. Nous avons également dressé trente kilomètres de barrières autour de nos installations. Et nous avons encore éclairé la zone,

arraché tous les bosquets pour faciliter la surveillance... » La SNCF, qui n'a pas terminé les travaux nécessaires à la sécurisation de la gare de Frethun, a suspendu les trois quarts de ses trains. Mais les réfugiés qui ont déboursé plusieurs milliers d'euros dans l'intention de gagner l'Angleterre n'acceptent pas de devoir se contenter de regarder les côtes britanniques depuis la France.

« J'ai quitté l'Afghanistan le 22 septembre dernier, confie dans un anglais hésitant Timur, un homme d'une trentaine d'années bloqué à Sangatte. Il est hors de question que je renonce aujourd'hui. J'ai déjà fait huit tentatives mais je recommencerais. » Les esprits s'échauffent. Les passeurs incapables de remplir leurs missions sont pris à parti. La moindre altercation menace de prendre des proportions importantes. « Nous avons affaire à des hommes de plus en plus jeunes, constate Michel Der, de la Croix-Rouge. Ils acceptent encore plus difficilement l'attente et la frustration. Ils ne comprennent pas pourquoi on leur refuse ce dernier voyage. Pour l'instant, ils gardent toutefois l'espoir de réussir. Un jour. Jusque-là tout ira bien, ou presque. »

Treize mille d'entre eux ont franchi la Manche en 2001

Les réfugiés sous la coupe des réseaux

Sangatte, sous le contrôle des passeurs ? La triste réalité devient de plus en plus patente.

Peu avant Noël, la Police de l'air et des frontières, la PAF, est d'ailleurs venue cueillir sept « passeurs » à l'intérieur même du centre. « On les renvoyait à leurs connaissances toutes neuves et bien cirées, confie une bénévole de la Croix-Rouge. Celles des vrais réfugiés sont usées jusqu'à la corde. Ce sont également ceux qui restent le plus longtemps, qui circulent de groupe en groupe... »

Différents réseaux opèrent à Sangatte, principalement des Kurdes et des Afghans. Au centre, les correspondants de réseaux internationaux attendent l'arrivée de clandestins qui ont souvent payé leur voyage avant de partir. La facture ? Sensiblement 1 500 ? pour un Albanais, 15 000 pour un Chinois et 6 000 pour

un Afghan. Pour ce prix, les migrants sont « coraquéés » depuis leur point de départ jusqu'à Sangatte. On leur fournit des adresses où ils trouveront, à chaque étape de leur long périple, des passeurs pour les embarquer à bord d'un camion, d'un bateau, d'un train. Ils pénètrent l'espace Schengen illégalement par l'Albanie, la Turquie, le sud de l'Allemagne. Ensuite, ils transitent par l'Italie, traversent la France ou rejoignent la Belgique depuis l'Allemagne pour arriver dans le Nord-Pas-de-Calais. Le tout sans garantie sur les délais.

« Certains mettent trois semaines, explique un spécialiste du dossier, d'autres plusieurs mois. Ceux-là doivent s'arrêter pour travailler en cours de route. » D'autres réfugiés, sans doute les moins nombreux, arrivent ici par leurs propres moyens et paient sur place les services

d'un passeur. « Le coût avoisine les 300 dollars, explique un bénévole. Mais ces derniers temps, les prix ont tendance à grimper : jusqu'à 1 000 dollars. »

« A 34 kilomètres du but, ces hommes n'ont pas l'intention de renoncer à leur rêve »

Les organisations mafieuses qui organisent ces transhumances humaines ont rodé le système et affichent des scores de passages impressionnants.

Depuis 1999, date de l'ouverture du centre de Sangatte, quelque 44 000 personnes, de 117 nationalités différentes, ont transité par le hangar de la Croix-Rouge : dont plus de 85 % auraient effectivement rejoint l'Angleterre. La législa-

tion britannique, qui doit être modifiée cette année, reste en effet beaucoup plus favorable aux migrants que celle en vigueur dans les différents pays de l'espace de Schengen.

Avant d'arriver à Sangatte, ces « candidats » à la traversée du Channel ont déjà parcouru entre 3 000 et 5 000 kilo-

mètres dans la clandestinité. Ils arrivent principalement d'Afghanistan et d'Irak et ne sont pas reconductibles dans leur pays pour des raisons humanitaires et politiques.

A 34 kilomètres du but, ces hommes n'ont pas l'intention de renoncer à leur rêve. Et, de fait, ils continuent de passer.

En 2001, 13 000 clandestins ont franchi la Manche illégalement. Selon les données des Britanniques, au cours

des six derniers mois, 2 000 sont passés par le tunnel, 1 700 ont embarqué sur des bateaux dans le port de Calais, 1 000 se sont infiltrés par la gare de triage de Fréthun. Quelque 2 000 autres, qui ont refusé de délivrer les derniers

secrets de leur voyage, ont été recensés dans la province du Kent.

Ces exilés, que la loi anglaise ne permet pas de chasser du sol de Sa Gracieuse Majesté, se font généralement connaître de l'administration

dès qu'ils arrivent au but, pour bénéficier d'un système de protection sociale (ce sont leurs propres déclarations qui permettent d'établir ces statistiques).

Le flux migratoire a cependant bien diminué depuis

2000, année record : 21 000 clandestins avaient, cette année-là, gagné la Grande-Bretagne.

M.-C. T.

IRAN En dix-huit mois, tous les projets votés par le Parlement réformateur ont été balayés par le Conseil des gardiens

Les conservateurs s'opposent aux réformes du président Khatami

Téhéran :
de notre correspondant
Serge Michel

Comment bloquer un processus de réformes et immobiliser un pays ? Demandez à M. Shahidi, qui en est victime tous les jours. Voilà exactement le genre de fonctionnaire dont le président Khatami a besoin pour réformer l'Iran : connaissant l'Occident sans y être inféodé, à la fois ouvert d'esprit et prudent, décidé à ne pas jeter le bébé de la révolution islamique avec l'eau du bain des réformes. Et pourtant, dans le système actuel, Shahabban Shahidi, vice-ministre de la Culture et de la Guidance islamique en charge de la presse, a les mains liées. Jugez plutôt.

Juste avant d'abandonner le Parlement aux réformateurs qui l'ont conquis en février 2000, les conservateurs ont passé une loi très restrictive sur la presse. La nouvelle assemblée a voulu modifier ce texte, mais le guide suprême Ali Khamenei, à l'été 2000, leur a interdit d'y toucher. En substance, cette loi prévoit que toute demande pour un nouveau journal passe par un conseil de supervision de sept membres, dont M. Shahidi est le secrétaire. Ce conseil doit ensuite consulter la justice, les services secrets et les Gardiens de la révolution. Mais en vérité, voilà comment fonctionne, ou plutôt ne fonctionne pas, ce conseil.

D'abord, les conservateurs se sont abstenus d'y désigner leurs

représentants, si bien que durant plusieurs mois, le conseil n'a pas pu être constitué. Ensuite, les représentants conservateurs ont fait (et font toujours) de l'absentéisme de dernière minute, de sorte que le quorum est rarement atteint. En moyenne, une session hebdomadaire sur deux doit ainsi être annulée.

Pendant ce temps, les demandes de licence pour de nouveaux journaux s'accumulent : 4 040 à ce jour. Bon an mal an, le conseil a réussi à en traiter 1 649, et a envoyé ces dossiers aux instances qui doivent aussi se prononcer. Les Gardiens de la révolution ont répondu. Les services secrets ont répondu. Mais « nos amis de la justice », comme dit M. Shahidi, ne répondent jamais. Alors les éditeurs potentiels s'énervent et inondent le secrétaire du conseil d'appels téléphoniques. Certains possèdent le numéro de son téléphone portable. D'autres l'appellent à la maison. Les plus impatients veulent le poursuivre devant les tribunaux pour n'avoir pas répondu à temps à leur demande.

Depuis qu'il existe, le conseil a pu autoriser 7 quotidiens, 42 hebdomadaires, 32 mensuels et 95 périodiques. Des titres souvent anodins qui se répartissent dans les 28 provinces d'Iran. Il est arrivé que la permission vienne trop tard : l'éditeur avait alors perdu le soutien de ses investisseurs. Mais surtout, durant la même période, la justice a fermé près de soixante titres, dont 26 quotidiens. Ces fermetures étaient provisoires (six



mois), mais comme la justice n'a pas organisé de tribunal adéquat 21 mois après la principale vague de fermeture des journaux, aucun n'a pu rouvrir.

Le conseil de supervision de la presse se trouve ainsi dans une situation kafkaïenne, dont Shahabban Shahidi a donné un acompte détaillé lors d'une récente conférence de presse à laquelle la justice a répondu par des menaces de poursuites. Sa seule consolation est sans doute de ne pas être seul : tous les mi-

nistères du cabinet Khatami se débattent dans des situations semblables et parfois pires. Si bien que l'Iran donne aujourd'hui l'image d'un système totalement bloqué, d'une mécanique sans ressort. Par exemple, en un an et demi, tous les projets importants de réformes votés

par le Parlement réformateur ont été balayés par le Conseil des gardiens, une instance conservatrice. Jusqu'à un récent accord de transport avec la Slovaquie.

L'offensive des conservateurs ne connaît pas de relâche. Après une vague d'arrestation parmi les journalistes, une autre chez les opposants libéraux, la justice s'est attaquée aux membres du Parlement : selon Mohammad Kazemi, rapporteur de la commission juridique du Majlis (Parlement), soixante députés réformateurs ont été convoqués par les tribunaux ! Trois députés ont écopé de peines de prison.

Plus récemment, la justice a commencé de s'en prendre aux membres du cabinet, une démarche à laquelle le guide suprême Ali Khamenei s'était personnellement opposé, selon des informations publiées par la presse iranienne. Les ministres du Pétrole et de l'Industrie ont

été convoqués au tribunal dans le contexte d'une lutte contre la corruption financière.

Le gouverneur de la banque centrale fait également l'objet de poursuites. Et Abdullah Ramezanzadeh, secrétaire du Conseil des ministres, qui a rang de vice-président, vient d'écopier de six mois de prison pour avoir contesté l'autorité du Conseil des gardiens lorsqu'il était gouverneur de la province du Kurdistan.

Durant le premier mandat du président Mohammad Khatami (1997-2001), les attaques des conservateurs ont d'une certaine manière

contribué à sa grandeur. Le public a plusieurs fois manifesté sa sympathie pour un homme qui, comme eux, souffrait. Il a ainsi été réélu le 8 juin dernier par 76 % des suffrages. Mais aujourd'hui, la tendance s'est inversée et la popularité de Khatami semble en chute libre.

Les étudiants, qui furent ses supporters les plus enflammés, l'accusent désormais de manquer de courage. « On n'arrive pas à lui en vouloir personnellement », explique Vida, étudiante à l'université polytechnique Amir Kabir de Téhéran. *Ce doit être comme lorsqu'un enfant que l'on a élevé avec tendresse se met à faire des bêtises. Mais*

bien sûr, nous regrettons d'avoir voté pour lui la seconde fois. » Dans ce hall de l'université Amir Kabir se prépare une réunion en faveur du responsable étudiant Ali Afshari, qui vient de passer plus d'un an en prison, vaguement accusé d'avoir voulu renverser le régime.

Au mur, des affiches proclament « *L'Iran est une grande prison* ». Ou encore : « *Nous sommes tous des accusés sans jugement* ». L'ambiance est chaude, mais pas seulement contre les conservateurs. « *Khatami, qu'as-tu fait pour dénoncer les obstacles sur la voie du développement politique ?* », lance un tribun. *Ton silence est inacceptable.* »

L'ayatollah Khamenei veut favoriser le dialogue

Inquiet de la tension politique croissante entre le Parlement réformateur et la justice conservatrice, le numéro un iranien Ali Khamenei pousse au dialogue entre les différentes institutions du régime, condition absolue à ses yeux de la survie de ce dernier.

Le Guide de la République islamique a souligné dans une allocution mercredi « *le danger de la division et de la discorde* » qui guette l'Iran. « *Le remède aux maux* » du pays réside dans « *l'unité et la solidarité des trois pouvoirs* », c'est-à-dire

la présidence de la République et le Parlement, tous deux réformateurs, et la justice, institution extrêmement puissante aux mains des conservateurs, a estimé l'ayatollah Khamenei. « *L'affaiblissement de ces pouvoirs porterait atteinte à la révolution et au système*, a déclaré le successeur de l'ayatollah Khomeiny. *Il ne faut pas qu'ils s'affaiblissent en luttant entre eux.* »

Le climat politique, tendu depuis l'arrivée au pouvoir en 1997 du président réformateur Mohammad Khatami, qui

entend « démocratiser » la République islamique, s'est durci encore depuis deux ans, avec les arrestations de nombreux opposants, journalistes et intellectuels. Un nouveau cran dans l'épreuve de force entre réformateurs et conservateurs a été franchi le 26 décembre avec l'incarcération du député d'Hamedan (ouest), Hossein Loghmanian, accusé d'avoir « *insulté la justice* ». Deux autres députés, dont une femme Fatemeh Haghighat-Jou, sont condamnés également à la prison. (AFP.)

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German Exports To Iraq Increased Fourfold in 2001

Gain Comes Amid Embargo And Possibility of Conflict

By GEORG WEISHAUPT
HANDELSBLATT CORRESPONDENT

DUESSELDORF, Germany — German exports to Iraq rose fourfold in 2001 despite a partial United Nations embargo and the possible extension of the war on terrorism to countries other than Afghanistan.

"Exports have jumped," said Michael Pfeiffer, head of foreign trade at the Federation of German Chambers of Trade and Industry. Despite lengthy approval procedures necessary to export to Iraq, the volume of approved exports by German companies rose to around 1.2 billion marks (€613.3 million) from 273 million marks.

Iraq is still near the bottom of German export rankings, but companies are benefiting from the upswing. Technology giant Siemens AG, for instance, is cashing in on the country's pent-up demand for medical supplies, with the group's medical-technology division forecasting sales of "more than €50 million" for the fiscal year ending in 2002, compared with less than €10 million in fiscal 2001.

Uli Burkhardt, from Munich-based trade-fair group Imag, said its annual international trade fair in Baghdad "was a very, very big success for German firms," with a total of 112 companies represented in the German pavilion, twice as many as in the previous year.

Wirtgen GmbH, a midsize producer of machinery and equipment for road construction, was one of the few German companies to exhibit its products directly in Baghdad. The group has been exporting its products to Iraq since before the Gulf War. It forecast sales for this year in the "two-digit millions of euros."

Truck maker MAN AG has also benefited from the increase in road construction in Iraq. In the six months ended Dec. 31, the group sold €16 million in trucks to the country. For 2002, MAN expects that figure to rise to €30 million.

Foreign companies can sell only goods to Iraq that fall under the so-called oil-for-food program. They include food and products that serve to improve the country's infrastructure and health provisions. The restrictions are designed to prevent the export of products that could be used for military purposes.

"You have to expect the approval process to take around six months," said Wolfgang Dintera, head of sales at the Middle East division of Siemens medical technology. But on one occasion, approval from New York for a shipment of ultrasound equipment took two years, he added. The supply of spare parts is subject to the same approval procedures. First, the German office for industry and export controls has to give the green light before the U.N. sanctions committee in New York grants final approval.

Turkish special forces inside Iraq

Iraq Press
January 5, 2002

Zakho - Hundreds of Turkish special forces have moved deep inside Iraqi territories, occupying positions within areas under Kurdish rebel control.

The reason behind the latest Turkish incursion is not clear. Previously, Turkey launched forays into northern Iraq in pursuit of guerrillas of Kurdistan Workers Party or PKK. But PKK presence in northern Iraq has almost vanished following the capture of its leader Abdullah Ocalan.

Kurdish sources told Iraq Press PKK guerrillas had evacuated their hideouts in northern Iraq and they had no idea why Turkey was sending in special forces this time.

The Turkish move comes amid reports of a possible U.S. military strike on Iraq. A U.S. delegation is currently in Ankara to address Turkish concerns if America decides to move against Baghdad.

The delegation consists of nine U.S. lawmakers among them Joseph Lieberman and John McCain who along with other congressmen have asked President George Bush to make Iraq the next target in America's war against international terrorism. The delegation made it clear to Turkish officials that America believes Iraqi President Saddam Hussein should be ousted, but it will not strike him without consulting Turkey first.

Turkish support would be crucial to any fight against Saddam. Turkey was the launching pad for attacks against Baghdad during the 1991 Gulf War and has since hosted U.S. and British warplanes enforcing a no-fly zone above northern Iraq. The Kurdish sources said more than 400 Turkish troops crossed the border into northern Iraq in the past two days and have camped 60 kilometers east of the Kurdish border town of Zakho.

More Turkish troops backed by tanks and armored personnel carriers had entered Iraq late last year but withdrew without any skirmishes. The Turks have beefed up their military base at Bamarni, an old Iraqi military camp in northern Iraq. Residents told Iraq Press the Turkish army now has about 2,000 troops and 30 tanks in Bamarni.

Previously, militias of the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Massoud Barzani aided the Turks in their hunt for PKK rebels.

But the KDP has suspended military assistance to the Turks in their fight against PKK guerrillas.

The measure, Kurdish sources say, has angered Ankara which they accused of attempts to create trouble with KDP checkpoints at the border point of Khabur.

* * * * *

Film on Turkish-Kurdish language divide is a hit in Turkey

Turkish Daily News January 4, 2002

Hejar, a 5-year old Kurdish girl, escapes a bloody police raid on a relative's home and ends up under the protection of a 75-year-old retired Turkish judge.

The girl cannot speak Turkish, and the authoritarian judge objects to the use of Kurdish in his house.

Partly sponsored by the government, the movie about their tense relationship and the old man's gradual questioning of Turkey's strict one-language policy has won over moviegoers here. "Big Man, Small Love" reflects a more relaxed attitude toward Kurdish language and cultural expression, and is Turkey's selection to compete for the foreign-film category of the Oscars. The movie includes bits of dialogue in Kurdish with Turkish subtitles.

Kurdish is still banned in formal settings and in education in Turkey; a recent plea by Kurdish university students that the government allow the language to be taught on campus has landed on deaf ears.

But things have loosened up since the days when Turkey's estimated 12 million Kurds - nearly a fifth of the population - were banned from speaking Kurdish under a policy enforced from 1983 to 1991.

In the film, Hejar ends up with a relative in Istanbul after her parents are killed in their village in clashes between government forces and Kurdish separatists / terrorists. The relative is sheltering two fugitive militants, and all three are killed when police raid the home. Hejar escapes by hiding in a cabinet.

Horried at the extra-judicial killings, the judge takes Hejar in while he tries to decide whether to hand her over to police or look for her other relatives. Many girls in villages in Turkey's impoverished and mainly Kurdish southeast speak only Kurdish.

The judge, however, refuses to believe that Hejar cannot speak Turkish, and he bans the little girl and his Kurdish maid, Sakine, from conversing in Kurdish. "Don't let me hear you speak Kurdish again," the judge, played by actor Sukran Gungor, tells the woman in one scene.

Like Turkey itself, however, the old man eventually mellows and even learns some Kurdish words.

"Negri!" ("Don't cry" in Kurdish) he pleads with Hejar.

Recently, Turkey's parliament, under European Union pressure, partially lifted a constitutional ban on broadcasts in Kurdish, but security forces can still order broadcasts off the air for security reasons.

Restrictions on Kurdish stem from the government's fear that granting cultural rights to Kurds would divide the country along ethnic lines and amount to concessions to the terrorists who have waged a 15-year war for autonomy. The fighting has claimed 37,000 lives. In the movie, Hejar (played by 6-year-old Dilan Ercetin) repeatedly screams obscenities in Kurdish. Turkish subtitles appear on the screen, prompting chuckles from one recent audience in Ankara.

"I can identify with the judge," said Pinar Ayaz, a student. "So many of us have difficulty accepting that some people in the east cannot speak Turkish. Our mentalities are now slowly changing."

The movie's writer and director, Handan Ipekci, a relative newcomer to Turkish cinema, said the violence in the southeast inspired her to tell this tale and base it on the language divide.

"It was a difficult time, people were killing each other, I thought something had to be done," Ipekci said in an interview. The Ministry of Culture contributed some dlr 30,000 while Euroimages, which sponsors European films, provided the rest of the dlr 850,000 budget.

The film won five awards at the Antalya Film Festival, Turkey's leading film awards, including best film and best screenplay. Turkey's top movie critic, Atilla Dorsay, calls it "the most important production of contemporary Turkish cinema. I don't recall ever seeing such a Turkish film."

* * * * *

Anti-Saddam Group May Lose Funding

January 7, 2002

By GEORGE GEDDA Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) - The leading Iraqi opposition group will lose its U.S. financial support at the end of January unless it comes up with a system that properly accounts for spending, the State Department said Monday. The aid program for the Iraqi National Congress was temporarily suspended last week. With the Jan. 31 deadline in mind, the group will receive \$500,000 to cover operational costs as it acts to reform its accounting system, department spokesman Richard Boucher said.

The INC reacted angrily to the suspension last week, calling it politically motivated.

On Monday, INC spokesman Sharif Ali reaffirmed the allegation, declaring that "pre-emptive efforts by the Near East Bureau of the State Department to discredit the INC serve no purpose other than to undermine the U.S. president's declared policy of regime change in Iraq," INC spokesman Sharif Ali said. Ali said the State Department has been systematically blocking INC efforts to carry out operations inside Iraq in violation of Congress' expressed intent.

Boucher denied that politics motivated suspension of the State Department fund. He said the suspension was prompted by an October report from the department's inspector general that ordered the money be withheld until the INC "has implemented adequate and transparent financial controls."

Spokesman Boucher also said the State Department has found shortcomings in INC television programming into Iraq and its proposals for delivering humanitarian assistance into the country.

But, he said, the main problem centers on the lack of effective accounting. Most of the money earmarked for Iraqi opposition groups over the years has gone to the INC. The programs are meant to support humanitarian aid, media, war crimes investigations and human rights activities. In 1997, Congress approved \$97 million for military training and equipment for the INC. Nothing has been designated yet for these activities.

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Iranian official confers with Iraqi opposition

Arabicnews.com January 5, 2002

The London-based al-Hayat daily issued on Friday quoted sources of the Iraqi opposition in Damascus as saying that Seif Ellahi, the official in charge of the Iraqi file at the office of the spiritual guide of the Islamic revolution in Iran Ali Khomeini is currently making talks in Syria with the Islamic, national and Kurdish trends in the Iraqi opposition.

The sources indicated that there is a new Iranian inclination in dealing with the Iraqi file based on two axes: openness to all opposition trends and not supporting one trend at the expense of the other and working for achieving democracy in Iraq. After the paper said in the context of a report by its correspondent in Damascus, yet sources at the Iranian embassy in Damascus were hesitant in conforming or denying the nature of the mission of the Iranian official in being a private or an official visit, the paper said quoting the Iraqi opposition sources that Seif Ellahi for whom the Iranian ambassador in Damascus organized a work luncheon attended by leading figures at the Iraqi opposition, had on Wednesday evening made talks with the chairman of the Iraqi (al-Watan) "the homeland" party Mashaan al-Jabouri.

The sources quoted al-Jabouri as saying that his party will strongly oppose every political project on the future of Iraq based on dismissing the authority's party, the army and the intelligence from the political life. Al-Jabouri added "I am defending the interests of those because they are faithful to their principles. The ruler might have had led them to the wrong destination and therefore our position should be positive towards them."

The sources indicated that al-Jabouri stressed during his meeting with Ellahi support for democracy and human rights in Iraq and his country's determination to create a meeting point between all Iraqi opposition trends.

The paper indicated that Seif Ellahi arrived in Damascus last Friday and was welcomed at the airport by the Iranian ambassador in Damascus Hussein Sheikh al-Islam, al-Jabouri, the Ghazi Zeibari the representative for the Kurdistan democratic party led by Mesout al-Barazani, Adel Murad the representative of the Kurdistan national federation and Bayan Jaber the representative of the higher council of the Islamic revolution led by Muhammad Baqer al-Hakim.

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Iraqi Regime Executes 8 Citizens from Basra Charged with Contacting Opposition

January 6, 2002

Center for Human Rights: IRAQI COMMUNIST PARTY

In a savage act aimed at terrorising the people, the Iraqi authorities have recently executed 8 citizens from Basra governorate after charging them with contacting opposition forces. The Centre for Human Rights has received information that the victims had been arrested in December 2000, and their fate remained unknown until their bodies were handed over to their families in early November 2001. There were clear signs of torture on the bodies of victims whose families were prevented from conducting the traditional mourning ceremonies.

The victims were: 1- Maher Hussein Majid, a student of the Law College at Basra university, and a resident of Shat al-Arab area, Al-Jazira Al-Rabi'a (Fourth Island). 2- Sayyed Emad Sayyed Abbass, a graduate of the Islamic Law

(Sahri'a) College. He belonged to a well-known religious family in Basra. 3- Ali Abd al-Hussein Lazem, a student of the Education College at Basra University, and a resident of Garmat Ali. 4- Hafedh Sabah al-Eidani, a conscript soldier, who lived in Eastern Bani Malek village, in Garmat Ali district. 5- Wahid Salman al-Dubaisi, a builder, and a resident of Eastern Bani Malek village. He is the nephew of the previous victim in the List (Hafedh al-Eidani). 6- Ahmed Gati', a resident of the centre of Garmat Ali district. He worked at his father's coffee house, known in the district as Maqha Gati'. 7- Khudayyer Hadi al-Shuwaili, a shopkeeper, who lived in Abu Sukhair village in Garmat Ali district. 8- Sayyed Hamed Sayyed Ali al-Jaberi, a shopkeeper, and a resident of Al-Qibla district.

This new barbaric crime, which has been committed by the dictatorial rulers against sons of Iraqi people, shows once again their true bloody nature and their insistence on pursuing and physically liquidating anyone suspected of resisting their hated regime. It is another example of the way our people are denied the right to life, after depriving them of their most basic right to just and open trials where they are given the opportunity to defend themselves and seek the help of lawyers for this purpose. We call once again upon all human rights organisations, as well as the world public opinion and all people of good will, to raise their voices and denounce strongly the crimes of the dictatorial regime against the Iraqi people, and call for an immediate halt to the on-going mass executions, an end to the violations of human rights, and the release of all political detainees and prisoners.

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Iraqi Shiite religious cleric in Syria

Iraq Press January 8, 2002

Damascus - A top Iraqi Shiite religious figure was given a warm welcome on arrival in Damascus.

Mohammed Saeed al-Hakeem, began his visit Sunday amid a large celebration at the airport attended by senior figures and hundreds of well-wishers. Al-Hakeem has a large following inside Iraq and his books and sermons have spread far beyond Iraqi borders. But unlike other colleagues, al-Hakeem has kept a low profile trying to distance himself from politics.

Many of those welcoming his arrival in Damascus came all the way from Lebanon and other Syrian cities among them the Iranian ambassador in Damascus, Hussein Sheikh al-Islam, the representative of Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Khamene'i and top Shiite clerics in both Syria and Lebanon. Al-Hakeem is in Damascus for treatment. He made the trip when his Iraqi doctors failed to prescribe the causes of certain ailments he suffers from.

The doctors advised the aging cleric to seek treatment abroad and his son, Sayed Riyadh, who lives in the Iranian religious city of Qom, has said his father may go to London if he does not find the cure in Syria. Al-Hakeem was seen leaving the Iraqi plane which carried him to Damascus with the aid of a stick.

Riyad has said his father's visit was purely for medical treatment and he will not hold political discussions neither with the Syrian authorities nor Iraqi opposition groups there. Several Iraqi Shiite clergymen who used their religious authority to criticize corruption of President Saddam Hussein's government have been either silenced or killed in mysterious circumstances. The highest ranking Shiite religious leader to have been murdered was grand Ayatollah Mohammed Sadek al-Sadr who was gunned down in the religious city of Najaf along with his two sons.

His murder provoked bloody clashes in Baghdad and other major cities in southern Iraq between the Iraqi authorities and demonstrators who took to the streets protesting his death.

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INC Confirms U.S. Funding Continues: Call for Congressional Oversight of INC Program

INC Press Release January 7, 2002

London - The Iraqi National Congress (INC) has confirmed today that it will continue to receive funds from the US Government. The INC has been asked to institute certain financial controls by 15 January. The INC is on schedule to meet this deadline and has given its commitment to this effect.

INC Leadership member and spokesman, Sharif Ali Bin AlHussein said today: "The statement issued by the State

Department was premature and was clearly engineered by officials who don't want aggressive action against Iraq," charged Sharif Ali.

"In a meeting in November 2001 held in New York between the senior leadership of the INC, and Undersecretary of State Marc Grossman and the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. John Negroponte, the INC was congratulated by these U.S. officials on the successful completion of the Inspector General audit," noted Sharif Ali.

"Additional financial controls were requested of the INC with a January 15th deadline. The INC intends to meet that deadline, and believes that preemptive efforts by the Near East Bureau of the Department of State to discredit the INC serve no purpose other than to undermine the U.S. President's declared policy of regime change in Iraq," insisted Sharif Ali.

"Prior to the end of the U.S. Fiscal Year, the INC submitted a proposal to the Department of State for \$25 million dollars, \$17 million of which was to be spent on operations inside Iraq. Since that time (September 2001), the INC has had no agreement with the State Department over the future of its funding activities. As a result, the State Department has been unilaterally extending the agreement with the INC," explained Sharif Ali.

"The fact is that the Near East Bureau of the Department of State has restricted funds to the INC because the INC has repeatedly insisted on spending the majority of its funds inside Iraq, as designated by the United States Congress," said Sharif Ali.

"This Congressional intent was reiterated in a letter directly to President Bush in early December 2001, signed by prominent Members of both parties and both Houses of Congress," explained Sharif Ali.

"The INC would welcome Congressional scrutiny of the work of the INC and the effectiveness of its spending of U.S. public funds. The INC would further welcome any Congressional oversight over the U.S. program to support the Iraqi National Congress," concluded Sharif Ali.

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Botching Iraqi Policy: The State Department getting in the way

National Review

By Eli J. Lake (State Department correspondent for United Press International) January 9, 2002

Last week the State Department cut off nearly all funding for the Iraqi National Congress, citing financial mismanagement.

State claims the coalition of rebels has failed to implement the basic reforms called for in a U.S. audit completed last October. They complain that there are no procedures in place to account for how the INC's information-collection program spends its money. And they raise concerns over the effectiveness of other programs.

The INC counters that the program employs operatives in dangerous countries surrounding Iraq that can't have their names show up in a document that could be obtained through the Freedom of Information Act. Sparking a revolution is, after all, messy business that doesn't neatly fit into annual ledgers.

The real problem is not how the rebels keep their books, but rather what they intend to do with the money that's on them. The INC's driving force, Ahmad Chalabi, has been fairly straightforward about how he intends to use American support. He wants to eventually train enough men to challenge a single Iraqi brigade and gain a foothold inside Iraq, a home address to attract more defectors and soldiers to fight Saddam. Chalabi came close to this goal in 1996 before the Kurdish Democratic Party allowed Saddam's troops to vanquish the remaining stronghold the INC had in northern Iraq in Erbil. Not surprising, the State Department does not share the INC's view of itself. It would like for the group to be a political organization, nonviolently presenting alternative perspectives on Saddam's rule through newspapers and until recently a television station.

The problem in Iraq appears to not be so much a question of popular support for ousting their ruler but faith that a group of Saddam's opponents would have enough military muscle to protect them from the state's death squads. After all countless Iraqis were slaughtered in 1991 when the first President Bush told them to rise up against the regi-

me and then allowed that regime to use its remaining helicopters to put down the rebellion. In the last ten years, Iraqi people's faith inside in the opposition has weakened in the face of bungled coups and Washington's foot dragging. This trend appears to be exacerbated by a near four-year marriage between Chalabi's rebels and the State Department. Iraqi rebels do not need better accountants, they need weapons and training superior to the Iraqi Republican Guards (and probably lots of U.S. air power).

If the second President Bush is serious about toppling Saddam's government, he should not entrust this task to diplomats who are prized for their skills in negotiating with existing governments. The stated goal of Iraq policy for the INC, Congress, and, for that matter, the Republican party (according to the 2000 platform) is the removal of Saddam Hussein from power. In foreign policy speak this is called regime change, which is a nice way of saying war, the proper domain of the Pentagon.

But regime change runs counter to the grist of what the State Department does. Modern diplomacy is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of states within the international system. The notion was first sketched out in the 1815 Congress of Vienna and is enshrined in the chapter two of the United Nations Charter.

The idea is simple, no matter what different governments think of each other, they may not interfere in each other's internal affairs, because every country is a sovereign entity. For this reason, much of the CIA's work is secret. Washington can't come right out and say they are influencing events inside a country because it violates the basic tenets of diplomacy. Letting the diplomats manage an insurrection inside Iraq is akin to asking the director of Central Intelligence to negotiate a ceasefire between the Israelis and Palestinians. Admittedly, this is a bad analogy since the substance of the current U.S. ceasefire proposal for the holy land was negotiated by George Tenet last June. But it proves the point, the spymaster's ceasefire failed miserably, just ask the Israeli navy.

As abhorrent as Saddam's regime is, the United States still formally recognizes it as the government of Iraq. Mind you this hasn't stopped American spies from buying off various Saddam opponents or hatching coup plots, but the State Department at least doesn't have to worry about these matters.

Contrast this with the Taliban, which the United States never recognized as the government of Afghanistan or the current warlords who run Somalia. The diplomatic problems with military action in those places are far less complicated. Foggy Bottom has long been suspicious of Chalabi and his plans for insurrection inside Iraq. The State Department has opposed not only arming and training INC rebels but also a more modest plan to distribute humanitarian aid inside the country. In October, the State Department even sent an envoy to London to urge the INC's leadership not to make defectors the group recruited available to journalists and other U.S. intelligence agencies.

Meanwhile, the primary Iraq policy goal of the State Department, at least under Colin Powell, has been the modification of international sanctions against Iraq. This policy by its nature recognizes the legitimacy of Saddam's regime because if "smart sanctions" work then they will persuade him to allow weapons inspectors inside the country. As one State Department official told me recently, "Regime change is plan B if the sanctions don't work."

The Pentagon opposed smart sanctions from the beginning of the administration and also made a modest grab for the INC account in the early part of the 2002 budget process. The reason is because people who work at the Pentagon focus on winning wars. Most analysts there believe that Saddam Hussein is at war with the United States and should therefore be defeated, Congress of Vienna be damned. After all, the guy tried to kill the first President Bush in Kuwait and won't live up to the terms of the agreements he signed to end the Gulf War back in 1991 anyway. Fortunately for President Bush, the Pentagon employs many experts in the kind of war likely to be most successful against Saddam. They reside in the office of Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict. If the president wishes to end Saddam Hussein's career as a statesman he should transfer INC responsibilities to the SOLIC offices.

If not, he should just come out and say he opposes regime change in Iraq and propose legislation reversing the Iraq Liberation Act that set aside the first bundle of money for the INC in 1998. In the meantime he should do Colin Powell and Ahmad Chalabi both a favor and promise them that neither will have to deal with each other again.

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The United States Must Strike at Saddam Hussein

By Richard Perle

WASHINGTON — Within hours of the Sept. 11 attacks, President George W. Bush said, "We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them."

From that first statement, Mr. Bush shaped a grand strategy for the war on terrorism that is as transforming of American policy as was Ronald Reagan's pledge to consign a Soviet "evil empire" to the "ash heap of history."

It breaks with the past by taking aim at states harboring terrorists as well as at terrorists themselves. It is why the U.S.-led forces have destroyed the Taliban regime in Afghanistan even as they hunt down Osama bin Laden himself. It is why the war against terrorism cannot be won if Saddam Hussein continues to rule Iraq.

Three things about Saddam make the destruction of his regime essential to the war against terrorism.

First Saddam hates the United States with a vengeance. It is hatred that he has embraced since Mr. Bush's father defeated him on the field of battle.

Second, Saddam has an array of chemical and biological weapons and has been willing to absorb the pain of a decade-long embargo rather than allow international inspectors to uncover the full magnitude of his program.

The expulsion of inspectors from Iraq three years ago has rendered future inspections worthless; everything that could be relocated has been hidden and

will prove even more difficult to find than bin Laden.

Alone among heads of state, Saddam has actually used chemical weapons against his own people, killing thousands of unarmed citizens in northern Iraq. Disseminated to would-be martyrs from Qaida, Hezbollah, Hamas, Islamic Jihad or other terrorist groups, Saddam's biological arsenal could kill very large numbers of Americans.

With each passing day, he comes closer to his dream of a nuclear arsenal. How close is he? We do not know. Two years, three years, tomorrow even? We simply do not know, and any intelligence estimate that would cause America to relax would be about as useful as the ones that missed his nuclear program in the early 1990s.

Third, we know that Saddam has engaged directly in acts of terror and given sanctuary and other support to terrorists. In 1993 he planned the assassination of George H. W. Bush during the former president's visit to Kuwait. He operates a terrorist training facility at Salman Pak complete with a passenger aircraft cabin for training in hijacking. He openly, defiantly pays the families of suicide bombers and praises the attacks on Sept. 11. If anyone fits the profile of support for terror, it is Saddam.

His removal from office, we are told privately, would be cheered in the Persian Gulf. The conventional wisdom that an attack on him would be seen as an

attack against Islam is an insult to Islam, and it is wrong. To most Muslims, his reign of terror is an abomination. In Iraq itself, his downfall would be met with dancing in the streets. A decent successor regime would be very likely to encourage peace in the region.

The Iraqi National Congress, an umbrella group of Saddam's opponents, needs U.S. political and financial support today, and when the time is ripe, they will need U.S. precision air power.

In 1981 the Israelis faced an urgent choice: Should they allow Saddam to fuel a French-built nuclear reactor near Baghdad — or destroy it? Once fuel was placed in the reactor, it could not be bombed without releasing lethal radioactive material.

Allowing the fueling to go forward meant that the Baghdad regime could eventually get the plutonium to build a nuclear weapon. The Israelis decided to strike preemptively, before it was too late: in a spectacular display of precision bombing, the reactor at Osirak was destroyed. Everything we know about Saddam forces Mr. Bush to make a similar choice: to take preemptive action or wait, possibly until it is too late.

The writer, a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, was assistant secretary of defense from 1981 to 1987. He contributed this comment to The New York Times.

No, a U.S. Attack on Iraq Would Do More Harm Than Good

By Leon Fuerth

WASHINGTON — Advocates of going to war to displace Saddam Hussein are working hard to sell their case to the public, and there are indications of a vigorous debate on Iraq within the Bush administration. But eliminating Saddam's regime will not solve the terrorism problem as exemplified by Qaida — and waging war against Iraq could create new threats.

Saddam Hussein is dangerous and likely to become more so. He may well possess stocks of biological weapons that escaped both the bombardments of the Gulf War and the subsequent investigations by United Nations inspectors. He has demonstrated more than enough ruthlessness for Americans to credit him with the will to use weapons of mass destruction. He is a permanent menace to his region and to the vital interests of the United States.

Nonetheless, Saddam is not America's most serious problem, and attacking him would be at the expense of higher priorities.

There may well have been interaction between Saddam's intelligence apparatus and various terrorist networks, including that of Osama bin Laden. But it was bin Laden's network that brought about the Sept. 11 attacks, and his agents

did not come from Iraq. There is no credible public information to indicate that Iraq was significantly involved.

It is, indeed, characteristic of bin Laden's network that it does not entirely depend on a state sponsor like Iraq. What makes Qaida so dangerous is not bin Laden — although his death or capture would remove a great, evil

talent from the leadership of terrorism — but his development of the concept of using a network as a vehicle for leveraging many individuals and groups, each weak on its own, into an engine of destruction powerful enough to hurt the United States.

The capacity to network, as described by a growing number of scholars, means an ability to create ad hoc patterns of activity among widely distributed cells: to communicate, pass resources, move key personnel and maintain the initiative through audacious planning. It is the network that gives what bin Laden created the means to adapt even to his demise, taking advantage of an organizational pattern that resembles that of a global multinational corporation.

After the dislocation of Qaida in Afghanistan, the next phase needs to be a sustained assault on the broader

network: attacking its individual cells by working in concert with intelligence and police services around the world. Multilateral cooperation is of the essence, as it was in the Afghanistan campaign. Anything that distracts the United States from relentless pursuit of the system by which terrorist groups can operate as networked entities — and anything that detracts from the willingness of other governments to work alongside America — is at the expense of U.S. national security.

An immediate attack on Saddam carries a very high risk of constituting just such a fatal diversion. Arguments that his fall would require little American military investment are reckless in the extreme. Claims that the Iraqi National Congress, or the two main Kurdish groups, are ready to be Iraq's version of

the Northern Alliance are misapplied analogies. Assurances that Iraq's neighbors would be happy to see Saddam eliminated are dangerous simplifications. Claims that America can either hold the coalition together if the United States promptly attacks Saddam or that America no longer needs a coalition are simply guesses.

U.S. choices are not limited to attack or neglect. There can be an interim program for Iraq. America should reheat the demand for international inspectors and return to the Security Council for "smart" sanctions. Washington should take the position that if Saddam blocks inspection of facilities suspected of being used for manufacturing weapons of mass destruction, the United States will destroy those sites. America should also develop the ca-

pabilities of the Iraqi National Congress and help the Kurds.

America's hand could be forced by convincing evidence that Saddam was a central actor in the use of anthrax as a weapon against the United States or by some new move on his part that threatens his neighbors. Absent such developments, the United States should focus on destroying what threatens it most: the ability of terrorist organizations to organize and to attack through a dispersed network; literally, the globalization of terror.

The writer, visiting professor of international relations at George Washington University, was national security adviser to Vice President Al Gore. He contributed this comment to The New York Times.

La loi turque reconnaît aux femmes l'égalité dans le mariage

Un nouveau code civil est entré en vigueur

ISTANBUL

de notre correspondante

Le Nouvel An a apporté aux femmes turques des étrennes très attendues. Après des années de pressions de la part de groupes féministes, une réforme fondamentale du code civil, qui enlève au mari le statut de chef de famille et donne enfin aux femmes l'égalité avec les hommes, est entrée en vigueur le 1^{er} janvier 2002.

Bien que considéré comme très progressiste au moment de son introduction, le code précédent, fondé sur la loi suisse, était resté presque inchangé depuis 1926 et n'était plus adapté aux conditions sociales actuelles. Les épouses tur-

ques ont désormais un pouvoir égal au sein du mariage, peuvent travailler sans demander l'autorisation de leur mari et prennent part à toutes les décisions concernant les enfants ou le lieu de résidence. Les enfants nés hors mariage seront reconnus au même titre que les enfants issus de l'union.

Un autre changement important concerne le régime matrimonial. Jusqu'à présent, le régime en vigueur était la séparation de biens et de nombreuses femmes se retrouvaient démunies en cas de divorce, leur ex-partenaire gardant la maison, la voiture et autres biens acquis durant leur union. Désormais, les futurs mariés auront le

choix entre quatre régimes différents, mais celui de la communauté des biens — et donc le partage équitable de ces biens en cas de séparation — sera appliqué par défaut.

Cette disposition a rencontré une forte opposition de la part de députés conservateurs au sein de l'Assemblée nationale durant les débats sur la révision des 1 030 articles du code civil. Les parlementaires opposés au changement sont parvenus à introduire une modification de dernière minute, qui limite l'application du nouveau régime aux biens acquis après le 1^{er} janvier 2003 dans le cas de mariages conclus sous l'ancienne loi.

La nouvelle loi interdit désormais le mariage avant 18 ans, alors que le code précédent prévoyait une limite inférieure de 15 ans pour les filles et 17 ans pour les garçons. Mais dans les régions rurales, la majorité des mariages sont encore arrangés par les familles et les filles sont souvent mariées à un très jeune âge.

Récemment, les autorités de la province égéenne d'Aydın se sont inquiétées du taux d'absentéisme dans les écoles primaires. Une enquête a révélé que de nombreuses jeunes filles, âgées de 10 à 14

ans, étaient déjà mariées et parfois mères de famille. Plusieurs dizaines de personnes ont été arrêtées, mais cette pratique est courante également dans d'autres provinces.

UNIONS ILLÉGALES

Ces unions, conclues devant un imam (dignitaire religieux) plutôt qu'à l'état civil, sont illégales, et la loi donne aux jeunes filles le droit de s'y opposer. Mais en pratique, la pression de la communauté est souvent trop forte et les filles, qui souvent sont considérées, en Anatolie, comme la propriété de leur père avant de devenir celle de leur époux, sont souvent forcées de se plier à la tradition.

La réforme du code civil a néanmoins été saluée par les féministes comme un progrès historique pour la Turquie, pays musulman qui aspire à adhérer à l'Union européenne. Un important travail d'éducation reste cependant encore à accomplir pour assurer que toutes les femmes turques soient au courant de leurs droits et surtout, qu'elles soient en mesure de les exercer.

Nicole Pope

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, TUESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2002

BRIEFLY

3 Sentenced in Turkish Killings

ANKARA — A Turkish court on Monday sentenced three men to death on charges linked to the killings of prominent supporters of a secular state.

Verdicts were handed down in the cases of 24 alleged Islamist rebels in a trial that marked the end of high-profile Turkish efforts to solve a series of killings of secularists and leftists in the 1990s.

Lawyers for the defendants had denied charges that the

defendants belonged to a secretive religious group that intended to replace Turkey's legal system with one based on Islamic law.

The death sentences are unlikely to be carried out. Turkey, a candidate for membership in the European Union, has put an effective moratorium on executions and has not carried out the death penalty since the mid-1980s. (Reuters)

U.S. Hawk Hints Iraq Won't Be Next Target

By James Dao
and Eric Schmitt
New York Times Service

WASHINGTON — The war on terrorism after Afghanistan could focus on denying terrorist groups sanctuary in such places as Somalia, Yemen, Indonesia and the Philippines, countries where they have sometimes operated freely, according to Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz.

Mr. Wolfowitz's remarks, in an interview Monday, provided one of the clearest outlines of the military's strategy for the evolving war on terrorism.

While he has a reputation as one of the more aggressive members of President George W. Bush's war council, his statements suggested that the Pentagon could choose to put off the bigger but politically more difficult targets in the war on terrorism like Iraq, and thus avoid conflict with some of its most important Arab and European allies, which have been wary of taking on Baghdad.

Instead, Mr. Wolfowitz said, the military is now engaged with friendly countries like the Philippines and Indonesia that would welcome American help in ridding themselves of terrorist networks. The Pentagon is also looking hard at possible terror bases in such countries as Somalia and Yemen that are weakly governed and ill-equipped to uproot them.

Mr. Wolfowitz stressed that he was not providing an explicit forecast for the next step in the war on terrorism and that the Pentagon had not ruled out imminent military action against any country.

