

file Yemen

THE FIRST LADY,
HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON,
THE WHITE HOUSE.

DEAR MADAM,

FROM SANA'A, A CITY OF PEACE, DEMOCRACY, HISTORY,
CIVILIZATIONS, CAPITAL OF UNIFIED YEMEN WE HAVE THE
HONOR TO INVITE YOUR HIGHLY RESPECTED PERSON - THE TWO
OF US IN PERSON AND ON BEHALF OF ALL WOMEN-RELATED
COMMITTEES AND ORGANIZATIONS - TO VISIT YEMEN TO GET TO
KNOW THE SIZE OF ACTIVITY IN ALL WALKS OF LIFE. WE
COULD ASSURE YOU THAT YOU HAVE CONSIDERABLE STATURE AND
WIDE PRESENCE IN YEMEN IN GENERAL AND AMONG WOMEN IN
PARTICULAR.

THIS COMES IN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND APPRECIATION OF YOUR
CONCRETE HUMANITARIAN ROLES IN NUMEROUS FIELDS. YOUR
CONTINUOUS STRIVING FOR PROPAGATING EDUCATION AND
COMBATING THE GHOST OF ILLITERACY, AND CARING FOR THE
POOR, IS ONLY AN EXAMPLE OF YOUR HUMANITARIAN INTERESTS
WORLDWIDE.

YEMENI WOMEN ARE PROUDLY LOOKING FORWARD TO HAVING THE
HONOR OF MEETING INFLUENTIAL PERSONALITIES, LIKE YOUR
YOURSELF, HAVING EFFECTIVE PRESENCE IN AND OUTSIDE THEIR
COUNTRIES. TO INTRODUCE THEM TO ACHIEVEMENTS REALIZED
AFTER REVOLUTION, AND ACTIVITIES IN FIELD OF DEVELOPMENT
UNDER THE WING OF THE NEW POLITICAL SYSTEM BORN ON THE
DAY OF REUNIFICATION (MAY 22ND, 1990) AND BASED ON
DEMOCRACY, PLURALISM, AND HUMAN RIGHTS RESPECT; TO
CLARIFY THE HONORABLE IMAGE OF YEMENI WOMEN WHICH SOME
PEOPLE HAVE BEEN TRYING TO EFFACE RETURNING WOMEN TO
PRE-REVOLUTION TIME, TO BACKWARDNESS, ILLITERACY, AND
DISEASE, WHEN WOMEN SUFFERED FROM ALL TYPES OF
OPPRESSION, AND DISCRIMINATION BECAUSE OF WHICH THEY
WERE LOOT FOR "EMBALMED" THOUGHTS AND VICTIMS OF
OUTDATED VIEWS WHICH WERE UNFAIR TO WOMEN RIGHTS.

HOWEVER, WOMEN, NOWADAYS, HAVE BECOME EFFECTIVE PARTNERS
IN WORLD OF POLITICS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
JUDICIARY, TEACHING, MEDICINE, ENGINEERING, WITH AN
INCREASING PRESENCE IN POLITICAL DECISION-MAKING, AND IN
MANY OTHER VITAL FIELDS.

THE YEMENI WOMEN, BY NOW ARE STRIVING, WITH ALL

AVAILABLE MEANS, FOR LIFE FREE FROM VIOLENCE
DISCRIMINATION, FOR CONSTITUTIONALLY BALANCING IN
DUTIES AND RIGHTS THROUGH GOVERNMENTAL AND
NON-GOVERNMENTAL CHANNELS IN COLLABORATION WITH SOME
INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES THAT BELIEVE IN WOMEN'S ROLE IN
VARIOUS FIELDS OF DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT THEM MORALLY
AND FINANCIALLY.

DEAR, FIRST LADY,

ALLOW US ON OUR BEHALF, AND ON BEHALF OF MEMBERS OF THE
WOMEN NATIONAL COMMITTEE, TO WARMLY WELCOME YOUR AWAITED
HONORABLE VISIT WITH ALL PLEASURE.

PLEASE ACCEPT OUR HIGHEST CONSIDERATION

YOURS SINCERELY,
DR. ORAS NAJI, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

AMAT AL-ALEEM ASSOSOWA, CHAIRWOMAN OF THE WOMEN NATIONAL
COMMITTEE, DEPUTY MINISTER OF INFORMATION
END TEXT

BODINE

It is wrong for Mr. Hatch to hold the president's nominees hostage to one district court vacancy. And while his staff has denied he is doing so, Mr. Hatch himself was fairly up front in describing to news media a conversation he had with Mr. Clinton concerning Mr. Stewart. "The president assumed that was the case, and I didn't disabuse him of that," he said. It is, after all, the president's job, not any senator's, to make judicial nominations, and

dramatic.

This is especially true because Mr. Hatch generally has been cooperative, often against stiff opposition from the Republican right wing, with White House judicial nomination efforts. Yet Mr. Clinton has so far not even condescended to give Mr. Hatch the courtesy of an answer. The chairman and the president need to work this matter out quickly so that the institutional needs of the judiciary are not compromised.

fileyewer

The Democracy Club

TWO THINGS HELD in common by the countries of Benin, Georgia, Guyana, Malawi and Mongolia: Few Americans could find them on a map, and all are emerging democracies. They represent a class of nations that just in the past few years have embraced political reform against large odds and have received little attention for it. So it's appealing that representatives of these and other nations—Bolivia, El Salvador, Ghana, Guatemala, Macedonia, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia and Nepal—will next month gather in Yemen, itself an emerging democracy, to swap advice and seek some measure of recognition.

The global trend toward democratization, along with some notable holdouts and recidivists, has been much remarked upon. Countries such as South Korea, the Philippines, Taiwan and Thailand have famously given the lie to those—most notably in China, Singapore and Burma—who argued that democracy was not suitable for Asia. Chile and Costa Rica have set well-noted examples for their regions. South Africa is an inspiring story of its own. Many nations emerging from the Soviet Union or its control—such as Hungary, Poland and Lithuania—have received at least some well-deserved attention. Now the most populous nations of Africa and Southeast Asia, Nigeria and Indonesia, are soaking up—as they

should—much of what aid exists for transitional democracies.