But he has been one of the leading advocates in the Bush administration for removing President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. And he seemed to signal to Iraq and other state sponsors of terrorism that unless they stopped harboring terrorists, they could face increased diplomatic, financial and, if necessary, military pressure from the United States.

He asserted that the U.S. air campaign in Afghanistan had already induced many countries that had

supported terrorism to change their ways and that it would serve as a powerful deterrent against future acts of terrorism.

"I'd say almost everywhere one has seen progress," he said. "A lot of that progress is motivated by the sense of American seriousness and the fear of getting on the wrong side of us."

"To the extent that's the motivation," Mr. Wolfowitz continued, "then obviously you don't want to issue a report card on those people and have them let up, because they're not doing it out of the goodness of their heart."

He also asserted that the Pentagon's main focus remained Afghanistan, which he described as being "at least as treacherous and dangerous now as it was a month or two ago."

"One of the most difficult things in the next few months," Mr. Wolfowitz said, "is going to be establishing which of our allies of convenience in the early stages of this war can become real allies over the longer term, and which ones are going to be major troublemakers, and which ones are going to just switch sides."

Sofar, Hamid Karzai, the leader of the interim government in Kabul, has "proven to be an impressive man," Mr. Wolfowitz said. "Whether he's up to the formidable job he has is a different question."

While careful not to identify countries where the United States might next aim its military might, Mr. Wolfowitz said that Somalia, perhaps more than any other place, fits the bill of a lawless state that draws terrorists like a magnet.

The Bush administration has identified Itihaad, a militant religious group based in Somalia, as a terrorist organization with ties to Qaida. The United States has also shut down Somalia's major money-transfer company and stepped up aerial reconnaissance flights off its coast.

"Obviously Somalia comes up as a possible candidate for Qaida people to flee to, precisely because the government is weak or nonexistent," Mr. Wolfowitz said.

But he acknowledged that U.S. options were limited in Somalia, where, he said, "by definition you don't have a government you can work with." The CIA, he added, is "looking for exactly those sorts of people" that the United States can use as proxy forces, as it did with anti-Taliban groups in Afghanistan.

In the Philippines, he said, the government has been eager to quell a rebellion by hundreds of Muslim militants from the Abu Sayyaf group who have been linked to Qaida and have been battling government forces on Basilan Island, in the southern part of the country.

U.S. officials have begun training Philippine forces in counterterrorist and special operations activities.

U.S. involvement "might include direct support of Philippine military operations," he said. "There's no question that we believe that if they could clear the Abu Sayyaf group out of Basilan Island, that would be a small blow against the extended Qaida network."

But Mr. Wolfowitz said that the government in Manila was "very anxious to do it themselves."

"That's the crucial standard for them" he said. "They're very willing to take help within the framework of helping them help themselves."

In Indonesia, Islamic militants have fought with Christians on Sulawesi Island and in Maluku Province, areas where the government "is extremely weak," he said.

"You see the potential for Muslim extremists and Muslim terrorists to link up with those Muslim groups in Indonesia and find a little corner for themselves in a country that's otherwise quite unfriendly to terrorism," he said.

He said that while Indonesia had expressed a willingness to crack down on terrorists, the government there was fearful of unleashing a violent backlash among its large Muslim population. He also said the United States was prepared to provide assistance, though the Pentagon was restricted from conducting certain joint exercises with the Indonesian military, which has been accused of human rights abuses.

But it is unlikely, Mr. Wolfowitz said, that the United States would consider direct military action in Indonesia, "because it's such a big and disparate place."

Yemen also has pockets or regions of lawlessness that lie outside the control of the central government, he said. "There are very significant back regions of Yemen," Mr. Wolfowitz said.

After the Sept. 11 attacks, the United States pressured Yemen to crack down on suspected Qaida cells in the country. Three months later, Yemeni special operations troops exchanged fire with tribesmen in remote parts of the country's central region, as the troops tried to capture suspected members of the terrorist network.

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE,

JANUARY 9, 2002

The Turkish Dilemma The United States seeks a strategic ally in the next war against Iraq. Can Ankara say 'no'? Probably not. But saying 'yes' is no easier

By Owen Matthews and Sami Kohen January 7, 2002
Newsweek International

Jan. 7 issue - Will they or won't they? That's what Washington asks about Turkey's joining in a military campaign against Iraq. The last time Ankara went along with such a venture, in the gulf war, it paid a hefty price. Sanctions cost \$40 billion in lost trade. A flood of Kurdish refugees fueled a guerrilla war by the separatist Kurdish Workers Party, or PKK. Saddam lost the war-but as Turks see it, so did they. "We don't want those experiences again," says Defense Minister Sabahattin Cakmakoglu.

THERE MAY BE little choice. If the United States indeed acts against Saddam Hussein, it must be able to use Turkish air bases. As a NATO member (and economic ward of the IMF), Ankara has ample reason not to say no. But it has equally compelling reasons not to say yes, either. Persuading the Turks to aid in any strike against Iraq is going to be a hard sell, concedes a senior NATO official in Brussels. Clearly, the pressure is on.

Turkey has many fears about a second conflict with Saddam. The biggest is that it might lead to an independent Kurdistan. Whether the dictator survives or falls, Kurdish separatists could be emboldened. Ankara got the upper hand in 1999, when it arrested the terrorist leader Abdullah Ocalan. Using a mixture of careful diplomacy and such hearts-and-minds projects as building schools and hospitals, it has since worked to foster good relations with Kurdish groups that control northern Iraq-with surprisingly good results. Masoud Barzani, head of the Kurdish Democratic Party, or KDP, has condemned the terror tactics of the PKK and claims to want nothing more than "a federal solution for the people of Kurdistan within a democratic Iraq." Just in case, Turkey maintains an Israeli-style buffer zone to keep out guerrillas (and more refugees). It's an uneasy peace, but preferable to the anarchy that followed the gulf war.

Now comes the prospect that America may try to use Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq, allied with Shiite rebels in the south, to unseat Saddam, much in the same way as they used Afghanistan's Northern Alliance to topple the Taliban. "This will lead to genocides and drag the whole region into disaster," says Ozdem Sanberk, former Turkish under secretary for Foreign Affairs.

Officially, the United States has not decided upon any action against Iraq. Unofficially, low-key military and political preparations are already underway. Within weeks of the September 11 attacks, the U.S. Air Force requested Turkey's permission to enhance its radar and communications capabilities at the Incirlik air base in eastern Turkey, from which NATO planes patrol the no-flight zone over northern Iraq. And over the last month, sorties from Incirlik have been cut down to just one a week. The reason: "to get the Iraqis in the open and moving," according to one well-placed military analyst in Ankara. A small U.S. delegation led by Assistant Under Secretary of State Ryan Crocker discreetly visited northern Iraq recently, ostensibly to check on efforts to reconcile feuding Kurdish groups and observe the progress of an oil-for-food aid program. But they were also sounding out the Kurds' readiness for military action. According to sources with knowledge of the talks, both the KDP and other Kurdish groups voiced "serious reservations."

Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit, one of the few world leaders to have a personal relationship with Saddam, will soon arrive in Washington for "extensive consultations." Bush administration hawks are likely to find him a tough nut to crack. Ecevit is close to Turkey's politically powerful military, and adamantly opposed to any military adventures outside Turkish territory. Ecevit was also one of the first politicians to visit Saddam after the gulf war. He seems convinced, according to a Western diplomat who has spoken to him extensively on the matter, that Saddam can be won over by diplomacy and business ties rather than by brute force.

That's just what the Turks have been trying to do. Trade with Iraq has rebounded to an estimated \$1 billion annually, much of it semilegal oil trading by Kurd-ish groups. But official trade with Baghdad is also flourishing. Turkey reopened the railway to Baghdad in July, and last month the Turkish Oil Exploration Co. signed a deal to start drilling in the Kirkuk region, controlled by Baghdad. A 148-member trade delegation headed by Kursad Tuzmen, Turkey's deputy minister for Trade, visited the Iraqi capital last month, potentially opening more commercial ties.

Thus the Turkish dilemma. For pragmatic and political reasons, Turkey will resist any military action against Iraq. On the other hand, it depends too heavily on American and NATO good will to rule it out. The solution, for now,

seems not to commit. "The Turks are going to wriggle all the way," predicts the diplomat close to Ecevit. One likely scenario is for the Turks to quietly make common cause with European leaders wary of Washington's warlike stance. Another is for Ankara to plead for time on Iraq while lending staunch support elsewhere-for example, eventually taking leadership over the international peacekeeping force in Afghanistan. The problem is that Washington is not likely to stand patiently by. Not saying no could well be construed as a tacit yes by a U.S. administration determined to act as it deems necessary. And for Turkey, that could mean gulf war II.

* * * * *

We must attack Iraq and free its people

Geraldine Brooks January 9, 2002 The Guardian

A grey day, a cup of tepid coffee, an unwiped table in a London student cafeteria. The haggard man sitting opposite me is an Iraqi Kurd, a poet. In the early 1980s, he wrote a verse whose metaphors were read somewhere in the Baathist hierarchy as incitement to Kurdish nationalism. He was invited to a meeting where the yoghurt beverage served to him was laced with thalium - rat poison. He did not drink all of it, and so he survived to get across the border, to be treated in a western hospital, to be granted asylum, to live.

In a middle-class house near Wimbledon Common, there is another Iraqi, a southern Shiite. She wears a scarf around her hair, even in the privacy of her home. When she goes out, she covers everything but her face and hands. She is an obstetrician and gynaecologist, married into a family of venerable Shiite clergy. In the 1980s, every male member of her husband's family between the ages of 12 and 70 was rounded up and executed.

But we do not talk about this outrage, which is famous and thoroughly documented. We talk instead about her own work - how she wasn't legally allowed to prescribe contraceptives of any kind to her patients, who were meant to serve as baby factories, making men to replace the casualties of Saddam Hussein's constant wars; how she risked her job, and maybe more than that, every time she failed to report an illicitly inserted intrauterine device; how, during a difficult delivery, a patient had moaned that she hoped her child would be a girl, not a boy who would grow to be a soldier for Saddam. On hospital rounds the day after, when she came to check on her patient, a nurse whispered that the security police had taken her away in the night.

It is one thing to hear stories, and another thing to see the physical evidence of such crimes. A few days after the Kurdish uprising that followed the Gulf war, I was in the basement of the office of Amen, Saddam's feared security police, in the north-eastern Iraqi city of Sulaimaniya. Rebellious Kurds had liberated the complex, which, at street level, was a bland office block.

Below ground, it was a warren of lightless dungeons, with excrement on the floor and meat hooks in the ceiling. In one room, a Kurdish guide spoke passionately and drew me towards something nailed to the wall. I couldn't quite make out what it was, so I leaned closer as he struck another match. It was a piece of cartilage - part of a human ear.

Outside, above ground, was a small, demountable building of the kind they use at my child's elementary school. By the steps was a pile of discarded women's clothing - Kurdish things, bright-coloured skirts and scarves woven through with shiny thread. Inside, the room was bare except for a stained mattress and a medicine cabinet which, when opened, revealed a bottle of valium. This, my guide explained, was a raping room, where the relatives of male detainees - mothers, daughters, sisters - the women of his blood, on whose sexual purity his honour depended, were brought, drugged, and violated in his presence, in an attempt to break his morale.

The United States-led policy since the Gulf war has been morally indefensible, from the day Kuwait was liberated until today. When the victorious allied armies gave Saddam's helicopter gunships permission to fly, they flew directly north, and I was under them, with thousands of fleeing civilians trying to reach safety over mined mountain passes into Turkey. I will never forget the faces of the people around me, who couldn't understand why President George Bush had encouraged them to rise up against Saddam, only to betray them so cruelly. Worse things happened to the Shiites and marsh Arabs of the south.

There would be more betrayals, a decade's worth, when the CIA pulled the plug on its liaison with the dissident Iraqi National Congress and left its locally -recruited Kurdish assets defenceless; when it became clear that Saddam had manipulated the post-war sanctions regime to enrich himself and his cronies while conveniently keeping what had been the middle class so destitute they had no energy left for dissent.

To be fair, allied analysts from Colin Powell down did not expect Saddam to survive a defeat of the magnitude they had inflicted. The metaphor of choice was the piece of rotting fruit: Saddam's hold on power was tenuous, he would fall from the tree within days, weeks, months at the most. Now, a decade has passed, and many are gone from power: two US presidents (George Bush, Bill Clinton); two British prime ministers (Margaret Thatcher, John Major); two Arab monarchs (King Fahd, King Hussein); three Israeli leaders (Yitzhak Rabin, Ehud Barak, Benjamin Netanyahu); even Syria's sinewy strongman, Hafez Asad. Yet Saddam is still there. If there is any joy at all in the business of war, it is the securing of a better peace. Even those who deplored the bombing of Afghanistan must celebrate the re-opening of girl's schools, the restoration of personal liberties of all kinds, and the prospect of a nation beginning to rebuild. Iraq is a far richer country than Afghanistan, gifted with oil, water, good farmland, scenic beauty, rare anti-

quities. If it were not for the bleak and terrible regime of Saddam Hussein, it could be the showplace of the region. Now is the time to make some belated amends for a tragic mistake. Some in the Bush cabinet want to strike Iraq to safeguard the west from future terrorism. That is a reason. But there is an even better one. It should be done for the sake of the Iraqis.

Geraldine Brooks is a novelist and former Middle East correspondent for the Wall Street Journal.

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Bin Laden disciples terrorise Kurds

Owen Bowcott January 10, 2002 The Guardian

Kurdish Islamic followers of Osama bin Laden, who are attempting to establish a Taliban-style enclave in northern Iraq, have triggered a civil war estimated to have claimed the lives of more than 100 people in four months.

Jund al-Islam, or the Soldiers of Islam, is operating in the mountains bordering Iran and defying calls by Kurdish nationalists to disband. In one case, more than 40 nationalist fighters were reportedly beheaded or mutilated.

The conflict flared shortly after September 11 around the town of Halabja, which lies on the edge of territory controlled by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) since the end of the Gulf war in 1991.

The emergence of Jund al-Islam follows a splintering of Muslim political forces in the region. The group is a hard-line offshoot of the more moderate, Iranian-backed Islamic Movement of Kurdistan, which used to hold territory near Halabja. The first Jund al-Islam decrees ordered shops to close during the call to prayers and outlawed music, television and even portraits of people.

In another statement, Jund al-Islam warned: "Your brothers are busy preparing themselves for jihad [holy war] in this area. We have achieved this task by opening training camps, Islamic education camps and the preparation of necessary weapons. Fearing attack, the PUK struck first, but its initial offensive was repulsed. In one engagement at Awi Khali Hama, near the Iranian border, the PUK alleged that "43 of our heroic fighters were brutally killed, some decapitated and all mutilated".

The PUK administration in Sulaymaniyah sent reinforcements and eventually captured Halabja. A man said to be Osama bin Laden's representative to Jund al-Islam, Abu Abdul-Rahman, was killed during the autumn fighting.

The PUK has now pushed the group into the mountains bordering Iran.

Latif Rashid, the PUK's London representative, said: "We have asked Jund al-Islam to surrender their arms and resettle themselves peacefully or action will be taken. "The clashes started among the Islamic groups, but they attacked forces sent to restore order. Some of them had trained in Afghanistan."

* * * * *

Quinze opposants iraniens comparaissent devant un tribunal révolutionnaire

QUINZE intellectuels iraniens, poursuivis pour « activités subversives contre l'Etat », sont jugés à partir de mardi 8 janvier par un tribunal révolutionnaire à Téhéran, devant lequel, soulignent la Fédération internationale des ligues des droits de l'homme (FIDH) et la Ligue pour la défense des droits de l'homme en Iran (LDDHI), ils encourrent la peine de mort.

Les quinze – sept journalistes, dont le directeur et le rédacteur en chef de la revue *Iran-e-Farda*, Ezzatollah Sahabi et Reza Ajlani, quatre universitaires, dont Habibollah Peyman et Mohammad Maleki, ancien doyen de l'université de Téhéran, deux écrivains, un chercheur et un commerçant – sont membres ou sympathisants du Mouvement pour la libération de l'Iran (MLI), formation de l'opposition qui prône une démocratie islamique et qui a été fondée par l'ancien premier ministre, feu Mehdi Bazargan.

L'un d'eux, Ezzatollah Sahabi,

avait déjà été condamné à quatre ans et demi de prison, ramenés à six mois, pour avoir participé à Berlin en avril 2000 à une conférence jugée « anti-islamique » par Téhéran. D'après son avocat cité par l'AFP, il sera jugé pour son appartenance à un mouvement « proscrit », pour avoir « contesté la prééminence du Guide » et « insulté les valeurs islamiques ».

Pendant vingt-deux ans, le MLI, qui n'a jamais fait mystère de son souhait de voir introduites des réformes politiques, a été plus ou moins toléré, mais n'a jamais réussi à obtenir sa légalisation, parce qu'il récuse le principe du Welayat-e-faqih (l'omnipotence du Guide), qui est au fondement de la République islamique. En mars 2001, il a été purement et simplement interdit et plusieurs de ses membres ont été interpellés par le pouvoir judiciaire contrôlé par les conservateurs, avant une nouvelle rafle dans les rangs de ses sympa-

thisans, en avril.

AFFAIBLIR M. KHATAMI

L'Iran connaissait alors un des temps forts de la guerre que les adversaires du changement menaient aux partisans des réformes, à quelques semaines du scrutin présidentiel, qui a reconduit dans ses fonctions le président réformateur Mohammad Khatami. De l'avis quasi général en Iran, l'arrestation des membres et proches du MLI, qui se définissent comme des nationalistes religieux, visait à affaiblir M. Khatami.

Dans une lettre qu'elles viennent d'adresser à ce dernier, la FIDH et la LDDHI se disent « particulièrement préoccupées par la situation des quinze intellectuels ». « Selon nos informations, ces personnes ne sont poursuivies qu'en raison de l'usage qu'elles ont fait de leur liberté d'expression », écrivent les deux organisations de défense des droits de l'homme, qui affirment avoir « toutes les raisons de crain-

dre » que les intéressés « ne bénéficient pas du droit à un procès équitable ». Les avocats n'ont pas eu accès au dossier de leurs clients, ni à l'acte d'accusation.

« Aucune garantie n'existe que le procès sera public », soulignent la FIDH et la LDDHI, qui souhaitent envoyer au procès, « conformément à une pratique constante, une mission internationale d'observation judiciaire », chargée de vérifier la mise en œuvre des normes internationales relatives aux droits de l'homme, souscrites par la République islamique d'Iran. Cette mission serait composée du président de la FIDH, Driss El Yazami, et du secrétaire général de la FIDH, Gilles Mancron, chargé de mission de la FIDH et responsable de la Ligue française des droits de l'homme pour lesquels la FIDH et la LDDHI sollicitent des visas d'entrée en Iran.

Mouna Naïm

15 Iranian Dissidents Go on Trial in Secret

Hard-Line Judiciary Ignores Constitution

By Nazila Fathi
New York Times Service

TEHRAN — Fifteen dissidents, mostly writers and intellectuals charged with plotting to overthrow the Islamic system, went on trial Tuesday behind closed doors before Iran's hard-line Revolutionary Court.

Fourteen other dissidents were tried in November, also in secret, as hard-liners, who control the judiciary, resist President Mohammed Khatami's agenda for political and social reform.

The 15 men whose trial began Tuesday are members of the National Religious Alliance and were arrested during several raids last year. Nine of the detainees were released on bail last summer, but six remain in jail.

According to their families, the men were kept under difficult conditions, mostly in small solitary cells. They were in a prison in a Revolutionary Guards military installation in central Tehran, which is unregulated and does not fall under the penal system.

Dozens of family members gathered Tuesday near the Revolutionary Court, holding pictures of the detainees and banners objecting to the secret trial. "Public Accusations but Closed Trials" and "The Trial Must Be Public," the banners read.

According to the Iranian Constitution, political prisoners must be tried in open courts with a jury. But these trials violate both provisions, and a single person is acting as both judge and prosecutor.

Further, the lawyers for those on trial were denied access to the case until last week, when they were asked to sign a letter saying they would not disclose the contents of the case to the public.

"We refused to sign it because this is an illegal request," said Abolfatah Soltani, the lawyer for several of the detainees, according to the Norouz daily. As a result, the judge did not permit the lawyers to study the several-hundred-page indictment or to meet with the accused prisoners whom they are representing.

"The reality is that the court has no evidence against them other than distorted confessions that have been extracted under duress," said Nargess Mohammadi, the wife of Taqi Rahmaini, who has been in prison since March. "Otherwise, there is no reason why the trials should not be public."

One of the defendants, Ezatollah Sahabi, a former cabinet minister following the 1979 revolution, reportedly told the court on Tuesday that a document that was said to be his confession was a lie. The conservative daily Keyhan

claimed that Mr. Sahabi had confessed that he intended to propagate violence and overthrow the Islamic system.

According to a person who spoke on condition of anonymity, Mr. Sahabi rejected all the accusations and demanded that his defense be public. Mr. Sahabi has been in jail for more than a year, during which his health has deteriorated.

On Tuesday the judge barred a lawyer, Mohammed Ali Dadkhah, who represents two of the defendants, from the court for what he said was a violation of procedures of the trials in November.

"I was prevented from defending my clients," Mr. Dadkhah told reporters outside the Revolutionary Court building. "They are standing trial without legal representation."

Families of the prisoners appealed this week to the speaker of Parliament, Mehdi Karroubi, but he could do no more than sympathize with them. In an hour-long meeting, he acknowledged that the lawyers would not be able to defend their clients without knowing what they were accused of.

The National Religious Alliance contributed to the victory of the Islamic revolution, but its members were marginalized after the religious regime took power. The party threw its support behind Mr. Khatami in the 1997 presidential election, and its members campaigned in favor of political reforms.

President Khatami's Information Ministry, the country's secret police organization, has rejected any affiliation with the arrests. Even President Khatami's representative on the Committee to Oversee the Implementation of the Constitution, Hossein Mehrpour, was not permitted by the judiciary to visit the prisoners.

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2002

Islamic Politician's Popularity Is Challenging Turkey's Secularism

By Douglas Frantz
New York Times Service

ISTANBUL — Nowhere does the war against Islamic extremism have more resonance than in Turkey: For eight decades, the country has used draconian laws and the threat of force to crush pro-Islamic politicians and protect its secular ideals.

But with Turkey beset by economic stagnation, scandals and weak leadership, the generals, who wield the real power, have had their hands full containing the popularity of a former Istanbul mayor who is trying to shed his fundamentalist background and wrap himself in a cloak of moderation.

The government's problems are giving the former mayor, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, a chance at a national electoral victory in 2004 that no aggressively Islamic politician has ever achieved.

Mr. Erdogan was a rising star in Turkey's Islamic political movement as mayor of the showcase city in the 1990s. Even critics acknowledge that he cleaned up the streets, improved public services and reduced the endemic corruption.

But his insistence that religion play a greater role in political life collided with secular Turkey's unbending prohibition against mixing religion and politics. He was forced out of office and imprisoned for publicly reciting a poem that the courts deemed seditious.

Now Mr. Erdogan is making a strong comeback at the helm of a new party, aided by public disenchantment with the three-party governing coalition and its inability to halt inflation and curb rising unemployment.

"The world is a different place, and I am a different person," Mr. Erdogan, 47, said in an interview at the sleek headquarters of his Justice and Development Party in Ankara. "Turkey should become a model for the Muslim world in terms of science, lifestyle, international relations and economics."

Mr. Erdogan's popularity suggests that he could become the next prime minister, but the prospect of an Islamic politician, however reformed, leading Turkey sends shudders through secular-minded Turks and Western allies, particularly the United States.

In the aftermath of Sept. 11, Turkey became important to the U.S.-led coalition against Osama bin Laden, and, for all its flaws in human rights, Turkey is a stable synthesis of democracy and Islam in a volatile and authoritarian Islamic world.

With Muslims worldwide rejecting the secular values of the United States and Europe, Turkey reflects the faith's less ferocious and more tolerant face. Even its most ardent clerics and Islamic-oriented politicians do not advocate vi-

olence or oppressive orthodoxy, but rather a government more responsive to their identity as Muslims.

On a practical level, Turkey, the only predominantly Muslim member of NATO and an ally of Israel, is also an essential friend to the United States: It granted access to its airspace and provided bases to U.S. warplanes, and it has promised to send troops to Afghanistan. If the United States attacks neighboring Iraq, Turkey will be even more vital, and the inherent tensions between its religion and its Western orientation will become more acute.

To many, Mr. Erdogan represents a threat to the rigid safeguards that have held religion in check and maintained Turkey's status as the most moderate and Western-oriented Muslim country.

Mr. Erdogan is trying to shift his image. The religious rhetoric has been scrubbed away and his old opposition to things Western — like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union — set aside.

That way he hopes to avoid any retribution by the generals, who could come back at him if he proves too religious for their tastes. Elections are scheduled for 2004; pollsters say his party would win handily if the elections were held now.

The country he may lead is complex. Western ways, embodied by television, films and tourism, are embraced widely. In Istanbul, a sophisticated metropolis straddling Europe and Asia, short skirts are as common as religious head scarves, and alcohol flows freely in restaurants.

"Turkey is not Iran," Meltem Eke, a stylish woman in her 30s, said at her bagel shop in the city's upscale Nisantasi district. "I am from a neighborhood that values the woman no less than the man."

But Turkey is at once modern and backward, democratic and repressive. The differences are sharp between the urban bustle and the sense that time stands still in the villages. There is also a divide between, on the one hand, the secular-minded generals and business leaders and, on the other, those like Mr. Erdogan, who would like to see more religion in the mix of governing.

Within those contradictions lies a tension that is always just below the surface and always the object of careful monitoring by the generals. A further tightening of measures to control Islamic movements and businesses is now under review by the National Security Council, a group of generals and politicians.

The resentments on which Mr. Erdogan builds his base of support are most evident in the heartland, where religious fervor lingers, polygamy is still practiced and illiteracy is high among women because families often do not send girls to school.

Konya is one of Anatolia's oldest cities, the place where Jalaluddin Rumi, the founder of the

Islamic Sufi sect of Whirling Dervishes, gathered his disciples in the 13th century to preach his mystical message. His tomb is inside the domed Mevlana Tekke, and every day dozens of women, their covered heads bowed, pray in front of the tomb.

But Konya is also a bustling city of nearly a million, with high-rise buildings and large agriculture businesses, many financed by devout bankers who observe the Koran's prohibition on interest.

"Traditions have been preserved here because there has not been much internal migration," said Osman Okka, an economics professor at Selcuk University in Konya. "Still, the Turkish people have lost a lot of their religious identity over the last 80 years. We know God. We know the Prophet. We know Ramadan. But we are illiterate beyond that, because of the secular policies of the state."

But a quiet rebellion against secularism has been brewing among business executives in places like Konya and among their counterparts who migrated to Istanbul and other cities to form a new urban middle class over the past 15 years.

Its leader is Ali Bayramoglu, an industrialist who founded the Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association to fight what he sees as government-backed discrimination against devout Muslims.

"We don't categorize a government as Islamic or secular," he said in the Istanbul office of the group, which represents 2,200 business owners and 10,000 businesses nationwide. "We have the idea that if we have a government with just and equal attitudes, that would be enough."

Mr. Erdogan wants to transform this disenchantment into a political mandate, but he must broaden his appeal beyond the devout, who have never mustered the political muscle to elect a national government. As a result, his speeches emphasize the economic failures and corruption of the current governing parties.

The message strikes home among the vast urban poor, particularly young men. Many arrived from rural areas over the past 20 years, bringing conservative values but few skills and little education.

One recent afternoon, several young men lounged outside a teahouse in Kasimpasa, a rough Istanbul neighborhood of rundown buildings. None had a job, none supported the government.

"Maybe it's time for someone like Mr. Erdogan to shake things up," said Mehmet Osman, 22, who has never worked full time. "He knows what life is like for us."

L'opposition de droite dénonce le trop grand laxisme du projet gouvernemental

L'immigration au cœur du débat politique

LE FIGARO JEUDI 10 JANVIER 2002

Berlin :
de notre correspondant

Depuis les attentats du 11 septembre et les accusations portées contre l'Allemagne par les Etats-Unis d'avoir servi de base arrière aux terroristes, le Bavarois Edmund Stoiber (CSU) et sa troupe repartent en guerre contre l'immigration. Le projet de loi du Parti socialiste (SPD) et des Verts la réglementant se heurte à une résistance croissante. L'opposition chrétienne-démocrate CDU/CSU a voté les deux trains de mesures antiterroristes concoctées par le ministre de l'Intérieur Otto Schily, en septembre, puis en décembre. Mais elle contrecarre son texte de loi sur l'immigration, le jugeant encore trop laxiste. Les chrétiens démocrates savent que les trois quarts des Allemands souhaitent tout simplement qu'on stoppe l'afflux d'étrangers non européens et

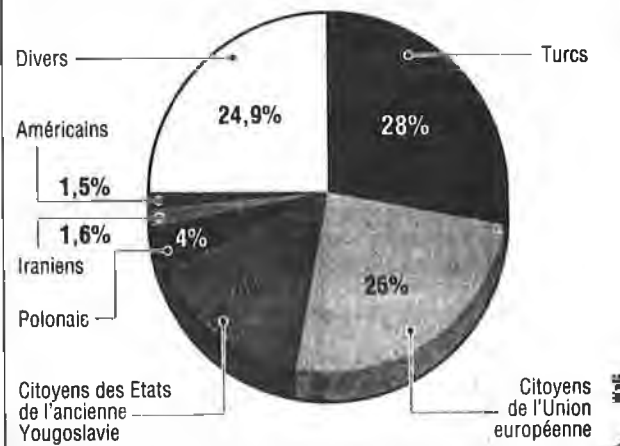
qu'on gèle l'immigration au niveau actuel : 7,3 millions d'étrangers dont 2,5 millions de musulmans sur 82 millions de résidents.

Départs déduits, ils sont 250 000 de plus par an à s'installer outre-Rhin. Quelques suspects surfont évidemment sur ce flot. Des arrestations d'islamistes parmi les étudiants étrangers et les demandeurs d'asile viennent de le prouver. Selon le reportage d'un journaliste du magazine télévisé « Report » (Munich), des jeunes hommes, célibataires, qualifiés et musulmans, généralement porteurs d'un papier leur indiquant l'adresse d'un contact en Allemagne, arrivent nombreux.

La filière la plus classique passe par la Bosnie. Depuis peu, une autre piste prend sa source en Afghanistan, traverse l'Iran, la Turquie, la Grèce, l'Italie et la France pour aboutir outre-Rhin. Le ministre de l'Intérieur de Bavière Günther Beckstein estime qu'un tout petit pourcentage de

Au total : 7,3 millions d'étrangers

► Répartition de la population étrangère en Allemagne



fondamentalistes sur les milliers d'Afghans, d'Irakiens, d'Iraniens arrivés ces dernières années suffirait à créer un vrai problème.

Pour faire passer au printemps prochain, à quelques mois des législatives, un texte qu'il juge adapté aux besoins de l'économie et qui clarifie un patchwork d'actes administratifs, Otto Schily a cherché des

soutiens dans l'aile gauche de la CDU et dans l'industrie.

Officiellement, les chambres de commerce et d'industrie (DIHK) et la Fédération patronale (BDI) soutiennent le projet gouvernemental qui représente la première loi globale sur l'immigration en Allemagne depuis la Seconde Guerre mondiale, en pointant le doigt sur les besoins de l'industrie en personnel qua-



Les Turcs (ici à Berlin), qui s'intègrent de moins en moins dans la société allemande, forment depuis les années 60 la communauté étrangère la plus importante en Allemagne. (Photo Maurice Weis/Rapho.)

lifié et sous-qualifié.

Les syndicats accusent les patrons de vouloir obtenir une main-d'œuvre bon marché. L'opposition est sur ce point en désaccord avec les industriels, excepté ceux d'entre eux qui pensent qu'avec les 400 millions d'euros annuels et davantage prévus pour les « cours d'intégration » des nouveaux venus (cours de langue, d'information, etc.), « on ferait mieux de subventionner des bas salaires et d'abaisser les charges des PME ».

Avant Noël, à la dernière séance du Bundesrat où l'opposition a la majorité, Edmund Stoiber (CSU) a estimé que le texte de Schily « encourage l'immigration au lieu de la limiter ». Sans aborder le thème de l'insécurité, Stoiber s'est contenté de déplorer que des immigrés en surnombre viennent « concu-

rener les chômeurs allemands et étrangers », actuellement au nombre de quatre millions. Schily, qui ne serait pas fâché que l'opposition l'aide à muscler sa copie, élaguée et affadée par ses partenaires verts, a eu beau proposer des compromis, rien n'y fait. Les parlementaires ont présenté quelque 200 demandes d'amendements, « souvent des changements de virgules », affirme Schily. En réalité, tout sera prétexte à la CDU/CSU pour conserver ce cheval de bataille électoral.

Il y a deux ans, Roland Koch (CDU) avait arraché la Hesse aux socialistes en organisant une campagne de signatures contre l'octroi du passeport allemand aux immigrés qui ne renonçaient pas à leur nationalité d'origine. Les deux tiers des Allemands sont pour un référendum sur la question de l'immigration. Cette procédure étant exclue par la Constitution, la CSU bavaroise envisage d'organiser une campagne de signatures. De plus en plus de dirigeants de la CDU se rallient au point de vue des Bavarois. Pour le leader CDU de Bade-Wurtemberg (Stuttgart), Erwin Teufel, « le plafond en matière d'immigration est déjà atteint ».

« On ne peut plus tolérer l'installation de sociétés parallèles dans les grandes villes allemandes », qui comptent jusqu'à 20 et 30 % d'immigrés non européens, a-t-il ajouté, en estimant que l'immigration doit être « compatible avec les intérêts sociaux de la population autochtone ». Pour lui, l'âge limite des enfants autorisés à rejoindre leurs parents immigrés en Allemagne doit être de trois ans. Le projet gouvernemental le fixait à quatorze ans.

Selon le projet Schily, les offices du travail régionaux pourront fixer les quotas d'immigration. Réclamant un filtrage national, l'opposition rejette cette formule comme une porte ouverte au laxisme et indique que l'on compte déjà des chômeurs parmi les 10 500 spécialistes étrangers, des informaticiens surtout, venus à l'invitation du chancelier Schröder avec une « carte verte », c'est-à-dire un permis de séjour. Elle s'oppose aussi aux dispositions introduites par les Verts dans le projet, visant à accorder le droit d'asile aux personnes persécutées par des organisations non étatiques ainsi qu'aux femmes maltraitées, estimant que ces « exceptions » risquent de provoquer un afflux de fausses victimes et de femmes musulmanes avec leurs enfants.

J.-P. P.

Ils s'expatrient pour des raisons économiques, gardent leurs coutumes et envisagent un retour au pays

Les Turcs allemands vivent en vase clos

Berlin :
de notre correspondant

Les Allemands identifient souvent les immigrés aux Turcs qui forment depuis les années 60 la communauté étrangère la plus importante du pays. Surtout dans les cités industrielles. Chez Ford, à Cologne, ils sont 4 200 salariés sur 21 300. Chez Mercedes, Volkswagen, Siemens, ils ne sont pas moins nombreux. Les Turcs sont calmes, assidus, économes, attachés à la vie de famille et... fiers d'être turcs. Ils s'intègrent de moins en moins dans la société allemande. Le port du tchador progresse. La troisième génération d'immigrés parle moins bien allemand que la deuxième. « Ils ne parlent bien ni l'allemand ni le turc », souligne Serpil Beylik. Née en Turquie, la trentaine, elle jette un œil attendri sur ses compatriotes : « J'ai du mal à supporter leur langage. En turc, ils parlent beaucoup argot et les enfants utilisent un pidgin germano-turc. Le soir, les hommes vont au café et ne parlent que des femmes, comme si les attentats de New York et la guerre en Afghanistan n'avaient pas eu lieu. » A 19 ans, le beau

Mustafa était venu la demander en mariage à Adana, comme beaucoup de Turcs d'Allemagne qui vont chercher épouse au pays dans la bonne société. Il donna 1 500 marks à ses parents et l'emmena avec lui. Tailleur à Hambourg, il gagnait bien sa vie et était instruit. Une fois en Allemagne, il l'enferma : interdit de travailler, d'apprendre l'allemand et de passer le permis de conduire. « Quand je me suis rebiffée, il s'est mis à me frapper, comme le font beaucoup d'hommes turcs avec leurs femmes. » Serpil doit à une femme écrivain turque d'avoir eu la force de divorcer après trois ans de mariage, puis de suivre les cours du soir en gagnant sa vie comme chauffeur de taxi. Elle aimait la littérature et avait lu à 18 ans les livres de Duygu Asena qui parle « d'égalité entre femmes et hommes » et « explique tout ce dont les femmes sont capables ». Elle passe son bac, apprend des langues et veut écrire, elle aussi, pour témoigner.

Le destin de Bahar Demir, 26 ans, a été bien différent. Née en Allemagne de parents immigrés, Bahar parle allemand sans accent. Son mari Mehmet, 29 ans, qu'elle a connu à Konya

en vacances et épousé là-bas à 19 ans, l'a suivie à Berlin. Mehmet travaille comme serveur dans un snack turc. Bahar fait sporadiquement des ménages. Avec leurs enfants, Onur, 7 ans, et Derya, 3 ans, ils logent dans un trois-pièces assez confortable de 63 m². Onur fréquente une école de Wedding, au nord de la ville. La plupart des 23 élèves de sa classe ont des parents turcs. Machine à laver, télévision, voiture d'occasion, rien d'essentiel ne leur manque.

C'est un de ces quartiers où vivent en vase clos plusieurs milliers des 130 000 Turcs de la capitale. Epicerie, coiffeurs, banques, enseignes, tout est en turc. Des forêts d'antennes paraboliques ornent fenêtres et balcons. « Pas question pour l'instant de rentrer chez nous, déclare Mehmet. Là-bas, je ne trouverais pas de travail. Ici nous gagnons assez pour mettre de l'argent de côté. » Il leur sert à rembourser un appartement à crédit à Konya. D'autres achètent un terrain au pays, un bout de terre turque à bâtir. Dans l'espoir de rentrer un jour. Ils disent : « Biz gerçek Berlinlileriz », « Nous sommes de vrais Berlinoises », mais leur relation avec l'Allemagne est essentiellement économique. Pas question pour Mehmet de se faire naturaliser. Sa femme a la double nationalité et les enfants l'auront s'ils le veulent. Mais on les élève à la

turque. L'aîné suit le catéchisme musulman à l'école, officiel depuis l'été dernier. Car Mehmet prie cinq fois par jour. Tous les vendredis, il va à la mosquée. Forcément, quand on vient de Konya, la plus religieuse des cités turques... L'été, toute la famille va se ressourcer en Turquie. De temps à autre, la mère de Mehmet, qui est veuve, passe quelques semaines chez eux à garder les enfants pour leur permettre de travailler davantage.

Les Demir ont mis sur la table des gâteaux, des noix, du thé, de l'orangeade et du pain turc « ek-mek ». « Chez nous, la table est toujours ouverte, dit Bahar en montrant ses réserves de provisions. Je stocke de la nourriture parce que quelqu'un peut arriver à l'improviste. En Turquie, personne ne repart le ventre vide. Les Allemands vivent différemment. L'autre jour, une collègue de travail allemande m'a téléphoné, disant qu'elle passait. Elle s'est excusée mille fois et refusait que je la fasse dîner. Les Allemands planifient tout à l'avance et ne supportent pas d'être pris par surprise. Quand je lui ai montré mes provisions, elle m'a demandé si j'avais peur de la guerre. »

La réussite de Remzi Kaplan, l'un des 60 000 entrepreneurs turcs d'Allemagne, fait rêver nombre de ses compatriotes. Il a fait d'un produit turc, le kebab, le plat national allemand, loin

devant la saucisse blanche bava-
roise ou le jambonneau berlinois
à la purée de poix. Fils de pay-
sans pauvres d'Anatolie, arrivé

ici il y a trente ans, il a créé
quatre usines, trois en Alle-
magne, une en Hollande. Des
ministres, des ambassadeurs,

des artistes comptent parmi ses
amis. Mais, chaque été, Kaplan
revient à Bahadin, son village
natal, pour l'inonder de ca-

deaux. Comme les autres « Al-
manci », les Turcs d'Allemagne,
il n'oublie pas son vrai pays...

J.-P. P.

Le Monde

11 DÉCEMBRE 2001

A Roissy, des dizaines d'étrangers, privés de droits, sont maintenus dans la précarité

La zone d'attente de l'aéroport Charles-de-Gaulle accueille les demandeurs d'asile à leur descente d'avion. Ils restent parfois plusieurs jours sans manger, n'ont pas toujours accès aux toilettes, et beaucoup ne parviennent pas à obtenir les formulaires administratifs

LES PANNEAUX d'affichage annoncent sans discontinuer les « vols annulés ». L'aérogare 2 B de Roissy-Charles-de-Gaulle est étrangement calme ce jeudi 6 décembre.

REPORTAGE

« J'ai demandé l'asile aux policiers. Ils m'ont renvoyé. J'ai déjà essayé quatre fois »

Les aiguilleurs du ciel ont décrété une grève de vingt-quatre heures et de rares voyageurs errent entre les magasins *duty free*. Soudain, cinq Africains encadrés par deux policiers sortent d'une salle d'embarquement et se dirigent vers les toilettes. Premier aperçu d'une longue série de personnes parquées dans différents recoins de l'aéroport. Etrangers non admis sur le territoire, ils sont retenus en zone d'attente.

8 h 50. Le sénateur (PCF) Robert Bret se présente au poste de la police aux frontières (PAF) pour la visite de contrôle que la loi l'autorise à effectuer en tant que parlementaire. Au mur, une affiche reproduit la Déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme. Un tableau indique les noms des quarante-sept étrangers maintenus à quelques mètres de là. « Les deux ZAPI [zones d'attente pour personnes en instance] sont pleines à craquer. On est un peu pris au dépourvu », s'excuse l'officier de quart de la PAF en ouvrant le chemin vers l'« extension », une salle d'embarquement d'Air France réquisitionnée par le ministère de l'Intérieur.

Derrière les paravents blancs à liséré jaune qu'Aéroports de Paris utilise pour masquer les chantiers, une petite foule d'étrangers, africains pour la plupart, attendent, assis ou prostrés. Les femmes se sont regroupées. Une odeur acre de saleté prend à la gorge. La chaleur est lourde. Sur le côté, dix personnes patientent depuis une heure pour aller aux toilettes. Le long des

baies vitrées, quatre cabines téléphoniques. Deux sont hors service, les deux autres n'acceptent que la Carte bleue. Un policier distribue le petit déjeuner : un café sans sucre et un morceau de pain.

Plusieurs hommes approchent, ils montrent la notification de leur non-admission sur le territoire et de maintien en zone d'attente en attendant leur vol de retour. Sissé M., Sénégalais âgé de vingt-six ans, relève le bas de son pantalon pour montrer sa peau grise : « Je ne me suis pas lavé depuis onze jours », assure-t-il, las. « Il faut attendre trois heures pour aller aux toilettes. La nourriture est mauvaise », reprend Adama B., Burkinabé, qui a fui les ratonnades en Côte d'Ivoire. Certains disent avoir été aidés par le personnel d'Air Afrique pour obtenir une place sur un vol en direction de Paris. Ils ont tous payé entre 25 000 et 40 000 francs.

NI REFOULÉS NI ADMIS

Beaucoup racontent des persécutions, des brimades, des viols, les assassinats de membres de leur famille dans leur pays. Ces récits, ils n'ont pu les faire entendre en arrivant. « Dès ma sortie d'avion, un policier m'a demandé ce que je foutais là

parce que je n'avais pas de passeport. J'ai demandé l'asile mais il a fait semblant de ne pas entendre », explique Alpha C., Guinéen. Des dizaines d'autres témoignent de ce refus d'enregistrer les demandes. Joël L., Sier-ra-léonais, « le réclame tous les jours ». En vain.

« Quelqu'un veut encore du café ? », s'enquiert le policier à l'entrée. Quelques minutes plus tard, des croissants arrivent. « C'est la première fois. C'est parce que vous êtes venus », glisse Alpha C. Le chef de quart assurera quelques minutes plus tard que les étrangers peuvent déposer leur demande d'asile « dès qu'ils le souhaitent ». « Nous prenons sur procès-verbal, leur donnons une copie et alors nous les transférons à l'hôtel », insiste l'agent de la PAF.

Au moment où les visiteurs quittent l'« extension », une main tape à une baie vitrée. Dans un recoin qui sert de lieu de repos, en zone internationale, six hommes sont assis. Eux n'ont pas le droit d'accéder à la salle d'embarquement : ils n'ont pas été enregistrés comme désirant entrer sur le territoire. Ni refoulés ni admis. Depuis trois, cinq ou sept jours, ces Afghans, Irakiens ou Congolais attendent que les agents de la PAF les « voient ». Avec toujours les

mêmes accusations. « Dès que je suis arrivé, je me suis présenté au poste pour demander l'asile. Ils m'ont renvoyé. J'ai déjà essayé quatre fois », relate Olivier P. en montrant son dos lacéré. Ce jeune Congolais affirme être un militant du Mouvement populaire de la révolution, pourchassé à Kinshasa. Un Irakien au teint gris explique dans un mauvais anglais qu'il n'a pas mangé depuis six jours. Aucun repas n'est prévu de ce côté-là de la paroi. « On ne peut pas nourrir tout le monde !, explique le chef de la PAF. C'est vrai qu'il y en a qui errent en zone internationale car il y a trop de demandes. »

FAUX PASSEPORT

Terminal 2 A, 11 heures. Au sous-sol, sous un escalier, la « salle de correspondance des non-admis » : un poste de police dans deux pièces aveugles. La première abrite une montagne de sacs de voyage, un couple chinois et une Angolaise avec ses deux enfants. Dans la seconde, d'une surface d'environ 25 m², trente-neuf personnes s'entassent sur des bancs métalliques ou attendent allongées sur un tapis posé au sol. Quatre bouteilles d'Evian remplies d'urine s'alignent le long du mur de béton. Pas de douche, pas de sanitaires, aucun paravent. Pendant leur maintien en zone d'attente – vingt jours maximum –, tous reçoivent un repas par jour. Certains en sont à leur dix-neuvième repas...

De très jeunes visages se tendent. Boubakar M., Guinéen, s'approche : « Depuis neuf jours, on m'a demandé quatre fois de partir. Comme je refusais, les policiers m'ont giflé. » Amadou, Guinéen lui aussi, au visage encore imberbe, attend depuis treize jours avec une blessure à la jambe : « Le médecin ne m'a donné que de l'aspirine », assure-t-il. Le juge a maintenu l'enfant malgré ses quinze ans, tout en précisant que sa demande d'asile « est prise en compte ». Dialo K., lui, essaie de faire reconnaître son âge. Guinéen, comme ses deux voisins, il affirme avoir

Dix-sept associations interpellent Lionel Jospin

Dix-sept associations ont adressé une lettre ouverte à Lionel Jospin, le 17 octobre, pour dénoncer la situation des étrangers dans les zones d'attente. Amnesty International, l'Association nationale d'assistance aux frontières pour les étrangers (Anafe), la Cimade, le Groupe d'information et de soutien des immigrés (Gisti), la Ligue des droits de l'homme, le Syndicat des avocats de France et le Syndicat de la magistrature, notamment, exhortent le gouvernement à prendre des mesures pour mettre fin « aux multiples dysfonctionnements ou illégalités préjudiciables aux étrangers maintenus ». Elles estiment que « le dispositif qui prévaut actuellement ne peut être considéré comme respectueux du droit des personnes et des règles françaises et européennes relatives à la protection du droit des individus ». Les signataires devaient être reçus par les conseillers du premier ministre, lundi 10 décembre. Mardi, ils devraient rendre public leur diagnostic des zones d'attente et dénoncer « ces lieux de privation de liberté pour les étrangers ».

quatorze ans. La police a retenu l'âge noté sur son faux passeport, vingt et un ans, en dépit de sa silhouette et de ses traits adolescents. « Au tribunal, l'avocate a dit : "Regardez, c'est un enfant". Le juge l'a reconnu et demandé un examen osseux pour déterminer mon âge. Mais cela fait cinq jours et on ne m'a pas emmené à l'hôpital. »

Terminal 2 F, au bout de la zone internationale, sous les boutiques de luxe ornées pour Noël, le poste de police a été repeint à neuf. Au centre, une porte vitrée où apparaissent deux visages collés au carreau. Derrière, quatorze étrangers s'y entassent, dans une pièce de 9 m² sans fenêtres. « C'est impossible de savoir s'il fait jour ou nuit », raconte l'un d'eux. Ici encore, des plaintes montent sur l'attente pour aller aux toilettes, l'insuffisance de nourriture. « Hier, j'ai râlé, un policier m'a dit de manger mes chaussures », dit Isidore T., Burkinabé. Un homme jusque-là silencieux tend un morceau de papier : « J'ai demandé à partir pour l'Equateur. J'ai de l'argent mais ils ne veulent pas me laisser repartir. S'il vous plaît, vous ne pouvez pas m'acheter un billet ? »

Sylvia Zappi

★ Ce reportage a été réalisé lors d'une visite inopinée de Robert Bret, sénateur (PCF) des Bouches du Rhône, en zone d'attente. Le Monde, alerté sur l'aggravation des conditions de maintien des étrangers à Roissy, avait par deux fois demandé (le 22 et le 29 novembre) une autorisation de visiter cette zone au cabinet de Daniel Vaillant. Devant le refus du ministère de l'intérieur, la direction du journal a décidé de le faire sans autorisation.

Des locaux surpeuplés

● Maintien en zone d'attente.

Sont maintenus en zone d'attente les étrangers à qui les autorités ont opposé un refus d'entrée sur le territoire, qui sollicitent l'asile ou pour qui le transit a été interrompu (refus d'autorisation d'entrée du pays de destination ou faux visa). La loi sur l'immigration précise que ce maintien doit se faire dans des locaux assurant « des prestations de type hôtelier ».

A Roissy, deux bâtiments servent pour l'hébergement : les ZAPI 2 et 3 (zones d'attente pour personnes en instance) situées à proximité de l'aérogare. Ces locaux, qui ont été agrandis, peuvent accueillir 296 personnes.

● **Droit.** L'étranger à qui l'entrée sur le territoire est refusée ne peut être renvoyé dans son pays contre son gré avant le délai d'un jour franc. Il peut, dans ce délai, formuler une demande d'asile. Après avis d'un représentant du ministère des affaires étrangères, la police aux frontières (PAF) se prononce sur la recevabilité de la demande. Si elle juge celle-ci « manifestement infondée », la PAF tente de renvoyer l'étranger dans son pays de provenance dès que le premier vol se présente. Le maintien en zone d'attente est contrôlé par un juge judiciaire, qui, au terme des quatre premiers jours, statue sur le renouvellement du maintien. Il ne peut excéder vingt jours ; au-delà, l'étranger doit être relâché.

● **Afflux.** Les capacités d'accueil des zones d'attente n'ont pas

suffi ces dernières semaines :

le 6 décembre, 408 étrangers étaient maintenus ; une semaine auparavant, ils étaient 510.

La PAF a réquisitionné une salle d'attente dans le terminal 2 et utilisé ses locaux dans les différentes aérogares de l'aéroport de Roissy. Les autorités sont confrontées depuis dix ans à une augmentation régulière des personnes refoulées à la frontière. Le nombre total de personnes maintenues a atteint 19 000 personnes en 2000 contre 9 300 en 1999, soit une augmentation de 103 %. A la fin du premier semestre 2001, il était déjà 10 700. 89 % de ces étrangers arrivent à l'aéroport de Roissy. Le reste se partage entre l'aéroport d'Orly et les différents aéroports, gares et ports de France.

● **Accès.** Sept associations sont habilitées par le ministère de l'intérieur à visiter les zones d'attente et à apporter une assistance aux étrangers, notamment les demandeurs d'asile. Il s'agit de l'Association nationale d'assistance aux frontières pour les étrangers, France terre d'asile, la Croix-Rouge française, Amnesty International, la Cimade, Médecins sans frontières et le Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'amitié entre les peuples. Elles ont effectué 65 visites en 2000, dont 35 à Roissy. Depuis la loi du 15 juin 2000 renforçant la présomption d'innocence et le droit des victimes, les députés et les sénateurs sont autorisés à visiter les zones d'attente. La presse y est interdite d'accès.

« Ils dorment là des jours durant, ne peuvent se laver »

DES DIZAINES d'employés côtoient chaque jour les étrangers maintenus dans les différentes zones d'attente de l'aéroport de Roissy. Hôtesse, employés des compagnies aériennes, femmes de ménage ou agents de sécurité, ils ferment jusqu'ici les yeux sur les mauvaises manières de la police aux frontières. Depuis quelques jours, certains ont décidé de témoigner.

● **Pierre, employé, et Marie, hôtesse au sol au terminal 2B dans une compagnie aérienne.**

« On a vu la situation se détériorer depuis quelques semaines. Il y a un mois, la police a réquisitionné une salle d'embarquement. On s'est dit alors que c'était provisoire. Le premier jour, ils y ont maintenu huit "proposés reconduite frontière" [les étrangers que la France veut renvoyer dans leur pays]. Le week-end suivant, ils étaient soixante-dix, hommes, femmes et enfants mélangés. Ils dorment là des jours durant, ne peuvent se laver. Comme il n'y a pas de sanitaires, les hommes urinent dans des bouteilles. Les odeurs sont terribles car il n'y a pas d'aération. Un jour, les policiers leur ont distribué des pommes comme repas : cela faisait zoo. On les traite de manière inadmissible. Quand on a compris qu'ils allaient rester, on

s'est dit qu'il fallait faire quelque chose, alerter. Nous assistons de plus en plus à des embarquements forcés avec des policiers violents. Avant, ces étrangers, on les voyait passer lors de l'embarquement, menottés. On les entendait parfois hurler, pleurer, parce qu'ils ne voulaient pas repartir. »

● **Claude, agent d'une société privée de sécurité. Il assiste la police aux contrôles des frontières.**

« Cela fait des années que je travaille à Roissy à côté des policiers. Par lâcheté, je n'ai jamais eu le courage de dénoncer. Jusqu'au jour où j'ai vu arriver ce couple libanais avec ses trois enfants. Ils attendaient d'être enregistrés comme demandeurs d'asile, en zone internationale. Tous les jours, ils se signalaient au poste de police, mais les agents les renvoyaient s'asseoir. Ils sont restés là quatre semaines avant de repartir vers le terminal B. Ils ne pouvaient pas se laver, n'avaient aucune distribution de nourriture. Ils avaient de l'argent mais ne pouvaient rien acheter, car il n'y a ni cafétéria ni distributeur.

» Un jour, je suis allé chercher des sandwiches pour eux mais j'ai dû me cacher car la police nous interdit de leur parler. J'ai appelé une fem-

me de ménage qui a tout caché dans un sac-poubelle et l'a discrètement posé à côté d'eux en passant le balai. La police les laisse s'épuiser en attendant qu'ils s'en aillent d'eux-mêmes. D'autres jours, on voit un étranger traîné endormi par deux policiers pour un embarquement forcé : un médecin lui a fait une piqûre. »

● **Olivier Eyraud, salarié d'Air France, et syndicaliste à la CFDT.**

« Je travaille à Roissy depuis 1983. C'est en voyant ce qui se passait lors des embarquements des étrangers reconduits que je me suis décidé à devenir visiteur pour le Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'amitié entre les peuples (MRAP). Grâce à mon travail, j'ai voyagé et vu la misère du monde. Mais je ne pensais pas voir ça là où je vis. Voir comment on les parque, comment on refuse de les entendre, les écouter parler de coups dans les aérogares. Ce n'est que ma troisième visite. C'est très dur. J'espère pouvoir, comme l'autre soir, attendre que tout le monde soit couché à la maison avant de pleurer comme un enfant. Trois jours après la visite, je suis encore bouleversé. »

S. Z.

IRAN

Pas à pas, les conservateurs gagnent du terrain

Alors que la chute des talibans en Afghanistan devait renforcer la ligne modérée du président Khatami, ce sont les conservateurs qui marquent des points, déplore Iran Emrooz.

IRAN EMROOZ (www.iran-emrooz.de)

Francfort

L'Iran est aujourd'hui secoué par un combat sans merci entre les courants réformateurs et obscurantistes [conservateurs]. A l'image de la lutte traditionnelle, les lutteurs font montre de toutes les qualités : force physique, savoir-faire, rapidité et ruse pour neutraliser l'adversaire et lui porter le coup fatal. Ainsi, la stratégie du mouvement réformateur comporte depuis sa création trois composantes : un combat politique par étapes, dans le cadre strict de la Constitution, mené en cherchant des alliés au sein du camp conservateur et en marginalisant les milieux extrémistes. Cette stratégie reste aujourd'hui valable. Toutefois, les réformateurs devraient faire un plus grand usage de leur récente expérience et démontrer plus de volonté politique afin de mobiliser tous les moyens possibles aux niveaux national et international. Cette stratégie n'a en effet pas permis de marquer beaucoup de points ! Les idées restent encore très théoriques et peu appliquées. En revanche, le bilan des conservateurs est très bon. De la tentative d'assassinat sur le réformateur Saïd Hadjarian [le 12 mars 2000] jusqu'à aujourd'hui, la politique de sape systématique des trois piliers d'action des réformateurs est couronnée de succès. En renforçant leur position sur l'échiquier politique, les conservateurs tentent de déstabiliser un pouvoir réformateur fragile, en utilisant toutes les institutions parallèles du pouvoir dirigées par leurs soins comme le Conseil de surveillance* et le Conseil de discernement de l'intérêt supérieur du régime**. Finalement, grâce au simulacre de procès à huis clos à l'encontre des dirigeants du Mouvement pour la libération de l'Iran (national religieux), les conservateurs ont pu annuler de manière brutale les décisions prises par le Parlement. En fait, les obscurantistes tentent de faire implorer le courant réformateur en le séparant des forces nationales religieuses.

Nous vivons à l'heure actuelle la cristallisation de cette stratégie conservatrice. Les actions engagées durant



▲ Réformateurs :

"En avant vers le futur!" ;

Conservateurs :

"Restez dans la pâture". Dessin de Kal paru dans The Economist, Londres.

ces années ont permis de contenir les interventions des réformateurs en déstabilisant un pouvoir politique fragile, vu la dualité de pouvoir [le président et le Parlement élus et la suprématie du guide religieux] inscrite dans la Constitution, notamment en ce qui concerne le judiciaire. Depuis deux ans, le fond du projet des obscurantistes a été de couper les liens entre les élites réformatrices et le peuple en rendant inefficaces les actions engagées pour la réforme. Ainsi, les conservateurs utilisent la Constitution et le pouvoir judiciaire pour atteindre leur but. Si le gouvernement Khatami et les réformateurs n'arrivent pas, de manière déterminée, à neutraliser les diverses tactiques des obscurantistes, les dés seront jetés. L'obstruction systématique des obscurantistes, dont l'un des principaux représentants est l'ancien président Hachemi Rafsandjani, et dont l'un des théoriciens est Amir Mohebbian, renforce la structure non démocratique du régime.

LES RÉFORMATEURS AVAIENT RÉINTRODUIT L'IDÉE DE LIBERTÉ

Si les conservateurs arrivent, à travers les procès en cours, à éliminer les alliés des réformateurs les plus respectés du pays, alors l'avenir du pays s'annonce sombre. A quoi doit-on encore s'attendre ? Un président faible, un Parlement pour la forme, un éclatement du mouvement réformateur, la déception et la méfiance des jeunes... Les structures non élues décident de l'avenir de notre pays. Or la popularité des réformateurs venait du fait qu'ils avaient réintroduit l'idée de liberté, d'appartenance de tous les Iraniens à un même pays, et d'ouverture en brisant ce mur qui excluait une partie des citoyens. Le pays ne peut sortir de sa crise économique tant que la question politique n'est pas résolue et que la mafia du pouvoir maîtrise les institutions économiques.

L'affaiblissement de la République au sein du régime et le renforcement de sa composante islamique sont le résultat de l'avancée graduelle des obscurantistes. Mais ce qu'ils n'arriveront jamais à résoudre, c'est la question de la légitimité politique. Plus ils avancent, plus le fossé entre le pouvoir et le peuple se creuse !

Mohsen Heydarian

* Chargé de veiller à la compatibilité avec l'islam des lois promulguées par le Parlement.

** Il a la charge de régler les litiges entre le Parlement et le Conseil de surveillance.

Bush Warns Iran Not to Hide Qaida

Tehran Faces 'Consequences' If It Undermines Afghanistan

By Eric Schmitt
New York Times Service

WASHINGTON — President George W. Bush warned Iran on Thursday that it must not try to undermine the new interim government of Afghanistan, or it will face consequences.

"Iran must be a contributor in the war against terror," Mr. Bush said at the White House. "Our nation, in our fight against terrorism, will uphold the doctrine of either you're with us or against us."

The president's comments were in response to reports that Pentagon and intelligence officials are concerned that Iran is seeking to exert political and military influence in border regions in western Afghanistan in ways that challenge the authority of the interim government in Kabul and threaten Washington's long-term goals in the country.

The officials say Iran, which denied the accusations on Thursday, has grown increasingly concerned about the pro-Western tilt of Afghanistan's government and is moving to flex its muscle in a part of Afghanistan where it has long held sway.

"Iran is trying to make sure that Afghanistan remains an Islamic state and does not become more secular, like Turkey," one military official said.

Mr. Bush noted that Iran had given the United States "positive signals" of cooperation early in the American-led military campaign in Afghanistan. Then he said Iran must not "allow al Qaida murderers to hide in their country" and must surrender any who have slipped across the Afghan border into Iran.

Mr. Bush said of the Iranians, "If they in any way, shape or form try to destabilize the government, the coalition will deal with them, you know, in diplomatic ways, initially."

On Thursday, an Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman, Hamid Reza Asefi, told Reuters, "Our borders are tightly closed, and the Islamic Republic of Iran in no circumstances would let al Qaida members, fighters and supporters of bin Laden enter the country."

Mr. Asefi also said Iran was not trying to interfere in Afghanistan's internal affairs or influence Kabul to set up an Islamic system of government. "Afghan people should decide their own future," he said.

American intelligence shows that Iran, which opposed the Taliban and viewed Qaida with caution, is giving safe haven to small numbers of Qaida fighters fleeing Afghanistan, with the view that Qaida will fight to weaken Western influence, Pentagon officials said.

United States special forces around Herat, in northwestern Afghanistan, have reported that Iranian agents are infiltrating the area, threatening some tribal leaders and bribing other local leaders to undermine American-backed

programs in one of the most lawless provinces of Afghanistan.

"Iran is trying to stir up mischief," a senior military official said. "So far, we haven't taken any action, but we're keeping a very close eye on it."

Afghanistan's interim cabinet, led by Hamid Karzai, includes a son of a powerful warlord, Ismail Khan, who was Iran's closest ally in the Northern Alliance, which helped topple the Taliban.

Defense officials described the selection, arranged in power-sharing talks in Bonn, as partly an effort to secure the support of Mr. Khan, whose forces control Herat. The move to put Mr. Khan's son, Mir Wais Sadeq, in the government is seen as an attempt to hold together the fractious factions.

Growing signs of cooperation between Washington and Tehran had emerged in recent months. Secretary of State Colin Powell says Iran has been generally helpful in the war in Afghanistan. Iran secretly agreed in October to rescue any American troops in distress in its territory. Many refugees fled to Iran from Afghanistan, and Iran provided a port for shipping American wheat into the war zone.

"By and large, the Iranian role diplomatically has been quite constructive," Richard Haass, the State Department's director of policy planning, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last month.

Iran sent observers to the talks in Bonn on forming the coalition government, and its diplomats played a key role behind the scenes, Mr. Haas said.

But he cautioned, "I'm not saying we see everything eye to eye here."

Iran is also seeking a leading role in the rebuilding of Afghanistan. A United

Nations-sponsored conference this week in Tehran brought together Afghan business leaders, entrepreneurs and academics to discuss recovery efforts in health, education and community development.

Tens of thousands of refugees have returned to the Herat area, with hundreds of families arriving every day, according to the United Nations, and more than 100,000 remain in a huge camp near the Iranian border. Aid agencies are mounting a major food-distribution effort in Herat, a city of nearly 400,000 where hunger and poverty are rampant.

Some experts, while condemning any Iranian actions that could undermine the interim government in Kabul, offered another explanation for Iran's behavior.

"I'm sure Iran would be concerned about a United States military presence on its border," said Professor Barnett Rubin, an Afghanistan specialist at New York University. "I wouldn't necessarily say there is an aggressive terrorist position. It's quite a reasonable security concern."

As one State Department official put it: "From the Iranian point of view, they're probably feeling pretty threatened in Afghanistan right now. There are some things we're working in parallel with the Iranians, and some

things they're going at in a different direction. We don't have identical goals in Afghanistan."

Iran poses difficult challenges for the Kabul government, and for Mr. Bush and his senior national security advisers as they look beyond Afghanistan in the campaign against terrorists: Iran is listed by the State Department as the world's most active state supporter of terrorism, largely because it supports the Palestinian groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

In Lebanon, Iran has also retained its close ties to Hezbollah, the Shiite group that has waged terrorism against the United States and Israel since the 1980s. American officials say that for years there have been regular flights from Tehran to Damascus carrying arms for Hezbollah's use in Lebanon.

More recently, the officials suspect, Tehran has expanded its support for Palestinian terrorists.

Trafic de clandestins vers l'Italie: un routier grec et 28 Kurdes arrêtés

ATHENES, 11 jan (AFP) - 10h55 - La police maritime de Patras (ouest) a arrêté jeudi un camionneur grec qui transportait 28 immigrés clandestins à destination de l'Italie, a indiqué vendredi le ministère de la Marine marchande.

Les clandestins, des Kurdes irakiens, étaient dissimulés dans une cache spécialement aménagée dans le camion, conduit par Dimitri Helmis, 56 ans, a ajouté un communiqué du ministère.

Il a été arrêté à Rio, près de Patras, dans le cadre des contrôles de la capitainerie du port de Patras pour combattre le trafic de clandestins entre la Grèce et l'Italie, a précisé le texte.

Le camion a été saisi. Les immigrés ont été placés en garde à vue à la capitainerie du port.

Celle-ci a ouvert une enquête tandis que le procureur compétent a été informé, a indiqué le ministère.

COOPÉRATION

Le réchauffement se poursuit entre la France et la Turquie

Selon le quotidien turc *Radikal*, les compagnies françaises peuvent espérer conclure des contrats d'un montant total de 5,6 milliards d'euros

Un an après le vote par le Parlement français de la loi sur la reconnaissance du génocide arménien, les relations entre Paris et Ankara, passablement tendues à l'époque, devraient retrouver une bonne partie de leur éclat avec la visite en Turquie, les 24 et 25 janvier, du ministre français de la Défense Alain Richard. Le responsable gouvernemental turc qui a divulgué l'information mercredi 2 janvier à l'AFP, sous couvert d'anonymat, a précisé que M. Richard, qui rencontrera son homologue turc Sabahattin Cakmakoglu et le premier ministre Bülent Ecevit, se rendra à Ankara «pour mettre fin à une période de froid dans les relations bilatérales».

Après l'adoption par le Parlement français de la loi

sur la reconnaissance du génocide arménien, la Turquie avait pris toute une série de mesures de représailles à l'encontre de la France, qui allaient du rappel de son ambassadeur à Paris Sonmez Koksall au gel de contrats commerciaux, notamment dans l'industrie de la défense. Le retour en mai dernier à Paris du représentant de la diplomatie turque, ainsi que la visite en juillet à Ankara du ministre français des Affaires étrangères Hubert Védrine allaient certes contribuer à l'amorce d'un dégel, mais la Turquie allait signifier au chef de la diplomatie française qu'elle n'avait pas l'intention de passer l'éponge. C'est en décembre dernier que les choses allaient s'accélérer, avec la confirmation par la France et la Turquie de l'ouverture de

négociations, en janvier 2002, entre Ankara et l'entreprise d'armement française Thalès (ex-Thomson CSF), au sujet de l'installation de systèmes électroniques sur les avions de transport militaire turcs.

Des signes d'amélioration tangibles, dont le quotidien turc *Radikal* s'est fait l'écho, non sans rappeler que le Conseil national de sécurité d'Ankara avait décidé l'an dernier d'annuler plusieurs contrats militaires avec la France, parmi lesquels la fabrication d'un satellite militaire et la livraison d'équipements électroniques pour des avions de combat F-16. Aujourd'hui, écrit *Radikal*, les compagnies françaises peuvent espérer conclure des contrats d'un montant total de 5 milliards de dollars (5,6 milliards d'euros), mais les relations ne retrouveront pas leur vitalité d'antan, tant que le Conseil de sécurité turc n'aura pas décidé d'annuler sa décision d'imposer un embargo économique à la France. ●

LA LETTRE DE L'UGAB

Samedi 12 janvier 2002

La Turquie qualifie de « vandalisme » la destruction d'un fort ottoman à La Mecque

ISTANBUL

de notre correspondant

La destruction par les Saoudiens d'une forteresse construite par les Ottomans en 1775 sur une colline surplombant les lieux saints de La Mecque a ranimé une animosité historique entre Turcs et Arabes, qui remonte à la révolte des tribus arabes contre l'Empire ottoman. Les autorités de La Mecque ont rasé le fort d'Al-Ajyad ainsi que le monticule sur lequel il avait été érigé pour faire place à un vaste complexe moderne de tours résidentielles, d'hôtels et de centres commerciaux qui desservira notamment les deux millions de pèlerins qui visitent la Ka'ba chaque année.

Le gouvernement turc, qui était intervenu sans succès auprès des Saoudiens, a déposé une plainte auprès de l'Unesco pour protester contre cette démolition du patrimoine ottoman, que les Turcs apparentent au dynamitage, au printemps 2001, par les talibans, des statues géantes du Bouddha en Afghanistan. Le ministre des affaires étrangères Ismail Cem n'a pas hésité à parler de « génocide culturel ».

Aux yeux des Turcs, la décision saoudienne est à la fois un acte de « vandalisme » com-

mis par des « barbares », mais également un affront délibéré, qui prouve l'inimitié des Arabes à l'égard des Turcs, les anciens colons. « La destruction par un pays musulman de l'héritage historique d'un autre pays musulman sur la terre sainte est une attitude pécheresse violant les valeurs morales de l'islam », a déclaré Murat Sokmenoglu, vice-président du Parlement turc.

LA REVENDICATION DE L'« HÉRITAGE »

La presse turque, qui alimente volontiers les flammes du nationalisme ambiant, a rappelé que les Saoudiens avaient transformé en musée la maison dans laquelle avait vécu Lawrence d'Arabie, « l'ennemi des Turcs » qui avait mené la révolte des tribus arabes contre l'empire ottoman. Patriotes de tous bords se sont mobilisés pour exprimer leur colère. Certaines voix se sont même élevées pour suggérer d'annuler le pèlerinage annuel à La Mecque, mais le directeur des affaires religieuses a déclaré que les réservations avaient été faites et qu'il était trop tard pour faire marche arrière cette année.

Les médias saoudiens se sont, eux aussi, saisis de la querelle. Un éditorial du quotidien

Okaz affirmait que la Turquie était mal placée pour parler d'histoire, puisqu'elle avait « annulé son identité en un jour par décision militaire. Au nom de la révolution, elle a choisi d'abolir son héritage et son identité pour devenir un pays sans identité ». Cette accusation se réfère à la décision prise en 1924 par Mustafa Kemal Atatürk d'abolir le califat et de faire de la République turque un Etat laïque. Un article d'Al-Watan, repris à la « une » par le quotidien turc Hürriyet, déclarait que « si la Turquie revendique l'héritage de l'Empire ottoman, elle devrait également accepter les mauvaises actions commises à cette époque, y compris le génocide arménien ».

Les autorités saoudiennes s'insurgent contre l'« ingérence » d'Ankara et affirment que le royaume n'a fait qu'« exercer sa souveraineté sur son territoire ». La municipalité de La Mecque affirme que la forteresse, démolie à l'aide de bulldozers, a simplement été déplacée pour les besoins du développement urbain et sera rebâtie ailleurs. L'affaire est désormais entre les mains des diplomates.

Nicole Pope

Masoud Barzani sheds the light on major Iraqi Kurdish issues

Iraqi Kurdistan Dispatch January 10, 2002

In a press conference held by the Kurdistan Democratic Party, KDP, media channels, on 1 January 2002 on the occasion of the New Year, the KDP leader, Mr Mas'ud Barzani pointed to several current issues related to the Iraqi Kurdistan region. Regarding the process of reconciliation between his party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, PUK, Barzani said that positive steps were taken last year in their effort to settle their differences, and that "appropriate [common] grounds have been found, and confidence between both sides have been rebuilt to a great extent."

He added: "for the time being, we have only one problem that remains to be settled. It is the issue of the parliament and its function. We, the KDP and PUK, have two different interpretations of the Washington agreement's clauses ... Washington agreement stipulates that the parliament is to resume work [with PUK MPs] on the basis of the 1992 elections' results; which means 51 [seats] for the KDP and 49 for the PUK. We, in the KDP, agreed and also accepted that the chairmanship of the parliament be regularly alternated between the KDP and PUK, and that the duty of the parliament be set out, not after a new election but until a new election is held under normal conditions, and could amend the election laws if necessary. Regarding important issues which may emerge; they should be dealt with by consensus ... I can speak for the KDP and say with confidence that the KDP has strong political will for peace; and I see that the PUK stresses the same thing". Regarding the fear that some countries, namely Turkey, express regarding a possible establishment of an independent Kurdish state in Northern Iraq, Barzani repeated KDP's earlier stance.

He stated: "Like any other people and nation, the Kurds should enjoy their rights ... At the same time, we should be realistic, we should know our limits. We understand very well the regional and world situation. We, as Kurds, have not asked for a Kurdish state. This does not mean that it is not our right; it is our right. But we know that our situation is not appropriate to raise this slogan. Our claim is the settlement to the Kurdish issue on the basis of federalism, which the [1992] elected Kurdistan parliament has called for it. Here, we speak about Iraqi Kurdistan within a democratic Iraq. The Kurdistan parliament expresses the people's will ... There is no doubt that if security and stability prevail in the [Kurdish] region, they will have impact on the surrounding areas also. The more Kurdish rights are fulfilled, the better the security of these [surrounding] countries would be ensured."

Regarding recent reports on possible strike against Iraq as part of the war against terrorism, and which reportedly, aims at changing the political system in this country, Mas'ud Barzani Said: "We have an established policy: We do not follow anything and anyone blindly. For us, it is very important to know what will be the fate of the Kurdish people. What would be the benefits to and the position of the Kurdish people, and how Kurdish rights would be guaranteed in any change. For us, this is a vital issue. "So far, these are only scenarios and proposals. No real and serious thing has so far been discussed for us to declare our stance. But our stance would always be based on the interests of the Iraqi and Kurdish people. We will not take any steps that may worsen the situation of the Kurdish people. We will take steps which could only improve it [Kurds situation] and when we have a guarantee of that."

* * * * *

PKK retreated, we forgot about the Southeast!

Turkish Daily News

By: Mehmet Ali Birand Jan 11, 2002

I feel like screaming, grabbing those in Ankara by the lapels. This much indifference is simply too much. There had been bloodshed for 15 years, the country was divided. In the end security was established – at a very high cost. Ocalan changed his attitude. The PKK adopted a new approach. The military said, we have done our share of the job and now it is your turn. And what has the state done? Has it kept any of the promises it had made?

As a society we have a very short memory. But this is simply too much. No one is thinking of it. No one is lifting a finger. We have already forgotten all about it. Once again we have abandoned the Southeast to its sad fate. Once again we have shown that we cannot rid ourselves of the habit of solving the problems merely by hitting and breaking, that is, with brute force. We have obviously nothing to do with modern practices, such as using reason, striving for that, making plans according to a program or dressing the wounds.

What a great shame...

I am sure you too are full of resentment.

Just think about the fact that for a period of 15 years this region saw only terror, counter-terror, blood and death. Some 30,000 people of this country lost their lives. Millions migrated to other parts. Hundreds of thousands suffered. Hunger, misery and death abounded. All the systems of the country were in tatters. Democracy received incredible wounds.

While the fight against terrorism was continuing, the state kept making the same pledges over and over. If terrorism came to an end people's expectations would be met, funds would be channelled into the region, the shortcomings would be eliminated and people would be treated as human beings should. The only condition was that terrorism should come to an end. At that time, the persons who said all these made ample promises -- whether because they did not believe that terrorism would come to an end or whether they did not want terrorism to come to an end, we do not know. And, what is worse, everybody believed them.

In the end, thanks to the great sacrifices made by the security forces, the change in the international conditions and Washington's making a choice in favor of supporting Turkey, terrorism was brought to a halt.

Abdullah Ocalan of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) changed -- or was compelled to change -- his basic policies. He forced the PKK as well to undergo a similar change. And a brand new development began. Terrorism withdrew from the region. Tranquillity was achieved. The military was the first to make the most significant announcement: We have done all we could to bring the terrorism to a halt. From now on the wounds have to be dressed. This task belongs to the political authority. And the political authority made high-sounding statements, disclosing a series of "measures packages" which turned out to contain not even a pebble.

Then the economic crisis came to dominate the country's agenda and the promises made in the past were forgotten. Had it not been for the replies given to a formal question Diyarbakir Deputy Sebgetullah Seydaoglu posed to the prime minister in Parliament, we probably would not remember how bad the situation is.

It is known that the number of evacuated villages is around 4,000. Official statistics indicate that hundreds of thousands of people live in misery in nylon tents.

And, in the face of all that, what has the state done?

Over the past two years, the state has reportedly had 770 houses built in 11 settlements in the context of the "returning home" program. Construction is reportedly continuing on another 435. And, for the hundreds of people driven out of their villages, 5,853 houses have reportedly been built at the provincial or county seats where they live.

Over the past 17 months only 30,000 people have reportedly been permitted to return to their villages and TL 3 trillion has been spent to reconstruct their houses which had been burnt down, torn down or in a decrepit state due to the fact that no one was taking care of them.

My God! These figures sound like a joke. It is as if they are making fun of the people.

Look, especially, at the amount of aid provided in a city such as Diyarbakir, a city which attracted the greatest number of people driven out of their villages, a city full to the brim: A total of TL 250 billion was handed out during the 2000-2001 period.

One would be too embarrassed to disclose such a figure.

The state has "closed up the book" now that terrorism has come to an end, the PKK has laid down its weapons and Ocalan has been jailed. It has shelved the "file." And the officials are no longer getting lavish amounts of compensation anyway. So, just never mind! The governor of Diyarbakir has made so many statements in a row. He has said that somebody has to make a move. He points out that a new "repentance law" must be passed and that funds must be channelled into the region.

Not a voice is being heard from Ankara.

You would think that the gentlemen there are preoccupied with major policies, wouldn't you? Out of the question. They have been caught in a vicious circle. They cannot go beyond gossiping. And, since not a word is coming from the politicians, the bureaucrats continue to sit smugly.

If hunger and misery continues in the Southeast in this manner the state may come face to face with the kind of situations that would make the PKK trouble seem a small issue. Hungry and desperate people would not care for anybody. If you sacrificed a small number of your posh cars, if you trimmed down the bureaucrats' lavish spending, you can find the resources needed to dress the wounds in the Southeast. The people of the Southeast do not deserve this treatment. Later, when they take up pickaxes and spades and start marching, none of us will have the right to open our mouths. And we will be too ashamed to turn to the military and say, "Save us!"

Wake up! It is high time you did that.

Mehmet Ali Birand's article is translated by TDN staff

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Kurdish Language Campaign Escalates "Nobody Minds the Repression"

13 January 2002
Kurdish Observer

At Van 100. Yil University activities continued. Ender Culha, Chairman of Human Rights Association (IHD) Ankara Branch brought the matter of detention of students to the Turkish Grand National Assembly Human Rights Investigation Committee while Hacettepe University students made a press statement, asking for their friends to be released. There were activities in Izmir and Denizli as well.

In Van a number of parents submitted their petitions to school administrations demanding Kurdish education. Gathering in front of Fevzi Geyik, Mustafa Cengiz, Dumlupinar, Lutfiye Binnaz Sacli and Suphan elementary schools, the parents attempted to submit their petitions but were turned down. But some parents were reported to submit their petitions to the Fevzi Geyik.

Kurdish was banned

On the other hand, the students of Ataturk and Cumhuriyet Lycees marched for a while crying the slogan "We Want Education in Mother Tongue". It has been reported that after the action speaking Kurdish was banned by the school administration. And in Altintepe, Yali and Yuniplik quarters, various groups lighted fires and danced halay, all the while crying slogans. A circular sent to all schools by Van Education Directory ordered not to accept civilian-clothed people, to identify people speaking Kurdish and to watch the gates continuously.

Democracy Platform

Van Democracy Platform organised press conferences on detentions. The press conferences denounced the repression on students and parents. The conferences was attended by a number of students. Giving a talk, IHD Van Branch Chairman Abdulvahap Ertan said the following: "We consider such a stance unacceptable. The students who have expressed only the right to speak their own mother tongue should be released immediately."

The matter at Parliament

While in Ankara, IHD Branch Chairman Ender Buyukculha applied to the Parliamentary Human Rights Investigation Committee, stating that police forces did not mention any legal grounds for detaining the students. Buyukculha asked for the students to be released as soon as possible or brought before the court. The Chairman stated that submitting petitions was a constitutional right, adding that "There should be no sanction for a petition rather than accepting or rejection it."

And in Ankara Hacettepe University, making a press statement, almost 100 students asked for their fellow students to be released, shouting slogans all the while and making a protest with applause.

Detainees

Students under detention were not permitted to meet with their lawyers and families. The families went to

Ankara Security Directorate in order to get information and were said "Your kids make PKK's propaganda at universities."

In Izmir 23 parents were not permitted to enter into the Konak Education Directorate to submit petitions.

Kurds, Turks, Arabians

and threatened the parents. And in Bagcilar almost 100 parents were detained. On the other hand in Umraniye their petitions were turned down too.

Detention in Adana

In Adana parents who were detained the other day after their petitions were not accepted are still under detention. Their names are as follows: "Fatma Ozbey, Güle Ozbey, Felek Ozbey, Sultan Beyaf, Halime Beyaf, Hakime Beyaf, Hüsnüye Beyaf, Zehra Beyaf, Sakine Beyaf, Fadile Yavuz, Saadet Dizmen and 5 other parents.

Participation continue

In Balıkesir students submitted 163 petitions to the Balıkesir University Rector's Office. They were turned down. And a group of students made an action in front of Istanbul University. Gathering at Law Faculty, a group of 100 students marched with slogans, broke down after making a sit-in action.

Protest marches

The repression on the campaign was protested by actions in Adana and Batman. About 50 youth lighted fires in Batman and danced "halay". Then they marched with slogans. The inhabitants also supported them with applause and slogans. And in Adana a group of young people lighted fires and marched by shouting slogans all the while.

12-article ultimatum to terrorist organisation the PKK

MSNBC NTV
January 16, 2002

A security forces report says the PKK is camouflaging its objective to divide Turkey by putting backing moves for Kurdish education rights.

January 16 A report compiled by Turkey's security forces has listed 12 steps that the outlawed terrorist organisation the PKK should implement in order to show that it has sincerely abandoned its campaign to promote separatism.

The report, released on Tuesday, said that if these steps were implemented then the Turkish state, acting in an atmosphere of democracy freed from the threats of terrorism and separatism, would evaluate the situation.

According to the report, the campaign being carried out at some universities demanding education in Kurdish was organised by the PKK. The rationale behind these moves, the report said, was that if Kurds could get education in the Kurdish language because they are Kurds, then the language would gain official status. This would then mean that there could be classes in history and geography, and that Kurdish would be accepted in business, the legal profession and other areas of society. Consequently, the report said, hundreds of associations, foundations and organisations established by Turks and Kurds would come to a point of disbanding and separation would be reflected throughout the whole society. Among the measures that the report called on the PKK to act upon was the removing of the word Kurdistan from its title and from other institutions active abroad.

The PKK should also stop taking part in official or semi official meetings held in countries, such as Germany and Belgium, while using the name Kurdistan in its title. The pro-PKK Medya TV in its Turkish and Kurdish broadcasts should not refer to the south east and east of Turkey as Kurdistan or describe the region as Kurdish provinces and

cease its criticism of Turkey. The report also called for the activities of the Kurdish Independent Congress to be halted, the practice of putting Kurdistan on maps on internet sites and publication of the organisations should be ceased.

Projects such as the Kurdish Businessmen's Association, the Kurdish Language Board, and the Kurdish Encyclopaedia should cease and the PKK and its affiliates should end their policy of rejecting both Atatürk and the Turkish national anthem, according to the report.

The document also calls for an end to support to Armenian groups that are conducting active anti-Turkey policies at the international level and for all members of the PKK to lay down their arms and surrender to the security forces.

* * * * *

Chief Prosecutor Asks Constitutional Court To Ban HADEP

Anatolia January 17, 2002

ANKARA - Constitutional Court delegation started listening to Supreme Court of Appeals Chief Prosecutor Sabih Kanadoglu's verbal statements on Thursday in the case filed to close People's Democracy Party (HADEP) on charges of "becoming a focus point of actions against inseparable integrity of the state with its country and nation".

Mehmet Turhan, the rapporteur of the case, is also in attendance at the session.

Vural Savas, the Supreme Court of Appeals Chief Prosecutor then, filed a lawsuit at the Constitutional Court with the request of closure of the HADEP on January 29, 1999.

HADEP administrations presented their pre-defense on April 5, 1999 while Savas expressed his views regarding the merits of the case on April 9, 1999. On June 23, 1999, the party administrators made their final defense against the merits of the case.

Meanwhile, HADEP administrators will make their verbal defense on January 30, 2002.

Later, the Constitutional Court will set a date to debate and to take a decision about the closure case.

The indictment claimed that HADEP had organic connection with the terrorist organization PKK. It noted that HADEP was totally under the control of the terrorist organization PKK like People's Labour Party (HEP) and Democracy Party (DEP) which had earlier been closed down. The indictment said that this organization staged activities in the direction of the orders and instructions of the central committee of the terrorist organization. It claimed that HADEP congresses were turned into grounds where demonstration in favour of Abdullah Ocalan, the head of the terrorist organization, was made. People who attended seminars organized by HADEP branches and meetings held by youth, woman, health and worker commissions of HADEP were tried to be imposed views like enmity towards the constitutional order and unitary state structure, the indictment said.

The indictment stated, "activities like organizing citizens of Kurdish origin around the terrorist organization PKK, carrying out activities to send militants to mountain cadre of PKK through internal and external terrorist camps are carried out in HADEP provincial and town organizations. Thus, it has been clearly seen that HADEP has turned into 'enlisting units' of the terrorist organization PKK."

The indictment asked for the closure of HADEP under Article 68 of the Constitution which regulates the conditions "for a party to become the focus point of activities against the inseparable integrity of the state with its country and nation" on charges that the party acted against Article 78 of the Political Parties Law about "laws on protection of democratic state order", Article 79 of the Political Parties Law regulating "the protection of independence", Article 80 of the Political Parties Law foreseeing "the principle of uniqueness of the state", Article 81 covering "prevention of creation of minority", Article 82 foreseeing "ban of racism and regionalism."

The Constitutional Court on Thursday listened to the verbal statements of Sabih Kanadoglu, the Chief Prosecutor of the Supreme Court of Appeals, in the case filed to close People's Democracy Party (HADEP) on charges of

“becoming a focus point of actions against inseparable integrity of the state with its country and nation”. Kanadoglu conveyed his views to the Constitutional Court for nearly one hour and 15 minutes.

Speaking to reporters, Kanadoglu said, “inseparable integrity of the Turkish Republic with its country and nation is the fundamental principle of our constitution and the fundamental reason of our existence.” Kanadoglu said he explained that HADEP became the focus of the activities which contradict with this fundamental principle. Kanadoglu said he disclosed his reasons regarded with his claim.

Kanadoglu said he demanded the party in question to be closed in respect to the dimensions and qualities of the activities.

* * * * *

Mistakes by PKK

Turkish Daily News January 17, 2002 By Ilnur Cevik

PKK continues its provocations while it hardly cares for the people of southeastern Turkey who can't even buy a slice of bread...

The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) terrorist organization is continuing on its course of confrontation with Turkey and is only creating the conditions for its own destruction.

The PKK is behind a rather awkward campaign by a some university students who have presented petitions to their university administrations demanding that they be educated in Kurdish...

Now the PKK is using primary school children in Istanbul for a continuation of this absurd campaign. They have made nearly three dozen mothers of the students present petitions to primary school administrations demanding that their children be educated in Kurdish...

Soon, we are told, the PKK will also encourage a campaign for a group of citizens of Kurdish origin to apply to the birth certificate offices across the country demanding that their Kurdish identity be documented.

All these developments suggest that the PKK is still after creating public disorder, chaos and discord in the country. They are still fanning separatism. We would have thought they would have drawn the necessary lessons of the very unfortunate incidents of the past and thus would not have repeated these mistakes of sowing the seeds of discord. All the PKK has done is bring more hardships and suffering on the people of southeastern Turkey.

We support the idea that some people in Turkey, including some of our citizens of Kurdish origin, are not being treated as first class citizens of the Turkish Republic. We have been saying this for nearly two decades and we will continue saying this in the future as long as things do not improve. Yet, we only see provocation and evil in what the PKK is doing. The citizens of Kurdish origin should be allowed to speak their native language. They should be allowed to communicate and use the media in this language.

But the official language of this country is Turkish and this language should be used as the means of communication of the people of our country. Yes, we could have some optional courses in Kurdish in some schools in southeastern Turkey and in some universities but that would only be subject to the supply and demand situation and not a set rule. It is absurd to say people will go to primary schools or even universities where the education language is exclusively Kurdish. The PKK, or anyone who claims to be really caring for the people of Kurdish origin, should be more concerned with the plight of the people of southeastern Turkey these days instead of such meaningless issues. The economic crisis had created deep suffering in the region. People are desperate. No one cares for language or even cultural rights when they can't even afford buying a slice of bread.

But the PKK and its crowd have no concern for the people. They have not even put in half of the constructive struggle we have put into improving the conditions of the people of southeastern Turkey over the years. They only know how to kill, ruin and destroy. They do not know how to build and create.

* * * * *

Tehran's Quest for Ballistic Missiles

A Moscow Scientist Details Russia's Role but Plays Down Threat

By Michael Dobbs
Washington Post Service

MOSCOW — The first time Vadim Vorobei went to Iran in 1996, he was amazed by the number of foreign missile scientists wandering openly through Tehran. For the most part, they were people like him: elderly representatives of the old Soviet technological elite impoverished by the collapse of communism and willing to sell their services to the highest bidder.

Although the Iranians made a show of keeping the scientists apart, said Mr. Vorobei, they frequently bumped into each other at hotels and restaurants. One day, he would spot a leading Russian missile guidance specialist; the next, a well-known missile engineer from Ukraine. All had been lured to Tehran on the pretext of giving lectures on rocket technology to Iranian university students.

From the U.S. perspective, Mr. Vorobei and his friends are symbols of one of the most serious challenges of the post-Cold War era, the worldwide proliferation of ballistic missiles.

In this view, Iran is a "rogue state" seeking weapons of mass destruction and sponsoring international terrorism. The

prospect of such a country acquiring long-range missiles is the nightmare scenario underpinning President George W. Bush's decision to push ahead with the deployment of a national missile defense system and withdraw from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with Russia.

Seated in his office at the Moscow Aviation Institute, one of several Russian institutions under U.S. sanctions for proliferating missile technology, Mr. Vorobei insists that American fears are exaggerated. He claims he and other Russian missile scientists were brought to Iran in part to demonstrate to the rest of the world that Iran was making rapid strides toward becoming a major missile power that would soon be able to target the United States. In fact, he insisted, Iran's capabilities remain much more modest than that.

"It was a huge mess," recalled Mr. Vorobei, a department head at the institute, the alma mater of many of Russia's leading missile engineers, describing what he said was a five-year collaboration with Iran, from 1996 to 2000.

"The Iranians took people who were needed and people who weren't needed. There was something artificial about it. They

were trying to show that a lot of Russians were working for them and everybody else should be scared by it," he said.

The threat has been taken seriously by the Bush administration, which used it to justify rapidly pushing ahead with the deployment of a missile defense system. A congressional commission headed by Donald Rumsfeld, now the defense secretary, predicted in July 1998 that Iran might be capable of causing "major destruction" to the United States "within five years."

The differing perceptions over what Iran has achieved, and how much outside assistance it is receiving, go to the heart of the missile defense debate in the United States. While few experts doubt that Iran is rapidly emerging as a regional missile power, opinions are divided over whether its programs pose a real threat to U.S. territory, as the Bush administration has suggested.

Mr. Vorobei's activities confirm what Western analysts have long suspected and the Russian government has repeatedly denied — the existence of an underground railroad of Russian scientists traveling to Iran to work on missile

and nuclear weapons programs.