Relatively out-of-the-way nations such as Mali struggle in the shadow both of the success stories and of the nations gone disastrously wrong. But their struggles are in some ways all the more heroic for their relative obscurity. Moreover, there are practical reasons to help them along. Small countries can have a contagious effect on larger, more strategically significant neighbors; success can set a positive example, backsliding a demoralizing one. And the failure of small countries can have a disproportionate human and financial cost, as Rwanda and Serbia demonstrate.

The June conference is sponsored by Yemen's government and the U.S. National Democratic Institute, with help from Japan, Canada and others. Hillary Clinton will attend, as will representatives of the World Bank and other financial institutions, which increasingly recognize a connection between participatory government (they still hesitate to use the d-word) and economic success. The goal of the conference goes beyond morale-boosting; representatives will trade tales on party-building, balancing political and economic reform, fighting corruption and other nitty-gritty of democracy-building. But if there's some morale-boosting, well, good.

for proper brain development might prevent the terrible that Littleton and other cities have experienced. The has not escaped this violent homicide rate involving aged 15 to 19 increased 700 from 1985 to 1996.

Research on brain development indicates that the degree parents' warmth and affection mediates the link between homes and crime. Where are highly affectionate will sons, the marital status of the seems to make little difference outcome of adult-level crime.

Voluntary home visitation programs are being set up across the country to help parents more actively nurture and stimulate newborn infants and to avoid and neglect. The District of Columbia, that was started five years ago and has been shown to have a positive impact on the children.

The District has the highest abuse rate in the country. Even the abused babies of today are the violent children of tomorrow. It is important that more people like Healthy Families D.C. be created. We call upon Mayor Anthony Williams to set aside funds both further the efforts of Healthy Families D.C. and to create funds for new programs aimed

Letters must be exclusive to The Post, must be signed, must include the writer's home address and daytime telephone number. Because of space limitations, published letters are subject to abridgement. Although we are unable to acknowledge letters we cannot publish, we value the views of those who send their comments. Letters should be addressed to Letters to the Editor and may be hand-delivered, submitted by U.S. mail or via The Post's web site, <http://www.washingtonpost.com>.

In fact, said the Cato Institute's Stephen Moore, "I don't see a huge difference now between the ideal of a free market and the reality of a free market." He said the schools would help create mentoring programs, encourage abstinence and teach character in the state legislature that bills pending in the state legislature that been a responsible leader of Texas. "He has life," said Hughes. "Governor Bush has been a responsible leader of Texas."

His top domestic adviser, Indianapolis Mayor Stephen Goldsmith, is one of the good deeds of community groups with small infusions of government money. "It will be a huge theme," said Bush spokeswoman Karen Hughes. "The whole need to change to a culture of responsibility and teach children to accept responsibility."

file Turkey

MEMORANDUM

To: Lissa and Melanne
Fr: Sabrina *Se*
Re: Reaction to Southern Europe column
Da: June 17, 1996

I spoke with Julieta Noyes about Robert Sexton's email critiquing HRC's Southern Europe column.

While there are some points in Mr. Sexton's letter that are completely wrong, there are others that are a bit trickier to respond to. The problem is that Mrs. Clinton's speech in Turkey (and by extension, her column) was designed for a Turkish audience, and as such, emphasized the positive. Some of Mr. Sexton's arguments are correct.

Issues such as the Armenian "genocide" and religious tolerance are extremely sensitive politically. The State Department could try to draft a carefully-worded, nuanced response, but given the visceral tone of this guy's email, Julieta is not sure it would make much difference. In addition, State would like to avoid having to address some of these issues at all.

Her advice is to ignore Mr. Sexton's email unless he follows up with a written letter -- unless either of you think differently.

o

From: RDSexton, 73557,3463
To: Creators Syndicate, 71154,1271
Date: Thu, Apr 18, 1996, 11:25 PM
RE: Hillary Rodham Clinton

Dear Mrs. Clinton-

I read with dismay your column (as published on Compuserve) of April 2, 1996. In it you made a terribly erroneous statement concerning Turkey.

You wrote that "Turkey has a long history of religious tolerance, having been the birthplace of Orthodox Christianity...". That is wrong on two counts. First, Turkey is not the birthplace of Orthodox Christianity. The Orthodox Church properly regards its founding as being on the day of Pentecost in 33 AD in Jerusalem. Turkey simply did not exist at that time nor is Jerusalem within its borders.

Of far more importance is the claim that Turkey has a history of religious tolerance. In the face of the fact that Turkey is regularly cited for its dismal human rights record this is utter nonsense. At the turn of the century, the population of Turkey was one-fourth Christian. Since then, through a continuous campaign of persecution virtually all Christians have been driven out. In 1950 there were 250,000 Greek Orthodox Christians in Constantinople. Today there are perhaps 2,500. It is small comfort to realize that this is the largest Christian group in that whole country. That is why today the population of Turkey is over 99% muslim. That is "predominantly muslim" indeed!

How would you explain Turkey's supposed tolerance to the 1,000,000 Armenians slaughtered in this centuries first holocaust? How would you explain it to the thousands upon thousands of Greeks who died at Smyrna in 1922? How would you reconcile that tolerance to the 1,250,000 Greeks pushed out of Turkey in 1922 in an internationally recognized act of ethnic cleansing? How do you tell the Greeks of Cyprus that Turkey has a record of tolerance when they have been exiled from their homes, their property confiscated and their churches desecrated? For twenty-two years the world watched as the US wrung its hands and then sent military aid to that same invader?

If Turkey is so tolerant, why has the theological seminary at Halki been closed by the Turkish government for two decades? Why did it take forty years and the intervention of Jimmy Carter to gain the approval of the Turkish government to rebuild the Patriarchate in Constantinople? For forty years it remained fire damaged while an obstinate Turkish government refused permission to rebuild. Is that evidence of religious tolerance?