But Mr. Vorobei's experiences also underscore the difficulties Iran has faced in developing long-range missiles.

Interviews with policymakers, missile scientists, and independent experts in a half-dozen countries suggest that the prospect of a ballistic missile attack on U.S. territory by a "rogue state" is in some ways less likely now than in the summer of 1998, when the Rumsfeld Commission issued its five-year warning.

North Korea, the Third World country furthest along in missile development, has declared a testing moratorium. Iran has had trouble perfecting its top-of-the-line Shahab-3 missile, with a range of about 1,300 kilometers (800 miles) and has shown little sign of embarking on a serious intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) program.

"The Iranian program is not developing as quickly as the Iranians have claimed, and Israeli and American assessments expected," said Gerald Steinberg, a strategic issues expert at the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. He said that the Shahab-3 missile, when it is even-

tually deployed, will be capable of hitting Israel, but is hardly a threat to the United States, nearly 9,600 kilometers away.

"A missile remains the least likely delivery vehicle for a weapon of mass destruction," said Joseph Cirincione, director of the nonproliferation project at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "The Sept. 11 events have shown that people can inflict mass casualties on the U.S. with cutting knives and imagination. There are many cheaper, more reliable, but still very destructive means of attacking America that don't require the expense, technical sophistication and exposure that come with a ballistic missile."

The Iranian Shahab-3 is modeled on the North Korean No Dong ballistic missile, which is itself a scaled-up version of the Soviet Scud, according to U.S. officials and independent experts.

Just how much help Mr. Vorobei and his colleagues gave Iran is a matter of dispute. U.S. and Israeli experts say that Russian cooperation with Iran has been more extensive than Mr. Vorobei and his colleagues are willing to acknowledge. For example, they said they have evidence of Russian experts attending Iranian static engine tests, in which a missile engine is strapped to the ground and fired, prior to a full missile test.

Mr. Vorobei said the Russian contribution to the Iranian missile program has been limited by Iranian paranoia and secretiveness. "They wanted to receive information from us, but at the same time they were not willing to tell us everything they were doing," Mr. Vorobei said. "That made it difficult to help them."

For the most part, the Russian sci-

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entists who have traveled to Tehran appear to have been academics like Mr. Vorobei rather than top-flight experts from missile design institutes, whose movements are much more tightly controlled by Russian security agencies.

While Mr. Vorobei and other Russians concede that they helped Iran build up its general scientific base, they insist they stopped well short of transferring secret information banned by international agreement. Mr. Vorobei said he doubted U.S. projections that Iran could obtain an intercontinental ballistic missile within five or even 10 years. "Their progress is very slow," he said.

As an insight into the difficulties that Iran has encountered in its missile program, he cites the attempt to produce jet vanes for the Shahab-3. Located at the bottom of the engine, the movable vanes help steer the missile and are an essential part of its guidance system.

Mr. Vorobei explained that the vanes must be coated with a heat-resistant material to protect against super-hot gases

from the engine exhaust. He said Iran was unable to acquire either the reinforced composite known as carbon-carbon or tungsten, two materials often used to coat jet vanes, so they used graphite, a poor substitute. While graphite can be used for jet vanes, it tends to crack under pressure.

"They created an engine, but not a proper guidance system," Mr. Vorobei said, pointing to the failure of two out of three tests of the Shahab-3. "They don't have any real metallurgical industry of their own. Their only hope is to steal something from neighboring countries, but they can't steal everything."

Prior to the publication of the Rumsfeld Commission report in 1998, CIA analysts testified that it would take Iran at least 10 or 15 years to develop an ICBM, even with maximum cooperation from the Russian government. "Ten years is when the Russians come in, build the plant, operate the plant, and build the missiles," the agency's top missile expert, David Osias, testified in 1996.

While there has been leakage of missile technology from Russia to Iran, it has not been on the scale that Mr. Osias and others predicted would be necessary for Iran to develop an ICBM within 10 years. The big question is whether Iran will attempt to build a new generation of missiles capable of traveling much longer distances.

Recent statements from Iranian officials, along with evidence from Iranian missile tests, suggest that Iran is now shifting its emphasis from long-range liquid fuel missiles, such as the Shahab, to short-range solid-fuel missiles.

"There is a big difference between Iranians trying to cover the region, and developing a system that will allow them to attack the U.S.," said Gary Samore, a senior fellow at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London and former White House senior director for nonproliferation for the Clinton administration. "I don't think the Iranians have yet made a fundamental decision about developing an ICBM capability."

Le dessous des cartes Par Julien Lacorle Syrie : le temps se gâte

Les nuages s'accumulent au-dessus de Damas, qui pourraient bien annoncer des orages dévastateurs. Convaincu, non sans raison, que son pays pourrait être l'une des prochaines cibles de la « guerre contre le terrorisme », le président syrien, Bachar al-Assad, multiplie les gages de bonne volonté en direction de Washington. Exemple : tout récemment, un agent du FBI a été autorisé pour la première fois à interroger dans la capitale syrienne des témoins qui ont rencontré Mohammed Atta, l'un des organisateurs des attentats du 11 septembre.

Selon des responsables arabes, la Syrie a également transmis des renseignements sur des organisations islamistes liées à Al-Qaïda, ainsi que sur Mamoun Darkanzali, un Syrien accusé d'être un des financiers du mouvement d'Oussama ben Laden. En outre, des informations ont été fournies sur le Hamas, le Jihad islamique et d'autres organisations palestiniennes du « front du refus ». Les Etats-Unis, qui ont présenté une liste de suspects réfugiés en Syrie, s'intéressent tout parti-



Bachar al-Assad multiplie les gages de bonne volonté vers les Etats-Unis.

culièrement à Imad Mughnujah, ancien dirigeant de la branche militaire du Hezbollah, responsable de plusieurs attentats anti-américains dans les années 80 à Beyrouth. Sur ce dossier, Bachar al-Assad a déjà fait un geste en bloquant depuis quelques semaines les transferts d'armes iraniennes destinées au Hezbollah. Elles transitaient par l'aéroport de Damas, avant d'être acheminées par la route jusqu'au Liban.

Cette concession n'a, semble-t-il, pas suffi à Washington. Des bâtiments de la 6^e flotte ont arraisonné en Méditerranée des bateaux « suspects », dont les cales auraient pu contenir des armes à destination du pays du Cèdre.

Avertissements sans frais ? Retranché dans un « splendide isolement », le pouvoir syrien apparaît aujourd'hui aux abois. Sur le plan intérieur, le jeune raïs dispose d'une marge de manœuvre extrêmement étroite, coincé entre les caciques du régime et les généraux de l'armée. Economiquement, le pays est en crise et les investissements étrangers se font rares. Damas a perdu de sa superbe ■

Des combattants islamistes pressés de se rendre aux Kurdes irakiens



DUBAI, 10 jan (AFP) - 17h29 - Des responsables kurdes irakiens tentent d'éviter un affrontement sanglant avec des combattants islamistes radicaux qui se cachent près de la frontière avec l'Iran, et dont certains ont des liens avec Al-Qaïda, ont affirmé jeudi des responsables kurdes.

Les combattants du Jound Al-Islam (les soldats de l'islam) sont dans une "situation peu enviable" après la chute des talibans et l'arrestation de membres du réseau d'Al-Qaïda du terroriste présumé Oussama ben Laden en Afghanistan, a déclaré à l'AFP un responsable.

Près de 200 combattants de ce groupe, dont le nombre est estimé à 300 ou 400 personnes, sont assiégés dans la région montagneuse de Biara, à la frontière avec l'Iran, a indiqué le représentant à Londres de l'Union patriotique du Kurdistan (UPK), Latif Rashid, interrogé par téléphone.

Ces militants ont été repoussés vers la frontière par l'UPK en septembre dernier à la suite d'une "embuscade" dressée dans le village de Khelihama, où des membres de Jound Al-Islam avaient "massacré" quelque 50 combattants de l'UPK, selon M. Rashid.

"Nous leur avons demandé de déposer les armes et de réintégrer la vie civile dans leurs régions", a-t-il dit.

M. Rashid a affirmé que l'UPK pourrait avoir recours à la force pour déloger le groupe, mais il tente de résoudre la crise sans effusion de sang et sans fixer d'ultimatum pour obtenir la reddition.

L'UPK de Jalal Talabani, et le Parti Démocratique du Kurdistan (PDK) de Massoud Barzani, se partagent le contrôle du nord de l'Irak, qui échappe totalement au contrôle de Bagdad depuis la fin de la guerre du Golfe en 1991.

Pour sa part, le responsable des relations extérieures à l'UPK, Sadi Pire, a affirmé à l'AFP que quelque 40 combattants avaient abandonné les rangs de Jound Al-Islam pour retourner à la vie civile, profitant de l'"amnistie" décrétée par l'UPK.

M. Pire, basé dans le Kurdistan irakien, mais qui se trouve actuellement en visite en Autriche, a ajouté que des responsables de l'UPK et des islamistes kurdes étaient engagés dans des pourparlers pour trouver une solution pacifique à cette impasse.

"Nous avons demandé à ce que les membres non-irakiens de Jound Al-Islam puissent retourner dans leurs pays", a dit M. Pire, en ajoutant qu'il y avait quelque 80 Arabes non-kurdes avec ce groupe, notamment marocains, jordaniens et syriens.

Quelque 60 combattants irakiens, membres de Jound Al-Islam, avaient été entraînés par les talibans ou les membres d'Al-Qaïda en Afghanistan.

Trois membres du parti pro-kurde HADEP emprisonnés dans le sud-est



ISTANBUL, 15 jan (AFP) - 21h16 - Trois membres d'une section locale du Parti de la Démocratie du Peuple (HADEP, pro-kurde) ont été écroués à Adana, dans le sud-est de la Turquie, pour "assistance à une organisation séparatiste", rapporte l'agence Anatolie.

Les trois hommes, interpellés auparavant par la police anti-terroriste, ont été présentés à la Cour de Sûreté de l'Etat qui les a fait incarcérer après les avoir inculpés d'"assistance à une organisation séparatiste", expression qui désigne le Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK, clandestin).

L'agence de presse ne précise pas les faits qui ont mené à cette inculpation, ni ne précise si les 3 hommes font partie du groupe d'une quinzaine de membres du HADEP placés en garde à vue le week-end dernier dans la même ville d'Adana.

Le HADEP est accusé d'avoir des liens "organiques" avec le PKK qui a mené pendant 15 ans une lutte armée pour la création d'un Etat kurde indépendant dans le sud-est anatolien à majorité kurde. Il rejette cette accusation et affirme rechercher une solution pacifique au problème kurde.

La Cour constitutionnelle turque entendra fin janvier la défense finale du HADEP, dans le cadre d'une procédure pouvant mener à son interdiction en raison de ses liens supposés avec la rébellion kurde, et devrait rendre son verdict dans les semaines qui suivront.

Le HADEP, créé en mai 1994, avait succédé à une autre formation pro-kurde, le Parti de la démocratie (DEP), qui avait été interdit, à l'instar de toutes les formations politiques pro-kurdes antérieures et postérieures. La Cour européenne des Droits de l'Homme a jugé inéquitable le procès qui a jeté ses sept députés en prison et réclame en vain la libération notamment de Leyla Zana, prix Sakharov.

Il n'est pas représenté au parlement faute de recueillir les 10% des voix nécessaires mais dirige les principales municipalités du sud-est depuis les élections municipales de 1999.

Le PKK a lui déposé les armes en septembre 1999, après l'arrestation et la condamnation à mort de son leader Abdullah Ocalan, accusé de haute trahison pour avoir mené une rébellion qui a fait quelque 36.500 victimes.

Syria Recasts Its War on Muslim Brotherhood as Anti-Terrorist

By Neil MacFarquhar
New York Times Service

DAMASCUS — After spending the last 20 years in prison for being a ranking member of the Muslim Brotherhood, Khalid al Shami suddenly found himself released on a cool night last month, lost in a capital he no longer recognized.

"I couldn't find my house because everything had changed," said Mr. Shami, reliving his first confused, exhilarating night. "I didn't know where I was."

He checked into a hotel after convincing the manager that he was indeed the dark-haired, 40-year-old man pictured on his expired driver's license and passport.

Mr. Shami counts himself lucky. In February 1982, just weeks after his arrest, Syria suppressed a Muslim Brotherhood insurgency, first with guns and then with bulldozers, leveling entire neighborhoods in the city of Hama, massacring about 10,000 residents. Thousands more members of the brotherhood were arrested and never seen again.

For years the events in Hama were only whispered about. But since Sept. 11, things have changed, and Syria is seeking to repackage its experience in asphyxiating Muslim extremism as a textbook anti-terrorism campaign.

The government exudes a certain sense of vin-

dication that what was once condemned as a human rights horror might now help improve long-troubled ties with Washington. Syrian intelligence agencies are even sharing their knowledge about tracking militant cells with the West, earning praise from American officials.

Yet in one of those odd twists of diplomacy, Syria remains firmly lodged on the State Department's list of nations that support terrorism. It has even been mentioned peripherally as a possible target because of its support for groups that Washington labels terrorists.

Syria, for its part, remains a staunch critic of the United States and is already using its new seat on the UN Security Council to focus attention on ending Israel's occupation of Arab lands, while dismissing the American role in Middle East peace talks as too biased.

"Relations exist on two levels," said Imad Fawzi Shueibi, a political analyst and a professor at Damascus University. "Publicly there is conflict, but on the second level the U.S. knows that it needs the Syrians."

American officials in Washington have previously said that a top official from the CIA held secret talks with his Syrian counterparts about helping the United States investigate and uproot Osama bin Laden's Qaida network.

The U.S. Embassy here refused to comment on the talks. But other diplomats noted that ever since the events in Hama, Syria's half dozen or so overlapping intelligence agencies have all tracked extremist groups operating in the Middle East and among Arab exile communities in Europe.

The Syrians, caught off guard by the virulence of the uprising, wanted to wipe out all Muslim Brotherhood cells and to ensure that no other organization emerged suddenly to threaten Hafez

al Assad, the president at the time. They were known to investigate virtually all terrorist groups, even those like Qaida that had no links to Syria.

"They keep their eyes on anybody who is doing any organized activity because they want to make sure that they are not a threat," said one diplomat. "They want to know who is in contact with whom, who is calling whom, where they are meeting."

Syrian agents were active in the Arab exile communities in France, the Netherlands and Germany, tracking people who committed terrorist acts or might be planning ones. No diplomats or Syrian officials would confirm whether Syria provided specific information that led directly to any Qaida cells. But any intelligence sharing with the United States constitutes a notable shift in relations.

One figure who emerged from the attack investigation is a Syrian-born executive in Germany who the authorities suspect may be a link

between the hijackers and Islamic militants there. The executive, Mamoun Darkazanli, was listed with 27 people and organizations whose assets were frozen by the United States on the grounds that they provided money to Qaida. Mr. Darkazanli has declined to comment.

American officials have praised the Syrians for contributing to the anti-terrorism effort, while affirming that they are likely to be asked to do more.

"They have said and done some things, and have cooperated with us recently, that suggest that they're looking for a better relationship with the United States," said Secretary of State Colin Powell in a television interview last fall.

So many congressional delegations are tramping through Damascus these days that Foreign Ministry officials started jokingly calling it "the American month."

President Bashar Assad, until recently reluctant to meet any American delegations, has been seeing them all. After one meeting last week, the government news agency quoted him as urging the United States to "take advantage of Syria's successful experiences."

Other officials are less oblique. "The kind of terrorism we faced was the same kind and probably the same persons now fighting the United States," said Adnan Omran, the minister of information.

"We were ahead in fighting terrorism."

Syrian officials hope Washington can straddle what amounts to the fault line in their relationship — how to define terrorism. They, too, regard Muslim fundamentalists as a strategic enemy, but they will not yet abandon the Palestinian and Lebanese Islamist groups with whom they share views on Israel.

"Those fighting to regain occupied territories are not terrorists," said Mr. Omran, noting that American delegations often neglect the distinction he makes.

Syria is on the State Department's terrorism list because it supports Hezbollah, the Lebanese guerrilla group that is making the transition to a political party and that the United States accuses

of being a terrorist organization.

The Syrians dismiss the list as an American favor to Israel. But Hezbollah has not carried out any attacks on Israeli targets since October, a fact analysts attribute to Syria's desire to avoid sudden American attention to its friends.

Two decades after the Syrian government faced

down its own Muslim insurgency, it still keeps about 500 members of the Muslim Brotherhood in jail. Men like Mr. Shami say they believe that they are being released because of health problems. Now 60, he had a heart attack in jail a few years ago and no longer poses much threat.

Turkish Leader Seeks Aid From the IMF and Bush

U.S. Visit Aims to Showcase Economy's Progress

By Douglas Frantz
New York Times Service

ISTANBUL — The prime minister of Turkey was set to arrive Monday in Washington to ask for urgent help for his country's economy, bringing a last-minute offering to make the case: a \$5 billion bailout for Turkish banks.

Parliament passed the bailout in a midnight session Thursday, completing a last requirement to get a \$10 billion International Monetary Fund loan.

The prime minister, Bulent Ecevit, with an entourage of 200 government officials and business leaders, hopes to persuade the IMF to provide the loan promptly and to convince the Bush administration that Turkey's strategic importance warrants special trade help.

The IMF board is expected to approve the loan this month, Turkish and American experts say, but the administration is unlikely to grant any trade preferences.

Improving the economy in Turkey, which has sustained setbacks similar to Argentina's in recent months, is the key to survival for Mr. Ecevit and his fragile coalition. The government is trying to turn around the economy before elections scheduled for 2004.

"There is an optimistic mood in the

country at the moment that things are getting better," said Ilter Turan, a political scientist at Bilgi University in Istanbul, "but any indication to the contrary would undermine the entire process of economic recovery."

The government is eager to portray Turkey as back on the road to financial stability after 2001 ended in a cascade of bleak statistics: The economy shrank by 8.5 percent, consumer inflation ended the year at 68.5 percent, the national currency lost more than 50 percent of its value, 27,000 businesses closed their doors and 1.5 million people lost their jobs.

But there was some good news. Under international pressure, Ankara took steps to insulate banking and other industries from the demands of politicians, who have traditionally used state-owned banks and government contracts to extract campaign contributions. Analysts said that injecting new capital into weak banks and other regulatory steps should speed up the pace of consolidation and help restore the sector's health.

Parliament also passed laws to bring greater integrity to public purchasing and to liberalize the tobacco industry by reducing subsidies to farmers and paving the way to privatize Tekel, the state-owned tobacco and alcohol monopoly.



Murat Sezer/The Associated Press

Mr. Ecevit is not expected to win any special U.S. trade preferences.

Also on the plus side, exports grew 15 percent last year, though partly as a result of the devalued lira. The Istanbul stock market recorded some year-end gains as Turkey benefited from the realization that the Argentine default would not lead to a collapse in other emerging markets.

"We are off to a better start this year, but we cannot talk about good economic conditions yet," said Akin Ongor, an executive at Garanti Bank and an official with the private Foreign Economic Relations Board.

Mr. Ongor, who was traveling with the prime minister, said the delegation would press Bush administration officials to eliminate quotas on Turkish textiles, reduce restrictions on the country's steel and adopt preferences that put Turkey on an equal footing with European countries.

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, TUESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2002

Deux rebelles présumé tués lors d'une fusillade dans une ville du sud-est



DIYARBAKIR (Turquie), 16 jan (AFP) - 12h09 - Deux rebelles kurdes présumés ont été tués mercredi lors d'une fusillade avec les forces de l'ordre dans une zone d'habitation de la localité de Silvan (sud-est), a-t-on indiqué de source officielle.

Les forces de l'ordre avaient encerclé une maison après avoir reçu un renseignement selon lequel deux membres du Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK) s'y cachaient, a expliqué Cemil Serhadli à l'agence Anatolie.

Quatre personnes sont sorties de la maison en répondant à un appel à se rendre mais deux autres sont restées à l'intérieur et ont ouvert le feu. Ils ont été tués dans la fusillade consécutive, a indiqué M. Serhadli, selon qui 2 fusils, deux grenades et des balles ont été retrouvées dans la maison.

Les affrontements entre les rebelles kurdes et l'armée ont considérablement diminué depuis que le PKK a appelé à l'arrêt des combats et au retrait de ses troupes de Turquie depuis septembre 1999, à l'appel de son chef Abdullah Ocalan, capturé puis condamné à mort quelques mois auparavant en Turquie.

Mais l'armée turque a rejeté cet appel et continue de pourchasser les rebelles, dont la plupart sont réfugiés selon elle dans le nord de l'Irak.

Le PKK avait lancé en 1984 une lutte armée pour la création d'un Etat kurde indépendant dans le sud-est anatolien à majorité kurde. Selon les autorités turques, les quinze ans de conflit ont fait 36.500 morts.

16 Jan, 2002

Kurdistan National Assembly

Erbil, Kurdistan- Iraq

STATEMENT

Office of the Speaker

Recently there has been a campaign in the Turkish media and through some Turkish official statements focused on fears about the future and territorial integrity of Iraq as well as allegations on the establishment of an independent Kurdish State in Iraqi Kurdistan, which supposedly threatens the life, property and freedom of the Turkmen citizens .

Excellencies

We find ourselves in a position to view with suspicion the reasons and motives for this untrue and unfair campaign. We feel that all this is being done as a pretext to interfere in the Iraqi people's affairs and particularly in the affairs of the people of Kurdistan, to abuse its democratic experiment denying its just national rights. We therefore find it necessary to make the following clarification:

First, no party in Kurdistan, legislative or administrative authority or institution has called for separation from Iraq or the establishment of a Kurdish independent state. Contrary to that the National Assembly of Iraqi Kurdistan made, on October 22, 1992, a unanimous decision that constitutional relationship with the central government should be on the basis of federalism within a democratic Iraqi republic whereby Iraqi Kurdistan will constitute one of its regions. This continues to be a binding decision on the regional administration as well as on political parties and institutions in Iraqi Kurdistan.

This decision has become the motto for all the parties and the people of Kurdistan in general and it is a decision that we hereby confirm as a principal demand of our people and their lawfully elected institutions.

Secondly, there are in Kurdistan, alongside the Kurds, national minorities such as Turkmen, Assyrians, Chaldeans and Arabs. The law recognizes their existence and guarantees their freedom, their rights and properties as equal in the eyes of the law.

The Regional Government respects this reality and safeguards those rights. These groups have their own political parties, cultural and social institutions. They study in their own languages, have their own newspapers, magazines, broadcasting and T.V stations. They all participate in the administration as well as other institutions of the region to an extent that has not been seen before since the establishment of the Iraqi State.

Excellencies,

We invite you or your representatives to visit Kurdistan and see the situation for yourselves and investigate what truly happens within the area; to meet with the political parties and particularly with the Turkmen ones, their associations and personalities to gauge the sentiment and opinion of the majority among this group.

We in the name of the National Assembly of Iraqi Kurdistan implore you to help our people to make known the facts and to assist them in achieving their legitimate democratic rights and prevent the undermining and the infringements upon those rights while refuting the pretexts and exposing the half-truths that are being unfairly publicized for purposes that are contrary to the interest of the people of Iraq and their democratic movement.

We hope that Your Excellencies' efforts will be instrumental in clarifying the truth and in putting an end to this unjust campaign and the dubious intentions behind it.

Please, Excellencies, accept the consideration of our highest regards.

Dr. Rowsch N. Shaways
Speaker of the Parliament

ASSEMBLEE NATIONALE DU KURDISTAN

**Erbil, Kurdistan d'Iraq
Bureau du Président**

16 janvier 2002

DECLARATION

Il y a eu récemment une campagne dans les média Turcs et dans certaines déclarations Turques officielles centrée sur des craintes à propos de l'avenir et l'intégrité territoriale de l'Iraq et comprenant des allégations sur l'établissement d'un état Kurde indépendant au Kurdistan d'Iraq qui serait une menace pour la vie, les propriétés et la liberté des citoyens Turkmènes.

Excellences,

Nous sommes amenés à regarder de près et avec suspicion les raisons et motifs de cette campagne mensongère et injuste. Nous pensons qu'elle sert de prétexte permettant à se mêler des affaires du peuple irakien et plus spécialement de celles du peuple du Kurdistan, dont on veut dénigrer l'expérience démocratique et nier les justes droits nationaux. C'est pourquoi nous estimons que la clarification suivante est nécessaire :

Tout d'abord, aucun parti au Kurdistan, aucune autorité ou institution législative ou administrative n'a jamais exigé l'établissement au Kurdistan d'un état indépendant. Bien au contraire, le 22 octobre 1992 l'Assemblée Nationale du Kurdistan d'Iraq a pris à l'unanimité la décision que les relations avec le gouvernement central devaient s'établir sur la base du fédéralisme à l'intérieur d'une république démocratique d'Iraq, dont le Kurdistan irakien constituerait une des régions. Cette décision reste toujours d'application dans l'administration régionale ainsi que dans les partis politiques et les institutions du Kurdistan d'Iraq.

Cette décision a toujours été la devise de tous les partis Kurdes et du peuple du Kurdistan en général, et nous tenons par cette voie à la confirmer comme étant la principale exigence de notre peuple et de ses institutions légalement élues.

En second lieu, il y a au Kurdistan, à part les Kurdes, des minorités nationales telles les Turkmènes, les Assyriens, les Chaldéens et les Arabes. La loi garantit en toute égalité au regard de la loi leur liberté, leurs droits et leurs propriétés.

Le Gouvernement Régional respecte cette réalité et protège leurs droits. Ces groupes ont leurs propres partis politiques, leurs propres institutions culturelles et sociales. Ils étudient dans leur propre langue, ils ont leurs propres journaux et revues, leurs propres stations de radio et de télévision. Ils participent à l'administration et aux autres institutions de la région dans une proportion jamais atteinte depuis la fondation de l'état irakien.

Excellences,

Nous vous invitons, vous ou vos représentants, à visiter le Kurdistan et à observer la situation vous-mêmes, pour vous rendre compte des réalités dans la région ;

acceptez de rencontrer des partis politiques et en particulier les partis Turkmènes, leurs associations et leurs personnalités, afin d'évaluer le sentiment général et l'opinion de la majorité dans ce groupe.

Au nom de l'Assemblée Nationale du Kurdistan d'Iraq, nous vous prions d'aider notre peuple à faire connaître les faits et à l'assister dans la réalisation de ses droits démocratiques légitimes. A l'aider aussi à se protéger des actions de sape et d'obstruction visant ces droits, en réfutant les mensonges et les demi-mensonges qui régulièrement sont publiés dans le but de nuire aux intérêts du peuple d'Iraq et de son mouvement démocratique.

Nous espérons que vos efforts, Excellences, contribueront à rétablir la vérité et à mettre fin à cette injuste campagne et aux intentions douteuses qui se cachent derrière.

Veuillez, Excellences, accepter l'expression de notre plus grand estime.

Dr. Rowsch N. Shaways
Président du Parlement

La Turquie et la Russie signent un accord de coopération militaire



ANKARA, 15 jan (AFP) - 9h53 - La Turquie et la Russie ont signé lundi soir un accord de coopération militaire visant à renforcer des relations bilatérales souvent tendues par des accusations mutuelles de soutien à leurs guérillas respectives, kurde et tchéchène, a indiqué mardi l'agence Anatolie.

"Cet accord, signe d'amitié et de coopération entre la Russie et la Turquie, sera un bon exemple pour d'autres pays de la région", a souligné le chef de l'état-major de l'armée turque, le général Huseyin Kivrikoglu, avant de signer cet accord avec son homologue russe Anatoli Kvachnine.

L'accord pose la base légale d'une coopération entre les armées russe et turque et sera suivi par d'autres accords et protocoles, a souligné le général Kivrikoglu.

Le général Kvachnine a relevé que l'accord contribuerait à renforcer la coopération technique et en matière d'entraînement du personnel militaire.

"Tout ceci sera bénéfique pour nos Etats et nos peuples", a-t-il dit.

La Turquie, membre de l'OTAN, et la Russie ont développé d'étroites relations commerciales après l'effondrement de l'URSS mais leurs relations restent entachées par de fréquentes accusations d'un soutien à des mouvements séparatistes considérés comme "terroristes" dans chacun des pays --les Kurdes pour la Turquie et les Tchétchènes pour la Russie.

La Turquie a longtemps accusé la Russie de tolérer la présence de rebelles kurdes sur son territoire, au cours des 15 ans de lutte menée par le Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK). Moscou reproche à Ankara d'abriter des rebelles tchéchènes, qui ont mené plusieurs opérations de détournement de bateau ou avion ces dernières années à partir de la Turquie.

En novembre dernier, les deux pays ont signé un plan d'action pour renforcer la coopération bilatérale incluant la lutte contre le terrorisme.

Washington is against Kurdish state, supports Iraq's territorial unity

- Bush tells Ecevit: 'Saddam should go'

U.S. President George Bush told Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit that Washington was determined to get rid of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein but it has not made a certain decision or examined possible options on Iraq yet.

Bush's remarks may be a relief to Turkey's concerns that whether its neighbor Iraq could be the next immediate target of a U.S. "anti terrorism" campaign. Washington launched the campaign late last year in retaliation to September 11 attacks and toppled radical Islamist Taleban rulers of Afghanistan for hiding Osama bin Laden, the mastermind of the September 11 attacks.

Ecevit met the U.S. President in the White House on the second day of his official talks in Washington where he hoped to receive U.S. backing in many fields, ranging from increased trade to sending Turkish troops to Afghanistan for an international peace keeping force there.

"Bush told Ecevit that the United States was determined to get rid of Saddam," a source close to the pair's meeting told the Turkish Daily news. "But he also told Ecevit that Washington has not made a decision on Iraq yet and he did not even order for the preparation of options on Iraq," the source added. He said the United States supported Iraq's territorial integrity and was against the establishment of a Kurdish state there.

Ankara is worried that a possible U.S. military attack to bring down longtime U.S. foe Saddam Hussein could result in the division of Iraq and see the birth of a Kurdish state there. Turkish authorities believe the emergence of a Kurdish state would encourage a similar formation within Turkey.

Turkey's billions of dollars of losses during the 1991 Gulf War also fuel Ankara's fears that a war next door could derail an IMF-backed economic programme designed to pull Turkey out of deep economic crisis.

Bush administration, however, advocates the toppling of Saddam Hussein describing an Iraq under his ruling as a threat for neighboring countries and for regional stability. Washington is in close contact with opposition Kurdish groups that has controlled the break away enclave of northern Iraq since from the Gulf War under the protection of a U.S.-led airforce flying out of Turkey.

BUSH ASSURES CONSULTATIONS ON IRAQ

The U.S. President assured Ecevit that Washington would consult with Turkey before taking and implementing any decision on Iraq but asked the Turkish side to do the

same in return. Bush emphasized the need for close consultations between the two strategic-partner countries on issues including Turkish plans such as opening up a new border gate with Iraq, the source said.

The future of Iraq were at the heart of Ecevit's official talks this week, but U.S. officials preferred to leave the in-depth discussions on maybe the most sensitive issue of the visit to the highest level contact, the Ecevit-Bush meeting.

"There are different opinions in the United States about Iraq. Anatolia news agency quoted Ecevit as saying after meeting with Vice President Dick Cheney and Assistant Secretary of State Marc Grossman on the first day of his talks. "Meeting with Bush is crucial for the Iraq issue," Ecevit said after meeting the two separately.

Ecevit before departing for Washington signalled that what matters for Turkey was no longer the Saddam Hussein administration but Iraq's territorial unity. He explained Turkey's concerns to the U.S. president during their meeting. But Turkish authorities are well aware that Ankara could not defer a U.S. military operation on Iraq if the decision was taken. U.S. assurances for beforehand consultations, however, could help ease Ankara's worries.

US SEES CRUCIAL TURKEY ROLE IN AFGHANISTAN

Turkey's importance as an ally of the United States has increased significantly following the Sept. 11 attacks as the single Muslim but secular member of NATO. Ankara is sending troops for the peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan and has offered to take over its leadership when Britain hands it over.

Ecevit discussed Turkey's needs to contribute to the efforts of restructuring Afghanistan in his talks with Defence Minister Donald Rumsfeld and Cheney. Ecevit later said he had the impression that Washington attached great importance to the role Turkey could play in Afghanistan.

Vice President Cheney praised an agreement between Turkey, the United States and Britain that allows a European Union rapid force to use NATO facilities and said Greek Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis was told about its importance during his visit to Washington before Ecevit. The issue is now a European Union matter and the 15-nation club should handle member-Greece's objections, he said.

In his meeting with Grossman, Ecevit asked for U.S. support for the face to face talks between the Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktas and his Greek Cypriot counterpart Glafcos Clerides that aim to bring an end to Cyprus' long-running division. "This process should continue. We all should encourage this process," Grossman said.

Turkish Daily News

17 January 2002,

KDP & PUK jointly deny reports: 'We seek a united and a democratic Iraq'

While Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit was preparing for a critical meeting with U.S. President George W. Bush where the Iraqi issue is expected to be the leading topic of the discussion, an interesting statement came from the Ankara offices of the Iraqi Kurdish parties.

Jalal Talabani-led Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and Massoud Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) released a joint statement on Wednesday in Ankara, denying reports in the Turkish media which dwelled on the concerns of "the establishment of an independent Kurdish state in northern Iraq in the event of U.S. military action against Baghdad."

"Both KDP and PUK, as the main two political groups in Iraqi Kurdistan, vehemently deny these unfounded and provocative accusations. Since we are advocating for the territorial integrity and political unity of Iraq with a democratic and federal solution to the Kurdish question. Furthermore the responsibility to maintain the security of our borders and the stability in the region is given high priority. Equally both parties are wary of the

legitimate concerns of the neighboring countries and those of Turkey in particular," the PUK-KDP statement said.

Remarks by the speaker of the Iraqi Kurdistan National Assembly

A speech made by Dr. Roj Nuri Shaways, the speaker of the Kurdistan National Assembly on Tuesday, stated that a campaign is being initiated by the Turkish media and certain officials against northern Iraq, which he called in his speech as "Iraqi Kurdistan."

The speech, a brief translation of which was sent to leader and members of the European Parliament, European Union, Secretary of Socialist International, all socialist parties, U.S. Congress, French Parliament, British Parliament, Secretary of Arab League, Turkish Parliament and all of the Turkish political parties, accused the efforts to interfere in the affairs of Iraqi people as a whole and that of "Iraqi Kurdistan" in particular and interrupt the "sacred experiment" in democracy...

"No Iraqi Kurdish party or group has advocated to break away from Iraq nor they have asked for the establishment of an independent Kurdish state," Shaways said in his speech.

17 January 2002, Copyright ' Turkish Daily News



En dépit d'une bonne image à l'extérieur, la démocratie en Iran est une illusion.

Le réformisme illusoire de Khatami

par MOHAMMAD-REZA DJALILI

Le jour où l'administration intérimaire afghane dirigée par Hamid Karzaï et composée de personnalités non religieuses entra en fonction à Kaboul, Mohammad Khatami participait à un rassemblement d'étudiants à l'université de Téhéran. «Plus de talibans, ni à Kaboul ni à Téhéran» et «action ou démission», tels furent les slogans par lesquels les étudiants accueillirent le président de la République islamique d'Iran. En guise de réponse, Khatami se livra à un aveu de quasi-impuissance, confirmant ainsi la désaffection de l'opinion publique iranienne à son égard.

Pourtant, en dehors de l'Iran, le président de la République islamique est crédité d'une autre image. L'estime dont jouit le président iranien est due à son image de mollah atypique – affable, souriant, élégant – et au discours qu'il tient sur l'Etat de droit, l'exaltation de la participation citoyenne, le respect des libertés fondamentales, etc. Ce discours est d'autant mieux accueilli qu'il diffère des vociférations habituelles des islamistes radicaux qui ont longtemps occupé le devant de la scène politique iranienne. Nous sommes en présence d'un autre style de comportement et aussi confrontés à l'utilisation de concepts inhabituels chez les activistes islamistes. Faut-il pour autant en conclure que les choses ont changé en Iran et que le régime fondé par l'ayatollah Khomeyni il y a vingt-trois ans a tourné la page de la période révolutionnaire pour entrer, comme d'aucuns le prétendent, dans une phase nouvelle, celle de l'édification d'une «démocratie islamique»?

La réponse à cette question est, de mon point de vue, négative. Ce qui a changé en Iran, c'est la société. Confrontée à la révolution et à ses excès, à la guerre meurtrière avec l'Irak, à la dégradation de la situation économique et sociale du pays, à la monopolisation du pouvoir par le clergé politique, la société iranienne, très jeune (70 % de la population a moins de 30 ans) mais politiquement plus mûre que jamais, a de plus en plus de mal à vivre sous un régime répressif dont une des caractéristiques est d'avoir promulgué une pléthore d'interdits dont le contournement est devenu le sport favori de tout un peuple. Face à cette situation, les dirigeants les plus avisés de la République islamique, comme Khatami, essayent d'empêcher l'élargissement du fossé qui sépare la société de l'Etat.

C'est dans cette perspective que s'inscrit la politique réformatrice qu'il appelle de ses vœux. Ce projet rencontre une farouche opposition parmi les conservateurs qui pensent que leurs pri-

vilèges pourraient être menacés par la politique khatamiste. Mais l'échec du programme des partisans du changement ne s'explique pas uni-

quement par la résistance qu'opposent les méchants conservateurs à la mise en application des plans concoctés par les gentils réformateurs. L'origine du mal se trouve au sein du courant réformateur et plus particulièrement dans la personnalité de son chef de file. En effet, en tant que membre du sérail islamiste depuis toujours mais aussi comme homme ouvert au débat sur la démocratie et la démocratisation, Khatami essaye de concilier théocratie et démocratie. Exercice qu'il semble plus ou moins réussir, en tout cas du point de vue de ceux qui ont intérêt à ne pas regarder les choses de trop près.

A titre d'exemple, son évocation de l'Etat de droit est un choix respectable si l'on adhère aux valeurs démocratiques. Mais dans le cas particulier de la République islamique, de quel Etat de droit s'agit-il? Un Etat où la législation est fondée sur la discrimination entre les sexes est-il, au XXI^e siècle, un Etat de droit tel que nous l'entendons communément? Un Etat où le Code civil (article 1210) stipule qu'une fillette de 9 ans est majeure et peut donc contracter mariage tout étant en même temps pénalement responsable en tant qu'adulte, est-il un Etat de droit comme les autres? Un Etat dont la juridiction est fondée sur le Qisas, la loi du talion, qui admet les amputations, la lapidation, les châtiments corporels inhumains, est-il un Etat de droit?

A ces questions les tenants du relativisme culturel pourraient rétorquer que le droit doit être conforme aux us et coutumes du pays. Une telle attitude se justifie au mieux par la méconnaissance, au pire par le mépris. Bien avant la révolution, ces pratiques «juridiques» n'étaient plus en vigueur en Iran. En fait, la législation en vigueur aujourd'hui en République islamique est plus étrangère aux mœurs des Iraniens que les codes d'inspiration occidentale rédigés dans les années 1930 que, par ailleurs, le régime islamique n'est pas parvenu, malgré tous ses efforts, à complètement abolir.

L'exaltation de la participation populaire n'est pas, du moins dans le discours de Khatami, un renvoi pur et simple au populisme révolutionnaire de Khomeyni. Il semble souhaiter une participation de la société civile à la vie politique du pays. Mais là où le bât blesse, c'est qu'en formulant ce souhait Khatami fait l'impasse sur la réalité du système politique islamique et son mode de fonctionnement. En effet, que signifie participation dans un système qui fait une distinction

nette entre *insider* et *outsider* (*khodi* et *gheyré khodi*), c'est-à-dire entre islamistes bon ton et tous ceux qui refusent le mélange religion et politique et de ce fait sont exclus de toute candidature dans les procédures électorales? Par ailleurs, dans un régime où le vote de millions de citoyens ne fait pas le poids face aux douze membres cléricaux du Conseil des gardiens ou à l'omnipotence du Guide suprême qui a toujours le dernier mot, quel sens faut-il donner à l'implication citoyenne dans l'action politique? Quant aux libertés fondamentales, il faut reconnaître qu'au début de son premier mandat le président Khatami a encouragé l'éclosion d'une presse libre qui à l'époque fut considérée comme un pas important vers la confirmation des libertés fondamentales. Mais aujourd'hui, nous sommes très loin de cette période euphorique puisque toutes les publications critiques sont interdites, que de nombreux journalistes ont été arrêtés, et que d'autres subissent les foudres des tribunaux. Il est difficile d'évoquer le progrès des droits et libertés dans un pays que *Reporter sans frontières* considère pour l'heure comme la plus grande prison pour les journalistes.

En fin de compte, la République islamique est une bizarrerie institutionnelle des plus étranges. Théocratie, que la hiérarchie religieuse chiite traditionnelle ne reconnaît pas, et république si peu républicaine qu'elle ne se prête pas aux réformes sans se transformer de fond en comble. Chaque nouveauté complique le profil du système sans en changer la nature.

Ainsi, les personnalités éminentes de l'oligarchie cléricale au pouvoir en Iran, Khomeyni, Khome-

nei, Khatami (les trois «Kh») ainsi que l'inévitable Rafsadjani, ont chacun apporté leur pierre à l'édifice institutionnel de la République islamique. L'apport essentiel est celui de Khomeyni qui a mis en place le socle sur lequel tout l'édifice repose: le concept du *velayat-e faqih* («la tutelle du juriste théologien») qui, tout en donnant un pouvoir exorbitant au Guide, est en même temps une insulte au peuple iranien, considéré comme n'ayant pas atteint la maturité nécessaire pour se passer de la supervision d'une

Un Etat dont la juridiction admet les amputations, la lapidation, les châtiments corporels inhumains, est-il encore un Etat de droit?

autoritaire tutélaire. Khameneï, ancien président et Guide actuel, est le promoteur de l'exclusion du principe majoritaire du parlementarisme iranien. Que ce soit par l'intermédiaire du Conseil des gardiens, dont les membres lui sont dévoués ou par le pouvoir judiciaire, dont il nomme le chef, et qui intente de nombreux procès aux députés réformateurs (fin décembre 2001, il y avait soixante députés poursuivis par la justice dont un déjà jeté en prison) ou en interdisant au Parlement d'entrer en matière sur certains sujets, il a fait de la «démocratie» islamique un système où la minorité conservatrice est assurée de toujours

gagner face aux réformateurs qui représentent pourtant près de 80 % des élus. Rafsandjani est l'artisan d'une politique pragmatique de développementalisme islamique. Pendant sa présidence (1989-1997), il aimait qu'on le désigne comme le *sardar-e sazandegari* ce qui veut dire le «meneur». Ses ambitions, teintées d'affairisme, ont contribué à l'endettement sans précédent du pays et à l'enrichissement de ses proches. S'agissant de Khatami, il restera dans l'histoire comme l'initiateur du réformisme timoré, virtuel, autrement dit du réformisme sans réforme. Une tutelle despotique, une démocratie à l'en-

vers, un réformisme illusoire, tout cela mis ensemble forme-t-il la démocratie islamique dont certains en Occident pensent qu'elle sera un modèle pour les autres pays musulmans? ●

Mohammad-Reza Djallili est professeur à l'Institut universitaire des hautes études internationales et à l'Institut d'études du développement à Genève. Derniers ouvrages parus: «Iran: l'illusion réformatrice» (Presses de Sciences-Po) et, en collaboration avec Thierry Kellner, «Géopolitique de la nouvelle Asie centrale» (PUF).

Les factions kurdes affirment leur soutien à l'intégrité de l'Irak



ANKARA, 16 jan (AFP) - 10h32 - Les deux principales factions kurdes contrôlant le nord de l'Irak depuis la guerre du Golfe en 1991 ont affirmé mercredi qu'elles n'avaient pas l'intention de créer un Etat kurde indépendant dans la région à la faveur d'éventuelles frappes américaines contre Bagdad.

Dans un communiqué commun reçu par l'AFP à Ankara, l'Union patriotique du Kurdistan (UPK) et le Parti démocratique du Kurdistan (PDK) ont «catégoriquement» rejeté les «accusations provocatrices et infondées» selon lesquelles d'éventuelles frappes américaines contre l'Irak pourraient permettre la création d'un Etat kurde dans le nord.

"Nous prônons l'intégrité territoriale et l'unité de l'Irak dans le cadre d'une solution démocratique et fédérale à la question kurde", ont souligné les deux groupes.

Ils se disent "conscients des préoccupations légitimes des pays voisins et ceux de la Turquie en particulier".

La publication de ce communiqué coïncide avec la visite aux Etats-Unis du Premier ministre turc Bulent Ecevit, au cours de laquelle la question irakienne devrait être évoquée.

La Turquie, seul pays musulman membre de l'Otan et qui soutient fermement la campagne antiterroriste des Etats-Unis, craint son extension à l'Irak, y voyant un risque de déstabilisation régionale et de création d'un Etat kurde dans le nord qui pourrait raviver les aspirations indépendantistes des Kurdes de Turquie.

Une possible attaque des Etats-Unis contre l'Irak fait l'objet d'intenses spéculations depuis des mois et Washington a dans le même temps relancé une médiation pour mettre fin aux dissensions entre le PDK et l'UPK.

Washington a longtemps cherché à unifier l'opposition irakienne en vue de renverser le président Saddam Hussein, sans succès jusqu'ici.

Les Kurdes d'Irak se sont soulevés contre Bagdad après la guerre du Golfe et contrôlent depuis trois provinces, Erbil, Suleimaniye et Dohuk.

Des avions britanniques et américains basés en Turquie imposent depuis à l'Irak une interdiction de survol de cette région.

Brayati,

17 Jan 02

Joint statement by KDP and PUK representations in Ankara

After all the suffering the Iraqi Kurdistan people have endured, and in response to the need for a permanent settlement to the Kurdish issue in Iraq, the elected Iraqi Kurdistan National Assembly decided unanimously in October 1992 to adopt federalism as settlement to the Kurdish issue within the framework of a united and democratic Iraq. The Kurdistan political parties incorporated this resolution in their party statutes and policies.

Over the last few weeks, the Turkish media mentioned extensively and with a great deal of concern that an independent Kurdish state in northern Iraq would be established in the event of a US strike against Iraq. Meanwhile, they [Turkish media] accuse the Kurdistan political parties of setting plans for this.

The Kurdistan Democratic Party and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the two main political parties in Iraqi Kurdistan, strongly condemn this baseless accusation.

We stress that both parties are committed to the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of a federal and democratic Iraq, where a permanent and established settlement could be found for the Kurdish issue.

We consider the responsibility of safeguarding the security of the frontiers and the establishment of stability in the region at the top of our priorities. At the same time we attach great importance to the legitimate concerns of the neighbouring countries, particularly Turkey.

[Signed, jointly by] The Kurdistan Democratic Party mission in Ankara; Patriotic Union of Kurdistan mission in Ankara

Un changement démocratique est-il possible ?

THE DAILY STAR

Beyrouth

Commentant les "plans" du Congrès national irakien, organisation

Pour établir les fondations nécessaires au changement, les Etats-Unis doivent d'abord être convaincus que la démocratie en Irak serait un garant de stabilité tant pour le pays que pour la région. Washington devrait par conséquent contribuer à la mise en place d'un mouvement d'opposition plus cohérent, plus efficace (bien que cela soit en premier lieu la responsabilité des Irakiens), disposant d'un projet réaliste pour l'après-Saddam et

Malheureusement, la plupart des pays arabes – dont les alliés des États-Unis dans la région – préfèrent que le statu quo se maintienne en Irak. Ils considèrent en effet tout changement démocratique à Bagdad comme une menace pour leurs propres régimes. Comparé au règne sanguinaire de Saddam Hussein, même le plus répressif des systèmes politiques arabes semble bénin. La situation changerait du tout au tout avec l'avènement de la démocratie en Irak. Heureusement, Washington peut intervenir contre Saddam Hussein sans que le soutien arabe lui soit indispensable. Mais, dans ce cas, il lui faudrait pouvoir compter sur l'appui de la Turquie. Avoir comme voisin une démocratie à Bagdad serait dans l'intérêt d'une Turquie libérale et laïque. Un Irak uni, sans sectarisme religieux et traitant tous ses citoyens sur un pied d'égalité, leur ôterait ainsi le besoin d'opter pour des solutions sécessionnistes. **Ghassan al-Athyah**

Etats-Unis.



TURQUIE Le 11 septembre a donné des arguments aux partisans de la laïcité pour faire de la lutte contre l'islamisme la première des priorités

Les islamistes turcs victimes de l'effet Ben Laden

LE FIGARO JEUDI 17 JANVIER 2002

Ankara-Istanbul :
de notre envoyé spécial
Claude Lorieux

Au lendemain du 11 septembre, tout ce qu'Ankara compte de kémalistes – les laïcs militants de Turquie, dans la veine de la III^e République française – s'est senti conforté dans sa lutte farouche contre l'islamisme. Les critiques occidentales contre le coup de frein anti-fondamentaliste du 27 février 1997 ont brusquement sonné creux, après l'attentat mené au nom de l'islam par les kamikazes de Ben Laden.

Ce 27 février, le Conseil national de sécurité, où les généraux ont voix prépondérante, avait obligé le Premier ministre, Necmettin Erbakan, à une reculade majeure, annonciatrice de la démission, cinq mois plus tard, de son gouvernement de coalition à dominante islamiste. Une date qui marquait une ligne de partage des eaux entre islam et laïcité en Turquie.

Du coup, l'irréductibilisme kurde du PKK est passé au second plan dans les préoccupations des responsables, la lutte contre le fondamentalisme apparaissant comme prioritaire. Toute tolérance est bannie. « Une jeune

filie voilée ne peut pas faire d'études universitaires normales », précise un résident étranger. Ankara demande à ses partenaires européens d'inscrire sur leur liste des groupes terroristes le Hezbollah turc, que ses « services » manipulèrent pourtant naguère contre le PKK.

L'industriel Omer Bolat, dynamique vice-président de la confédération turque des entreprises musulmanes (Musiad), relève que « les pressions subies par les musulmans pieux ont été si vives depuis 1997 que 60 000 d'entre eux ont émigré aux Etats-Unis, au Canada et en Grande-Bretagne ».

Le résultat est là. Les élites laïques, généralement pro-occidentales et pro-européennes,

respirent mieux que sous le gouvernement de l'islamiste Erbakan. Le « péril vert » semble s'éloigner d'un pays où « la réislamisation de la société est très forte » et où « l'islam apparaît comme un aspect de plus en plus assumé de l'identité nationale », souligne un spécialiste de la Turquie moderne.

L'effondrement des Tours jumelles de Manhattan offrit à l'establishment ankariote l'argument d'une « campagne promotionnelle » en faveur du « modèle turc » de relations entre un Etat laïc et une popula-



tion musulmane que Mustapha Kemal avait créé sur les ruines du califat ottoman. Le politologue Seyfi Tashan affirme qu'« en repensant les relations entre Dieu et les hommes, Mustapha Kemal s'est comporté comme une sorte de Martin Luther de l'islam ».

Candidate mal-aimée à l'Union européenne, la Turquie veut prouver aux Quinze qu'à condition de s'en donner les moyens un pays peut être à la fois musulman et « occidental ». « La Turquie est le seul pays musulman qui soit à la fois laïc, démocratique, respectueux des droits de l'homme et en progression », déclare au Figaro Ismail Cem, le ministre des Affaires étrangères.

Beaucoup d'eau a cependant coulé sous les ponts du Bosphore depuis la mort de Mustapha Kemal, le visionnaire qui, pour faire entrer la Turquie dans la modernité, adopta et adapta le système européen de relations entre Eglise et Etat.

Avec le temps, beaucoup d'hommes politiques n'ont plus

hésité à afficher leur foi musulmane ; et les populations anatoliennes ont renoué publiquement avec une pratique religieuse mal vue aux premiers temps de la République.

Le général Kenan Evren, l'inspirateur du coup d'Etat de 1980, encouragea même l'islam comme antidote au marxisme. L'enseignement religieux gagna du terrain sous l'égide de cet officier censé incarner les vertus kémalistes.

Premier président démocratiquement élu de la Turquie convalescente, Turgut Ozal fit davantage, en réconciliant la république kémaliste avec ses traditions religieuses. Provisoirement.

L'état-major de l'armée faisait le dos rond. Il se cabra quand Necmettin Erbakan, chef du Parti islamiste de la prospérité, se hissa à la tête d'un gouvernement de coalition, en juin 1996. Moins d'un an plus tard, Erbakan était poussé vers la sortie et son parti dissous. Les ambitions personnelles achevèrent d'affaiblir le mouvement islamiste turc, qui éclata depuis

de progrès, invite les imams à faire campagne contre la polygamie dans les régions d'Anatolie où elle est encore assez répandue.

Les services du Diyanet sélectionnent les imams destinés à servir les communautés turques à l'étranger. Les candidats doivent avoir dix ans d'ancienneté, connaître des langues étrangères et se soumettre aux questions de représentants de plusieurs départements ministériels.

Le docteur Yaçar Nuri Ozturk, professeur d'études islamiques à l'université d'Istanbul et commentateur en vogue à la télévision, relève une autre anomalie : « Le Diyanet administre l'islam sunnite. Les musulmans alevites, qui sont plus de dix millions en Turquie, n'y sont pas représentés. »

La situation qui prévaut depuis le 27 février 1997 ne reflète

Certains intellectuels s'interrogent sur la cohérence du « modèle » turc sur la séparation de l'islam et de l'Etat

en deux « chapelles » rivales. Islamistes contre kémalistes.

Aujourd'hui, certains intellectuels s'interrogent sur la cohérence du « modèle » turc sur la séparation de l'islam et de l'Etat.

L'Etat kémaliste a en effet chargé un organisme officiel, le Diyanet, d'assurer la formation des desservants de mosquées, qui sont salariés de l'Etat. Il dicte les sermons qu'ils prononcent. Mehmet Nizri Yilmaz, le président du Diyanet, précise que l'imam qui « ne suit pas le texte de l'« outbé » (la prédication) est sanctionné ». Le Diyanet, qui se veut un instrument

d'ailleurs pas tant un équilibre mutuellement accepté qu'une trêve entre forces idéologiques rivales.

Provisoirement bridé, le mouvement islamiste n'est pas sans moyens. Un universitaire se dit « étonné de sa puissance financière, notamment dans la banque et les assurances », et de l'étendue de son action caritative. Purgé systématiquement et semestriellement du personnel des forces armées, les islamistes ne seraient pas sans influence dans d'autres corps de

l'Etat, comme « certains organes de l'administration des affaires religieuses, très noyautés par les confréries religieuses ».

Cette réalité contrastée ne satisfait pas l'industriel musulman Omer Balat : « La séparation de l'Etat et de la religion, c'est bien. Mais en pratique, ça se

traduit par des pressions sur les musulmans pieux qui font leurs cinq prières quotidiennes. Je l'ai vécu personnellement dans une entreprise. »

Interrogé sur le caractère « exportable » d'un tel modèle, Omer Balat n'est pas convaincu : « Si la Turquie avait été plus tolérante, elle au-

rait pu devenir un modèle d'exportation. Mais elle n'a pas résolu ses propres problèmes. A l'intérieur, ça bouillonne. »

Ismail Cem, le ministre des Affaires étrangères, pense pour sa part que la Turquie « n'a jamais tenté d'imposer son modèle de modernisation », mais que c'est « assurément un atout

en politique étrangère ».

Et de conclure : « Quand les Afghans auront les moyens de faire renaître leur pays, ils pourraient s'inspirer de ce que nous avons fait. Les rois d'Afghanistan en avaient eu déjà l'idée dans les années 1920-1930. »

Les mystérieux lycées de maître Fetullah

Ankara-Istanbul :
de notre envoyé spécial

A l'étranger, des Balkans au Caucase et à l'Asie centrale, les lycées de Fetullah Gülen sont autant de vitrines de la Turquie moderne.

Bien équipées, ces institutions, au nombre d'une centaine, sont prisées par les rejets des élites locales. On en trouve jusqu'en Russie et aux Etats-Unis. Elles dispensent un enseignement d'avant-garde, en turc et aussi en anglais.

Fetullah Hodja, maître Fetullah, comme les Turcs l'appellent généralement, veille également à l'éducation religieuse de ses élèves. Cet enseignement coranique se fait en marge des cours généraux, en particulier dans les foyers où sont hébergés les lycéens étrangers à la ville.

Rien que de très normal jusque-là. Après tout, les pères lazaristes et jésuites contribuèrent eux aussi, par leur enseignement, à défendre l'image de la France à l'étranger ! Un diplomate rappelle en outre que « la confrérie que dirige Fetullah Hodja s'accommode des principes kémalistes ».

Maître Fetullah est pourtant

poursuivi en Turquie pour avoir voulu « changer les piliers de la République et créer un Etat fondamentaliste », rappelle l'éditorialiste d'un grand journal. Ces difficultés l'ont conduit à prolonger indéfiniment un déplacement aux Etats-Unis.

Les ennuis de Fetullah Gülen remontent à la diffusion d'« un enregistrement vidéo », qui, selon un éditorialiste d'Ankara, « apporte la preuve de sa duplicité ». « Le maître incite ses fidèles, les fetullahi, à dissimuler leurs convictions. Il leur fixe comme objectif d'infiltrer les institutions de l'Etat. »

Le docteur Yazar Nuri Öztürk, professeur d'études islamiques à l'université d'Istanbul, est encore plus précis. « Les fetullahi portent des masques. Ils enseignent ce que pensent les nurcu », une confrérie musulmane pourchassée naguère par Mustapha Kemal.

Comment Fetullah Hodja peut-il être à la fois encouragé dans ses activités éducatives internationales et poursuivi par la justice de son pays ?

Les activités des fetullahi à l'étranger « placent l'establishment kémaliste devant un dilemme », constate un journaliste. La décision du président

ouzbek Islam Karimov de fermer les écoles de Fetullah Hodja en Ouzbékistan, ainsi que le bureau de son journal, Zaman, à Tachkent, n'est pas passée inaperçue. Le gouvernement turc devait-il à son tour prendre des mesures contre le réseau scolaire de la confrérie ? « On y pense depuis deux ans et demi, sans parvenir à une conclusion », confie un responsable. Mehmet Nizri Yilmaz, le président de l'administration des affaires religieuses Diyanet, souligne que « Fetullah n'est pas poursuivi en Turquie pour ses activités d'enseignement » pour la bonne raison que « ces activités ne violent ni la loi turque ni la loi des pays où il exerce ses activités ».

L'organisation, qui tirerait ses ressources des subventions de groupes industriels islamistes et de collectes dans les communautés turques expatriées, est protégée par son indépendance financière. Politiquement, Fetullah Gülen est en bons termes avec une partie des cercles dirigeants d'Ankara. Ses relations avec le premier ministre, Bülent Ecevit, sont connues. Un ancien ministre de l'Intérieur et un ex-directeur général de la Sécurité figurent aussi au rang de ses relations.

C. L.



Ayatollah Frees Legislator After Boycott Threat

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches

TEHRAN — Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader, stepped in Tuesday to defuse a dispute between reformist deputies and the hard-line judiciary, pardoning an imprisoned legislator after the speaker of Parliament threatened a boycott.

Hossein Loqmanian, who was imprisoned in December for a 10-month term, was the first legislator to be jailed for criticizing the government since the

1979 Islamic revolution.

After more than half of Parliament walked out in protest Tuesday, the hard-liners appeared to back down.

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi, the head of the judiciary and a leading opponent of reform, wrote a letter to Ayatollah Khamenei recommending a pardon for Mr. Loqmanian. Ayatollah Khamenei agreed, state television reported Tuesday.

Hard-liners opposed to President Mohammed Khatami's reform movement control the judiciary, the police and the main levers of power. But they have been wary of angering the public, which broadly supports change in the Islamic government's political and social restrictions. A lawmakers' boycott of Parliament could have inflamed tensions.

Mr. Loqmanian was released later Tuesday and was greeted by fellow lawmakers outside the doors of Evin prison north of capital.

"I will attend the open session of the Parliament Wednesday," Mr. Loqmanian said. "I thank all the people who defended my legal rights during my stay in jail."

Using their control of the judiciary, hard-liners have closed dozens of pro-reform newspapers and arrested journalists and opposition activists.

Mr. Loqmanian, who represents the western city of Hamedan in Parliament, was jailed Dec. 25 for insulting the judiciary. He had accused the courts of being "unjust" in the newspaper closures and arrests. (Reuters, AP)

La Turquie a engagé des réformes de fond

ANKARA ENVISAGE
UNE PURGE DU
SECTEUR BANCAIRE
ET UNE REFONTE DES
MARCHÉS PUBLICS

ISTANBUL

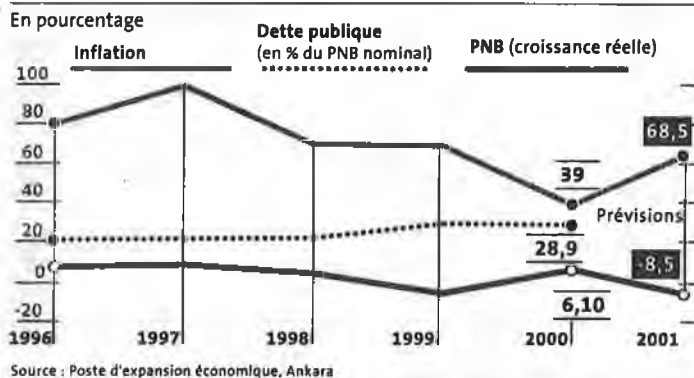
de notre correspondante

La Turquie a franchi le cap de la nouvelle année avec l'espoir de jours meilleurs : la Bourse et la monnaie nationale – la livre – sont à la hausse et un vent d'optimisme y souffle. « Le pays est dans une phase d'amélioration et de stabilisation, même s'il n'est pas encore possible d'avoir une vision à long terme », estime un diplomate européen.

2001 restera dans les annales comme une *annus horribilis* marquée par une crise financière sérieuse en février, qui a forcé une dépréciation de 50 % de la livre et une profonde récession. La contraction annuelle du produit national brut (PNB) devrait être de 8,5 %. Plus d'un million d'emplois ont été perdus et, selon l'Union des chambres de commerce, quelque 27 000 sociétés ont fermé leurs portes. L'inflation, qui se situait à 39 % fin 2000 (prix à la consommation), est remontée en flèche pour atteindre 68,5 % fin 2001. Le facteur principal justifiant les gains des dernières semaines est un nouvel accord avec le Fonds monétaire international (FMI), qui devrait être conclu durant la seconde quinzaine de janvier. Après la signature d'un premier accord stand-by en décembre 1999, le FMI avait dû intervenir d'urgence à deux reprises pour sauver le pays. Le Fonds a déjà autorisé des prêts totalisant 19 milliards de dollars (21,2 milliards d'euros), dont 4,3 milliards restent à déboursier, et il va vraisemblablement s'engager à verser environ 10 milliards de dollars (11,2 milliards d'euros) d'argent frais en 2002. La Banque mondiale devrait octroyer des crédits importants, étalés sur deux ou trois ans.

« N'oublions pas que l'argent du FMI est un prêt, pas un don. A long terme, nous avons toujours besoin de trouver des ressources pour payer nos dettes »

DES INDICATEURS AU ROUGE



Après la débâcle en Argentine, les institutions financières internationales semblent miser sur la Turquie où, malgré les réticences des politiciens, des réformes économiques importantes sont en cours sous la houlette du ministre de l'économie Kemal Dervis, notamment une purge du secteur bancaire. « Il faudra voir comment les réformes seront appliquées, mais les autorités ont mis en place des garanties qui n'existaient pas auparavant », affirme un analyste européen.

Plusieurs petites banques, saisies par l'Etat, ont été fermées dans le

cadre d'une restructuration du secteur qui a coûté quelque 10 milliards de dollars. Le gouvernement envisage un plan très controversé qui permettrait de recapitaliser les grandes banques par le biais d'un prêt participatif de l'Etat, et financerait la relance de l'économie.

Les événements du 11 septembre ont indéniablement joué en faveur de la Turquie, seul pays musulman

membre de l'OTAN et allié privilégié de Washington. Certains secteurs de l'économie, notamment le tourisme, ont souffert de l'insécurité globale, mais l'appui très fort du gouvernement américain a changé la perception de la Turquie, qui était jusque-là considérée comme un pays à haut risque au même titre que l'Argentine. Le gouvernement turc espère par exemple obtenir de Washington l'annulation de créan-

ces militaires qui se chiffrent à plusieurs milliards de dollars.

La prudence est cependant encore de mise. L'appui du FMI permettra à la Turquie de faire face à ses obligations en 2002, mais le pays n'est pas sorti de la crise. « L'économie boîte encore, bien qu'elle soit fondamentalement forte et prête à entrer dans une nouvelle phase de développement », affirme Ishak Alaton, qui dirige Alarko Holding. Le secteur public a jusqu'à présent montré peu d'enthousiasme pour limiter les dépenses, mais l'Etat va être forcé de se serrer la ceinture. « N'oublions

pas que l'argent du FMI est un prêt, pas un don. A long terme, nous avons toujours besoin de trouver des ressources pour payer nos dettes », rappelle Nurhan Yentürk, professeur d'économie à l'Université technique d'Istanbul. Selon Mme Yentürk, malgré l'avantage offert par la dévaluation de la livre, la structure industrielle du pays demeure insuffisante pour soutenir un envol des exportations sur lequel le gouvernement compte pour gonfler ses revenus et la reprise sera plus lente que lors de crises précédentes.

PAUPÉRISATION ÉVIDENTE

La capacité de la population à résister aux chocs économiques, qui avait permis à la Turquie de surmonter ses difficultés rapidement, est un des atouts du pays. Cette fois-ci, la contraction est

plus sérieuse, et la mise en place des réformes, qui produira à terme une économie plus saine, prendra du temps. « La classe moyenne, traditionnellement le moteur de la consommation, a été touchée de plein fouet », explique un diplomate européen. Malgré la paupérisation évidente, une explosion sociale est peu probable. « Le taux d'épargne est très élevé dans ce pays, 25 % contre 2-3 % en Europe », affirme un banquier français. A cet élément positif s'ajoute également le taux très bas d'endettement privé, qui est de 22 % du PNB, contre 112 % en France. « Cela permet aux gens de survivre plus longtemps. »

La longévité de la coalition au pouvoir, malgré une crédibilité érodée par les crises successives, est due à l'absence d'alternative politique plutôt qu'à l'appui de la population. La faiblesse de la classe politique continue de fragiliser la Turquie. La loi sur l'indépendance de la banque centrale, la nomination d'une équipe professionnelle à la tête de Turk Telekom en attendant sa privatisation, ainsi qu'un projet de loi crucial sur les marchés publics, ont pour but de limiter l'influence des partis sur l'économie et éviter la corruption et le clientélisme. Les partis ne seraient plus en mesure de distribuer leurs largesses par l'intermédiaire du secteur public.

Des progrès importants ont été enregistrés, mais pour renforcer ces succès initiaux et éviter de nouvelles secousses, la Turquie a encore besoin d'un ingrédient qui a fait cruellement défaut au cours de l'année écoulée, et qu'Ishak Alaton résume d'un seul mot : « la confiance ».

Nicole Pope

Analysis: Turkey and the Iraqi Kurds

18 January, 2002 BBC By Hiwa Osman

The two main parties controlling the Kurdish region of Iraq have ruled out any plans to establish an independent Kurdish state. Turkey is concerned that an independent Kurdish state in Iraq would encourage its large Kurdish population, who do not have cultural and linguistic rights, to call for a state of their own. But in a joint statement, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) said that they "categorically reject baseless and provocative accusations" that they were planning an independent state and understand the "legitimate concerns of neighbouring countries, especially of Turkey".

Ruling out any plans for separation, the Kurdish parties said: "We advocate a democratic and federal solution for the Kurdish issue and we support Iraq's territorial integrity."

Security safeguard

Turkey provides valuable access for the landlocked Iraqi Kurds to the outside world and hosts the American air base that protects the no-fly zone in northern Iraq. In return, the Kurdish parties, who have been governing the area south of Turkey's border with Iraq since 1991, have been trying to maintain good neighbourly relations with Turkey. "It is our primary duty to safeguard the security of our borders and the stability in the region," the joint statement added. In performing this "duty", Iraqi Kurds have prevented Turkey's main Kurdish rebel party, the PKK, from operating in their area. This has involved armed clashes and allowed the Turkish army to enter their region to pursue the PKK.

Fragile economy

Another mutual benefit of this uneasy partnership is the relatively stable trade across the border. Shops in the Iraqi Kurdish region are stacked with Turkish products brought by trucks that return to Turkey with cheap Iraqi fuel.

While playing the role of a key US ally in the region, Turkey also enjoys good commercial and diplomatic ties with Baghdad. Over the past year, talks on boosting trade and improving diplomatic relations between the two countries have increased as Turkey has sought ways to bolster its fragile economy. If the US-led campaign against terrorism extends to Iraq, Turkey will have a key role to play, as it will provide a northern military base. But Turkey is wary of the consequences of such an attack.

In addition to its concerns over the disintegration of Iraq and subsequent establishment of a Kurdish state, it will be difficult for Turkey's troubled economy to withstand a war on its border as it will affect its trade with the Kurds and with Baghdad. The Iraqi Kurds are keen to appease Turkey's border security concerns. "Over the past 10 years, we've worked closely with Turkey to address its border security concerns," KDP's foreign relations chief, Hoshyar Zebari told the BBC. "Turkey is a valuable neighbour." This valued-neighbour status that Turkey enjoys with the Iraqi Kurds may not be the same if Baghdad takes control of the Kurdish area.

The current state of affairs seems convenient for the Turks, as they enjoy stable political and economic ties with the US, Baghdad and the Iraqi Kurds.

* * * * *

Turkish Interests and Iraq: Between Saddam Hussein and the Next Regime

Turkish Daily News

January 19, 2002 by Amatzia Baram (*)

Despite huge challenges, without a massive American attack Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq is likely to stay in power for at least a few more years, and possibly more.

In this article I shall try to deal with two sets of questions: Firstly, what are the Turkish benefits from the status quo under which Saddam Hussein remains in power, and what should be Turkish concerns in such a case. Secondly, if the United States manages to oust Saddam's regime from power, what are the likely consequences for

Turkey? The benefits enjoyed by Turkey under the present circumstances are fairly clear. First of all, Iraqi-Kurdish independence is widely seen in Turkey as detrimental to Turkish national unity. Presently, the Kurds are squeezed between Turkey, Iran, Syria and the Baath regime in Baghdad. To stave off encroachment by Saddam's troops on their territory, the Iraqi Kurds need American support, and the U.S. will never agree to a fully-fledged independent Kurdish state.

Animosity or, at least, tension between Iran and Saddam's Iraq is conducive to Turkish interests as it prevents an effective coalition against Turkey. Lack of trust between Saddam's Iraq and Asad's Syria, too, is useful, as it prevents close Iraqi-Syrian cooperation over the Euphrates water dispute. Finally, Turkish-Iraqi trade under the U.N. Oil-for-Food Program is thriving, slightly exceeding \$1 billion in 2001, with an Iraqi promise to double it in 2002. Also, at least 100 tanker lorries are crossing the border every day bringing cheap heavy fuel into Turkey.

All this is very beneficial, but it comes at price. First of all, in the medium and long term Iraq under Saddam is very likely to become a nuclear power. Nuclear weapons pose little danger in responsible hands, but in Saddam's hands they will become a threat to Turkey. In May 1990 Saddam had already implied, in the connection of the dispute over the Euphrates water, that Turkey is a potential target (Reports about his conversation with Turkey's Akbulut in Baghdad, appeared on TRT TV-Ankara, Dec. 20, 1990; Anatolia News Agency, January 19, 1991). Before that, in August 1975, Saddam threatened to bomb Syria's Assad Dam. This habit of rattling his saber to achieve political-economic goals found its ultimate expression when Saddam invaded Kuwait.

Another drawback to Turkey when it comes to the existing situation is the U.N. economic sanctions against Iraq. Because of the sanctions Iraq's economic development has been arrested and Iraqi-Turkish economic cooperation is restricted. It is very doubtful that Iraq can fulfill its promise to go to \$2 billion of trade in 2002. However, under a new regime that will fulfill all the requirements of U.N. Resolutions 687 and 688 the sanctions will be lifted and mutual trade may go even beyond its 1989 \$2.5 billion level.

Seen from a Turkish viewpoint, what are the pros and cons of a change of regime in Baghdad? The most serious threat to Turkish interests in such a case is posed by the possibility that Iraq will disintegrate. Iraq is a mosaic of ethnic, religious and tribal groups, and there is also much poverty side by side with fantastic affluence. If there is chaos in Baghdad, with the army and the Republican Guard melting away and the street taking over for more than a few days, a civil war may ensue. In such a case the Kurds of Iraq might declare independence.

Other parts of Iraq may split along different lines: religious, regional or even tribal. Syria is very likely to attempt to exert influence over the Iraqi Jazira, while Iran will seek to expand its control over southern Iraq. All these developments will be clearly detrimental to Turkish interests: for Turkey, political stability and equilibrium are probably the most important geo-strategic interests. In my mind, however, the chances of such a scenario are low, well below 50 percent.

What other scenarios are feasible? Everything depends on the question of who is going to replace Saddam and how stable the new regime will be. If the Baath regime is replaced by a fundamentalist Shiite Islamic one, this may prevent the disintegration of Iraq but it will guarantee continuous civil strife between Shiites and Sunnis, Arabs and Kurds, fundamentalists and secularists, and those with Arabs against those with Iranian orientation. Both Iran and Syria will compete over influence in Baghdad, and Turkey will have very little leverage.

Under a different scenario, when the dust settles, Iraq will be ruled by a military junta. In such a case, the ethnic and denominational status quo will change only little, but Iraq's regional policy will change substantially. The Iraqi military are Arab nationalists but they are also very keen on safeguarding Iraqi particular interests. Without Saddam Hussein's ambitions to become leader of all the Arabs and Muslims of the world, and without his tendency to resort to force, the new rulers in Baghdad will most likely be looking for cooperation with the U.S. and will be interested in regional stability, possibly excluding Israel. At least judging by the historical approach of the Iraqi military to Turkey, there is no reason to expect aggression, whatever the dispute. Under both scenarios there is a very good chance that Iraq will allow the U.N. weapons inspectors to reenter Iraq. This will lead to the lifting of the sanctions, opening the door for the resumption of extensive trade relations with Turkey. In addition much more Iraqi oil (and gas) will go through Turkey.

Under a third possible scenario, the next regime in Baghdad will be a wide coalition of Shiite fundamentalists, moderate Sunni Islamists, ex-Baathi secular Arab nationalists (Sunni and Shiite), army officers (mostly Sunnis), Kurds and Western-educated liberals of all affiliations. This coalition will necessarily be more democratic than the two regimes previously mentioned because it will represent a far wider cross section of the Iraqi population. A regime like that

will depend greatly on the support of the international community and thus will be certain to get rid of Iraq's non-conventional weapons.

Furthermore: it will be interested in good relations with all neighbors and it will be ready to spend less resources on armament and military aggrandizement. Its main legitimacy will come from civil development. A regime like that will need close cooperation with Turkey for obvious economic reasons. It will also seek an agreement on outstanding political and economic issues through diplomacy and economic means. The only aspect that has a potential of affecting Turkish interests in such a case is that in such a democratic or semi-democratic regime the Kurds will demand real autonomy or federalism. It is not likely that they will go beyond that and establish an independent state for the simple reason that there will be no support for it in Baghdad, and all the northern neighbors will be against it. The Kurds have no access to any ocean, and Kurdish independence will win no international support. Thus they will have to settle for a compromise. It is also possible that the federal system will be along regional, not ethnic lines: Suleymaniya (under Talabani) may choose to be united with the Kirkuk area, while Rawanduz (under Barazani) may prefer to be joined to the Mosul area.

A democratic or semi-democratic regime in Baghdad will be less likely than the two previously mentioned potential regimes to turn decisively towards Iran or Syria. This kind of strategic equilibrium is the best that Turkey can hope for.

* Amatzia Baram is chair of the department of Middle Eastern history at the University of Haifa, where his research focuses on the political, social, economic, and cultural history of the Baath regimes of Iraq and Syria.

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Analysis: Iraq's weapons threat

UPI January 17, 2002 By CLAUDE SALHANI

NEW YORK, – Anniversaries are always good times to reflect on past events, and to learn from history's mistakes and successes. This week marks 11 years since the start of Desert Storm, the campaign by a U.S.-led coalition that expelled Iraq from Kuwait, following its Aug. 2 invasion of the oil-rich Persian Gulf emirate.

Saddam Hussein's arsenal of biological, chemical, and possibly even nuclear weapons of mass destruction, are issues the United States must take into consideration in planning any future campaign against Iraq.

As the war on Afghanistan is winding down, and the Taliban and al Qaeda all but defeated, some voices in Washington are asking that the Iraqi issue now be addressed.

Since the end of the Gulf War, 11 years ago next month, Saddam has kept international observers out of the country, insisting that sanctions imposed on Iraq in 1991 be removed as a prerequisite for their return.

The fundamental difference between taking on the Taliban and al Qaeda, versus facing Saddam's regime, is that the Afghans and their Arab Islamist allies did not possess WMD. Although a number of intelligence reports claim that terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden tried to acquire bio-chemical and nuclear agents -- and a few suspect he may have well gotten his hands on some -- the Afghan campaign did not result in their use.

But Iraq is a different kettle of fish all together. Saddam does possess WMD, and would have no qualms in using them. Iraq's strongman gassed thousands of Iraqi Kurds in the town of Halabja, when they tried to revolt against Baghdad in 1988. He has also used chemical weapons in the war against Iran, a war that left more than a million dead on both sides. The only reason Saddam refrained from deploying chemical or biological weapons during Desert Storm is because he was warned by the United States, in no explicit terms, that use of WMD would bring about "extremely grave consequences" -- meaning a possible nuclear retaliatory strike on Iraq.

Saddam may be mad, but he is certainly not insane. He realized in 1991 that he could survive a defeat from his Kuwait escapade, as indeed he did. But any new attack against Iraq, this time, would mean removing him from power. That much he realizes. And a cornered animal fights to the death.

Faced with such reality, Saddam would very likely deploy WMD against his neighbors and Israel, escalating the conflict. A number of Iraqi SCUD missiles were fired at Israeli cities during Desert Storm, although all were armed with conventional warheads.

This time it would be very different.

"When the United States attacks Saddam, it will have to act very, very fast," cautions Amatzia Baram, director of the Middle East Institute at the University of Haifa, and Professor of Middle Eastern History. Baram, author of a book on Saddam Hussein, is also one of the more prominent authorities on the Iraqi leader.

"The lesser reason, though still an important one, is that this will leave little time for the radical elements in the Arab street to create havoc. More importantly, Saddam must be denied the option of using his chemical and biological weapons against neighbors and Iraqi opposition. When his end seems near he is sure to try and do precisely that," Amatzia Baram told UPI. Baram warns that unless international inspectors are allowed back in to Iraq, Saddam "will be a nuclear and missile power within a few years."

"He is very ambitious," says Baram of the master of Baghdad.

While the war against the Taliban went smoothly, with incredibly few American casualties, a campaign against Iraq will certainly not be the same walk through the park that Afghanistan was. Iraq can still muster about 300,000 troops, though several observers believe a great number will defect at the first opportunity. Saddam can only rely on his Republican Guard and Special Republican Guard Divisions to put up any real resistance. Unlike Afghanistan, the Iraqi military is equipped with anti-aircraft missiles and radar systems, as well as with tanks and armor. Only Saddam's personal bodyguard unit -- a few thousand men -- would likely fight to the finish. But, asks Baram, "with what?"

"Eventually I have no doubt that the United States will have to replace the regime, and there is only one way of doing it: military action and cooperation with the opposition," says Baram. "I have no doubt that the vast majority of Iraqis will be elated to see Saddam's back." But the problem of replacing the regime is not a simple one. An autocratic ruler, Saddam has not encouraged potential heirs to his throne, not hesitating to rapidly eliminate any potential threat to his power base. Identifying a viable opposition to Saddam's regime remains one of the most daunting tasks facing the United States today. This issue will have to be addressed before any military campaign is undertaken.

(Claude Salhani, a senior editor with UPI, covered the 1991 desert war from both the Iraqi and coalition sides. He is the author of "Black September to Desert Storm: A Journalist in the Middle East.")

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Hussein Discusses Mobilizing Troops

Associated Press January 20, 2002

BAGHDAD, IRAQ (AP) - Saddam Hussein and his senior aides met Sunday to discuss a general mobilization of Iraqis against a possible U.S. strike, the official Iraqi News Agency reported. President Bush recently warned Saddam there would be consequence if Iraq did not resume co-operation with U.N. arms inspectors, who have been barred from Iraq since 1998.

On Sunday, Saddam chaired a meeting of the two most powerful bodies in his regime - the Revolutionary Command Council and the Regional Command of the ruling Baath party - to discuss ways to improve amobilization of Iraqis, INA said. The meeting discussed means to "confront the malicious, hostile plans that the rulers of America are brandishing against our people, and how to thwart them," the agency added.

Saddam has previously said Iraq will not be caught off guard by a U.S. strike.

U.N. arms inspectors are charged with verifying that Iraq has eliminated its weapons of mass destruction and the means to produce them - one of the conditions for the lifting of sanctions imposed since Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990.

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Iraq Speculates on Attack From U.S.

January 19, 2002 By MARIAM FAM Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) - Baghdad print shop owner Abdel Hakim Loqman believes his country could again be the target of U.S. bombs, but says his fears have nothing to do with whether Iraq sponsors terrorists or is building a nerve gas arsenal.

"The (Iraqi) leadership is working on liberating Palestine and uniting the Arab nation and this is something the enemy does not want," Loqmansaid after Friday prayers in the Sheik Abdel Qader al-Qeilani mosque, one of the biggest in Baghdad.

"As long as Iraq continues these things, I expect an attack if not this month then the next month; if not this year then the coming one," added Loqman, who'd just heard a sermon that spoke of U.S. "savageness" in Iraq and the Palestinian territories and called on Arabs to unite against the enemies of Islam. Few people in Iraq would express criticism of a regime known for brutally punishing dissidents. But the sentiments expressed by Iraqis Friday reflect those heard across the region since Sept. 11: Many view President Saddam Hussein as a hero and see the United States as an oppressive presence.

In the West, it may be easy to make the case that Saddam is a threat that must be contained. But at home - and elsewhere in the Mideast - many see him as a champion of Arabs and Muslims. If Washington wants to move against him, it will have to take into account whether Arab states it counts on as allies can afford to support the campaign in the face of popular support for Saddam.

Washington hasn't said what military options, if any, it has in mind for Iraq.

David Mack, a former Iraqi officer at the State Department, said in a telephone interview from Washington that the next U.S. move in the war against terror will focus on diplomatic efforts and international cooperation to battle terrorists.

"The United States does not want to go from country to country using military action," Mack, now the vice president of the private Middle East Institute, said in a telephone interview from Washington. But some in the U.S. administration and in the Iraqi opposition have been pressing for U.S. military action to topple the Iraqi regime, saying it is as dangerous as the Taliban regime U.S. bombs helped push from power in Afghanistan last year. The Taliban harbored Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaida network, the accused masterminds in the Sept. 11 terror attacks on the United States.

There have been reports an Iraqi agent met with one of the suicide hijackers and that foreign Arab militants were trained at Iraqi military camps. Iraq has denied the charges and America has produced no concrete evidence linking Iraq to the terror attacks.

Hawks in the U.S. administration have been pressing for the U.S. military to take on Iraq and finish off Saddam, who was left in power after the Gulf War.

Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit, who met with Bush in Washington this week, said the United States is determined to oust Saddam. However, Ecevit said Saturday that U.S. officials "did not even hint" at plans for short-term military action against Iraq, a neighbor of Turkey.

In a speech Thursday commemorating the start of the Gulf War 11 years ago, Saddam said Iraq won't be caught off guard if attacked by U.S. forces. The speech was featured in the newspapers and state television broadcast commemorations from around the country. "As Iraqis we don't worry in any circumstances, no matter what they are, because we've suffered in the past. Iraqis don't care about these U.S. threats," said Shakir Mahmoud, a government worker who seemed to sum up the mood of a nation hardened by first eight years of war with neighboring Iran and soon after that the Gulf War, in addition to more than a decade of economic sanctions.

Under U.N. resolutions, 1990 sanctions can be lifted only after Baghdad proves that it has dismantled its weapons of mass destruction. Iraq says it has done so but has refused to allow U.N. weapons inspectors into the country since 1998.

The United States might use Iraq's refusal to allow in inspectors as a pretext to bomb the country, said Scott Ritter, a former U.N. weapons inspector in Iraq.

"I don't believe Iraq is developing chemical weapons or biological weapons. There's no evidence of this and we can't use speculation by certain elements in Washington, D.C., as an excuse to go to war," Ritter, a critic of Washington's Iraq policies, said in a telephone interview with The Associated Press.

Jean Pascal Zanders of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, on the other hand, said an Iraq with no weapons inspectors should cause concern.

"There were still quite a few unresolved issues regarding Iraq's chemical and biological weapons program, especially the biological weapons program and I think that it's extremely important that these issues are resolved," said Zanders, an expert on chemical and biological weapons reached by telephone in Switzerland.

Zanders said that during the time when inspectors worked in Iraq there were indications that the country may have weaponized an extremely toxic nerve agent, VX - a charge Iraq has denied. To strengthen its position, some argue, Iraq has been boosting relations and mending fences with other Arab countries. Staunch U.S. allies Egypt and Jordan are among those who have argued that a U.S. attack on an Arab country now would have serious repercussions. But Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak also recently urged Iraq to cooperate with the U.N. inspectors to avoid a possible U.S. strike.

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Turkey prosecutes Chomsky publisher

The Independent
By Robert Fisk, Middle East Correspondent
24 January 2002

Noam Chomsky, one of America's greatest philosophers and linguists, has become the target of Turkey's chief of "terrorism prosecution".

Scarcely two months after the European Union praised Turkey for passing new laws protecting freedom of statement, the authorities in Ankara are using anti-terrorism legislation to prosecute Mr Chomsky's Turkish publisher.

Fatih Tas of the Aram Publishing House faces a year in prison for daring to print American Interventionism, a collection of Mr Chomsky's recent essays including harsh criticism of Turkey's treatment of its Kurdish minority.

Mr Chomsky, a linguistics professor at Harvard, is planning to fly to Turkey for Mr Tas's first court appearance on 13 February and has already written to the offices of the United Nations high commissioner for human rights, pointing out that amendments to Turkish law were supposed to have provided greater freedom of statement, not less.

Mr Chomsky plans to visit the Turkish city of Diyarbakir to meet Kurdish "activists" and it will be a test of Turkey's freedoms to see if he is allowed to visit the area.

In one of his essays, originally a university lecture,

he says that "the Kurds have been miserably oppressed throughout the whole history of the modern Turkish state ... In 1984, the Turkish government launched a major war in the south-east against the Kurdish population ... The end result was pretty awesome: tens of thousands of people killed, two to three million refugees, massive ethnic cleansing with some 3,500 villages destroyed."

This, according to the Turks, constitutes an incitement to violence. Mr Chomsky has been suitably outraged, regarding the trial as part of a much broader wave of repression directed against Kurds appealing for greater use of the Kurdish language. Bekir Rayif Aldemyr, Turkey's chief prosecutor, claims that the Chomsky essay "propagates separatism".

A spiky, inexhaustible academic of Jewish origin who has been an inveterate critic of Israel and especially of the United States, Mr Chomsky's condemnation of Turkey's treatment of the Kurds and of the vast arms shipments made to Turkey by the United States was bound to enrage Ankara.

Mr Chomsky describes the prosecution as "a very severe attack on the most elementary human and civil rights". The EU, so impressed by those changes in Turkish law last November, has remained silent.

10.000 détenus politiques en Turquie !

Bien que le sommet de Laeken ait annoncé le rapprochement de l'ouverture de négociations d'adhésion avec le régime d'Ankara, deux sénateurs belges, Dubié et Cornil, sont préoccupés de la situation des prisonniers politiques.

Un black-out total est toujours en vigueur en ce qui concerne la plus grande grève de la faim de l'histoire carcérale en Turquie. Le nombre total des victimes de la résistance des prisonniers politiques contre l'isolement dans les prisons de type F s'est élevé à 85 depuis un an. Les trois grévistes de la faim se sont ajoutés à cette liste macabre dans trois semaines dernières.

Pourtant, on n'en parle pas dans les grands médias, ni en Turquie ni Europe dont la Belgique. Parfois on ne publie que quelques lignes comme un fait divers après une nouvelle mort mais ne se formule aucun reproche à l'égard des autorités turques!

Pour essayer de mieux comprendre la situation, deux sénateurs belges, MM Josy Dubié (Ecolo) et Jean Cornil (PS), se sont rendus sur place en Turquie. A leur retour, le 17 janvier, ils ont tenu une conférence de presse à la Maison des parlementaires en vue de briser ce black-out honteux. Incroyablement, il n'y en avait toujours aucun écho dans les grands médias même pour les informations données par deux importantes personnalités belges.

Bien que la construction des prisons de type F soit conforme aux normes européennes, les deux sénateurs ont constaté sur place que "le système d'isolement appliqué en Turquie dans ces prisons constitue, comme il a été dénoncé par le Conseil de l'Europe, une forme inacceptable de torture entraînant des conséquences psychologiques et physiologiques graves pour les détenus soumis à ce régime, et donc contraire à l'article 3 de la Convention de sauvegarde des Droits de l'homme et des libertés fondamentales".

"Les grévistes de la faim ont considérablement abaissé leurs exigences pour mettre fin à leur grève et sont prêts à accepter un compromis avancé par les chefs des 4 principaux barreaux du pays," dit M. Dubié. "Ce compromis, résumé sous la formule, 3 clefs.3 portes, permettrait aux détenus de 3 cellules de 3 détenus (9 personnes), de pouvoir communiquer entre eux pendant huit heures par jour. Le ministre de la justice, M. Hikmet Sami Türk, la refuse en invoquant des obstacles de nature technique et sécuritaire".

M. Dubié s'insurge contre cet argument: "L'examen approfondi mené sur place, en prison, m'autorise à pouvoir déclarer formellement que ces obstacles soit-disant techniques et sécuritaires ne tiennent pas la route. Le refus du compromis de la part des autorités turques est donc uniquement de nature politique".

Comme M. Dubié, le sénateur Jean Cornil, dans sa demande d'explication adressée au ministre des affaires étrangères Louis Michel, dit: "Dans le cadre des négociations relatives à l'adhésion de la Turquie à l'Union européenne, il nous a paru absolument impératif de témoigner de notre plus vive pré-

occupation face à cette situation auprès des autorités turques et auprès du gouvernement belge".

Lors de la conférence de presse, M.Dubié a également donné une information encore plus alarmante concernant la situation des droits de l'Homme en Turquie: "Le procureur qui m'accompagnait en prison a reconnu que la plupart des détenus (dont 50% n'ont pas été jugés), attendent en général quatre ans avant de comparaître! De l'aveu même du ministre de la Justice, M.Türk, quelque 10.000 des 55.000 détenus que compte la Turquie sont des détenus politiques accusés de terrorisme ou d'appartenance à un parti ou une organisation politiques illégaux, ce qui est manifestement contraire à l'article 10 de la Convention européenne des droits de l'Homme".

En réponse à une question d'Info-Türk si les dirigeants d'Ankara ont-ils déclaré un engagement ou une promesse pour libérer ces prisonniers politiques et pour ne plus emprisonner des gens à cause de leur choix politique, M.Dubié a souligné que le ministre turc de la Justice n'a fait aucune promesse en ce sens.

Quant aux derniers projets de la loi pour se conformer aux critères européens, comme les précédents, ils ne contiennent que des réformes cosmétiques sans toucher le tabou de "délit politique" et le pouvoir abusif des cours de sûreté de l'Etat (DGM).

Et c'est toujours le Conseil national de la Sûreté (MGK) paramilitaire qui détermine le contenu du "délit politique" et ordonne aux services de renseignement et forces de sécurité d'entamer de nouvelles chasses à l'homme contre tous ceux qui sont soupçonnés de commettre ce soi-disant "délit politique".

La dernière preuve: selon les dépêches en provenance de Turquie, des milliers d'étudiants d'origine kurde et leurs parents sont arrêtés et jetés dans la prison pour la simple raison qu'ils réclament le droit d'avoir des cours de langue kurde dans les institutions académiques et scolaires. Le Ministère de l'Intérieur, suivant l'ordre du MGK, a annoncé récemment que tous les demandeurs d'éducation de la langue kurde seront suivis comme "terroristes".

Alors, les dirigeants européens pourront-ils vraiment ouvrir les négociations pour l'adhésion d'un tel régime à l'Union européenne tant qu'il y a des milliers de détenus politiques dans les prisons et qu'un peuple subit toujours aux arrestations massives pour une demande la plus innocente et la plus démocratique ?

Transformer les prisons turques de type Midnight Express en "cages d'or" de type F, sera-t-il suffisant pour considérer la Turquie comme un pays conforme aux critères européens des droits de l'Homme ?