I hope, while you were in Constantinople, you had an opportunity to visit the AyaSofya museum. If you had, you might have reflected on the history of that place and that city. Perhaps it would have occurred to you that alone among the great capitals of Europe, Constantinople is the only one still occupied by a foreign power. London is English. Paris is French. Rome is Italian. But Constantinople, the city created by a Roman emperor as the first truly Christian city, is now occupied by a state bent on eradicating every last vestige of Christianity from within its borders (unless it can be hawked for tourist dollars).

If you had visited that museum you would, of course, have been reminded that this was once a Christian Church, Hagia Sophia, the Church of the Holy Wisdom, the greatest church in Chritendom. In 1453, it was appropriated for a mosque after the priests and people within had been slaughtered. When you walk in that place you walk on the blood of martyrs and, like Abel, their blood cries out from the ground for justice. For over 500 years there has been no justice nor will there be justice while Turkey is pandered to with words like yours.

Robert D. Sexton
3225 W. Minarets

From: RDSexton, 73557,3463
To: Creators Syndicate, 71154,1271
Date: Thu, Apr 18, 1996, 11:25 PM
RE: Hillary Rodham Clinton

Fresno, CA 93711
209-431-4817

**TALKING IT OVER
BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The lighting of the Olympic flame amid the ancient ruins of Olympia, Greece, is a simple and solemn affair. There are no marching bands, no fancy commercials, no play-by-play commentary, just a silent dance to the Greek gods punctuated by the beat of a single drum.

Watching this remarkable event on the grassy spot where the original Games were held more than 2,500 years ago, I was reminded not only of the enduring power of Western civilization but also of the democratic ideals we are still working toward today.

It turned out to be the perfect place to end my week-long trip to Bosnia, Turkey and Greece. As different as these countries appear on the surface, their pasts and futures are inextricably tied to ours and to the world's -- and to the vision set forth in the earliest Olympic contests.

My first stop was Bosnia, a country that has suffered untold horror but is now trying, with international help, to create a multiethnic, multireligious democracy. Not only did I visit with religious, political and humanitarian leaders, I also spent time with American troops who are part of NATO's mission to enforce the Bosnian peace accords.

Then, I went to Turkey, a NATO partner whose importance to the United States goes well beyond its geography at the crossroads of Europe and Asia. Turkey is a rarity in its region of the world because, although predominantly Muslim, it is a secular society.

At a time of increased political tensions and the rise of religious extremism in southern Europe, the Middle East, Central Asia and North Africa, Turkey's role as a secular democracy becomes that much more significant to nations interested in spreading the fruits of peace and democracy.

Turkey has a long history of religious tolerance, having been the birthplace of Orthodox Christianity and a meeting point throughout history for many of the world's great religions.

While I was in Istanbul, I had a chance to meet with the leaders of the country's major religious groups -- Muslim, Jewish, Catholic and Orthodox. We talked about what they can do to make sure that religion is not used to promote fanaticism, violence

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON 4/2/96**Page 2**

or extremism and remains a force for harmony and civility among people of different faiths.

Leaving Ankara and Istanbul, I traveled to Greece, where many of the values and institutions of modern civilization were born. Standing in the Acropolis above the city of Athens, I imagined the ancient Athenians coming to market to buy pears, figs and honey and the sounds of cobblers and sculptors making and selling their wares. I envisioned jurors assembling for court and senators taking their seats in the Athenian legislature.

Almost every aspect of our lives today has roots in classical antiquity. The words we use, the laws we follow, the medicine we practice, the ideas we believe in, the buildings we build, the plays and dramas we perform, the system of democratic government so many countries now enjoy all began with the ancient Greeks.

Since those earlier times, of course, empires have risen and fallen, wars have been won and lost, and much blood has been spilled in that part of the world. But through it all, pluralistic democracy has lived on and spread, proving to be the world's most equitable, just and productive form of government that civilization has ever known.

All of which brings me back to the Olympic Games, one of the most palpable and powerful symbols we have of the democratic values the ancient Greeks created for us.

The flame that was lit last week -- and which will guide the Games in Atlanta this summer -- burns with the spirit of Olympic contests that have taken place in Greece and around the world and the tens of thousands of athletes who have competed in them. It is a spirit that stretches back nearly 3,000 years to the first foot race held amid the orange and olive groves of Olympia.

Now, as then, the Olympic Games emphasize an inescapable dimension of the human experience -- that we are all members of one global family.

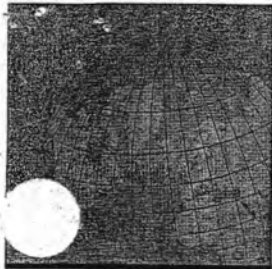
Whether through athletes competing at sports in Olympia or Atlanta, or through American, Turkish and Greek troops helping democracy grow in Bosnia, we are coming together as nations to build bridges of respect, tolerance and friendship.

It is a task that has challenged us for most of human history. But rarely has it been as urgent as it is today.

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April 2, 1996



file Yemen

EMERGING DEMOCRACIES FORUM

THE NATIONAL
DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

AND

THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

In Partnership with:

UNITED NATIONS
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR
DEMOCRACY

And the Governments of:

CANADA

JAPAN

THE NETHERLANDS

THE UNITED KINGDOM

THE UNITED STATES

April 20, 1999

Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
Office of the First Lady
The White House
Room 2/WW
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Mrs. Clinton
did not attend
in person - she
taped video
remarks.

Dear Mrs. Clinton:

On behalf of the Government of Yemen and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) we are pleased to invite you to participate in a unique three-day Forum entitled, Managing the Twin Transitions: Economic and Political Reform in Emerging Democracies, to be held in Sana'a, Yemen, from June 27 to June 29, 1999. The Forum will provide support and encouragement for a group of newly emerging democracies. They include: Benin, Bolivia, El Salvador, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Macedonia, Malawi, Mali, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, and Yemen.

The Forum will bring together political, civic and economic leaders – heads of state and government, cabinet ministers, political party and parliamentary leaders, civil society activists and key players in public and private sector economic reform – of countries advancing democratic reform. This progress has come despite challenges such as weak economies, corruption, conflicts or post-conflict tensions, and few or no participatory traditions. In addition to providing a setting to analyze and address the common hurdles of democratic transition, the Forum will draw attention to the achievements of countries that, unfortunately, receive relatively little international exposure.

Funding and in-kind contributions for the event are being provided by the United Nations Development Programme, and the governments of Canada, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Key topics in addressing political reform in this group of small, unheralded democracies will include: confidence building and gaining public trust; government accountability; the promotion of civil society; the imperative of women's participation; making hard choices in simultaneous economic and political transitions; and developing policy to address the rule of law and corruption.

We are in the process of inviting prominent international figures to serve as Forum co-chairs, and we would be honored if you would consider joining this group. The State Department views this event as a precursor to a broader initiative by the Administration to convene a worldwide meeting of democratic governments next year. Senior U.S. Government officials from the State Department and USAID are planning to attend the Yemen event.

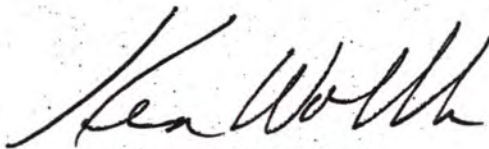
We believe that you are in a unique position to bring your knowledge, experience and international profile to bear on the issue of popular political participation, particularly on the vital role of women in the democratic transformation process. It is noteworthy that this initiative is being hosted by the Republic of Yemen, the only country on the Arabian peninsula to have held legislative elections with the full participation of women as candidates, party activists and voters and the only country on the Arabian peninsula with women in the national parliament. At the same time, while Yemen has made laudable political progress, it remains a conservative society where greater civic education is necessary to promote the role of women in public and social life.

Given that a main objective of this initiative is to showcase little known democracies, your presence would mean a great deal to the participants who are well aware of your ongoing efforts to focus international attention on many of these countries. Your role as Forum co-chair would be to address a plenary session, perhaps lead one of the specific topic panels, and to help facilitate a summit joint declaration.

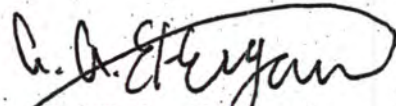
Your leadership would contribute measurably to the Forum and we hope you will be able to join us. We have attached a draft agenda for your review and look forward to your response.

With highest regards and appreciation for your continuing interest.

Sincerely,



Kenneth D. Wollack
President, NDI



Dr. Abdul Karim Al-Eryami
Prime Minister, Republic of Yemen

Managing Editor, Yemen Times

Emerging Democracies Forum

"Managing the Twin Transitions Political
and Economic Reform in Emerging Democracies"

Sana'a, Yemen

27 to 30 June, 1999

Working Agenda

Sunday, 27 June

All day Participant Arrival

Evening Registration, Informal Reception at Sheraton Hotel

Distribution of welcome/orientation packets; country briefing materials

Monday, 28 June

7:00-8:30 Breakfast

9:45-11:25 Welcome and Opening Address at Dar Al-Riassa (Presidential
Conference Center)

11:25-13:20 Opening Plenary

(Brief remarks from designee of each country group, presided by international
co-chairs)

14:20-15:30 Lunch

15:30-17:30 Topic Discussion I - Politics of Hard Choices

Political Transition and Economic Restructuring

19:30 Reception and Dinner hosted by Prime Minister at Taj Sheba Hotel

Brief Remarks to be determined

Tuesday, 29 June

7:00-8:30 Breakfast

9:00-11:30 Topic Discussion II - Building Public Trust

Elections and Legislatures

12:00-13:30 Lunch

13:30-15:45 Topic Discussion III-

Participation

Democratic Decision Making: the vital voices of women, civil society, and
pluralism

17:30-20:30 Reception and Dinner hosted by Partners and Donors

Wednesday, 30 June

7:00-8:30 Breakfast

9:00-11:30 Topic Discussion IV-Achieving Good Governance

Controlling Corruption, Improving Administration and Strengthening the Rule of
Law

1ST STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

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HEADLINE: Yemen forum agrees that women are vital to democratic process

BYLINE: AHMAD AL-HAJ
Yemen-Democracy Conference ,0356

DATELINE: SAN'A, Yemen

BODY:

Delegates from 17 nations agreed Monday that women have a vital role to play in the democratization of their countries.

"The democratic process will not develop or be complete unless women participate fully and completely in it," Kenneth Wollack, head of the U.S.-based National Democratic Institute, told the Emerging Democracies Forum.

More than 200 participants representing 17 countries from Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin and North America, are taking part in the three-day forum whose goal is to draw attention to the democratic success stories in countries that have little international exposure. The conference is being held at the Presidential palace in San'a amid tight security.

Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh spoke about the challenges facing developing democratic nations.

"Democracy is in danger when economic and development programs are not also supported," Saleh said in his opening speech.

"Today, more people enjoy the right to democratic self-governance than ever before. In the mid-70's, there were some 40 democracies in the world compared to 120 today," U.S. Under Secretary of State Frank E. Loy said. He added that Latin America, dominated by military dictatorships until a little over a decade ago, now boasted 33 democracies.

Former Canadian Prime Minister Kim Campbell said democracy was the only path to development.

Funding for the conference came from Canada, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Last month, a militant Islamic group threatened to carry out suicide attacks on foreigners, including those attending the conference, if its leader was not

set free.

The Aden-Abyan Islamic Army demanded the release of Zein Al-Abidine al-Mihdar, who was convicted with three other men of abducting 16 Western tourists in December. Four of the hostages died during a botched rescue attempt. Al-Midhar was sentenced to death on May 5. Their case is currently under appeal.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: June 28, 1999

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
VIDEOTAPED REMARKS
THE EMERGING DEMOCRACIES FORUM
SANA'A, YEMEN
JUNE 29, 1999

It is a great pleasure to be able to join all of you, as you conclude this historic Emerging Democracies Forum. As some of you may know, I had hoped to attend in person, to hear first hand about the challenges and opportunities you are facing in the often daunting struggle toward democracy. But when I learned I would be unable to come, I was determined, at the very least, to speak to you through the wonders of technology. Because the discussions you have had over the past few days will have an impact not only on the future of your own nations – but on our common dreams of living in a just and peaceful world.