Délai d'un mois accordé au parti pro-kurde HADEP pour sa défense

ANKARA, 22 jan (AFP) - 11h57 - La Cour constitutionnelle turque a décidé d'accorder un délai supplémentaire d'un mois pour sa défense au parti pro-kurde de la Démocratie du Peuple (HADEP), menacé d'interdiction pour liens avec la rébellion kurde armée, a annoncé mardi le vice-président de cette instance.

La Cour a ainsi répondu favorablement à une demande déposée par le président de la formation pro-kurde, Murat Bozlak, a indiqué Hasim Kilic aux journalistes, selon l'agence Anatolie.

La Cour constitutionnelle devait entendre initialement la défense du HADEP le 30 janvier.

Le procureur général Sabih Kanadoglu avait requis la semaine dernière devant la Cour constitutionnelle l'interdiction de ce parti pour liens avec les séparatistes du Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK).

M. Kanadoglu avait alors expliqué à la cour en quoi le HADEP était devenu un foyer d'activités attentant à l'unité indivisible de la Turquie, principe posé par la constitution.

Dans cette procédure ouverte en janvier 1999, le HADEP est accusé d'être lié au PKK, qui a mené pendant 15 ans une guérilla armée dans le sud-est anatolien à majorité kurde pour créer un Etat kurde indépendant.

L'acte d'accusation affirme que le HADEP agit sous les directives du PKK, lui sert d'outil de propagande et que ses bureaux étaient devenus des "centres de recrutement" pour gagner les militants à la cause du PKK.

Le HADEP nie ces accusations et affirme prôner une solution pacifique à la question kurde.

Les partis pro-kurdes en Turquie ont régulièrement été interdits par la Cour dans le passé.

M. Kanadoglu avait accéléré la procédure en demandant aux juges de se saisir du cas du HADEP le plus rapidement possible en faisant valoir que tout délai serait préjudiciable à l'unité du pays.



Une Kurde de 26 ans victime d'un "crime d'honneur" en Suède

STOCKHOLM, 22 jan (AFP) - 12h32 - Une femme kurde de 26 ans a été tuée lundi soir par son père qui lui reprochait ses relations avec un Suédois, a annoncé mardi la police d'Uppsala (est) qui a évoqué un "crime d'honneur".

La jeune femme, identifiée comme Fadime, s'était fait connaître en Suède lors d'une action en justice qu'elle avait gagnée en 1998 contre son père et son frère.

Les deux hommes l'avaient menacée de mort à cause de ses relations avec un Suédois et exigeaient qu'elle épouse un Kurde.

Le père avait alors été condamné à une peine de prison avec sursis et une amende, et le frère, âgé de 17 ans, à un an de mise à l'épreuve.

"La seule façon pour ma famille de retrouver son honneur, maintenant que je lui ai infligé le déshonneur, est de me tuer", avait prédit la jeune femme lors du procès.

Peu après, son ami suédois était mort dans un accident de voiture.

Le frère de Fadime, qui avait continué à harceler sa soeur, avait été condamné à cinq mois de prison ferme.

La jeune femme s'était alors installée dans le nord de la Suède où elle suivait des études de sociologie, et voyageait à travers le pays, donnant des conférences sur sa situation.



M. Ecevit demande à la Bulgarie de poursuivre le PKK

SOFIA, 30 jan (AFP) - 17h40 - Le Premier ministre turc Bulent Ecevit a demandé mercredi à la Bulgarie de ne pas laisser agir les rebelles du Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK) sur son territoire, a-t-il indiqué lors d'une conférence de presse.

"Nous avons discuté sur cette question très sensible. Nous nous rendons compte de la bonne volonté de la partie bulgare. Le PKK est une organisation terroriste qui agit ici en cachant son identité. Nous sommes sûrs que la partie bulgare y prêterait l'attention nécessaire", a déclaré M. Ecevit.

Un millier de Kurdes de Turquie, d'Irak, d'Iran et de Syrie résident en Bulgarie. Ils sont organisés en sociétés culturelles. Au cours des deux dernières années les Kurdes ont fait des manifestations et des grèves de la faim pour soutenir le leader du PKK Abdullah Ocalan condamné à mort en Turquie en juin 1999 pour "trahison et séparatisme".

M. Ecevit a par ailleurs souhaité "une solidarité entre les pays" dans la lutte contre le terrorisme et "des contacts plus étroits entre les services" de renseignement.

Le Premier ministre turc effectue une visite de deux jours en Bulgarie au cours de laquelle il devait s'entretenir également avec le nouveau président Gueorgui Parvanov et avec le président du Parlement Ognian Guerdjikov.

Hafez Assad's Legacy Overshadows New Goals for Syria's Cabinet

By Neil MacFarquhar
New York Times Service

DAMASCUS — Hisham Zaim, the new minister of industry, was outlining his ideas on resuscitating Syria's decrepit public sector, when he noticed a visitor eyeing the numerous pictures of the young Syrian president and his father, the former president, that decorated the room.

In the minister's office, for example, there are at least six. One entire wall can barely contain a billboard-sized head shot of President Bashar Assad, while the bookshelves hold framed portraits including one of his father, the late Hafez Assad, as a dashing air force pilot.

"You see many pictures around that were inherited from my predecessor," explained the minister, noting that with less than a month on the job he had not had time to worry about the decor. "That is not my style; one picture is enough."

Those possible decor changes closely mirror the prevailing official mood now that Bashar Assad has appointed his first cabinet 18 months after inheriting the job.

The new government promises to retire the violent political repression, rigid economic centralization and rampant corruption that marked the previous 30 years, but no one expects any wholesale dismantling of the older Mr. Assad's legacy.

This is particularly true in the Arab-Israeli conflict, with Syria resolute in its contention that peace depends on Israel's returning the annexed Golan Heights.

Syria used its new seat on the UN Security Council, for example, to attack Israel's recent destruction of a swath of Palestinian homes in the Gaza Strip. The speech set off outrage by comparing the site of the destruction to the attack on the World Trade Center, where thousands died.

On Sunday, Secretary of State Colin Powell dismissed the remark as "hysterical." John Negroponte, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, was to hold talks with Mr. Assad in Damascus on Monday.

The UN speech was just one sign that the old habits of Hafez Assad die hard. Free speech forums of a year ago have largely been shuttered. Martial law continues and foreign investment lags. Unquestionably there are signs of change. Almost one-third of the new ministers are not members of the governing Ba'ath Arab Socialist Party, and a heavy concentration of technocrats hold the economic portfolios.

There are new laws to encourage private banks; a stock exchange; inde-

pendent newspapers, and real estate development. Cell phones have become widely used in the last six months, while a new school curriculum for fall mandates English-language instruction starting in the fourth grade.

Ministers and other senior officials emphasize that economic reform is their main priority, followed by streamlining the administration and improving social services. Political change comes a distant fourth. "A great part of our resources are still needed for defensive purposes," said Adnan Omran, the minister of information, noting that with the new government that was appointed in December, "you have a team that makes it easier to implement the plans of the new government. You have to give them time."

Critics contend that the conflict with Israel and fears of upheaval are just excuses. The more contentious argue that senior military officers and Ba'ath Party officials have kept their hands in the public cash register for so long that they are loath to implement change.

Riad Seif, a member of Parliament, was jailed in September after reconvening his forum — one of the evening salons where democracy was promoted — without permission. But his supporters suspect that the real reason might be his study arguing that the mobile-phone contract awarded to a presidential cousin would cost the Syrian public billions of dollars in lost revenue.

"This is a message from our secret police to the people that we are here, don't try to agitate, don't talk," said Haitham Maleh, one of the lawyers defending Mr. Seif and the other dissidents.

Critics of the democracy forums said they were trying to move too fast. Openly describing the late Mr. Assad as a dictator and discussing the role of religious sects alarmed a regime dominated by an Alawite minority in a country with a Sunni Muslim majority and significant group of Kurds, Christians and others.

Bashar Assad, a 36-year-old ophthalmologist, has fulfilled some of his promises. Human rights lawyers note that the population of political prisoners reached an estimated 50,000 during his father's tenure. The number of political prisoners is now less than 1,000, most of them members of the Muslim Brotherhood.

On the economic front, businessmen and economists point out that necessary reforms are still lacking. Although Lebanon's private banks are eager to serve Syria's 17 million people, they still need regulations like a free currency exchange rate and labor laws that allow

them to dismiss employees.

New cabinet ministers insist that new laws are coming.

"If you are building a new highway that is 100 kilometers, you still need the last 100 meters," said Saadalla Agha Kalaa, the minister of tourism. "You can't change things in a single day."

But private businessmen say the problem extends beyond a few laws.

Nightmarish Soviet-style bureaucratic controls remain, like needing a special government permit to buy a delivery van.

The government, which makes everything from steel to shoes, evidently fears selling off its factories and creating more unemployment in a country where the official jobless rate is 10 percent and the actual rate is estimated at 20 percent.

Mr. Zaim, the industry minister, said Syria planned to keep its state-owned companies but the management would be expected to run them like private firms and make a profit.

"There will be no more endless subsidies from the state," he said.

Many doubt that the model is viable. What is keeping the Syrian economy afloat is its oil industry, especially an influx of about 200,000 barrels of oil a day from Iraq despite UN sanctions, said local economists and Western diplomats. Syria denies breaking the sanctions.

Syria gets the oil in a barter arrangement in return for textiles, television sets and other goods that it would be hard-pressed to sell elsewhere, according to the analysts.

The imports enable it to sell more of its own oil on world markets.

That economic benefit has thus far allowed Mr. Assad to slowly to slowly alter a sclerotic system without major change.

"It's like a spider's web," said a senior Lebanese journalist.

"It's both dangerous and fragile. You cut one string and the whole thing collapses."

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2002

Turkey Seeks to Quell Kurd Language Demands; 17 Held

Los Angeles Times January 23, 2002 By AMBERIN ZAMAN

ANKARA, Turkey -- In a move likely to further jeopardize Turkey's hopes of joining the European Union, authorities imprisoned 17 students Tuesday as a crackdown continued against Kurds demanding the right to study their own language.

The students were accused by a special state security court of "promoting separatism and inciting racial hatred" by signing a petition calling on their local university to introduce a course on the Kurdish language. They were jailed pending trial in the largely Kurdish province of Malatya in eastern Turkey and face a minimum sentence of three years in prison if found guilty.

The students were acting in concert with about 11,000 ethnic Kurdish students, their families and sympathizers across Turkey who have signed petitions during the last two months in a bid to end constitutional bans on Kurdish language education. Education in Kurdish is forbidden under the Turkish Constitution, and Education Minister Metin Bostancıoğlu reaffirmed the government's position against Kurdish language courses Tuesday.

The government is under pressure from the European Union to offer ethnic Kurds the right to express themselves freely in their own language as a precondition for Turkey's entry into the economic bloc.

Use of the Kurdish language was banned during military rule in 1980 and has emerged as the main political battleground between Kurdish nationalists and the Turkish government. The ban on using Kurdish in public places was eased in 1991, but restrictions on broadcasting, publication and education continue to be enforced. Turkish authorities fear that granting such broader language rights would be followed by further demands for autonomy from the country's estimated 12 million ethnic Kurds and the establishment of an independent Kurdish state in the largely Kurdish southeastern provinces.

Turkey's three-party coalition government led by Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit charges that the Kurdish language campaign, which began in November, is being orchestrated by the Kurdistan Workers Party, or PKK, to rekindle separatism. Abdurrahman Demir, a 20-year-old student at Dicle University in the largely Kurdish province of Diyarbakır, said in a recent interview that security forces arrested him last month after he joined the Kurdish language campaign.

"I was stripped naked and beaten by security forces until I signed a confession saying that I had been acting under orders from the PKK," he said.

Demir signed the confession and is awaiting trial on charges of promoting separatism.

Not all students who have signed the petition have been jailed, but many of them have been expelled by their universities.

Hopes that Turkey would work toward accommodating Kurdish demands rose after the 1999 capture of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan. A Turkish court sentenced Öcalan to death by hanging the same year, but the government stayed his execution pending a review by the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, France. In return, Öcalan called off the PKK's 15-year armed campaign for an independent homeland. Öcalan, who is the sole inmate of an island prison off the coast of Istanbul, now says that lifting bans on Kurdish language education and broadcasting will satisfy the Kurds' demands for more cultural rights. However, some of his former followers now regard him as a traitor to the cause. The Ankara government has brushed aside Öcalan's overtures as a ploy to place the Kurdish issue on an international platform in the context of Turkey's bid to join the European Union.

Turkey's parliament passed legislation in October that eased bans on Kurdish language broadcasting but left the education ban in force. Despite the new law, at least two radio stations in Diyarbakır province and the southern Mediterranean port of Mersin received heavy fines in recent months for airing Kurdish songs.

* * * * *

Foolishness with EU and Kurdish language issue

Milliyet January 22, 2002 by Hasan Cemal

What is terrorism? What is a terrorist organization? The European Union remain confused on these issues. Or, maybe, this confusion stems from a deliberate choice. Or it results from a "May the snake that does not harm me live forever," mentality.

Is the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) a terrorist organization? Yes, it is. Is the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (DHKP/C) a terrorist organization? Of course it is.

Yet, according to the EU, these two are obviously not terrorist organizations. The EU has failed to put the names of these two organizations on its recently-announced list of terrorist organizations. And there are signs indicating that the next EU list too will not be any different in this respect.

Has the Sept. 11 taught no lesson? Has even such a tragedy failed to change that mentality? This attitude on the part of the EU countries is doing harm to Turkey-EU relations. It strengthens the hand of the anti-EU circles in Turkey and undermines Turkey's democratization and reform process.

And it encourages the PKK. For example, recently, the "street" has been stirred up into action on the education in Kurdish issue. But this problem cannot be solved out on the street! Carrying this issue into the street, "publicizing" it with such a mentality, and sticking the "PKK label" on this issue, can only backfire. It is foolish to do that.

Some problems are extremely sensitive and can be solved only with time and great care. Attempts to solve them with hue and cry or by resorting to force would fail. Education in Kurdish is exactly that kind of issue. So is radio-TV broadcasting in Kurdish. Turkey has entered a highly critical year. What makes this year so critical is Turkey's relations with the EU. We have a critical threshold ahead: the deadline to determine the date on which the EU would start accession talks with Turkey. If a specific date gets officially and definitely set by the EU for that purpose by the end of the current year, Turkey will have passed that critical threshold. In other words, Turkey's full membership process will have been placed on an irreversible track.

Let us hope that the next time it prepares the list of terrorist organizations the EU will persuade Belgium and the Netherlands and put on the list the PKK and the DHKP/C as well. It would stop encouraging the PKK and the "street" in Turkey. Let us also hope that it will be realized what a foolish thing it is to carry into the street such a sensitive issue as education in Kurdish. Also, during Turkey's journey into Europe, an historic responsibility falls on the Ecevit government and Parliament especially in the democratization area.

* * * * *

Bahceli defends amendment of Penal Code Article 312

Turkish Daily News January 23, 2002

Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) leader Deputy Prime Minister Devlet Bahceli opposed Tuesday to calls for total abrogation of the controversial Penal Code Article 312 that the three-way coalition government wanted amendments be made in. Talking at the parliamentary group of his nationalist party, Bahceli said the proposed amendments in the controversial Penal Code Article 312 did not either aim at saving an individual or punishing an individual. He said his party was against total lifting of the controversial article or making radical amendments in it in a manner that would empty its contents.

The MHP leader said the proposal on the amendment of the controversial article was prepared in line with the principles of the National Program and in accordance with the consensus between the three partners of the coalition government. The controversial article, Bahceli said, was punishing crimes such as inciting unrest and discrimination along with religious, ethnic or class lines and thus endangering social peace and order with such acts.

Bahceli said defending exclusion from punishment of provocative speeches and behaviours inciting separatism and discrimination cannot be reconciled with democracy or notion of freedom of speech. "For us propagating for separatism and instigating unrest is not part of freedoms in a democratic pluralist society," Bahceli said.

The MHP leader said with the amendments to be made in Article 312 clarification would be brought to the line in between freedom of thought and expression and acts aimed at upsetting public peace and order. He said efforts aimed at total abrogation of Article 312 or emptying the content of the article and rendering it inapplicable were unacceptable. He said his party would not support such a move.

Regarding Kurdish education, Bahceli said the separatist Kurdistan Workers' Party gang made a change in its strategies after its chieftain was captured and sentenced to death. He said the clandestine PKK has now started giving prominence to becoming a political grouping. He said with logistical support the gang was receiving from some of Turkey's western allies and from some domestic collaborators, was trying to implement that aim and Kurdish education demands were part of that campaign. Claiming that the campaigns for Kurdish education rights were all organized by the separatist gang, Bahceli underlined that according to Constitution no language other than Turkish could be thought in Turkish schools.

Talking on the Turkish-European Union issues, on the other hand, Bahceli criticized statements by Motherland Party (ANAP) leader deputy Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz, without directly naming the ANAP boss. Bahceli said attitudes of some circles in Turkey to constantly refer to Turkey's obligations while talking on Turkish-EU matters was not an appropriate position. The MHP leader said it was difficult for Turkey to understand how it happens that "savage" gangs of terror were not included by Europe on its list of terrorist groups. He said Turkey was having difficulty in reconciling the European attitude with talk of a common stance against terrorism.

Accusing Europe of following a hypocritical attitude and applying double standards, Bahceli said it was unfortunate to see inclusion of some minor terrorist groups on the European list of terrorist gangs, while terrorist groups that have caused substantial damage to the Turkish state and nation were excluded from the list. He said such attitudes of Europe led to suspicions in Turkey against the sincerity of Europe.

The MHP leader said those who have been demanding Turkey to lift the sentence at times of war and for terrorists as well, should first act against terrorists groups that endanger the fundamental right of Turkish people: the right to live.

Bahceli said his party was against the lifting of the death penalty totally.

Touching on the Cyprus problem also, the MHP leader stressed that Cyprus was a national cause for the Turkish public. He said the Cyprus problem was constituting one of the critical agenda matters of Turkey's relations with the EU. He said in dealing with the Cyprus problem the EU was appearing to favor Greek Cypriots over Turkish Cypriots. The MHP leader said he sincerely hoped that the current peace process in Cyprus would succeed and appealed to the EU to stop making frequent remarks that it would accept Greek Cypriots as a member with or without a settlement on the island as such attitudes could spoil the atmosphere of the talks and render a settlement on the east Mediterranean island even more difficult.

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Baghdad Aims Kurdish TV to Win Over Iraqi Kurds

Reuters January 26, 2002

TUNCELI, Turkey - Baghdad has begun airing Kurdish-language television broadcasts in a bid to win over Iraqi Kurds as fears mount the U.S. "war on terrorism" could spread to Iraq, Kurdish officials told Reuters on Saturday.

Kurds wrested control of northern Iraq from Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in the wake of the 1991 Gulf War and are protected by U.S. and British warplanes based in Turkey who patrol a no-fly zone over the enclave. "Saddam Hussein is using this method to win over and influence Kurds before a U.S. attack on Iraq," a Kurdish official said on condition of anonymity. The station has launched trial broadcasts from a studio in the town of Kirkuk near the Kurdish enclave and will begin airing regular programming in the coming weeks, he said. U.S. President George Bush has warned Hussein to allow U.N. weapons inspectors to return or face consequences.

The rival Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), which administer breakaway northern Iraq, have said they oppose Hussein but are wary of any U.S. military action against his regime.

* * * * *

Iraq and its neighbours

Greed, fear and confusion to Saddam's rescue

Jan 24th 2002 | CAIRO

From The Economist print edition



The regional obstacles in the way of a change of Iraqi regime

THE performance could be delayed a bit but America is still writing scripts for the exit of Saddam Hussein and his regime. This calls for ingenuity. Iraq has been devastated by an 11-year siege, and made friendless by a government that is widely despised, not least by its own people. But its dictator lives on, helped by a closing of Arab ranks, and by the greed, fear and confusion of many of his foes.

Take greed, to start with. Iraq's predicament has taken an appalling human and economic toll at home, but many of the regional allies that America would need in a war have profited nicely from Iraq's distress. Although the country has vast oil reserves, sanctions have withered investment and throttled exports, allowing competitors, such as Russia and Saudi Arabia, to produce more oil without glutting the market. Over the past decade, Iraq has forfeited potential revenue of some \$150 billion, all to the advantage of others.

In addition, oil-importing neighbours, such as Jordan and Turkey, enjoy heavily discounted energy supplies from Iraq. And the Kurds of northern Iraq, who live under semi-autonomous UN protection, have grown dependent on the tidy income they earn from the transit of Iraqi fuel.

All of Iraq's neighbours are agitated, sometimes fearful, about what a change of regime might bring to the region. With Iraq's population 60% Shia Muslim, both secular Turkey and Sunni Muslim Saudi Arabia harbour fears, for different reasons, of the emergence of a fundamentalist theocracy aligned with Shia Iran. The Gulf monarchies would hardly be happy with a democracy next door, either.

Some Americans have spoken of using Iraq's Kurds as a Northern Alliance-like bridgehead to Baghdad. This also makes Turkey nervous. Having squashed its own Kurdish minority, Turkey looks askance at the rewards America might dole out to Kurdish collaborators. It is even more alarmed at the idea of an independent Iraqi Kurdistan that might reignite Kurdish aspirations elsewhere. Perhaps with this in mind, Turkey has taken to muttering about its right to *âœprotektâ* * the tiny minority of ethnic Turks who live in the Iraqi enclave. For the time being, the unprecedented freedom the Kurds currently enjoy, with both Mr Hussein and the Turks kept at bay, may look too precious to risk.

Few doubt that the world would be a better place without Mr Hussein, but a big problem is that those baying for his blood have consistently failed to explain why his removal is an urgent necessity rather than a desirable outcome. Attempts to link the country to the al-Qaeda terrorist network have not borne fruit, which is no surprise considering that *jihad* -minded Islamists consider Mr Hussein anathema. Nor, in the region, is there much concern about Iraq's illicit weaponry or aggressive tendencies. Kuwait, understandably, remains apprehensive, but Iraq's other neighbours no longer consider Iraq to be a major security threat. The argument that Mr Hussein must go because he hates America and might one day be a danger to it, fails to convince Iraq's neighbours of the need for an expedited change of regime.

The proposed means for bringing this change about are even less convincing than the reasons. America does not, to date, have a legal mandate for serious military intervention. Given the reluctance of Iraq's neighbours, it has no place to install the 100,000 or so troops that might be necessary for Mr Hussein's overthrow. And the Iraqi opposition remains as divided and feeble as ever. The Bush administration's recent suspension of funding to the most pro-American group, the Iraqi National Congress, over suspected financial malfeasance, is a case in point.

Sensing a breathing space, Iraq has launched another of its sporadic charm offensives. Top officials have taken to praising the Gulf monarchies, waxing on the virtues of Arab unity, and even hinting at a future dialogue with America. Mr Hussein himself is said to have proposed some new

initiative to Amr Moussa, when the Arab League's secretary-general visited him in Baghdad last weekend. The visit, the first of its kind since the Gulf war, was widely seen by Arab commentators as an attempt to bring Iraq back into the fold at a time when a joint Arab approach is urgently needed to face the consequences of America's anti-terrorism campaign.

Mr Hussein may be spared from this campaign, for the moment. But this does not translate into alleviating the suffering of his people. America's prickly mood has already led to a surge in the number of *âœholdsa* * put on contracts under the UN's oil for food programme. Some \$5 billion in orders, all but a fraction of them intended for humanitarian purposes, now languish undelivered due to American fears that they may serve some military purpose. Meantime, oil prices have fallen 30% since September, and the stringent new mechanism the UN now imposes, whereby prices for Iraqi oil are set retroactively every 15 days, is frightening off customers. The Iraqis' meagre income, already less than a quarter of pre-Gulf war levels, looks set to shrink even further.

Assouplissement du régime des visas,
revirement des membres turcs
de la Commission de réconciliation

Les USA poussent Ankara et Erévan au rapprochement

L'Arménie a salué mercredi 16 janvier la décision de la Turquie d'assouplir son régime de visas pour les ressortissants arméniens. Dziunik Aghadjanian, la porte-parole du ministère arménien des Affaires étrangères, a estimé que ce geste «aura un impact positif sur les contacts entre les deux peuples et contribuera à améliorer le climat général» dans les relations arméno-turques. Mais elle a toutefois précisé à Radio-Liberté qu'Erévan n'avait toujours pas reçu de note officielle d'Ankara sur le sujet.

La Turquie a néanmoins laissé à son ministère des Affaires étrangères le soin de commenter mercredi 16 janvier au quotidien *Turkish Daily News* sa décision, qui est le fruit d'une «évaluation technique», une procédure de «routine» suivie chaque année. «Cette année, a déclaré un haut fonctionnaire du ministère, nous avons décidé de redémarrer la délivrance des visas aux ressortissants arméniens aux postes frontaliers. En prenant cette décision, nous avons pris en considération les problèmes rencontrés par les ressortissants arméniens pour l'obtention de visas auprès des missions diplomatiques turques à l'étranger, compte tenu de l'absence de relations diplomatiques avec Erévan.»

Les ressortissants arméniens, qui payaient 40 dollars pour obtenir un visa auprès des ambassades de Turquie en Géorgie et dans d'autres pays, se plaignaient en effet d'attendre souvent plus d'un mois que le visa leur fût délivré. Dorénavant, ils n'auront plus qu'à franchir la frontière turco-géorgienne pour avoir un visa, et ne devront plus s'acquitter que de 10 dollars (environ 11,3 euros). Conséquence certaine : le nombre de ressortissants arméniens qui visiteront la Turquie voisine devrait nettement augmenter.

Cette décision d'Ankara a été diversement appréciée par les principales organisations arméniennes des Etats-Unis. L'*Armenian Assembly of America* a salué non seulement cette décision, mais également le rôle joué par l'administration Bush dans cette affaire.

En revanche, l'*Armenian National Committee of America* (ANCA) a plutôt minimisé la portée de la décision turque, estimant que cet assouplissement du régime des visas pour les ressortissants arméniens bénéficierait en premier lieu à l'économie de la Turquie, dont les produits seraient plus facilement achetés par les industriels arméniens.

Par ailleurs, pour l'ANCA, il s'agit là d'une «mesure à court terme destinée à détourner l'attention de l'opinion publique du blocus exercé par la Turquie sur l'Arménie, à créer une image imméritée de bonne volonté autour d'un pays qui développe une attitude hostile à l'égard de l'Arménie et à préparer le terrain, avant la visite aux Etats-Unis du premier ministre Bülent Ecevit, à des demandes d'aide à

l'administration Bush qui se chiffrent à plusieurs milliards de dollars».

Lors d'un déjeuner organisé mercredi 16 janvier à l'Université de Los Angeles, en Californie, le nouvel ambassadeur des Etats-Unis en Arménie John Ordway a évoqué la question de la normalisation des relations arméno-turques, pour affirmer que le Congrès américain n'était «pas en bonne position actuellement pour reconnaître le génocide arménien, car ce faisant, il pourrait porter atteinte aux relations avec la Turquie». Sans dire si le gouvernement américain envisageait de reconnaître le génocide, il avait indiqué la veille à Glendale que l'amélioration des relations entre l'Arménie et la Turquie, ainsi qu'entre les Arméniens et les Turcs, doit figurer au rang des priorités. «Nous croyons que ce problème doit être traité avec beaucoup de tact, et c'est ce que nous comptons faire», a-t-il déclaré.

Prise quelques jours avant la visite du premier ministre turc Bülent Ecevit aux Etats-Unis, la décision d'Ankara d'assouplir le régime des visas a été saluée par le Département d'Etat américain, qui «espère qu'elle contribuera à améliorer les relations arméno-turques». Le Département d'Etat a saisi l'occasion pour réaffirmer son «soutien aux initiatives gouvernementales et privées qui permettraient de trouver des mesures susceptibles d'accompagner le processus de normalisation». Le porte-parole du Département d'Etat, Philip Reeker, a annoncé également que le sous-secrétaire d'Etat aux Affaires économiques, Alan Larson, conduira une délégation américaine qui se rendra prochainement à Ankara, pour participer les 26 et 27 février à la première réunion d'une Commission pour le Partenariat économique entre les Etats-Unis et la Turquie. «Les Etats-Unis et la Turquie maintiennent depuis longtemps un partenariat stratégique très fort. Nous avons décidé aujourd'hui de porter notre coopération économique au même niveau», a souligné M. Reeker.

Cette décision de la Turquie, si elle a été très vraisemblablement prise en vue de séduire l'allié américain, dont elle attend avec impatience les subsides pour remettre à flot une économie largement sinistrée, est tout aussi certainement le fruit d'une pression de l'administration américaine, sans aucun doute affectée par l'échec de la Commission de réconciliation arméno-turque (CRAT), et qui ne ménage aucun effort pour réunir Turcs et Arméniens autour d'une table de négociations.

La preuve : après la décision d'Ankara d'assouplir le régime des visas pour les ressortissants arméniens, un membre turc de la Commission de réconciliation arméno-turque, Ustun Erguder, a déclaré vendredi 18 janvier à Radio-Liberté que pour la partie turque, l'initiative soutenue par Washington «[pouvait] encore être sauvée».

ANKARA VEUT SÉDUIRE WASHINGTON, ET WASHINGTON FAIT PRESSION SUR ANKARA

Ce rebondissement intervient plus d'un mois après que la plupart des observateurs eurent annoncé le 11 décembre dernier la mort virtuelle de la Commission (cf. n° 387), après l'annonce par les membres arméniens de la suspension de leur participation, en raison de la «décision unilatérale» de leurs homologues

turcs de dénier au Centre international pour la justice transitionnelle le droit de conduire une étude sur l'applicabilité au cas arménien de la Convention des Nations unies de 1948 sur le génocide. Or, par un curieux retournement de situation, M. Erguder soutient aujourd'hui que contrairement aux affirmations émises par la partie arménienne, les membres turcs de la Commission ne sont pas revenus sur l'accord aux termes duquel les experts du CIJT devaient mener l'étude que l'on sait. En clair, M. Erguder, qui est le directeur du Centre d'études politiques de l'Université Sabanci d'Istanbul, se défend au nom de ses collègues turcs de la Commission d'avoir voulu saborder l'opération. «Je pense qu'il y a eu certains malentendus, et je crois que nous n'avons jamais eu l'intention de [renoncer à notre engagement], a-t-il déclaré. Et si la Commission paraît morte aujourd'hui, cela tient à des raisons techniques. Nous étions pressés par le temps ; car si nous en avions eu davantage, nous aurions probablement pu la faire vivre.»

Quoi qu'il en soit, M. Erguder a confirmé que les membres turcs et arméniens de la Commission n'ont pas eu de contacts directs depuis leur dernière rencontre de New York, qui s'était tenue du 18 au 21 novembre derniers dans une atmosphère déjà houleuse (cf. n° 385), et il s'est dit incapable de prédire la suite des événements, tout en plaidant au nom de ses collègues turcs en faveur de la poursuite des activités de la CRAT. «Le temps dira» si ce «vœu» sera exaucé, a déclaré M. Erguder, qui ne croit pas que la disparition de la Commission soit un phénomène inéluctable. De l'avis même de M. Erguder, David Phillips, cet universitaire américain conseiller du Département d'Etat, qui jouait le rôle de modérateur lors des réunions de la CRAT, ne ménage pas ses efforts pour faire revivre la Commission. «Je pense qu'il veut que les choses se poursuivent, et qu'il a des plans pour sauver [la Commission]», a déclaré M. Erguder.

L'universitaire turc en profite pour récuser vigoureusement l'argument développé par la partie arménienne, selon laquelle les Turcs tenteraient d'exploiter l'existence de la CRAT pour neutraliser les velléités de reconnaissance du génocide arménien dans les pays occidentaux. «Je pense qu'un grand nombre de possibilités s'offriront, à l'avenir, pour les Arméniens et les Turcs, qui ont partagé une histoire commune», a esquisé M. Erguder. «Il pourrait y avoir débat sur cette histoire. Une bonne manière de se pencher sur cette histoire serait de rechercher les possibilités futures de coopération, l'ouverture des frontières, le développement des relations économiques et des activités culturelles. Dès lors que cette volonté s'exprime, vous pouvez vous retourner en arrière et poser un regard plus détaché sur l'histoire», a-t-il ajouté.

M. Erguder a affirmé que les six Turcs membres de la Commission pensent qu'Ankara ne devrait poser aucun préalable à l'établissement de relations diplomatiques avec Erévan. Il voit dans le récent assouplissement du régime des visas pour les ressortissants arméniens «les premiers fruits» des efforts déployés par les membres turcs de la CRAT en vue d'améliorer les relations entre les deux Etats voisins. «Je pense que mes collègues, qui sont d'anciens ambassadeurs, ont joué un rôle influent pour parvenir à ce résultat. C'est un bon pas en avant», a-t-il souligné. ●

Samedi 26 janvier 2002

LA LETTRE DE L'UGAB

27 Years After Turkish Invasion, an Ugly Gash Still Divides Nicosia

By Douglas Frantz
New York Times Service

NICOSIA — Captain Louise Burt stood in the muddy no-man's-land between enemy lines and pointed toward two flag poles that held aloft the star and crescent of Turkey and the similar banner of the Turkish Cypriots.

"Look closely," said Captain Burt, a British Army officer with the United Nations peacekeeping force that patrols the buffer zone separating Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. "See the barbed wire wrapped round the poles?"

Sure enough, a strand of rusted wire snaked menacingly up each pole, protection against a sometimes lethal game of Capture the Flag carried on from time to time between the soldiers who have stared at each other across the narrow divide day and night for 27 years.

The Berlin Wall is history. So is the Iron Curtain. Peace prevails much of the time in Northern Ireland.

Nicosia is the world's last divided capital, stubbornly split by an ugly scar that symbolizes the deep differences between two ethnic groups that cannot seem to share this island of mountains and beaches in peace.

The island's formal division dates to August 1974, when troops from Turkey landed in northern Cyprus. They came in response to a short-lived coup by Greek Cypriots that threatened to make Cyprus part of Greece and seemed to endanger Turkish Cypriots.

Since then Cyprus has been divided by a neutral zone 186 kilometers (116 miles) east to west and up to 5 kilometers wide.

But within the historic district of Nicosia, the capital, the distance shrinks to as little as 3 meters (10 feet) — a place called Spear Alley. The name comes from the days when soldiers from the opposing sides strapped bayonets to broom sticks and jostled across the alley from balconies.

Those narrow points are where the danger is greatest, and where the games soldiers play to relieve the tedium or demonstrate their manhood carry the spark of violence.

Deaths have dropped sharply in recent years largely because the two sides voluntarily reduced the number of troops along the line. Still, the buffer zone remains, no longer only a line on a map but a state of mind and way of life.

"I've never been to the other side," said Takis Moriatis, 26, a carpenter who

works in a shop next to the buffer on the Greek Cypriot side. "I've never even seen it, really, and I don't care to."

Although a new round of reunification talks opened last week with some optimism, no one is talking yet about erasing the fortified line that separates the island's 800,000 people, of whom about three-quarters are Greek and one-quarter Turkish. That line defines a forbidden zone that makes up 4 percent of the island and is open only to United Nations peacekeepers.

Outsiders who manage to wangle a tour find a place where time was ordered to stand still, although the buildings re-

The buffer zone has become a state of mind and way of life.

fused to obey. The damage of the years is particularly evident in Nicosia, where the division is known as the Green Line.

City streets dead end where the zone begins, blocked by ugly barricades and dividing neighborhoods, and in one case a factory that used to make springs.

What were once some of the city's most elegant buildings are scarred by bullets and ruined by enforced neglect, their walls of mud and brick crumbling.

A former Turkish Cypriot school that was the scene of fierce fighting in 1974 is riddled with shell holes and is on the verge of collapse. Nearby, a small Greek Orthodox chapel, said to have been built in the fourth century, is falling down.

Time seems frozen in other places. Dust-covered tables wait for long-gone customers inside the Café Berlin, and a rusty sign hangs outside a beauty shop. Fifty-six Toyota cars sit marooned in a basement, each with 38.7 miles on their odometers to mark the drive from the port at Famagusta to Nicosia 27 years ago.

Soldiers watch each other through peepholes in fortified observation posts.

During the day, the enemies slouch

carelessly and mooch cigarettes from passersby. At night, they often cut the boredom by firing stones from slingshots at each other. Sometimes they fire rifles.

Most of the posts are ramshackle. But the Greek Cypriots created a tourist attraction out of the post at the end of a popular pedestrian walkway on Ledra Street. People climb the metal stairs to the wood-paneled platform and peer across at the Turkish Cypriots on the other side. It is something like going to a weird and sad zoo.

Nearby, the Greek Cypriots set up an exhibit of photographs from 1974, carefully labeled "Turkish atrocities." Across the buffer zone, a similar display portrays what are called "Greek Cypriot war crimes."

The path winding between two halves

of the city is rutted and overgrown with weeds. Coils of barbed wire line the sides, and signs in three languages warn of minefields.

The United Nations refuses to clear the mines because, Captain Burt said, that would constitute tampering with the status quo, which the peacekeepers are there to maintain, making sure neither side appears to build a higher wall or encroach into the buffer zone.

UN officials fear the most trivial matter could turn ugly fast.

They cite a particular brick wall on the Turkish Cypriot side. Not long ago several rows of bricks were added to the wall, a violation. The UN painted the top row of bricks white so the wall could go no higher.

A few days later the wall appeared to be higher, although the white row was still at the top. A count revealed that the Turkish Cypriots had removed the painted bricks, added several rows and put the white ones back on top. So the line was painted 10 rows below the top, making the chore of moving it so burdensome that the Turkish Cypriots gave up.

Internet for everyone in Kurdistan

January 26, 2002 KurdishMedia.com - By R. M. Ahmad

London (KurdishMedia.com) January 2002: Soon the work with Kurdistan.net project will start in the next few days in Kurdistan Region and the internet service will reach all the homes with telephone lines for 24 hours a day, reported local Kurdish media.

The project is going through its final tests at the moment.

This project will let any one with private telephone line to go on Internet 24 hours a day. The project makes people of Kurdistan to benefit from Internet service the same way people in developed countries benefit from Internet. This project is considered as unique of its kind in Middle East. It comes as the results and expressions of the realities of the democratic climates, which overwhelm the region like other democratic societies in the world. South Kurdistan has already left Iraq and some other Middle Eastern countries behind, for the availability of the modern technology, such as Internet, mobile telephony, international telephony and satellite TV. The prices may still be high, but these technologies increasingly becoming available for majority of the populations.

The online chat facilities, such as PalTalk, are becoming a united lad for Kurds, from Kurdistan and abroad, to communicate and debate important elements of the Kurdish issue.

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Barzani: International Situation Is Not In favor Of Independent State

Kurdistan Observer Jan 24, 2002.

KDP President Massoud Barzani denied rumors suggesting that the KDP is planning to establish an independent state in Southern Kurdistan, reported Al-Zaman last Monday.

Addressing the KDP Central Committee members in Salahuddin, Barzani asserted that similar to all nations of this planet, the Kurdish people have the right of self determination and to have their own independent state. However, Mr. Barzani added that the current regional and international situation is not in favor of [an independent Kurdish state]. Mr. Barzani also talked about the progress that has taken place in regard to the Kurdish problem internationally and renewed interest in the Kurdish issue.

He went on to say "upgrading of the bilateral relations between the Kurdistan Regional Government and European countries has come as a result of the success of the democratic experiment in Kurdistan and also the success of the KRG organizations in serving the public.

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Where are the 10,000 Faily young Kurds abducted by Iraq during 1980s?

January 28, 2002 KurdishMedia.com (Translated) - By R. M. Ahmad Source: Kuwait News Agency, in Arabic, 28th Jan 2002.

Tehran on 27th Jan 2002. Iraqi Kurds living in Iran, today, appealed to Iranian Foreign Minister, Kemal Khezary, to open the question of the 10,000 young Faily Kurds, who were abducted by Iraqi Government during 1980s, with the Iraqi Foreign Minister, Naji Sabry Al-Hadithy, who is on a visit to Tehran now. The announcement, which was issued by Faily Kurds living in Iran, said: "The sons, of Kurdish refugee families forcefully deported to Iran on 1980, still suffering in Iraqi prisons for over 20 years."

Iraqi Foreign Minister, Naji Sabry Al-Hadithy, is visiting Tehran now officially for four days to discuss "Humanitarian Questions" related to Iraq-Iran war of 1980-1988.

The announcement added that the families of these prisoners are tormented and still suffer. They live today in fear on the fate of their beloved ones imprisoned unfairly. The Kurds called Iranian Foreign Minister, Kemal Khezary,

to schedule the question of these prisoners in his discussion with Iraqi Foreign Minister. They pointed out that it is a Humanitarian and Islamic duty to end this humanitarian suffering which caused by Iraqi Government.

It is worth mentioning that the Iraqi Government forcefully deported more than hundred thousand Iraqi Kurds to Iran after confiscating their properties and documents on 1980. In addition to these, the Iraqi Government abducted all young male members, over 16 year olds, of these Kurds to unknown destinations.

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No Entry From Turkey for 'Kurdistan' Passports

Milliyet January 22, 2002 by Tolga Sardan

It has emerged that the British Government has issued passports to several Iraqi citizens with the 'Place of Birth' section bearing the word 'Kurdistan'. The Interior Ministry has alerted the Foreign Ministry and sent a message to border governor's offices telling them to deny entry and exit to bearers of passports bearing the word "Kurdistan".

Some time earlier a group of Iraqi nationals bearing British passports -- Johar Mamod, Shnow Mahmud, Joan Mahmud, Zahwa Mahmood Mohamed and Koshnow Znar Kamal Hamad -- applied on two separate occasions to enter Iraq at the Habur border crossing. Customs officials inspected their British passports and noticed that in five of them the place of birth was noted as "Kurdistan". Because of this, they were reused exit. The Iraqi-origin British national called Voshov Zervan Kamal Hamad had his place of birth noted as al-Sulaymaniyah and was allowed to pass. This incident at Habur was notified first to the Sinak Governor's Office, then the Emergency Rule Governor's Office and finally the Interior Ministry, which immediately notified the Foreign Ministry and all the border governor's offices. The Ministry telexed orders to all the border crossings noting, "It has been deemed appropriate not to allow entry or exit at the border crossings with Turkey to Iraq nationals whose passports state they were born in 'Kurdistan'."

The ministry instructed that the place of birth notation in the passports of people using this route must have their city of birth written and not any region, zone, small town or village. The Foreign Ministry has stated it will take up the Interior Ministry's warning with the British authorities.

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ÇILLER PARTY RECOMMENDS 'TURKMEN-KURDISH FEDERATION'

RFE/RL IRAQ REPORT Vol. 5, No. 3, 25 January 2002

A report by the 'True Path' -- Dogru Yol Party (DYP) makes the point that Turkey's insistence on keeping Saddam Hussein in power is not in its interests and proposes that a Turkmen-Kurdish Federation be formed in northern Iraq, according to the Istanbul newspaper "Aksam" on 19 January. At the request of Tansu Ciller, DYP general chairwoman, a report titled "A Fresh View of the Northern Iraq Problem and New Perspectives Within the Framework of the Ankara Process" argues that Turkey must seize the initiative in the area and that it must not insist on keeping Saddam Hussein in power.

The report notes that northern Iraq is the only region in the world where Kurds have gained world recognition for their existence, and points out that "having fought against separatist terrorism based on chauvinist Kurdish nationalism for years, Turkey can hardly be expected to remain indifferent to the Kurdish political movements and groups in northern Iraq." The report adds that "a Kurdish federated state on its own would be against Turkey's interests, but a Turkmen-Kurdish Federation within an Iraq whose territorial integrity is guaranteed by Turkey would be in our interests. Consequently, the scope of any arrangement in northern Iraq must include the Turkmen and the Kurds."

The report also makes the point that U.S. policies must dovetail with Turkey's.

The report also outlines the requirements of a Turkish strategy in the region: first, a policy of constant destabilization must be pursued, and equal distances must be maintained from the two Kurdish leaders in northern Iraq;

second, northern Iraq must be seen as a social and cultural sphere of interest and appropriate investments must be made; third, discussion of the Mosul question must be reopened and discussed because "the status of the Province of Mosul was not finalized by the Treaty of Lausanne and the resolution of the issue was postponed to a later date. Then, 'at a later date,' the province was handed to the Iraqi state via a political fait accompli. Now it is clear that the 'Mosul Province file' must be reopened."

The DYP report is not the only recent mention of the Iraqi Turkmen. The "Mideast Mirror" of 22 January cites an article in the London-based Arabic-language newspaper "Al-Sharq Al-Awsat" by Adnan Hussayn noting that Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit also expressed his concern about the Iraqi Turkmen on the eve of his departure for Washington. Hussayn writes that the Turks have disregarded their existence for many years because of Turkey's various joint interests with the Saddam Husseyn government, and also because the Turks themselves could be accused of practicing a discriminatory ethnic policy similar to that of the Ba'th Party against its own Kurds, Arabs, Armenians, Assyrians, and Chaldeans.

Hussayn claims the Turks want to get control of what he calls the "Turkmen cordon," which begins at Sinjar and Mosul and ends in Kirkuk. (David Nissman)

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Notorious 159 becomes more deadly

Turkish Daily News January 25, 2002

The parliamentary Justice Commission gave its go ahead to a key element of the so-called "mini reform package" of the three-way coalition government, further enhancing the scope of the notorious Article 159 of the Penal Code.

The controversial Penal Code article regulates punishments for defamation against the state, state organs, the military and the judiciary, and judges have sent scores of Turkish intellectuals behind the bars over the past decades on such charges. Turkish Daily News editor Mine Cevik and columnist Burak Bekdil are currently facing court under the controversial article on grounds of defaming the Turkish judiciary in an item Bekdil wrote in the Aug. 28 editions of the TDN.

The article calls for one to three years imprisonment (up to six years imprisonment in the current law) for those who have defamed explicitly the "Turkish identity, the Republic, Turkish nation, Turkish state, the Turkish Grand National Assembly (Parliament), Council of Ministers, ministries, the judiciary, the military, police or other security forces of the state."

With the reform approved by the commission, the term "Republic" was inserted into the text of the law, "democracy" was initially inserted, but in a reconsideration of the bill in the afternoon session yesterday the commission decided not to make such an insert in the text of the law. On the other hand, while the existing law stipulates that those "explicitly defaming" the norms and establishments taken under its protection, the commission-approved reformed text of the draft stated that even if there was no explicit defamation, but it was clearly assessed so (by the judges) the article could still be applied against those who were accused.

Thus, the scope of the controversial article was substantially enhanced, while the penalties it stipulated were taken down from a maximum of six years to three years. The draft stipulates, on the other hand, one to six months imprisonment (it is 15 days to six months in the current law) to those who "publicly swore" against the laws of the Republic and the decisions of Parliament.