I want to thank our sponsors, the Government of Yemen and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs. We are particularly grateful to NDI's Les Cambell and the Prime Minister of Yemen, Abdul Karim Al-Iryani for their vision to bring us all together. I want to thank Margreeth de Boer for speaking to us just now about the vital role that women can – and must – play in developing democracies. Appreciation also to Sally for her kind words of introduction, and for all she is doing at USAID to promote democracy and economic opportunity worldwide.

I especially want to thank all of you, the political, civic and economic leaders of your nations, for participating in this important international forum. America's Secretary of State Madeleine Albright always reminds us that unlike dictatorships -- democracy can't be imposed. "It's always a choice." And I want to commend all of you for the work you do every day to ensure more citizens of the world not only make that choice for democracy, but can begin to fulfill its promise.

And what better place to hold this global conversation and strengthen these bonds of support among us than here in Yemen, where so much progress is being made. Yemen's multi-party system, and its democratically elected legislature, serve as a model for the region.

I'm impressed as well with Yemen's efforts to expand the rights and opportunities for girls and women. Wherever I go – in my own country and overseas -- I talk about Yemen's remarkable commitment to girl's education. By eliminating school fees; providing families food and other incentives to keep their girls in schools; and by encouraging more women to enter the teaching profession, you are sending a powerful message. That access to education – for every citizen -- is the very foundation of democracy – and choice.

And that no nation can move forward until all of its citizens – including women -- are full participants in the social, economic, and political life of their communities.

We've come together here in this historic capital of Yemen at a time of unparalleled possibilities – as the forces of democracy are literally sweeping across the world. As Undersecretary of State Frank Loy noted a few days ago, 40 democracies existed in the 1970s. Today, the people of 120 nations are engaged in building democratic societies. Even now, we witness the first free elections in Indonesia in 40 years; the re-affirmation of multi-racial democracy in South Africa; and renewed hopes for peace in the Middle East. And finally – Serbia's brutal and systematic efforts to drive ethnic Albanians from their homes has been halted, and refugees are returning home.

As Kosovo so painfully reminds us, even as the forces of freedom move forward, age old ethnic, religious and tribal hatreds continue to tear apart communities and nations. And human rights continue to be trampled in almost every corner of the globe.

We also see that in newly emerging democracies, crime, violence, corruption – and citizen apathy -- threaten to dismantle many of our hard fought gains. And today, the rapidly changing world of technology and a global economy pose new challenges to democracies – young and old.

The work that all of you have been engaged in at this conference – to advance an international agenda of cooperation among democracies, and to help create the citizens of tomorrow -- has never been so critical.

Just a few weeks ago, I met in Palermo, Italy with a number of remarkable women leaders from around the world who are deeply engaged in making democracy real in their communities. They had come to Palermo to participate in an international conference promoting civic education. One woman from Argentina talked to me about how few women in her country held positions of power or authority – and how she and others are setting up a website to identify and promote women leaders.

A woman from Northern Ireland spoke about how women in her country were just beginning to find their own voices, and take their rightful place in society.

Many are joining the work force for the first time – and are beginning to organize themselves around issues like expanded child care, and access to loans and credit that have been denied to them for so long.

A young woman from Kuwait told me how proud she was that women in her country had just gained the right to vote only a few weeks earlier. But she is concerned that even the most educated women in Kuwait are not sure that casting a ballot is part of their civic responsibilities. She's working to mobilize women to vote in the upcoming elections – and to teach everyone that being part of the political process is the key to citizenship in a democratic society.

From what I've heard about your discussions over the past few days, these are the kinds of daunting challenges that many of you are grappling with in your own countries, as you struggle to expand economic and political reforms.

We know that establishing and maintaining a democracy is very hard work, for emerging and established democracies alike. It is, in fact, a never ending process. My own country became a democracy over 220 years, and we're still struggling to fulfill its promise.

But over the years, we have all learned some of the same lessons. That strengthening the rule of law, and creating the institutions of civil society, and moving toward a market-based economy are absolutely critical steps. And we must work together to support countries struggling to make progress in these areas. But we also know that democracy can only be sustained when its values are rooted in the hearts, minds, and actions of ordinary men and women. When citizens practice the responsibilities of citizenship in their daily lives. And when parents pass on that tradition to their children by their example, and by the stories they tell them as they put them to bed at night.

Over the years, I've been privileged to travel on behalf of my country, and I've seen firsthand the remarkable work that many of you have been doing – to strengthen civil society, and widen the circle of human rights in your countries.

A few years ago, I visited Mongolia, and saw how the people of that country were moving from a one-party dictatorship to a pluralistic political system. I was told that citizens demonstrated in the streets in freezing weather to advocate for their rights and freedoms. And that when elections were held – 90% of the people voted. That's a voting rate any democracy would envy -- including my own.

In Guatemala and El Salvador, I saw people struggling to make the difficult transition from war to a peaceful, democratic society. I met with women who were on opposite sides of those conflicts – but who became the architects of peace and reconciliation. They realized that what they held in common was far stronger than what had kept them apart. And they led the way as people began to rebuild their communities and put back their lives.

In countries as far apart as Nepal and Bolivia, I've seen how women's lives have been transformed – and empowered – as they gain access to life's basic tools of opportunity, like maternal health care and education. A few months ago in Morocco, I saw those same opportunities open up when I visited a small village nestled at the base of the Atlas mountains.

A non governmental organization was working with the villagers there to help spur new businesses, to encourage girl's literacy programs, and to organize a village cooperative. For the first time, these villagers had the tools and support to shape their own futures.