Furthermore, the draft underlines that penalties foreseen in the law would be increased by 1/3 if the crime was committed in a foreign country by a Turkish national. Reforms in the Turkish Penal Code to conform with the constitutional amendments made last year have been one of the constant demands from Turkey from its western allies. on Wednesday, American Ambassador Robert Pearson visited Parliament Speaker Omer Ezgi and stressed that Turkish people wanted more democracy.

The American envoy met Thursday with Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) leader Deputy Prime Minister Devlet Bahçeli. No statement was made on the 30-minute meeting of Bahçeli with Pearson, but the reform package was expected to be discussed by the two.

Article 312 clears commission

The Justice Commission also gave the go ahead Thursday to a proposal amending the controversial Article 312 of the Turkish Penal Code.

Failing to reach a consensus on further amendments in the controversial articles, the deputies of the three ruling parties did not present any motion during the debates of the commission yesterday and killed with their votes some 14 motions presented by the opposition parties and approved the amendment to be made in the controversial law as it was suggested by the leaders of the trilateral coalition. But, before approving the amendment to be made in the controversial article, the commission lived some very tense minutes when Motherland Party (ANAP) Deputy Chairman Erkan Mumcu, in contradiction with other deputies of three ruling parties, claimed that the text debated by the commission and the amendment suggested by the three leaders were incompatible.

Both the ruling and opposition deputies almost burst into anger when Mumcu suggested them "to read" the text again. Mumcu was accused of staging a show by the ruling deputies while enjoying the rift between the deputies of ruling parties, the opposition deputies urged Mumcu to withdraw the amendment proposal.

Article 7 of Anti-Terror Law clears commission

After completing discussions over the controversial Article 312, the Justice Commission moved on debating Article 7 of the Anti-Terror Law and speedily approved it as was suggested by the government. The government proposal amending Article 8 of the Anti-Terror Law that regulates fines for the media was also approved by the commission without any change.

Reform package sent to General Assembly

Acting with speed, the commission approved the remaining three articles of the mini reform package without making any changes in the proposal of the three-way government, and dispatched the package to the General Assembly of Parliament. Although the mini-reform package has now been placed on the agenda of Parliament, even if the Speakership Council decides to handle the package with urgency, parliamentary debate on it can start at the earliest next Wednesday.

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Syria co-operates with Turkey over PKK

January 29, 2002 NTV/MSNBC

Syria is stepping up its co-operation with Turkey in efforts to combat terrorism in the region, providing information on the activities of the outlawed organisation the PKK. On Monday, the Syrian Interior Ministry handed Turkish authorities records of approximately 1,500 interrogations conducted with Syrian citizens who had deserted the PKK. The information showed that those Syrians questioned had left the PKK voluntarily, citing reasons for their desertion as being that PKK lost the support of the people and that terrorist group's new leader, Osman Öcalan, is not liked.

The Syrian records also showed that PKK camps had received foreign visitors from Greece, Armenia, Belgium and Holland. The move by Damascus is in line with the Adana Agreement, signed in 1998, under which the two countries agreed to step up their co-operation in the field of security. The former Syrian PKK militants do not face any legal action in their country but have been made to sign a document saying that if they rejoin the organisation they would face legal charges.

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Protest against dissapearences result in arrests

Reuters January 25, 2002

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey -- Police in southeast Turkey detained nearly 70 people demonstrating on Friday on the first anniversary of the disappearance of two Kurdish party activists, security officials said. Security officers used batons to disperse a crowd of about 300 members of the Kurdish People's Democracy Party (HADEP) in the mainly Kurdish regional capital Diyarbakir, witnesses said. Smaller protests were held in the towns of Batman, Van and

Siirt. Protesters demanded information on the whereabouts of local HADEP officials Serdar Tanis and Ebubekir Deniz, who have not been seen since police took them into custody on January 25, 2001, in the southeastern town of Silopi.

Police said they released Tanis and Deniz unharmed last year. Authorities later said the men had escaped to PKK camps in northern Iraq. HADEP is Turkey's only legal Kurdish party but faces possible closure on charges it maintains ties with the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which has waged an armed struggle for self-rule in the southeast that has claimed more than 30,000 lives, most of whom are Kurdish.

"Pressure on our party and detentions are intensifying," HADEP deputy leader Ahmet Turk told protesters in Diyarbakir.

Police have launched a crackdown this month on a campaign to bring Kurdish-language education to Turkish schools. More than 100 students and activists have been detained after signing petitions to introduce Kurdish into curricula. Lawmakers recently rescinded a ban on Kurdish broadcasts and publications in a bid to meet European Union criteria, but Turkish remains the only official language for public institutions.

The EU made Turkey a candidate for membership two years ago but expects an overhaul of its chequered human rights record for accession talks to start.

Authorities fear granting wider cultural rights to the country's 12 million Kurds could lead to the breakup of Turkish territory. Disappearances and killings of Kurdish and other political activists in the southeast were rife in the mid-1990s as conflict waged between PKK guerrillas and Turkish soldiers. The PKK took up arms against the Turkish state in 1984. Violence has dropped off sharply since the 1999 capture of PKK commander Abdullah Ocalan, sentenced to death by Turkey for treason and awaiting a European Court of Human Rights ruling on the sentence.

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IHD urges for tolerance to Kurdish education petitioners

Turkish Daily News January 26, 2002

The Human Rights Association (IHD) urged authorities yesterday to show tolerance towards hundreds of students taken into custody for submitting petitions demanding education in Kurdish.

Security forces have rounded up some 2,000 university students in a nationwide crackdown ordered by Interior Minister Rustu Kazim Yucelen early in January. The minister described the demands for Kurdish-language education in optional classes at universities as part of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party's (PKK) campaign to become a political force. The detentions overshadowed EU-candidate Turkey's efforts to meet the European criteria to be able to start membership negotiations with the union. Deputy Prime Minister and Conservative Motherland Party Leader Mesut Yilmaz has said it was impossible to meet those demands, but added the students should be treated with tolerance. IHD Chairman Husnu Ondul called for free discussion on the issue. "We do not approve either the detentions nor the arrests. In this respect, we support Mesut Yilmaz's approach," the Anatolia news agency quoted him as saying.

IHD officials say most of the detainees had been released from custody, but they were expected to face jail terms in cases at the State Security Courts (DGM). Meanwhile, police have detained eight officials of the pro-Kurdish Peoples Democracy Party (HADEP) in the northwestern province of Bursa, Anatolia reported. It said illegal documents belonging to the PKK had been discovered at the HADEP offices in the Karacabey and Orhangazi districts.

The arrests followed detentions of seven others, including HADEP's Bursa office chairman, the day before. HADEP, Turkey's only legal Kurdish party, faces a legal ban on the charge of acting as a front for the PKK. The PKK have fought for independence or autonomy in southeastern Turkey since 1984, but have since withdrawn outside Turkey on the order of its condemned leader Abdullah Ocalan in 1999, in a bid to win a political identity. The conflict has cost more than 30,000 lives. Turkish authorities describe the PKK's move as a bid to save Ocalan from execution.

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M. Ecevit s'oppose catégoriquement à un enseignement en kurde en Turquie



ANKARA, 26 jan (AFP) - 10h09 - Le Premier ministre turc Bulent Ecevit s'est catégoriquement opposé à un enseignement en kurde en Turquie, qualifiant les tentatives en ce sens de "manoeuvre visant à diviser la Turquie", lors d'un entretien vendredi soir à la chaîne d'information CNN-Turk.

"Nous ne pouvons l'accepter (l'enseignement du kurde dans les lycées et les universités), c'est impossible", a-t-il notamment dit.

Il a estimé que les récentes manifestations dans les grandes villes de Turquie pour réclamer une éducation en kurde relevaient de "manoeuvres utilisant les jeunes et émanant de certains pays d'Europe visant à diviser la Turquie".

L'éducation dans une autre langue que le turc, donc le kurde, est interdite, selon la constitution turque.

La campagne pour demander l'enseignement en kurde a débuté en novembre dernier dans des universités d'Istanbul où des centaines d'étudiants kurdes ont signé des pétitions en ce sens et le mouvement s'est répandu dans d'autres établissements.

Des parents d'élèves de lycée ont envoyé des pétitions similaires au ministère de l'Education.

Les autorités turques considèrent le mouvement comme une volonté de politisation du Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK, séparatistes kurdes de Turquie), qui a mis fin en 1999 à sa lutte armée pour la création d'un Etat kurde indépendant dans le sud-est à majorité kurde du pays.

Selon la principale formation pro-kurde de Turquie, le parti la Démocratie du Peuple (HADEP), menacé d'interdiction pour liens avec le PKK, plus de 5.000 personnes --des étudiants, parents d'élèves et membres du HADEP-- ont été interpellées par la police lors de manifestations.

L'Union européenne à laquelle la Turquie souhaite adhérer, lui réclame plus de droits culturels pour sa population kurde, notamment une télévision et un enseignement en kurde.

Bien que le kurde soit officiellement interdit en Turquie, les autorités tolèrent depuis longtemps des magazines et des cassettes de musique dans cette langue.

Sept membres d'un parti pro-kurde arrêtés, un institut fermé à Istanbul



ISTANBUL, 29 jan (AFP) - 15h44 - Sept représentants du Parti de la Démocratie du Peuple (HADEP, pro-kurde) interpellés vendredi à Tarsus (sud-est) ont été écroués mardi sous l'inculpation de "manifestation non autorisée" et "slogans en langue kurde", a-t-on appris auprès du HADEP.

Selon un responsable du HADEP à Tarsus contacté par l'AFP, Yusuf Cetinel, le président de la section locale de Tarsus, Abdullah Olmez, un élu du conseil municipal de la ville, Haci Ates, ainsi que 5 membres du parti ont été arrêtés.

Les 7 hommes avaient été interpellés lors d'une manifestation organisée dans une grande partie sud-est à majorité kurde pour le premier anniversaire de la disparition de deux responsables du HADEP, protestations qui s'étaient soldées par quelque 130 interpellations, dont 43 à Tarsus.

Tous les autres manifestants interpellés dans cette ville avaient été relâchés dimanche, a indiqué M. Cetinel.

Serdar Tanis et Ebubekir Deniz ont disparu l'an dernier à Silopi, dans le sud-est du pays, après avoir été convoqués au commissariat de la gendarmerie locale, et n'ont jamais réapparu depuis.

Le HADEP fait régulièrement l'objet de persécutions policières et judiciaires, sous l'accusation d'aide à la rébellion sécessionniste du Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan, le PKK, qui a mis un terme en septembre 1999 à 15 ans de lutte armée.

Pour cette raison, il risque d'être interdit par la Cour Constitutionnelle qui lui a demandé de présenter sa défense au mois de mars prochain dans le cadre d'une procédure ouverte il y a plus de 3 ans.

Dans un communiqué, le HADEP regrette par ailleurs que l'Institut Kurde d'Istanbul, une fondation privée qui éditait des revues en kurde et enseignait cette langue, ait été fermé lundi lors d'une opération de police, et réclame que cette décision "anti-démocratique" soit "immédiatement corrigée".

Son directeur, Hasan Kaya, a expliqué à l'AFP que, bien qu'ayant bénéficié le 26 décembre d'un non-lieu dans des poursuites pour violation de la loi sur l'enseignement privé, la fermeture de son établissement relevait du seul "ordre" du gouverneur d'Istanbul et ne lui avait pas été notifiée officiellement.

Le génocide arménien ? Jamais entendu parler...

L'image de la Turquie avait été ternie par le film *Midnight Express*. Il ne faut pas qu'*Ararat* produise les mêmes effets, constate Hürriyet, qui livre à ses lecteurs les coordonnées du réalisateur Atom Egoyan

HÜRRİYET

Istanbul

Quand il s'agit de sujets qui concernent tout le pays, nous réagissons de façon trop émotive et trop épidermique. Et pour cette raison, nous commettons beaucoup d'erreurs. Nous attachons une importance énorme aux calomnies les plus banales, qui n'ont d'autre but que de blesser notre honneur national. A cause de cette attitude, un film comme *Midnight Express* [sorti en 1977], qui n'a aucune valeur artistique, est devenu une œuvre cinématographique très importante, à l'affiche pendant des années, offrant à son réalisateur la célébrité et surtout beaucoup d'argent.

Pourtant, si nous n'avions pas attaché une si grande importance à ce film, il aurait

depuis longtemps disparu des écrans. Aujourd'hui, chaque fois que quelqu'un se fâche contre la Turquie ou les Turcs, il se sert encore de *Midnight Express*. C'est nous-mêmes qui avons transformé ce film en une arme antiturque.

Et maintenant nous sommes en train de faire la même erreur pour le film *Ararat*. Avant même que son tournage au Canada ne soit terminé et qu'il ne soit sur les écrans, il a déjà acquis une célébrité mondiale grâce à nous.

Le réalisateur canadien d'origine arménienne Atom Egoyan doit être comblé. Si nous continuons à afficher ainsi nos réactions, nous allons finir par faire gagner à Egoyan non seulement de l'argent et de la célébrité, mais aussi des prix cinématographiques. Les responsables du ministère des Affaires étrangères s'efforcent de calmer le jeu : "Ne faites pas de pub pour ce film en lui accordant les manchettes de vos journaux. Ne créez pas une seconde affaire *Midnight Express*."

Mais qui les écoute ? Presque chaque jour, on lit des réactions dans la presse concer-

nant le film *Ararat*, qui nourrit l'hostilité entre Turcs et Arméniens et dénature la vérité en racontant que les Arméniens vivant en Anatolie en 1915 ont subi un génocide. Il ne sert à personne, ni aux Arméniens ni aux Turcs, de calomnier toute une nation en déformant l'Histoire, et, de plus, en présentant cela au nom de l'art. Il sera sans doute utile que les citoyens expriment leurs réactions par fax ou par courrier électronique, mais sans insultes, en restant dans les limites civiles. Nous n'avons pas de haine historique contre la communauté arménienne, nous ne pourrions jamais en avoir. Nous avons la maturité pour dépasser les rancunes et l'hostilité.

Chers lecteurs, je vous donne les adresses du metteur en scène et de la maison de production du film *Ararat*. Vous pouvez leur faire part de votre point de vue, mais, s'il vous plaît, ne soyez pas grossiers. Transmettez vos réactions sans descendre au niveau des pauvres gens prisonniers de leur haine.

Tufan Türeç

Fin d'une visite au Kurdistan irakien d'un responsable de l'ONU



BAGDAD, 29 jan (AFP) - 13h23 - Le directeur du programme "pétrole contre nourriture" Benon Sevan a regagné Bagdad au terme d'une tournée dans le Kurdistan irakien, où il a examiné les moyens d'améliorer la situation humanitaire, a indiqué mardi un porte-parole de l'ONU.

"Benon Sevan a achevé une tournée de sept jours dans les provinces d'Erbil, Souleimaniya et Dohuk, où il a eu des discussions avec les autorités locales et les agences humanitaires de l'ONU sur l'application du programme humanitaire", a déclaré à l'AFP Adnane Jarrar.

Selon lui, M. Sevan, qui était accompagné du coordinateur humanitaire de l'ONU en Irak, Tun Myat, a aussi examiné "les moyens d'accélérer et de rendre plus efficace l'application du programme humanitaire dans tous les secteurs".

M. Sevan a inspecté divers projets au Kurdistan, dont un hôpital, un centre médical, une centrale thermique et une station de traitement des eaux usées, construits dans le cadre du programme "pétrole contre nourriture", a ajouté M. Jarrar.

Selon lui, M. Sevan poursuivra ses entretiens à Bagdad jusqu'à son départ au cours de la première semaine de février.

Il a entamé à la mi-janvier une mission en Irak, destinée à discuter "des moyens d'améliorer les performances du programme concernant l'acheminement des produits" alimentaires et pharmaceutiques dans ce pays.

Il avait affirmé le 8 janvier, dans une lettre adressée à la commission du Conseil de sécurité supervisant le programme, être "très inquiet de l'augmentation sans précédent du nombre de contrats bloqués".

Selon lui, 1.854 contrats représentant 4,9 milliards de dollars, dont 4,25 milliards de dollars d'approvisionnement humanitaire et 676 millions de dollars de matériel pour l'exploitation pétrolière, sont actuellement bloqués par le comité des sanctions de l'ONU.

Le programme humanitaire a été mis en place en décembre 1996 pour réduire l'impact des sanctions imposées à l'Irak à la suite de l'invasion du Koweït en

HADEP: We are not orchestrating a Kurdish education campaign

Turkish Daily News January 26, 2002

The pro-Kurdish People's Democracy Party (HADEP) has said that it did not orchestrate the campaign demanding Kurdish language education at universities, which led to scores of detentions all over the country.

"We are not organizing the demands (for education in the mother tongue). We are not behind that," Anatolia news agency quoted HADEP Deputy Chairman Ahmet Turk as saying in speech to party-supporters in the mainly-Kurdish southeastern city of Diyarbakir. "But we are supporting it on the basis of thought. We will resolve this in the unity of Turkey," said Turk. Anatolia said the police urged the crowd of HADEP supporters to disperse after Turk's statement. But a brief scuffle erupted and police took some protestors into custody.

There were similar protests in the southeastern cities of Gaziantep and Siirt, where at least 50 people were detained, including a number of local HADEP officials there.

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Insurgents want Afghan model to oust Saddam

The Washington Times By David R. Sands January 30, 2002

The leading opposition group to Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein said yesterday it believes a funding dispute with the U.S. government can be resolved quickly, but the group remains at odds with the Bush administration over its bid to take the fight against Saddam inside Iraq.

Citing accounting and management shortfalls, the State Department earlier this month suspended all funding for the Iraqi National Congress. INC officials complained that the suspension was premature and reflected U.S. unease about the larger question of what to do about Saddam. "We have taken all the steps the State Department has recommended, but we do think it is unfair to use accounting problems to deal with issues of a political nature," said INC co-founder Ahmad Chalabi. Mr. Chalabi and a group of INC officials meet today and tomorrow with senior State Department officials to discuss the funding issues and the future of U.S. Iraq policy.

Saddam's regime surged toward the top of the Bush administration foreign-policy agenda after the September 11 terrorist attacks. With the war in Afghanistan winding down, the administration has been divided over whether to make Baghdad the next front in the global war on terrorism.

The United States repeatedly has said it supports the overthrow of Saddam, but both the Clinton and Bush administrations have harbored doubts that the INC, an umbrella group with a history of internal feuding, can do the job. The INC has yet to spend the bulk of \$97 million approved by Congress in 1998. A new \$25 million assistance package is snagged in a dispute over INC plans to use \$17 million of the new grant on operations inside Iraq, working from bases in a U.S.-protected "no-fly zone" in the country's north.

INC Chairman Latif Rashid told a gathering at the American Enterprise Institute yesterday that operating only outside Iraq would be "suicidal" to his group's credibility.

"We cannot serve our people if we just consider ourselves a PR company," he said.

INC officials said the stunning success of the U.S.-led military campaign in Afghanistan could be a model for action against Saddam, who they claim has only a tenuous control over the country's armed forces and faces extensive opposition both in the country's north and south.

"What was done in Afghanistan could be done much more easily in Iraq," said Sharif Ali bin Hussein, head of the Constitutional Monarchist Movement of Iraq and the INC's official spokesman. "It's time to move on to phase two."

Baghdad has been unusually active on the diplomatic front in recent days, reaching out to Russia, China, the European Union and even longtime regional rival Iran. Diplomats say Saddam is seeking to increase international momentum to ease U.S.-backed economic sanctions and to forestall any U.S. military move.

The Iraqi government yesterday said it had invited a U.N. human rights official to the country next month, the first such visit in a decade. Mr. Hussein, the INC spokesman, dismissed Baghdad's apparent effort to mend fences with Iran, which hosts large numbers of Iraqi refugees and has provided a base for opposition groups in the past.

"Our relations with Iran remain excellent," said Mr. Hussein. "I think that's a better indicator of sentiment in Tehran."

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Baghdad Goes On Diplomatic Offensive Amid U.S. Warnings About Arms Monitors

Radio Free Europe By Charles Recknagel January 30, 2002

Iraq has made a new offer to Kuwait to resolve outstanding issues from the Gulf War. Many analysts see the initiative as yet another phase in Baghdad's continuing drive to build Arab public opinion against United Nations sanctions. Prague, 30 January 2002 (RFE/RL) -- As Washington threatens to punish Iraq if it does not readmit weapons inspectors, Baghdad has responded by launching a diplomatic offensive to build regional popular support against the UN sanctions regime.

The offensive has multiple fronts and is aimed at several different audiences.

First, and closest to home, Baghdad has made new overtures to Kuwait to resolve outstanding differences left over from Iraq's 1990 occupation of the emirate and the ensuing Gulf War.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein said over the weekend that he invites Kuwaiti officials to make surprise visits to Iraq's jails and even palaces to look for prisoners of war that Kuwait says are still being held by Baghdad. Kuwait says Iraq is keeping more than 600 people, 90 percent of them Kuwaiti, who were abducted when Iraqi troops were forced out of the emirate by a U.S.-led international coalition in 1991.

Iraqi state television quoted Saddam as saying, "The Kuwaitis and the Saudis [can] make a surprise visit to Baghdad...and say, 'We have specified places according to information from American intelligence...that we would like to see.'" At the same time, Iraq said it would allow a UN human rights investigator, Andreas Mavrommatis of Cyprus, to visit for the first time in a decade.

Analysts say the invitation to Kuwait aims to convince public opinion in the Gulf that Baghdad is doing all it can to improve relations with Kuwait and Saudi Arabia -- the two states in the region that most support keeping UN sanctions in place. The initiative comes as Baghdad in recent years has re-established diplomatic and trade ties with four other Arab Gulf states -- Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. Qatar, in particular, has increasingly called for an international dialogue with Iraq aimed at lifting the sanctions.

So far, Iraq's offer has received little response from Kuwait City or Riyadh, both of which have no diplomatic relations with Baghdad. Those two states have previously said that before sanctions can be removed, Saddam must reassure his neighbors about their security and address the issue of the missing Kuwaitis. They also have said Baghdad must allow UN weapons inspectors to return and verify Iraq has no more weapons of mass destruction.

Qinan Al-Gandi, chief editor of the Saudi daily "Al-Watan," told Radio Free Iraq correspondent Sami Shoresheh recently that he sees little prospect that Kuwaiti and Saudi officials will view Iraq's new initiative as being in good faith. Instead, he says, both governments are likely to view the overture as being motivated more by Baghdad's own desire to build Arab popular support against any new U.S. military strikes than as a genuine response to their concerns.

"[Baghdad's motivation] is a problem because this matter appears to be intended to avoid a U.S. strike, and that raises the mistrust felt by the Gulf states toward Iraq. In fact, this matter makes the Gulf states believe that the Iraqi regime just wants to solve the problem temporarily and, when the storm passes, it will return to its old positions and the old problems." Al-Gandi also said Kuwait does not trust Baghdad sufficiently to try to solve the missing-persons issue bilaterally. Instead, Kuwaiti officials want the dispute solved in the UN Security Council. "I think the demand of the Kuwaitis is just and right, because the Kuwaitis have no trust in the good intentions of the Iraqi regime toward

solving this problem (bilaterally). There is a long experience with Iraq on this issue. Therefore, the Kuwaitis want this problem to be solved in the Security Council and not elsewhere."

Still, the Saudi and Kuwaiti reluctance to accept Baghdad's offer is unlikely to derail Iraq's new diplomatic offensive. Analysts believe the offer is part of a new sanctions initiative that the secretary-general of the Arab League, Amr Mussa, received from Saddam while visiting Baghdad 10 days ago. Mussa, who has not divulged details of the initiative, has said he will convey it to Arab leaders and the UN. Arab leaders are due to meet in Beirut for a two-day annual Arab League summit beginning on 25 March.

Simultaneously with its offer to Kuwait, Baghdad has launched a new initiative to improve ties with Iran. There, too, one of the outstanding issues between the two sides -- who fought an eight-year war that ended in 1988 -- is prisoners of war (POWs).

Iraq's Foreign Minister Naji Sabri visited Tehran over the weekend to meet with Iranian President Mohammad Khatami and other top officials. After the meetings, Tehran and Baghdad vowed to ease tensions and to try to resolve all outstanding humanitarian issues between them. And Sabri said Iran would resume direct flights to Baghdad after a break of more than 20 years.

Sabri's visit comes on the heels of Iran's recent release of 697 Iraq soldiers and Iraq's release of 50 Iranian prisoners. Iraq's release of the Iranians surprised many observers because Baghdad had said for years that it held just one remaining Iranian POW, a pilot, whom it said it was keeping as evidence of Iraq's claim that Tehran began their war. Tehran says Iraq still holds 2,806 of its prisoners, while Baghdad says Iran still holds several tens of thousands of its citizens.

Analysts say Iraq's freeing of the 50 Iranians may be partly intended to reinforce any popular perception in the Gulf area that Baghdad is now serious about resolving tensions with its neighbors. That, in turn, would help build sentiment in the Arab world and elsewhere that it is Gulf governments, particularly Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, that are responsible for the Iraq crisis -- not Baghdad.

Such popular sentiment has already seen numerous organizations -- and some governments -- ignore previous UN restrictions on flying to Iraq. The flights, beginning two years ago, have challenged the UN's ability to monitor Iraqi imports. Washington and London also are concerned by large-scale regional smuggling of Iraqi oil, which provides Baghdad with substantial revenue outside of the UN's supervision.

Both of those problems have helped fuel the U.S. and British "smart sanctions" proposal, which is currently on hold at the UN. Discussion of smart sanctions was postponed until this summer after the U.S. and Russia -- which opposes the proposal -- agreed last year to conclude talks on any changes to the sanctions regime by 1 June.

The UN placed sanctions on Iraq following Baghdad's occupation of Kuwait in 1990, with their lifting tied to Baghdad's proving it has no more weapons of mass destruction. The sanctions regime is designed to prevent the Iraqi government from procuring items of military use but allows it to use its oil revenues to purchase humanitarian goods.

As Baghdad launches its latest diplomatic offensive, tensions between Baghdad and Washington have escalated in recent weeks. U.S. warplanes struck Iraqi air defenses three times last week in response to challenges to no-fly-zone patrols -- resuming a pattern of tit-for-tat attacks that had slacked off in recent months.

U.S. President George W. Bush has warned Baghdad it will face consequences if UN inspectors -- who left Iraq three years ago -- are not allowed to return. The U.S. president described Iraq -- along with Iran and North Korea -- as an "axis of evil" in his State of the Union speech yesterday. Such warnings have triggered U.S. press speculation that Washington could next target Iraq in its war on terrorism, though U.S. officials have not said publicly they will do so.

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The Islamist Threat in Iraqi Kurdistan

by Michael Rubin

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Middle East Intelligence Bulletin



On September 11, 2001, the world expressed shock as Al-Qa'ida terrorists hijacked four airliners, toppled the World Trade Center, and heavily damaged the Pentagon. This dramatic display of Al-Qa'ida's global reach has dominated international media attention, virtually to the exclusion of all other international news. However, the United States was not the only country to be targeted by Islamist terrorists in September. Shortly after the tragic events of September 11, a militant Islamist group calling itself *Jund al-Islam* (The Army of Islam), erupted onto the scene in northern Iraq, establishing itself on the strategic Shinirwe Mountain overlooking the town of Halabja.¹ In its inaugural address, the group declared its intention to "terrorize" enemies of Allah and "undertake jihad in this region."² Iraqi Kurdistan is naturally an attractive target for Al-Qa'ida, which has sought to develop havens in inaccessible or politically unstable areas. Prior to his relocation to Afghanistan, Osama bin Laden called Sudan home from 1991-1996. Reports also indicate that Al-Qa'ida-related groups maintained camps in Somalia.³ Simply put, Al-Qa'ida has a track record not only of establishing global reach, but also of seeking to diversify geographically its assets. Like much of Afghanistan, northern Iraq is mountainous and inaccessible. The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which is waging a violent separatist campaign against Turkey, has often taken refuge in the region's mountains and caves to hide from both Turkish and Iraqi Kurdish militaries. Saudi money and Iranian arms flow into the region across porous borders. As a captured *Jund al-Islam* internal leaflet noted, "there are a number of reasons for initiating jihad within Kurdistan's borders. The geographic location, with its mountainous terrain, is suitable and has strategic value . . ."⁴ Iraqi Kurdistan is also a tempting political target for Islamist destabilization because of its relatively secular and democratic administration. Indeed, the Islamist destabilization campaign in northern Iraq began in earnest on September 23, when members of *Jund al-Islam* massacred and mutilated the bodies of 43 Kurdish fighters belonging to the secular, pro-Western Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), which administers the province of Sulaymaniyah, as well as portions of the neighboring Irbil and Kirkuk provinces. Local Iraqis interpreted the attack as not only a direct challenge to the PUK, but also to the idea of a secular, moderately democratic entity in the Middle East. An additional factor making Iraqi Kurdistan ripe for penetration by Al-Qa'ida is Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, who has not hesitated to work with Islamist groups in order to weaken domestic (and, perhaps, international) opponents.⁵

A brief history of Islamism in Iraqi Kurdistan

Islamism in northern Iraq is not new, though it has never had strong regional appeal. As PUK President Jalal Talabani observed in a May 2001 interview, "the cultural heritage of Iraq includes traditions that do not coincide with the program of the Islamist movements . . . [such as] a tradition of more equality between men and women than they accept."⁶ Following the 1991 Kurdish uprising and the imposition of the 'safe haven' in northern Iraq, numerous political parties participated in elections for a regional parliament. Masoud Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) won 46% of the vote and the PUK won 45%, while the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan (IMK) received just 6%. Nevertheless, the Islamic movement, which has undergone numerous schisms and transformations, remains locally significant along the Iranian border, especially in the town of Halabja (better known as the site of the 1988 Iraqi chemical weapons attack which killed an estimated 5,000 civilians). In the aftermath of the 1994-1996 PUK-KDP civil war, the Kurdish parties divided the safe haven into two distinct sectors. The KDP controlled the northern and western portions (including the entire length of the Turkish-Iraqi frontier) while the PUK controlled the south and east. The PUK, as part of its coalition agreement with the IMK, ceded to the Islamist group territory between Halabja, Tawella, and Panjwin near the Iranian border, inward several dozen kilometers to the town of Said Sadiq. Driving from PUK-administered regions into IMK territory was like entering the Taliban's Afghanistan. White flags fluttered over checkpoints, as young men with Taliban-style beards, brandishing AK-47s, interrogated all but official cars. In 1999, an international aid organization's car was fired on after being waived through an Islamist checkpoint on the road to Tawella. The problem? A foreign woman did not have her head covered. On Fridays at noon, towns would be deserted as IMK militants enforced mosque attendance for locals. Throughout the safe haven, Saudi-financed mosques (identified as such with logos and attribution on their walls) preached

extreme Salafiyah Islam. A new mosque in rebuilt Halabja dominates the local skyline, while a huge multi-story mosque visible for miles around is nearing completion in Irbil. The IMK is responsible for several new mosques in other towns and villages as well. While the PUK and KDP have not operated offices in each other's territory for five years, the IMK maintained offices (often resembling fortified compounds) throughout the safe haven. The IMK has not been the sole representative of Islamists in Iraqi Kurdistan, though. The Kurdistan Islamic Union professes non-violence, and also supports the Islamic Kurdish League, which presents itself as a non-violent social service organization.⁷ While the Islamic Kurdish League generally maintains a positive local image, some senior politicians warn that the group could be the "Hamass of Kurdistan," meaning that the group is slowly expanding its influence among the poor and dispossessed, but could easily turn violent once it feels its base is large enough. Both the IMK and the Kurdistan Islamic Union maintain television stations. The groups - especially the Islamic Union - have a wide appeal not for ideological or religious reasons, but rather as a protest vote. While the Iraqi Kurdish regional government held contested municipal elections last year, every November, there are closely-watched secondary school and university student elections organized by political party. Many of my students said they considered voting for the Islamists out of frustration at the dominance of their local party. Many who are not particularly religious respect the Islamists for transcending the PUK-KDP divide. In November 1999, the Islamists reportedly won close to 40% of the vote at Dahuk University, a sign which local residents said was a wake-up call to the KDP, indicating that it needed to

become more responsive to the public. In November 2001, the Islamist parties managed to win just 11% of the vote in Sulaymaniyah, though many students complain that the PUK gerrymanders classes (concentrating Islamists in a single class so as to minimize their votes), and that the KDP threatens students and their families with redistribution (denying jobs, graduate school admittance, etc.).

The Islamist Wake-up Call

In October 2000, heavy fighting erupted between the PUK and PKK guerillas in the Qandil range. PUK casualties - announced each evening on local television - mounted into the hundreds; in Darbandikhan, a large town in the Kirkuk governorate, locals set up a special pavilion to handle funerals. The PKK remains extremely unpopular in Iraqi Kurdistan (though, ironically, the PKK satellite television, Med-TV, remains popular because of its slick production quality), but both the KDP and PUK have had to defend against PKK guerilla activity. While Syria once supported the group (until Turkey's 1998 mobilization convinced Damascus to end its sponsorship of the group), now Iran provides the PKK with logistical and material support. While entrenched in Qandil, the PKK re-supplied via Iran.

Throughout the autumn of 2000 and the winter of 2001, Iran used the PKK as a pawn against the PUK in order to split PUK resources and extend Islamist influence in northern Iraq. A senior PUK politician leaked to me at a January 5, 2001 meeting that, while the PUK was active in Qandil, the Iranians had facilitated the transfer of members of the militant Islamist and anti-Turkish Kaplanist movement to a base inside IMK-held territory near Halabja. At the same time, rumors swept Sulaymaniyah that the IMK was taking advantage of the situation in Qandil to demand extension of their territory by approximately 30 kilometers from Said Sadiq to Arbat, quite close to the PUK "capital" of Sulaymaniyah. The secular model of government established by the KDP and PUK in northern Iraq is a direct threat to Iran's governing philosophy of *vilayat-i faqih* (guardianship of the jurist). The PUK's developing relations with Turkey, especially after the January 2001, accession of Barham Salih as PUK Prime Minister, accentuate the challenge that the secular PUK by example poses to the Islamic Republic. In an October 2001 policy forum at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Salih stressed that secular Turkish democracy was the model not only for Iraqi Kurdistan, but also for the future of Iraq itself.

Discord in the Islamist Camp

Several competing factions of the IMK (later renamed the Islamic Unity Movement in 2000) are worthy of mention. *Hamas* - Originating in Garmian (such as the towns of Kifri, Kalar, Darbandikhan, and Chamcharnal), the fanatical members of Hamas uphold a Salafite interpretation of Islam in which the Quran and the hadith are interpreted literally. They clashed violently with the PUK in 1993 and 1994, after which they settled in and around the town of Kirmal. The movement split from the IMK in 1997, following the Islamic Movement's agreement to participate in the PUK government (Hamas maintains that any cooperation with secular parties is contrary to Islam). The group is led by Umar Abdul Karim Abdul Aziz (Umar Barzani). Umar trained and fought in Afghanistan, along with Makuwan Qazi Ramadan (Makuwan Muryasi) and Arsanah Ahmad Marif. In July 2001, Hamas united with Tawhid under the new name, Tawhid Islamic Front. Tawhid, led by Mullah Abdul Ghani Bazani, was formed out of the mosques in Irbil, though the KDP banned it. Because the IMK leadership did not support Tawhid against the KDP, in 2000 a shadowy group formed within Tawhid named the Tawhid Islamic Group. This group initiated a terror campaign of throwing acid at unveiled women. When the KDP cracked down on the group, many relocated to Halabja, and have also operated a base in Hajji Umrani. The relationship between Tawhid and Hamas developed in part out of a mutual dislike of Mullah Abdul Aziz' Islamic Unity Movement (the successor to the IMK). Two members of Tawhid - Mullah Abu Bakr Hawleri and 'Abu Qatada' - reportedly traveled to Afghanistan to cement relations with bin Ladin. On August 8, Abu Qatada gave a dinner reception in which he regaled his guests with stories about bin Ladin. In July 2001, Tawhid sent several other members to Afghanistan for training in Al-Qa'ida camps. These include: Muhammad Salih Umar, Swara Karim, Wahid Muhammad Mahmud, Usma Ahmad Bazani, and Hamin Salim Bani Shari. Following the merger with Hamas, Mullah Abu Bakr Hawleri became leader with the Hamas' Umar Bazani as his deputy. The Tawhid precipitated the latest clash between the secular Kurdish parties and the Islamists when, on February 19, 2001, gunmen in Irbil assassinated Fransu Hariri, the KDP majority leader in the Kurdistan Regional Government's parliament and the government's highest-ranking Christian. KDP officials traced the license plate of the get-away car to PUK territory, who traced the vehicle to Halabja. PUK security forces arrested one suspect who provided the names of five others. The Tawhid reportedly targeted the KDP in revenge for an incident in the summer of 2000 when KDP peshmurga near Hajji Umrani opened fire on Tawhid militants infiltrating into Iraq from Iran (The KDP claimed they thought the infiltrators were PKK). Twenty Tawhid fighters died. However, many locals in Irbil suspect that Hariri's religion was a factor in his assassination. The IMK in late March 2001 refused to transfer custody of the suspects to the KDP, at which point both the PUK and KDP closed down IMK offices. However, these offices reopened during the second week in April. Members of the (non-violent) Islamic Union in Irbil claimed that the KDP arrested "more than 2,000" Islamists (and joked that the price of razors had skyrocketed as many sought to shave their beards), though the real total is likely significantly lower. The Second Soran Unit This group, with between 350-400 men under arms, was the largest single military unit within the IMK (and its successor, the Islamic Unity Movement). Approximately 50-60 Arabs also fight with the group, many of whom trained in Afghanistan. The Second Soran Unit is extremely well-armed, with Daushkas (surface-to-surface rockets), 106mm artillery, and many other heavy weapons. They remain based in the vicinity of Biyara, near the Iranian border at Tawella. The leader of the unit is Asad Muhammad Hasan (Aso Hawleri), a member of the IMK since 1991, and a member of its central council since 1997. While ideologically and violently opposed to the PUK (and KDP), the unit also frequently clashed with the IMK leadership. In 1998, the Second Soran Unit created a political front group called the Central Islamic Faction led by Aso Hawleri, several Arabs, and a Turkoman named Abu Khubayy Barachak (now imprisoned by the KDP on terrorism charges). After the split in the IMK and Islamic Unity Movement, the Second Soran Unit initially became independent, but eventually joined the Tawhid Islamic Front. The Islamic Unity Movement In August 2000, Mullah Abdul Aziz's IMK merged with another group led by Mullah Sidiq, and was renamed the Islamic Unity Movement. Personal differences within the Islamic Unity Movement led Mullah 'Ali Bapir to withdraw his followers and create an independent movement named the Islamic League (not to be confused with the Islamic Kurdish League). On October 22, 2000, two days before my visit to the town, a full-fledged gun battle erupted in Halabja between rival Islamist factions. Additionally, factional rivalries continued to exist within the Islamic Unity Movement. Iranian militants and Salafi centers in the Persian Gulf, as well as devotees of Al-Qa'ida were able to exploit the divisions to increase their own influence within the movements.

The Rise of Jund al-Islam

On September 1, 2001, the Second Soran Unit and the Tawhid Islamic Front merged to form Jund al-Islam. According to a report in *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, three Afghan-trained Arabs witnessed the agreement: Abu Abdul Rahman, who serves as bin Ladin's representative for the supervision of unity and media in Kurdistan; Abu Wa'il, an expert and instructor in sabotage; and Abu Darda'a, an instructor in terrorism and assassination. Upon the signing, the three transferred to Jund al-Islam a \$300,000 grant supplied by bin Laden. In total, the report claimed that 60 of the approximately 400 fighters in Jund al-Islam received training in Afghanistan.⁸ Throughout the fighting, Jund al-Islam commanders reportedly communicated via satellite phone with Islamic militants based in Jordan.⁹ Saddam Hussein's government may also be involved - a group of Sunni Arabs operating with the Jund al-Islam hail from Mosul, a large city under Saddam's control.¹⁰ Intelligence sources on the ground in northern Iraq indicated that the infiltrators initially had three to four Katyusha rockets, a number of 106mm shells, anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns, sniper-rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, BKC machine guns, and mortars.¹¹ Some reports counted up to 400 "Afghan Arab" mercenaries, though later reports spoke of perhaps 600 fighters, divided into six battalions: Nasr, Fat'h, Badr, Quds, Fida'iyyun, and Salahuddin.¹² Thirty-four Jund al-Islam members were Iraqi Kurds who received training in Afghan camps.¹³ The Jund al-Islam itself reportedly claimed that its fighters have trained for "four years in many types of explosives, and possessed all kinds of heavy weapons."¹⁴ Several Turkish officials dismissed PUK claims that the Jund al-Islam was linked to Al-Qa'ida and accused the Iraqi Kurds of trying to latch onto anti-bin Laden fever to extract U.S. military support.¹⁵ However, before the eruption of fighting brought the Iraqi Kurds into the limelight (at least in US policy circles), political independent residents had e-mailed reports about "men in black" infiltrating into the region, speaking Arabic and languages other than Kurdish.

The Organization of the Jund al-Islam

The leader of Jund al-Islam is Abdullah al-Shafi'i (Mullah Wurja Hawleri). While some reports identify Shafi'i as an ethnic Arab from Iran, he is apparently an Iraqi Kurd from the village of Gwer near Irbil. Shafi'i fled to Afghanistan in 1993, but has since returned to Iraqi Kurdistan at least three times. He is also reported to have fought in Chechnya.¹⁶ Aso Hawleri, formerly the head of the Second Soran Unit, serves as Shafi'i's deputy. Important governing agencies in the Jund al-Islam include the *Shari'a Board*, comprised of a court, a committee to investigate legal questions and issue decrees, a committee for the promotion of virtue and the prevention of vice, and a committee to supervise the imposition of Islamic law; the *Mujahidin Military Leadership Council*, which supervises military matters; the *Media Council*, which supervises the group's media outreach - including a Jund al-Islam radio station which began operating from Darga Shekhan - and issues circulars; and a public relations department, which handles the group's foreign relations and grass roots organization. The Jund al-Islam is based in Biyara, a few kilometers from the Iranian border. After its establishment, the group also seized the border town of Tawella, as well as the villages of Mula Chinara, Khak Kelan, Kharpan, Zardalaha, Hanadi, Dargashikhan, Balkha, Mishia, and Palyanaw.¹⁷ The group issued a Taliban-like proclamation for areas under its control, containing the following imperatives:

- A state of holy war against "the blasphemers and the secularists"
- The implementation of God's will
- The prohibition of any contact with secular parties
- The establishment of an Islamic administration conforming to the "Islamic Sunni religion."
- The merger of all Islamic parties under the Jund's control
- That no rule except "the Judgments of Islam" be accepted.¹⁸

In order to underscore their point, the Jund al-Islam immediately undertook a campaign to shock and destabilize. Just as the Taliban had destroyed the pre-Islamic Buddha statues in Bamian, the Jund al-Islam destroyed two Kaka'i shrines (the Kaka'i are a local sect heavily influenced by pre-Islamic practices).¹⁹ Jund al-Islam supporters also assassinated a high-ranking Kurdish official and a moderate Muslim scholar. Local security sources claimed to have uncovered plots to carry out several other assassinations and conduct a wave of bombings, beginning in Sulaymaniyah and spreading across Iraqi Kurdistan. After the massacre of its troops, the PUK forcefully responded. PUK prime minister Barham Salih declared in a September interview with MEI that "Iraqi Kurdistan cannot be used as a terrorist haven." On October 3, the PUK asked the Kurdistan Islamic Group led by Ali Bapir to evacuate Ahmadawa and Khurmal so that the PUK could have a freer hand to more directly counter Jund

al-Islam.20 (Ali Bapir separated his faction from Mulla Ali Abdulaziz in June 2001 after internal quarrelling. Nine other faction leaders also split from Mullah 'Ali, but remained independent until September 13, when they rejoined under the banner of Ali Bapir).21 As the PUK entered Halabja, the Jund al-Islam shelled them from the heights of Shinerwe mountain. The PUK surrounded the Jund al-Islam positions and unleashed a heavy artillery barrage. Killed in the fighting on October 8 were Abu Abdul Rahman (an Arab from Syria and the personal emissary of bin Laden) and Abu Yassir, an Arab from Baghdad.22 The conflict continued into October, following several attempts at negotiation to co-opt the Jund al-Islam into Ali Bapir's Kurdistan Islamic Group. On October 23, Jund al-Islam militants took the town of Khurmal, 15 kilometers from Halabja, and expelled all PUK supporters from their homes. The following week, the militants established checkpoints along main road in order to collect taxes and customs fees from transiting vehicles.23 In early November, the PUK launched a renewed attack on Jund al-Islam positions, reclaiming some territory and causing heavy casualties on both sides. However, PUK pushmurga remained unable to uproot the Islamists. Negotiations resumed. On December 10, the KDP daily *Hawlati* reported that Mulla Krekar and Abdulrahman Abdulrahman, leaders of the IMK, would merge with Jund al-Islam to form a new Islamist movement, named "Supporters of Islam in Kurdistan."24 As with the previous conflicts in northern Iraq with the PKK, neither the PUK nor the KDP are capable of defeating an enemy receiving significant external material and logistical support. As with the PKK, it appears that the PUK will be forced to negotiate an unpleasant truce for the time being. Implications of the Jund al-Islam's rise

The evidence appears overwhelming that armed Islamist groups sought to establish a safe-haven within mountainous northern Iraq. Private or public money from Saudi Arabia, as well as from Al-Qa'ida, financed the new group. Clearly, bin Laden and his deputies saw a base in Iraqi Kurdistan as a useful operating point to harm both United States security interests as well as to destabilize Turkey. Just as troubling is the role of Iran in facilitating the rise of the Jund al-Islam. The only international border into PUK and IMK-administered territory is that of Iran. Following the October 4 battle for Tawella, Shawkat Hajji Mushir, a local PUK commander, commented that "if the PUK gets any closer [to the border], PUK bullets and rockets would hit Iranian positions."25 While smuggling does take place across the border, Iranian guard posts and small forts are visible throughout and road crossings are few. Moreover, the Toyota land cruisers used by Jund al-Islam could not have been smuggled into the area without the tacit approval of the Iranian government and security apparatus. The apparent re-supply of Jund al-Islam through Iranian territory is further evidence of Tehran's complicity.26 While Iran is currently engaged in a public relations campaign to break her international isolation and woo Western investment, it is unlikely to shed its reputation as a state sponsor of terrorism until it ends its involvement with Jund al-Islami.

Notes

- 1 David Nissman, "Men in Black," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Iraq Report*, 21 September 2001.
- 2 Jund al-Islam 'Clarification' No. 1, transferred to me by sources in northern Iraq.
- 3 Bob Drogin and Paul Watson, "Response to Terror: The Investigation," *The Los Angeles Times*, 9 December 2001.
- 4 "Jund al-Islam Program and Internal By-Laws," copies of which fell into PUK hands during the September fighting. The document adds, "Another reason is that this nation is descended from Salahuddin Ayyubi (May Allah Bless Him) who historically achieved victory for Islam and Muslims [against the Crusaders]."
- 5 For example, note the activity of "Saddam's Fidayin," as described in: "Legitimate Justification," *The Wall Street Journal Europe*, 18 December 2001.
- 6 Jalal Talabani: 'No Grounds for a Relationship with Baghdad,'" *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter 2002.
- 7 Both organizations maintain web pages at www.kurdin.org and www.ite.mh.se/~abdsu97/ikl, respectively.
- 8 Report by Abbas al-Badri, *Al-Sharq al-Awsat* (London), 28 September 2001.
- 9 Ismail Zayir in *Al-Hayat* (London), 5 October 2001, as cited in: R.M. Ahmad, "Afghan Taliban and Qaida did train Jund al-Islam," *Kurdishmedia.com*, 5 October 2001.
- 10 Barham Salih, "Iraq and Counterterrorism: The Role of the Kurdistan Regional Government," *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policywatch* No. 575, 18 October 2001.
- 11 Personal sources inside northern Iraq.
- 12 Personal sources inside northern Iraq. See also William Safire, "Bite the Bullet and Target Iraq," *The Guardian* (London), 25 September 2001.
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The Fears of a Muslim Ally

Turkey doesn't want to prove its worth by fighting a war with neighboring Iraq

NEWSWEEK January 28, 2002 By Fareed Zakaria

When visiting Turkey last week, I happened to read *Private View*, a smart Istanbul quarterly of mostly political and economic analysis. I was not prepared for the essay lamenting Turkey's backwardness in ... wine drinking. "With a yearly consumption rate of 1 liter per person," it scolds, "Turkey is lagging way behind its Western counterparts." But how to reconcile Islam with wine? Well, the author concludes that "the Turks' persistence to enjoy this drink despite all the obvious religious prohibitions must be due to their determination to fully exploit the delights of this world."

Someone forgot to tell these guys about the clash of civilizations.

TURKEY SHATTERS THE conventional image of Islam. It is 99 percent Muslim and yet resolutely secular, democratic and pro-Western. And these are not attitudes held only in Istanbul salons. Seventy-five percent of the country is in favor of joining the European Union. Popular attitudes are generally pro-American. Since September 11 we've all heard dozens of instant experts explain that in Islam, religion and politics can never be separated. Well, Turkey's done it for seven decades.

But despite September 11, the Turkish establishment is currently obsessed about something else: Europe. Over the past three years, the European Union has made some encouraging noises about Turkey's potential to become a member. It has caused a quiet revolution in the country. The government—despite being a weak multiparty coalition—has been steadily pursuing significant economic and political reforms for a year. In October 2001, the Turkish Parliament passed 34 of 37 proposed amendments to the 1982 Constitution to bring it more in line with European Union standards. (Interestingly, the Islamic parties are now in favor of EU membership because they realize that their freedom of expression would be better guaranteed by European courts than Turkish generals.) Even on the decades-long impasse over Cyprus, Ankara is inching toward a negotiated solution. "For Turkey, EU membership would be the culmination of Atatürk's dream: to catch up with civilization," said Sukrit Elektar, one of Ankara's veteran diplomats. The road to the West has cleared up since September 11. Now Turkey is important as a modern Muslim country, but more crucially because of its geopolitical location and heft—a major power straddling Europe, the Middle East and Asia, with easy access to all the major oil lands. "It's as if a magic wand has tapped Turkey," says former foreign minister Emre Gonensay.

But its location has also produced its greatest headache: Iraq. "Every time we hear that Washington wants to intervene in Iraq, I want to say, think twice, think three times, and then think again," says Cevik Bir, former deputy chief of the armed forces. "If there is a war, it is impossible that Iraq will hold together." Turkey's nightmare is not that an invasion of Iraq will produce an independent Kurdish state on its southern border. "That's not an option," a senior source close to the military explained. The nightmare is that the Army would be forced to preclude that option by occupying northern Iraq. (With 12 percent of its population Kurdish and having battled a terrorist movement for decades, Turkey believes that Kurdish self-determination even across the border would mean the end of the nation's unitary existence.) There are already contingency plans for such an operation in Ankara. "If there is an American intervention," this source told me, "we would have to watch and see whether the Kurds began rising up in northern Iraq—and they likely will. We would be forced to make sure that once the war ends we are in a military position to affect the political settlement that follows. It's a last resort, but we have to be masters of our own fate."

Washington has told Ankara that it supports the principle that Iraq should remain one nation. Many Turkish generals don't believe it. They think that once the war begins, all bets are off. The Iraqi Kurds have been the chief opposition to Saddam Hussein for a decade. Were they to declare independence, the United States would not crush them. We're for self-determination, remember? As a result, Turkey wants assurances that no Afghan-style operation—bombing plus reliance on local forces—will be attempted. (In such a scenario, the Kurds would play the role of the Northern Alliance and thus would become the victors.) A senior military officer observed that if 500,000 American troops were required to evict Saddam from Kuwait, then surely the much larger task of occupying Iraq would require at least as many American troops. An American intervention in Iraq would hit Turkey hard economically—as it did during the Gulf War. It would also take the focus of the country away from economic and political modernization. Economic reforms, political reforms and human-rights issues would all take a back seat to the life-and-death problems of national sovereignty. "The Gulf War set us back for almost a decade," said General Bir.

"Now as we are moving forward, this would create new problems. We would become obsessed for years with all the security problems it would create."

There are good arguments for intervention in Iraq. If successful, a democratic or at least friendly Iraq would ease tensions in the region and might even transform its geopolitics. The status quo, with Saddam Hussein and his weapons intact, is not that stable anyway. But for Turkey the stakes are very high. For years it has dreamed that its key strategic location will bring it inexorably closer to the West. Now it has, but that same geography could thrust Turkey way off course. That's as close to Greek tragedy as geopolitics gets.

* * * * *

Turkey to buy 14 Sea Hawk helicopters from the US

Turkish Daily News January 22, 2002

Turkey agreed to buy 14 Sea Hawk naval helicopters, on loans granted by the U.S. Eximbank, during Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit's visit last week to Washington. Anatolia news agency said that the U.S. bank had decided to provide \$324 million in loans for Turkey's planned purchase, but the project needed a green light from U.S. Congress first.

NATO-members Turkey and the United States have close military cooperation and strategic defence ties. Ecevit, on his Washington trip, sought to ease his country's \$5.5 billion military debt to the United States. But both sides, most probably seeing possible challenges by anti-Turkish lobbies in the U.S. Congress, decided to leave the issue to the newly-formed joint economic committee that will work to boost Turkish-U.S. trade ties.

The U.S. loan promise for the helicopter project appear to be a gesture by the Washington administration who did not want to see Ecevit returning home empty-handed on the U.S.-Turkish defence cooperation. Anatolia said that President George W. Bush's administration was hopeful of winning Congress' backing on the funding and sale of the Sea Hawks to Turkey. The U.S.-based Sikorsky defense firm produces the helicopters. The U.S. Eximbank granted Turkey a \$1,3 billion loan some three years ago for the sale of 50 Black Hawk military and transport helicopters. Ankara has used up to \$1 billion of that loan, the rest of it could be used for the purchase of the Sea Hawk helicopters needed by the Naval Forces.

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Le Monde JEUDI 31 JANVIER 2002

VERBATIM

« Un axe du mal, armé pour menacer la paix du monde »

VOICI les principaux extraits du discours sur l'état de l'Union prononcé par George Bush devant le Congrès des Etats-Unis, mardi 29 janvier.

« Notre pays est en guerre, notre économie est en récession, et le monde civilisé affronte des dangers sans précédents. Pourtant, l'état de notre Union n'a jamais été aussi solide. (...) »

Nos découvertes en Afghanistan ont confirmé nos pires craintes et nous ont montré l'étendue de la tâche qui nous attend. (...) Nous avons découvert des plans de centrales nucléaires américaines et de réservoirs d'eau, des instructions détaillées pour la fabrication d'armes chimiques, des cartes de villes américaines et des descriptions complètes de monuments situés aux Etats-Unis et dans le monde.

Ce que nous avons découvert en Afghanistan confirme que, loin de s'achever là-bas, notre guerre contre le terrorisme ne fait que commencer. (...) Des milliers de dangereux assassins,

entraînés à tuer de toutes les manières, souvent soutenus par des régimes hors la loi, sont maintenant répartis dans le monde comme autant de bombes à retardement, prêtes à exploser sans prévenir. (...) Des dizaines de milliers de terroristes entraînés sont encore en liberté. Ces ennemis considèrent le monde entier comme un champ de bataille, et nous devons les poursuivre où qu'ils se trouvent. Tant que des camps d'entraînement fonctionnent, tant que des pays abritent des terroristes, la liberté est menacée. (...) Nous ne le tolérerons pas.

Notre pays poursuivra inébranlablement (...) deux objectifs. D'abord, nous fermerons les camps terroristes, nous déjouerons les plans terroristes et nous traînerons les terroristes devant la justice. Ensuite, nous devons empêcher les terroristes et les régimes qui cherchent des armes chimiques, biologiques ou nucléaires de menacer les Etats-Unis et le monde. (...) Des camps d'entraînement subsistent dans au moins une douzaine de pays. Un monde souterrain terroriste – qui comprend des groupes comme le Hamas, le Hez-

ollah, le Djihad islamique, Jaish-i-Mohammed – opère dans des jungles et des déserts éloignés et se cache au centre de grandes villes. (...) »

Certains gouvernements seront timides face à la terreur. Mais ne vous y trompez pas : s'ils n'agissent pas, l'Amérique agira. (...) La Corée du Nord s'arme de missiles et d'armes de destruction massive. (...) L'Irak recherche agressivement ces armes et exporte la terreur. (...) L'Irak continue d'afficher son hostilité de l'Amérique et à soutenir la terreur. (...) Des Etats comme ceux-là, et leurs alliés terroristes, constituent un axe du mal, armé pour menacer la paix du monde. En cherchant des armes de destruction massive, ces régimes (...) présentent un danger croissant. Ils peuvent fournir des armes aux terroristes. (...) Ils peuvent attaquer nos alliés ou tenter de faire chanter les Etats-Unis. Dans tous les cas, le prix de l'indifférence serait catastrophique.

(...) Pour faire vivre et étendre le meilleur de ce qui a émergé en Amérique, je vous invite à rejoindre le nouveau Corps de la liberté. »

ÉTATS-UNIS *Après l'Afghanistan, le président américain étend la bataille antiterroriste au reste du monde*

Bush déclare la guerre à « l'axe du mal »

Washington
de notre correspondant
Jean-Jacques Mével

La page de l'Afghanistan presque tournée, George W. Bush a décidé d'élargir sa bataille au reste du monde en identifiant les comparses du terrorisme international : ce sont la Corée du Nord, l'Iran et bien sûr l'Irak, trois parias reliés par « *un axe du mal* » que les États-Unis se donnent pour mission de démanteler.

A la tribune d'un Congrès acquis d'avance, les 50 minutes de discours du président américain ne se sont encombrées ni de diplomatie ni de sentiment. « *La nation est en guerre* », dit-il. La mobilisation emprunte aux mots de Franklin D. Roosevelt contre

« *les puissances de l'axe* » totalitaire. Et à ceux de Ronald Reagan face à « *l'empire du mal* » communiste.

Le fait que le nouvel ennemi ne soit ni aussi formidable ni même simplement soudé, n'ôte rien au poids de l'avertissement américain. Mardi soir, le président a justifié par avance de possibles attaques américaines contre trois États constitués – bien au-delà des réseaux terroristes enracinés dans des territoires de non-droit, comme en Afghanistan, en Somalie ou aux Philippines.

Cent quarante jours après la tuerie de Manhattan et du Pentagone, la « doctrine Bush » s'élargit. La Maison-Blanche bascule finalement du côté des « durs », ceux qui considèrent que l'élimination de Saddam Hussein, de ses armes nucléaires, biolo-

giques ou chimiques est une tâche aussi urgente que la liquidation d'Oussama ben Laden. Il s'agit de contrer un autre chantage à la terreur, potentiellement plus meurtrier encore. L'Irak, héritage mal ficelé de George le père, devient naturellement la priorité numéro un de George le fils : « *Ces régimes ont voulu se faire oublier depuis le 11 septembre*, dit-il. *Mais nous connaissons leur vraie nature.* »

La mystérieuse Corée du Nord, avec ses laboratoires nucléaires souterrains, ses missiles balistiques et son petit dictateur stalinien rentre logiquement dans le trio infernal. Plus étonnante est la présence de l'Iran, avec lequel les États-Unis avaient paru se dégeler à l'automne. Téhéran avait condamné sans attendre les attaques terroristes du 11 septembre. Washington avait

rendu la politesse en saluant le rôle « *constructif* » des Iraniens dans la gestation, à Bonn, de la nouvelle démocratie afghane.

Mais là encore, les faucons de l'équipe Bush et tout ce que l'Administration compte de soutiens à Israël semblent avoir repris le dessus. Dans la bouche du président, l'Iran n'est pas une dictature religieuse en bout de course, ou un partenaire en puissance, idéalement placé entre Bagdad et Kaboul. C'est un pays qui « *s'arme agressivement et qui exporte la terreur, pendant qu'une minorité réprime tout espoir de liberté dans le peuple iranien* ».

Un autre signal du raidissement à la Maison-Blanche est la volonté affichée d'agir vite – et si nécessaire seul. « *Cela se fera sans précipitation, mais le temps ne joue pas en notre fa-*



George W. Bush félicité par les membres de son gouvernement après son discours au Congrès. « *Nous sommes en guerre contre la terreur, cette guerre ne fait que commencer* », a notamment déclaré le président américain. (Photo Tim Sloan/AFP.)

veur, dit George W. Bush. *Je n'attendrai pas les bras croisés pendant que le danger se précise. Nous ne tolérerons pas que les États les plus dangereux de la planète menacent le monde des armes les plus destructrices (...) Nous sommes en guerre*

contre la terreur, cette guerre ne fait que commencer. »

En filigrane, les amis et les alliés liront que la puissance militaire des États-Unis pourrait une fois de plus se passer d'eux, comme ce fut le cas pour la campagne d'Afghanistan. « *Entendons-nous bien, avertit le président américain : certains gouvernements feront preuve de timidité. Mais s'ils refusent d'agir, nous Américains, nous passerons à l'acte.* » En clair, une seconde offensive américaine contre Saddam Hussein ne ressemblerait pas à celle de 1991. Elle se ferait sans la diplomatie internationale, ni les forces d'une coalition.

Pour autant, le président s'est gardé de préciser la nature d'une réplique américaine, ou de fixer des conditions et des ultima-

tums, ainsi qu'il l'avait fait contre le régime afghan des talibans dès le 20 septembre. Sous couvert d'anonymat, un haut responsable américain explique qu'il serait vain de chercher dans le discours de George W. Bush la carte précise de futures offensives. Les États-Unis, ajoute-t-il, disposent de toute une gamme de moyens qui ne sont pas nécessairement militaires.

« *L'axe du mal* » n'est pas non plus la seule menace qui pèse sur les États-Unis et contre leur territoire. Oussama ben Laden et ses émules courent toujours, George W. Bush a signalé mardi soir la découverte de plans de villes et de centrales nucléaires américaines, vestiges inquiétants retrouvés par la CIA en Afghanistan, dans la mémoire des ordinateurs d'Al Qaida. « *Des dizaines de milliers de tueurs, dit-il, hantent encore la planète comme autant de bombes à retardement.* »

L'Europe, exclue de la campagne d'Afghanistan à la symbolique exception de la Grande-Bretagne, a d'autres raisons de trouver peu rassurant le discours

de la Maison-Blanche. Pour ce qui y est énoncé, autant que pour ce qui est soigneusement omis. Devant le Congrès, George W. Bush a évité toute référence à l'attitude des États-Unis dans la crise israélo-palestinienne, un dossier qui fâche les Européens presque autant que les Arabes. Controverse plus épidermique, le sort des détenus européens de Guantanamo n'a été qu'un bref point d'ironie dans le discours de mardi soir.

Aux yeux des Américains, le discours de l'état de l'Union, temps fort de la démocratie américaine, illustre le paradoxe du mandat de George W. Bush : « *Un pays en guerre, une économie en récession (...) et un pays pourtant plus fort que jamais* », comme il le définit lui-même. Sur le front de la politique intérieure, l'exercice au Congrès était plus risqué, surtout au début d'une année électorale qui verra le renouvellement du tiers du Sénat et de la Chambre au grand complet. Les Démocrates n'ont pas ménagé leurs applaudissements au « Commandant-en-chef ». Mais dès hier ils lui ont fait savoir

que cette solidarité de temps de guerre ne fera taire ni les critiques sur sa gestion de l'économie ni les attaques suscitées par la troublante affaire Enron.

Accusés de chercher à se doter d'armes de destruction massive

L'Iran, l'Irak et la Corée du Nord rejettent les accusations

Les accusés répliquent. L'Iran, l'Irak et la Corée du Nord, qualifiés la veille par George Bush Jr d'États terroristes « *cherchant à se doter d'armes chimiques, biologiques et nucléaires* » et menaçant les États-Unis et le monde, ont vivement réagi hier aux propos du président américain.

« *Les accusations de « petit Bush » contre l'Irak sont sans fondement* », a déclaré l'un des hauts responsables irakiens, Salim al-Koubaisi, en prêtant au président américain l'intention de vouloir « *préparer l'opinion publique internationale à une nouvelle agression contre l'Irak* ». Depuis longtemps en tête de la liste noire de Washington pour son refus de laisser les

inspecteurs de l'ONU vérifier son désarmement, Bagdad a été proposé comme la prochaine cible, après l'Afghanistan, de la campagne contre le terrorisme international lancée par Bush Jr.

Bagdad estime que « les accusations du « petit Bush » contre l'Irak sont sans fondement »

L'Iran accuse aussi le président américain de visées hégémoniques. « *Il aurait été mieux avisé d'étayer ses accusations plutôt que de rabâcher de vieilles antennes et des affirmations non*

fondées », a estimé le ministre iranien des Affaires étrangères, Kamal Kharrazi.

Selon lui, George Bush cherche à détourner l'attention de l'opinion publique mondiale de la question du

M o y e n - Orient et à « *préparer son opinion intérieure à la poursuite de son soutien à l'oppression bru-*

taile de la nation palestinienne par Israël », a-t-il ajouté à la radio nationale.

Pour la Corée du Nord, les accusations de Bush relèvent aussi du « *sophisme* » visant à justifier la présence militaire

américaine en Corée du Sud et « *la poursuite de la politique d'agression* » à l'encontre du régime communiste de Pyongyang.

En Europe, les réactions aux propos du président américain ont été parfois divergentes.

Alors que le Quai d'Orsay soulignait qu'il n'est pas dans les habitudes de la France de qualifier de terroristes des États étrangers, le porte-parole de Tony Blair s'est félicité de la détermination affichée par Bush. Jugeant « *entièrement justifiées* » ses inquiétudes au sujet des agresseurs potentiels des États-Unis, le porte-parole a rappelé que « *la lutte contre le terrorisme ne s'arrêtait pas à l'Afghanistan* ».

Bush's 'Axis of Evil' Draws Fire

But Congress Backs Warning

By Brian Knowlton
International Herald Tribune

WASHINGTON — President George W. Bush's vow to turn the fight against terrorism next against "an axis of evil" formed by Iran, Iraq and North Korea drew strong political support at home Wednesday as a Senate leader predicted that Congress would support eventual military action, but it provoked angry rebuttals from the countries singled out.

White House officials, speaking a day after a somber, sometimes eloquent, and generally well-received State of the Union address by Mr. Bush, emphasized that there were no immediate plans for military action against the three countries, which the president singled out for seeking weapons of mass destruction.

The White House spokesman, Ari Fleischer, called the "axis of evil" phrase "more rhetorical than historical." It was not meant, he said, to link

these countries to the World War II alliance of Germany, Japan and Italy.

Still, the suggestion that either the suspect regimes or their weapons capabilities must be eliminated — and that diplomacy and economic sanctions might not do the job — brought fierce replies from the three.

Iran, Iraq and North Korea defiantly rejected Mr. Bush's language and his assertion that they posed a threat to Americans and others. Iraq suggested that the Bush remarks presaged a U.S. attack on Baghdad. Iran said they betrayed a desire for world dominance.

North Korea said it saw in them evidence of a "policy of aggression."

While Mr. Bush offered no blueprint for possible action against the three countries, the Senate majority leader, Tom Daschle, Democrat of South Dakota, appeared close to endorsing any moves the administration decided to make.

"If it takes preemptive strikes and preventive action" to prevent new attacks, he told ABC-TV, "I think Congress is prepared to support it."

Democrats in Congress have so far strongly supported the administration war on terrorism.

The "axis" comment came as Mr. Bush, in a 48-minute speech frequently interrupted by prolonged and mostly bipartisan applause on Tuesday night, sought to mobilize Americans to continue the fight — and to preserve a sense of national unity — that began with the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the United States.

Political scientists graded the speech as solid and infused



Win McNamee/Reuters

Mr. Bush warned of threats from the "world's most dangerous regimes."

with far greater confidence than Mr. Bush displayed in the early days of his presidency. Its language was "galvanizing," said the historian Doris Kearns Goodwin.

Mr. Bush sought to use the fear of continued terrorist threats to justify both his proposal to substantially boost military spending, by the largest amount in 20 years, and nearly to double spending on homeland defense.

"Thousands of dangerous killers, schooled in the methods of murder, often supported by outlaw regimes, are now spread throughout the world like ticking time bombs, set to go off without warning," the president said. His aides later said he referred to all those thought to have trained in Afghan terror camps.

"Our war on terror is only beginning," Mr. Bush warned the packed House of Representatives chamber where men-

bers of Congress were joined by cabinet members, military leaders and Supreme Court justices amid extraordinary security measures.

"We will win this war, we will protect our homeland, and we will revive our economy," he said, summarizing a sharply focused agenda.

In one of relatively few new initiatives, Mr. Bush called for a dramatic expansion of programs of voluntary national service, aiming to enlist hundreds of thousands of Americans. Some, Mr. Bush hoped, would be part of new Peace Corps programs intended to work in Muslim countries.

He also sought support for Republican proposals — accelerated tax cuts, additional spending on education, a prescription drug benefit for the elderly, and energy policies — but portrayed his entire agenda as vital to keeping the country strong and secure, and restoring its

economy, in a world of persisting terrorist threat.

Mr. Bush used some of his strongest language yet in describing what he said was the menace from nations seeking weapons of mass destruction. Saying he was ready to take his fight against terrorist groups to the Philippines, the Middle East and Africa — and to any governments that shield them — he went further, including countries that might threaten the United States with biological, chemical or nuclear weapons.

"I will not wait on events while dangers gather," said Mr. Bush, appearing calm but earnest. "I will not stand by as peril draws closer and closer. The United States will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons."

American officials say the administration continues to debate the best ways to deal with Iraq and the other two countries. Nonetheless, the president's rhetoric was his most urgent yet, and pushed the three toward the top of his foreign security agenda.

While Mr. Bush appeared to be laying the groundwork for possible preemptive military strikes at some point, he did not explicitly say so.

But Senator Daschle specifically referred to preemptive strikes Wednesday, saying that he thought Congress would support Mr. Bush in whatever steps he deemed necessary to prevent a new massive attack on U.S. targets.

"The memory of 9/11 runs so

deeply," Mr. Daschle said on ABC-TV. "We know that we have got to take more preventive action, and the president outlined some of the steps last night, and I think that Congress supports him."

In Baghdad, Tehran and Pyongyang, officials and state-sponsored newspapers lashed out at the Bush comments.

"Bush intends to divert public opinion from the Middle East issue and to prepare the domestic grounds for continuing his support of Israel in its brutal oppression of the Palestinian nation," Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi of Iran said Wednesday, Reuters reported, quoting Iranian state radio.

Mr. Bush, whose speech had little foreign policy content other than that linked to the war on terror, made no mention of the violence between Palestinians and Israelis.

Hashemi Rafsanjani, top adviser to the supreme Iranian leader, Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei, ridiculed the suggestion that the three countries were "terrorists."

"We will not be threatened by such aggressive language," state television quoted him as saying.

Mr. Bush's remarks appeared to be a serious setback to already dwindling prospects for improved U.S.-Iranian ties.

After the Sept. 11 attacks, Tehran had quietly acquiesced in the U.S. campaign against Osama bin Laden and his Taliban protectors in Afghanistan; it also helped broker the Bonn agreement that led to formation of an interim government in Kabul.

Since then, however, anger at Iran has risen in the administration over reported Iranian attempts to expand influence in western Afghanistan, and over the Karine A, the cargo ship seized by Israel as it carried arms from an Iranian port to Palestinian buyers.

In Baghdad, a senior Iraqi legislator said Mr. Bush was laying the groundwork for another U.S. assault on Iraq, whose troops were driven from Kuwait in 1991 by a coalition led by then President George Bush.

"Little Bush's accusation against Iraq is baseless," the legislator, Salim

Qubaisi, head of the Iraqi Parliament's foreign and Arab relations committee, told Reuters; Iraq would not be intimidated by what he called threats of "aggression or foolishness by the American-Zionist administration."

North Korea's official media scoffed at Mr. Bush for identifying the country as a threat. The president, while noting that North Korea was "arming with missiles," said nothing of the moratorium on testing long-range missiles imposed by Pyongyang.

North Korea abruptly halted exchanges and family visits with South Korea last year, blaming hostile comments made in the early days of the Bush presidency.

In his speech, Mr. Bush also sought to build on the enormous outpouring of charitable feeling engendered by the Sept. 11 tragedies to build a fresh notion of civic responsibility.

"This time of adversity offers a unique moment of opportunity, a moment we must seize to change our culture," Mr. Bush said. This echoed his campaign theme of a "culture of responsibility."

He called for a doubling of the Peace Corps over five years and the addition of 200,000 volunteers under Americorps, which was begun by President Bill Clinton, and other national service programs. Every American, he suggested, should commit 4,000 hours in his or her lifetime to national and community service.

Some Americans had argued, in the aftermath of Sept. 11, that Arab reaction highlighted such a deep well of misunderstanding and suspicion of U.S. motives and objectives that it could never be overcome without a concerted new effort involving diplomacy, aid and cultural contacts.

By moving to expand the Peace Corps, particularly in the Muslim world, Mr. Bush seeks to address this concern, while giving American values more visibility in the Muslim world.

Mr. Bush used the word "security" 19 times in his speech. He did not mention Europe once, and the Middle East not at all.

Bush Assails an 'Axis of Evil'

Iraq, Iran and North Korea Described as 'Dangerous'

By David E. Sanger
New York Times Service

WASHINGTON — President George W. Bush told Americans in his State of the Union address that "our war against terror is only beginning" and sent new warnings to terrorists around the world and to three nations: Iran, Iraq and North Korea.

Using unusually strong language, he charged that the three "constitute an axis of evil,"

evoking a word once used to describe the alliance of Germany, Italy and Japan during World War II.

In his first State of the Union address, Tuesday night, Mr. Bush seemed to be outlining a rationale for future action if he deemed it necessary, not only against terrorists but also against hostile states that are developing weapons of mass destruction.

The president expressed a sense of the need to act quickly

when the United States and the world are united against terrorism and rogue nations.

"We will be deliberate, yet time is not on our side," Mr. Bush said to thunderous applause that reflected the freedom Congress has given him to pursue the terror fight around the globe. "I will not wait on events while dangers gather. I will not stand by as peril draws closer and closer. The United States of America

will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons."

He also vowed to use the national unity forged by the fight against terrorism on the twin causes of creating jobs for those worst hit by the recession and promoting a spirit of national service.

Surrounded by heroes and widows and widowers of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and their aftermath, Mr. Bush adopted a positive but emphatic tone. He described an America made stronger by tragedy and called on every adult in the country to devote two years or 4,000 hours of their lives to volunteer activities, perhaps working in an expanded Peace Corps or in a new Freedom Corps, which is intended to help guard American shores and rebuild blighted cities.

But Mr. Bush's calls for lower taxes, expanded trade and new energy production seemed to pale next to the emotional center of the speech — a celebration of America's slow recovery from the Sept. 11 attacks.

He expanded his definition of America's immediate defensive goals, saying he would soon deal with countries that make the nuclear and biological weapons that terrorists covet. He vowed that their efforts to develop nuclear and biological weapons would be

stopped. And in haunting words of warning, he said that American intelligence now believes that tens of thousands of potential terrorists have been trained by Al Qaeda in Afghanistan since 1996 and "are now spread throughout the world like ticking time bombs — set to go off without warning."

He said that "camps still exist in at least a dozen countries."

Yet Mr. Bush tried, mostly through the symbolism of whom he chose to have sit in the historic chamber, to convey the sense that America now understood its enemy and felt a new confidence. Vice President Dick Cheney sat behind him, the first time the men have appeared together at a major event since the terrorist attacks.

But there were subjects Mr. Bush avoided. He never uttered the name of Osama bin Laden, the Qaeda leader, who has eluded capture — and is also a sign of what remains incomplete in Mr.



Tim Shonn/Agence France-Presse

The president's speech to Congress was applauded by George Tenet, the CIA director, left; Tom Ridge, director of homeland security, and Condoleezza Rice, national security adviser.

Bush's campaign in Afghanistan.

Nor did he mention Enron, the collapsing energy company once run by his biggest political supporter, Kenneth Lay.

Instead, he talked of the need to revise pension laws so that workers who "save all their lives should not have to risk losing everything if their company fails." And he called for "stricter accounting standards and tougher disclosure requirements" that would make corporations "more accountable to employees and shareholders."

He did not mention the dispute over how to deal with Al Qaeda and Taliban fighters held in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, which has divided his administration. He never talked about the Middle East, though his top aides said Tuesday night that he had discussed the issue so much in recent weeks that they did not believe further discussion was necessary.

His appearance was his third before a joint session of Congress. The first was a bit more than a month into his presidency, when Mr. Bush delivered his budget message and celebrated "a balanced budget, big sur-

pluses, a military that is second to none, a country at peace." A year later, the balanced budget and big surpluses are gone, the military has proven itself in an unconventional war, and the peace has been shattered.

His second appearance, on Sept. 20, was while the shock of the terrorist attacks was still fresh. That speech set the country

on the path to war.

On Tuesday night, Mr. Bush tried to capture the odd historic moment he finds himself in — soaring popularity despite a significant recession, and the opening months of a war with no endpoint in sight. "Our nation is at war, our economy is in recession and the civilized world faces unprecedented dangers," he said.

Then, repeating the declaration virtually all of his predecessors have uttered in one form or another, he said, "Yet the state of our union has never been stronger."

31 décembre 2002

پراسا
HIRAYETI

نیچیرقان بارزانی پیشوازی له بهرێزان د. کهندال نزان و، د. نهجمه دین کهریم دهکات



سهعات (3) ی دواى نیوهێ دویتى 2001/12/30 بهرێز نیچیرقان بارزانی سهروکی حکومهتی ههریمی کوردستان، له دیوانی سهروکایهتی نهجمه دین وهزیراندا، پیشوازی له بهرێزان د. کهندال نزان سهروکی نهیستیتووتی کورد له پاریس و، د. نهجمه دین کهریم رووناکبیری ناسراو و سهروکی نهیستیتووتی کورد له واشنتۆن کرد. له دانیشتیکدا، که بهرێزان سهروکی پهڕلهمانی کوردستان و جیگری سهروکی حکومهت و، وهزیری کاروباری نهجمه دین وهزیران و ژماردیهک له وهزیره بهرێزدهکان و، بهریرسی حزبی ئامادهبوون، بهرێز نیچیرقان بارزانی بهگهرمی بهخیرهاتنی ههردوو بهرێزی کرد و، هیواى خواست، که له ماوهی مانهوهیاندا له کوردستان، وهزعی بهرهوپیش چوونی ههریمی کوردستان له سهرحهم بواره جیاجیاکاندا ببین و، هیواشی خواست، که پیتوبسته پسهپۆر و سیاسهتدارانی کورد له دهروه، له ههولتی بهرهوپیش بردنی ئهم نهزمونه دابن، بهتایبهتی له بوارهکانی دیپلۆماسی و سیاسى و بووژاندنهوه و، ناوهاندنهوهی کوردستان، له رێگهی پرپاری (986) و ریکخراو و ئازانهکانی (UN) له دهروه پشگیری حکومهتی ههریمی کوردستان بکهن. ئهمه و بهرێز سهروکی حکومهت نیوهێر خوانیکی بۆ ههردوو بهرێزان له سهروکایهتی نهجمه دین وهزیراندا سازکرد.

له رێورهسمیکدا د. کهندال نزان و د. نهجمه دین کهریم ههردوو پرۆژهی ناوخوازی لهیلا قاسمی کچان و پهڕتووکهخانهی ناوهندی و دهزگای چاپ دهکهنهوه

ئافرهتانیان کرد و، پاشان بهرێز د. کهندال نزان بهشی ناوخوازی لهیلا قاسمی کچان و پهڕتووکهخانهی ناوهندی و دهزگای چاپ کردهوه، که نۆژهن کراوهتهوه. لهمهسارهیهوه راپۆرتیک له لاپهڕه (2) دا بلاوکراوه.

بهرێز شهوکهت شیخ یهزدین وهزیری کاروباری نهجمه دین وهزیران و، بهرێزان وهزیری دارایی و تابووری و فهلهکه دین کاکهیی و پارێزگاری ههولپهر و سهروکی زانکۆی سهلاحه دین، سهردانی پرۆژهی دروستکردنی نهخۆشخانهی (الامل) بۆ له دایک بوون و نهشتههرگهریی

سهعات (1130) ی پیش نیوهێرۆی دویتى، بهرێزان د. کهندال نزان سهروکی نهیستیتووتی کورد له پاریس و، د. نهجمه دین کهریم رووناکبیری ناسراو، سهروکی نهیستیتووتی کورد له واشنتۆن که بهسهردان له کوردستانن، بهیاوهیی

مام جلال

يستقبل الشخصيتين المعروفتين الدكتور نجم الدين كريم والدكتور كندال نزان

الدكتور نجم الدين كريم والدكتور كندال نزان قد استقبلوا في نقطة بيور من قبل وفد حكومي وحزبي فيما كان الدكتور برهم أحمد صالح في استقبالهما في مدينة كويسنجق، وتجدد الإشارة إلى أن الدكتور نجم الدين كريم من الشخصيات السياسية الكردية، ويعيش في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية، والدكتور كندال نزان هو أحد المثقفين الكرد في فرنسا، وقد عادوا في زيارة لهما إلى كردستان.

وأرأس الشيخ جنكي وعدد من الكوادر الإعلامية، رحب مام جلال بفاوة بهما، وأعرب عن سروره لعودتهما إلى كردستان، معرباً لهما عن الأمل في طيب الوقت لدى إقامتهما في كردستان وأن يطلعاً عن كثب على حياة المواطنين والتطورات التي تشهدها كردستان في المجالات العمرانية والإدارية والاقتصادية والثقافية والاجتماعية والمشاريع الخدمية والعمرانية والمكتسبات والإنجازات الأخرى، جدير ذكره أن السيدين

استقبل مام جلال بفاوة بعد ظهر يوم ٢٣/١٢/٢٠٠١ في مكتبه، وبحضور السادة نوشيروان مصطفى والدكتور برهم أحمد صالح رئيس حكومة إقليم كردستان وأرسلان بايز وجلال جوهر وزير الصناعة والطاقة وأزاد جندباني والدكتور يادگار رؤوف حشمت وزير الصحة، المناضل المعروف لشعبنا الدكتور نجم الدين كريم والدكتور كندال نزان رئيس المعهد الكردي في باريس، وفي لقاء حضره السيدان جوهر كرمانج

غومما، مؤكداً على أهمية توطيد العلاقات بين المثقفين خارج وداخل كردستان، وقد أبدى الزائران اهتمامهما بالمؤسسة وأبدى إعجابهما بمطوياتها ودورياتها.

ويستقبلهما رئيس المجلس

البلدي في السليمانية

والتقى السيد قادر حمدان عزيز رئيس المجلس البلدي في السليمانية يوم ٢٦/١٢/٢٠٠١ الدكتور نجم الدين كريم والدكتور كندال نزان. وبعد الترحيب بهما، تحدث رئيس المجلس البلدي بأسهاب وخلال تقرير شفهي، حول المشاريع والبرامج الخدمية التي نفذها المجلس البلدي المنتخب من لندن الجاهز، في العامين المنصرمين.

وبالمقابل تمس الوفد الطيف، برامج ومشاريع المجلس البلدي، والتطورات الحاصلة في العامين المنصرمين.

ويوزون ديوان وزارة التربية

كما زار السيدان الدكتور نجم الدين كريم والدكتور كندال نزان صباح يوم ٢٩/١٢/٢٠٠١، ديوان وزارة التربية واستقبلهما في مكتب السيدة نرومين عثمان قبل السيدة التربية. وخلال هذه الزيارة أطلعوا على المسيرة التربوية في إقليم كردستان والتطور الذي شهده وأهدوا في هذه الزيارة أيضاً عدة كتب إلى الوزارة وأعربوا عن سرورهم للتقدم والتطور في الحقل التربوي.

ويوزون وزارة الصحة وجامعة

السليمانية ومؤسسة سرديم

وفي سياق زيارتهما للإقليم، زار الضيفان الدكتور نجم الدين كريم والدكتور كندال نزان وزارة الصحة واستقبلوا هناك من قبل الدكتور يادگار رؤوف حشمت وزير الصحة ووكيل الوزارة، وبعد أن سلط وزير الصحة الاضواء على عملية تطوير القطاع الصحي في الإقليم، تفقد السيدان المستشفى التعليمي في السليمانية.

وفي إطار برنامجهم

زيارتهم أيضاً زاروا جامعة

السليمانية ومؤسسة سرديم

للطباعة والنشر.

وخلال زيارتهما لجامعة

السليمانية حضروا اجتماعاً

لمجلس الجامعة والذي حضره

أيضاً الدكتور كمال خوشنوار

رئيس الجامعة وأعضاء مجلس

الجامعة، وجرى فيه بحث

المستوى التعليمي في الجامعة

والفرص المتاحة للتعليم

الأكاديمي في كردستان، وخلال

زيارتهم مؤسسة سرديم

للطباعة والنشر تحدث لهما

الشاعر الكبير شروكو بيكس

حول عمل ونشاطات المؤسسة

والحركة الثقافية في كردستان



التطور قد حدث فعلاً والذي يبعث على السعادة حقاً، خصوصاً مشروع مصطفى النبط، والذي تم إنجازه بالاعتماد على ذوي الكفاءات المحلية، كما وقال: نحن سرورون حين نرى بأن عدداً كبيراً من العاملين في المصفي هم من مواطني مدينة كركوك، ويقومون هنا بهذا الواجب المقدس. وفيما يتعلق بحياة المرحلين في حدود مدينة جمجمال قال: للأسف، إن هؤلاء يعيشون في أوضاع سيئة وغير مستقرة، وهم أحسج إلى المستشفيات والمدارس إلى جانب حاجتهم إلى أماكن الراحة، أي المساكن، وأشار إلى أن المجلس الجسري لمشاكل هؤلاء يكمن في عودتهم إلى أماكنهم الأصلية.

السليمانية، تفقدوا مشروع مصطفى النبط، حيث استمعوا إلى أحاديث المهندسين هناك وحول تنفيذ مشروع المصفي من قبل المهندسين والفنيين والعاملين الكرد، وأعربوا عن سرورهم لإنجاز هذا المشروع الكبير بالاعتماد على الكفاءات المحلية. ومن ثم وخلال لقائه مع عدداً من القنوات الإعلامية التابعة لمكتب الاعلام المركزي للاتحاد الوطني، تحدث الدكتور نجم الدين كريم حول المشاريع الخدمية والعمرانية التي تم تنفيذها من قبل حكومة إقليم كردستان، وقال: إنه تم تحقيق تقدم ملموس في جميع القطاعات العمرانية والصحية والتربوية، وأضاف: نحن لم نأخذ بالحسبان أن ذلك المأسوي من

يهدف الاطلاع عن كثب على المستوى المعيشي لجماعية المنطقة عموماً وذوي ضحايا الانفصال والمرحلين الذين تم ترحيلهم من مناطق كركوك وأطرافها، نتيجة إنتهاج الحكومة العراقية لسياسة التطهير العرقي على نحو خاص، والاطلاع أيضاً على المشاريع الخدمية والعمرانية التي تم تنفيذها في المنطقة من قبل حكومة إقليم كردستان، زار السيدان الدكتور نجم الدين كريم الشخصيات السياسية الكردية المعروفة والدكتور كندال نزان رئيس المعهد الكردي في باريس، يرافقه السيد عماد أحمد مسؤول مكتب الفكر والتوعية للاتحاد الوطني الكردي وعدد من أعضاء اللجنة القيادية والمسؤولون الحكوميون في المنطقة، قضاء جمجمال وضواحيه.

وخلال زيارتهم تفقدوا مجمع (برهوقارمان) للمرحلين وعدداً من المؤسسات الخيرية والحكومية والخدمية في المنطقة، وأطلعوا هناك على المستوى المعيشي واحتياجات ومتطلبات ذوي ضحايا الانفصال. ولدى عودتهم إلى مدينة

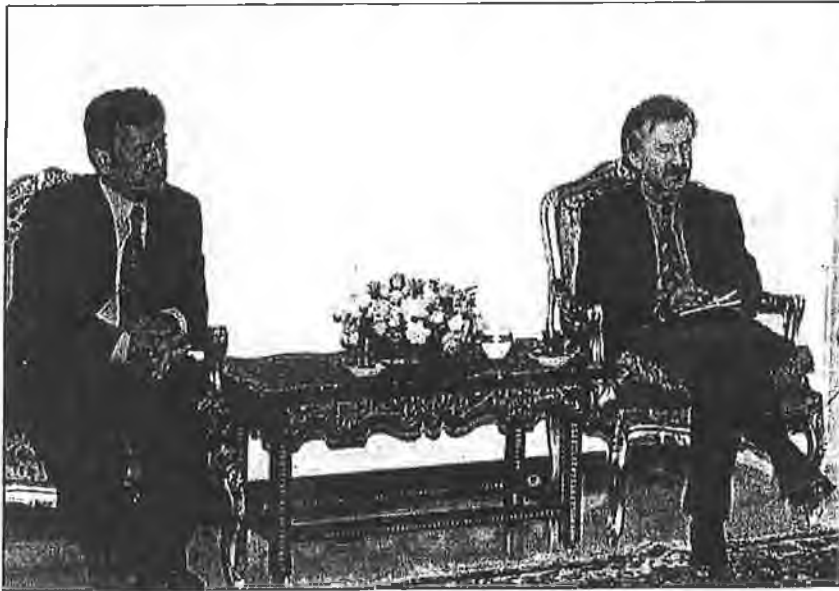
3 janvier 2002

پێنج شهم ٢٠٠٢/١/٣ شماره (3579)

برایستی
BIRAYETI

ناوهنده كۆلتووری و ئەكادیمیەكانی كورد پشتیوانی زیاتر بۆ ئەزموونی دیموکراتی هەریمی كوردستان

راپۆرتی: چیمەن سالح



دەرخستنی رووی چەوساوەیی گەلی كورد لەمێژوودا و بڵاوكردنەوه ناساندنی فەرھەنگی كوردی و پێگەپاندنی كادیری ئەكادیمی كورد و كارێگەری كردن لەسەر حكومەتەكان بەتایبەتی لەناوەنده بێیار سازەكانی وەك ئەمریکا و ئەوروپا، كۆكردنەوه كارێگەری خستە سەر رای گشتی لە ولاتانی دیموکراتەدا، لەلایەن دامەزرێكە گەڕا غەبەرە حكومەتیەكانەوه، كارێگەری خۆی ھەبە، لەم روودۆ ئەنستیتۆی كورد لە پارێس لەسالی ١٩٨٣ ھەوێ دامەزرێكە ئێستێ وەك ناوەندی كۆلتووری و فەرھەنگی كورد، تەماشای دەكۆ و كۆتێخانەپەكی گەڕەیی ھەبە، كە قوتابیان و لێتۆژەران لەسەر دۆزی كورد لەسەر تاسەری ئەوروپادا، سوودی لێ وەرەگرن ھەروەھا ئەنستیتۆی كورد لە واشنتۆن، كە لەسالی ١٩٩٦ ھەوێ دامەزرێكە چەندین كۆژو سیمیناری، بۆ شارەزایان لەسەر دۆزی كورد بەستووە دواتر بێیان سیمیناریك لەسەر كۆمەلگەیی ھەدەنی و رۆلی ئاڤرەت و مەیدیا لەكۆمەلگەیی كوردستاندا و شاندێكیش لەھەرمیمی كوردستانەوه بەشدارییان تێدا كۆر، و بەرنامەپەكیان ھەبە تا كارەساتی ھەلەبجە وەك دۆكۆمێنتێكی بەرھەوێ، بێخەمە بەرھەم رای گشتی، لەم رووانەوه ئەو دوو ناوەندە رۆلێكی بەچاویان بێنێو، بەرێزان د. كەندال ئۆزان سەرۆكی ئێنستیتۆی كورد لە پارێس و ئەجمەدین كەرم سەرۆكی ئێنستیتۆی كورد لە واشنتۆن لەسەردانێكدا ھەرمیمی كوردستانیەن بەسەر كۆرەوه.

28.01.2002

برایستی
BIRAYETI

پێشكەش كۆر. لەكۆتاییشدا وەلامی پرسیارەكانی
نامادەبووانی داھەوێ.



پاریس

رەوشی ھەرمیمی لە كۆرێكی ئەنستیتۆی كورد دا

شوكری بەرواری:

دوێنێ سەعات چواری ئێوارە د. كەندال ئۆزان سەرۆكی ئەنستیتۆی كورد لە پارێس، كۆنفرانسیكی رۆژنامەوانی بەست كە تێپیدا ژمارەپەك لە رۆژنامەنۆس و نووسەران نامادە بوون. لەو كۆژەدا د. ئۆزان پاسی لە سەردانی ئەم دواییەیی بۆ ھەرمیمی كوردستانی عێراق كۆر، رەوشی ناوەدانكردنەوه پێش. ئەچوونی لە ھەموو بوارەكاندا بۆ نامادەبووان روونكردەوه و خوشحالی خۆی بەو پەرەسەندن و پێشكەوتنە دەرەری. ھەر بەم بۆنەپەوێ فێلمێكی دیکۆمێنتی دەربارەیی سەردانەكەیی لەكۆژەكەدا