And in country after country throughout this region, I've seen young people of different cultures and religions spending time together -- learning to overcome stereotypes. Learning to respect each other's differences. Learning to become the leaders of tomorrow.

Many may not have heard your stories of progress and success -- whether it's expanding voting rights; strengthening the institutions of civil society; ensuring greater economic and political opportunities for women and ethnic minorities; or teaching the lessons of democracy to the next generation of citizens. But the world should know that while we all face different struggles, we speak the universal language of democracy and freedom. The overwhelming passage of the "Right to Democracy" resolution by the UN Commission on Human Rights a few months ago confirms that democracy is a fundamental human right -- and the only path to peace and prosperity.

So I hope that this historic conference will bring attention to the remarkable work that you are doing to nurture and sustain democracy in your own countries. But I also hope this gathering will help forge a new global community of democracies that can support each other in the years ahead.

We cannot minimize the formidable challenges each one of you is facing today. But nor should we underestimate the benefits that will come with increased international support and cooperation on your behalf.

Last year, in addressing the citizens of Poland, President Clinton said that "the struggle for democracy is never over, it must be fought every day." I want to thank all of you for the invaluable work you do, every single day, to make democracy real in your own countries, and around the world. Thank you.

The Washington Post

SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 1997

c

Feminists on the March in Traditional Yemen

By John Lancaster

Washington Post Foreign Service

ARHAB AL HINA, Yemen—It is hard to imagine a more unlikely outpost of women's political activism than this tiny village of crude stone houses and hand-tilled fields, lying in a narrow valley almost two hours by four-wheel-drive vehicle from the nearest paved road.

There is no school, no electricity, no television. Most residents can neither read nor write. The main legal authority is not the central government but the local tribal leader, who adjudi-

cates land disputes and criminal cases in the manner of a feudal lord.

For the last several months, however, women here have been subjected to tireless proselytizing on the meaning of democracy by Warda Ghaylan, a 25-year-old mother of three and one of the few village women with any formal education. Ghaylan is a foot soldier in a nationwide effort to boost women's participation in Sunday's national parliamentary elections, the second since North and South Yemen were merged in 1990 after decades of warfare.

"I tell them, 'Your vote is the key to the future

of your children,' " said Ghaylan, a graceful woman in a floral-print robe, her gleaming white teeth contrasting vividly with her black head scarf. "Yes, they listen to me, but sometimes when they hear that I've come to talk to them about the elections, they hide. They think people will come in big cars and take them away to vote in a faraway place."

Notwithstanding such challenges, a beguiling experiment in representative government has begun in this tradition-bound Muslim country of 14 million people—an isolated, otherworldly

See YEMEN, A20, Col. 1

Women in Remote Villages Urged to Vote in Tradition-Bound Yemen

YEMEN, From A1

place where men while away afternoons chewing a mildly narcotic plant called khat and rarely appear in public without a curved dagger strapped to their waists.

It is an experiment, moreover, in which women are playing a prominent role. Yemeni feminists in veils and billowy black robes are organizing voter registration drives, fielding female candidates and even cutting political deals with conservative tribal chiefs and the country's largest Islamic party, the Yemeni Islah Party.

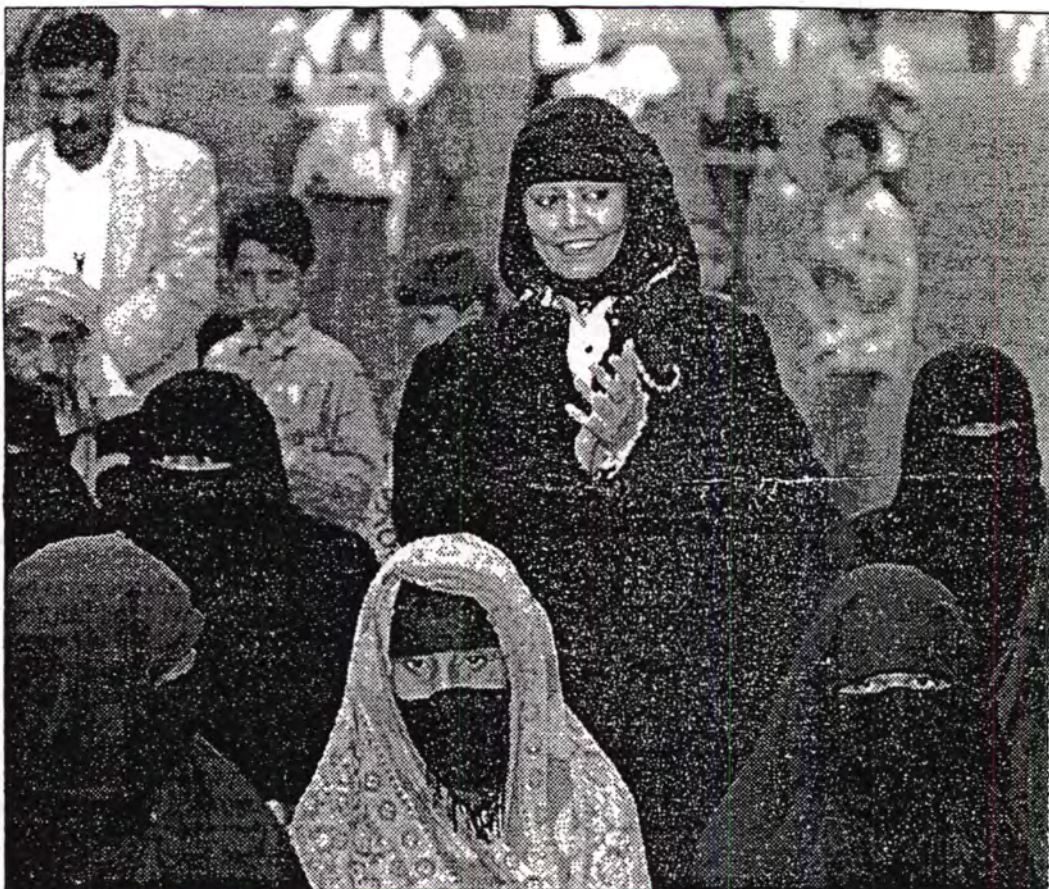
The outcome could reverberate well beyond Yemen's borders. In a region where political life is dominated by dictators, monarchs and Islamic fundamentalists, democracy advocates look to Yemen as a potential bright spot. Saudi Arabia and other autocratic neighbors, meanwhile, see it as a bad example that could weaken their grip on power.

"I think we are having a unique experience in the Arab world," said Abdel-Karim Iryani, a Yale-educated biogeneticist and computer aficionado—he is especially fond of Yemen's home page on the World Wide Web—who serves as the country's foreign minister.

Situated on the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula at the entrance to the Red Sea, Yemen seems closer in spirit to Mogadishu than Monticello. One of the poorest Arab countries, Yemen is famously anarchic, to the point where government officials sometimes have to seek permission from local sheiks when crossing tribal boundaries. Many tribes consider the taking of hostages, including Western tourists, an honorable way of settling disputes with the government.

Only three years ago, the former South Yemen tried to secede from the north, bombarding the capital city, Sanaa, with Scud missiles in a month-long civil war. Relations between north and south are still so strained that the largest southern opposition party, the Yemeni Socialist Party, is boycotting Sunday's election.

Nor is the central government a model of political enlightenment. The government of President Ali Abdallah Salih, who has ruled for



BY ALI JAREKI

One of the few women running for a seat in parliament in Yemen applauds at a campaign rally in Sanaa.

nearly 20 years, stands accused of numerous human rights abuses.

Women face their own problems. Roughly 80 percent of Yemeni women are illiterate, compared with 35 percent of men; the country's limited supply of secondary schools is largely reserved for boys.

Such disparities are reflected in political life. Just two of 301 members of parliament are women. During the last elections in 1993, the 43 female candidates encountered so much hostility that only three have chosen to run again. This year, only 16 of more than 2,000 candidates are women; most of them are running as independents because major parties refuse to back them.

None of that deters Raufa Hassan, 38, a university professor who directs a voter-education project for the Arab Democratic Institute in Sanaa with backing from the European Union.

For Hassan, who holds a doctorate in communication from the University of Paris, the trick is to focus on the long term. "We tell them, 'Even though voting isn't going to get you anywhere . . . it's going to be good for your kids,'" she said.

Yemen's experiment with democracy happened almost by chance. The unification of the conservative north and the socialist south left Salih and his ruling party, the General People's Congress, on top. So the northern leaders sought to placate the south by granting more power to opposition parties. Tribal leaders, meanwhile, have begun to learn the art of ward politics, promising to deliver votes in exchange for roads, schools and water projects.

Despite weak representation in parliament, women are not entirely powerless. Earlier this month, for example, the highest-ranking woman in Yemen's government, Undersec-

retary of Information Amat Aleem Sosowa, was horrified to learn that parliament had passed legislation lifting the ban on marriage for girls under 15. So she contacted the legal adviser to Salih, who obligingly sent the law back to parliament without his signature.

Even the Islah party, whose extremist wing has barred the use of Western musical instruments in its campaign jingles, has been signing up women voters in its strongholds—betting that most of them will vote as their husbands do.

Saudi Arabia has taken a dim view of the democratic goings-on next door. At a January meeting in Tunisia, the Saudi interior minister, Prince Nayef, urged his Yemeni counterpart to cancel the parliamentary elections as a threat to stability in the region, according to a senior Yemeni official and Western diplomats.

The involvement of women in politics is especially disturbing to Saudi Arabia—a country so conservative that it does not permit women to drive—and other autocratic states on the Arabian Peninsula.

The center of the get-out-the-vote effort in Yemen is the Arab Democratic Institute, Hassan's organization, which has dispatched women field coordinators to the 83 voting districts with the lowest turnout by women in the 1993 elections.

One such coordinator is Nabila Hassan Saleh, who works out of her village near Taiz, a bustling mountain city about 100 miles south of Sanaa. Draped from head to toe in black cloth, Saleh meets regularly with local women to explain the basics of democracy.

Saleh and another, similarly attired coordinator, Samira Khassem Salem, recently invited a foreign visitor to sit in on a session under the watchful eye of Saleh's elderly father in Saleh's house.

At first, the listeners expressed befuddlement. "We are goatherds and women," said Fatemah Gorham, a 35-year-old mother of eight in a bright red head scarf. "How can we vote? We can't read and write."

But the two women patiently pressed on. "You say you're a goatherd, but you are human," Salem told Gorham. "Do you have any demands?"

"I want cheap sugar, I want low prices," Gorham replied, warming to the topic. "I have a hundred demands—water, electricity, education."

"The man you vote for, ask him, 'What will you do for me when you go to parliament?'" Salem urged.

But another woman was doubtful as she recalled her experience during the last parliamentary election. "They told us they would give us sugar and wheat," she said, cradling a sleeping toddler. "We were so pleased that I took my daughters and we voted. But we didn't even get soap."

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Title: VOTING RITES: YEMEN STEERS A PATH TOWARD
DEMOCRACY, WITH SOME SURPRISES; ISLAMIST PARTY
BUSES WOMEN TO THE POLLS, AND SHEIKS BACK
SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT; BUT MEN RETAIN THE CLOUT
Authors: Daniel Pearl Staff Reporter of The Wall Street Journal
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Abstract: Yemen is ahead of most of its neighbors in moving toward
democracy, and the preparations for the country's second
parliamentary elections in Apr 1997 show how democracy
might really work in the Arab world. Tribes, rather than
resisting elections, adapt to them by acting like Western-style
pressure groups, and Islamists embrace women's voting rights,
if doing so increases their clout.

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Article Text:

HAJJAH, Yemen — Ask most Arab leaders about the obstacles to democracy, and they will mention tribalism, Islamic fundamentalism and the thorny question of whether women should be allowed to vote. But consider what happens when Raufa Hassan, Yemen's most outspoken feminist, organizes get-out-the-vote meetings among women in the most backward parts of this conservative Arab country. Local tribal leaders give enthusiastic support. Yemen's Islamist party, Islah, praises her and sends its own female activists hiking up jagged mountainsides in full veil to preach the benefits of voting to goat-herding women.

'Everybody is helping us. For now, we have common goals,' says Dr. Hassan, a fast-talking, 38-year-old university professor who achieved renown in Yemen in the 1970s by delivering television news broadcasts without a veil. 'If democrats do not work within the tribes, it's their mistake.'

Yemen is ahead of most of its neighbors in moving toward democracy, and the preparations for the country's second parliamentary elections next month show how democracy might really work in the Arab world. Tribes, rather than resisting elections, adapt to them by acting like Western-style pressure groups. Islamists embrace women's voting rights — if doing so increases their clout. At the same time, women rarely challenge male ascendancy when they vote.

They will if Dr. Hassan has her way, though. Dr. Hassan is training her young charges to take part in tribal affairs; currently, it is considered unusual for a woman even to enter the sitting rooms where sheiks make decisions for their tribes. The nonpartisan Arab Democratic Institute, which she helped start, plans to bankroll seven women candidates for the 301-seat Parliament, which has two women, and Dr. Hassan is trying to convince the Islah party to run a woman.

It wouldn't be the first unusual occurrence in Yemen, a land where ancient mud skyscrapers rise inexplicably to the sky, where the Arabic word for 'OK' means 'no' and where the biggest natural resource isn't oil but an intoxicating plant called qat.

Democracy had unusual roots here. Conservative north Yemen and socialist south Yemen warred for decades before uniting in 1990. Allowing multiple parties, with women voting, was a way to bring southerners on board. That effort hasn't always been a success. After the first elections in 1993, southern separatists tried to break away, but were routed by the north in a brief civil war. Many southerners now complain bitterly about dominance by the tribal north, where women had much less freedom. And the southern Yemen Socialist Party is boycotting next month's elections.

The elections haven't helped the government assert much control over tribes, either. Tribal representatives won most of the parliamentary seats in 1993. Highways near the capital, Sana'a, are dotted with homemade traffic barriers where Kalashnikov-wielding tribesmen sometimes stop government cars. Tribal areas have their own court systems: The sheik and the families often work out compensation for a murder. Sheiks typically collect taxes and recruit soldiers. Some tribes kidnap Westerners when they want to pressure the government to reroute a highway or fund a water project.

Nor have elections threatened Ali Abdullah Saleh's two-decade-long hold on the presidency. He was elected by the new Parliament in 1994, and his People's General Congress party controls Yemen's television and radio stations and army. He has had little trouble imposing wrenching economic reforms on Yemen.

But the rival Islah party, which seeks stricter application of Islamic law, did win 62 seats in Parliament in 1993. Islah did so in part by busing women to the polls, and last summer, during voter registration for the April 27 election, Islah was the most active party in signing women up to vote. 'They assume they'll vote like their husbands,' says Renaud Detalle of the French Center for Yemeni Studies in Sana'a.

One of the unsuccessful independent candidates in 1993 was Dr. Hassan, a liberal professor from a family of traditional Islamic judges. At 12 years old, the age her mother had conceived her, Raufa Hassan was giving literacy lessons to the elderly under the guidance of an early Yemeni feminist. At 30, she was earning a doctorate in social communications from the University of Paris by spending months in remote tribal villages to study the effects of television. Between starting Sana'a University's Empirical Research and Women's Studies Center and running a host of nonprofit groups, she says she hasn't had time to get married.

To Dr. Hassan, the key issue is giving women more political power. Tribal government works fine, she says, except for excluding women, and she espouses democracy largely because it helps her build support from Westerners. She ran for Parliament in part to write a book about her experiences. One that stood out was a campaign rally in which a veiled woman started charging up from the back, shouting that 'the voice of woman is haram' — or forbidden. Dr. Hassan handed her a microphone to amplify the irony.

The 1993 elections inspired a new cadre of democracy advocates. Thousands of

volunteers monitored the elections, though the government declined to sanction official monitors. Afterward, Dr. Hassan joined with the group's leaders – including a traditional Islamic lawyer and an American-educated businessman – to form the Arab Democratic Institute, or ADI.

Dr. Hassan proved a wily fund-raiser, to the point that other Yemeni women gripe about her monopolizing foreign contributions. As part of a successful bid for Dutch funding to expand her women's center, she had students occupy her office to make it so cramped, the Dutch ambassador had nowhere to sit during a visit. ADI's proposal for a women's voting project was about to be rejected by the European Union when Dr. Hassan made a long telephone appeal to a female EU official she had never met. The EU gave the project \$500,000.

'I'm getting everyone to support me, but I'm not focusing that much on the elections,' Dr. Hassan says. 'I want to create women leaders in little villages.'

ADI placed radio advertisements that made no mention of the elections, merely touting good pay for educated women who were willing to travel. The 11 women selected became regional organizers and fanned out across the country to hire local women as 'constituency coordinators' at \$200 a month.

Many of the 79 coordinators who arrived in Sana'a for the first meeting had never eaten in a restaurant or used a flush toilet, let alone spoken publicly. As fathers and husbands took care of babies in an adjacent room, the women walked through imaginary election discussions with strangers. To get her regional organizers used to dealing with men, Dr. Hassan had them sit in alternating seats for a televised ceremony so male dignitaries had no choice but to mingle when they arrived.

Meeting with village women can be hazardous without men's approval, ADI coordinators soon found. One coordinator says she relied on a local woman to set up a meeting in a eastern Yemen village, but the woman's father found out, stormed into the meeting and beat his daughter in front of everybody. Other coordinators hold meetings by inviting women to soda parties, or sneaking some time at village weddings.

More often than not, though, sheiks have given their support. Khadija Saleh Ali Oman and her husband, Abdul Mohammad Al Gofli, knocked on the door of one sheik and were invited in for lunch. She explained the project, and the sheik immediately rounded up some women for a meeting. The sheik later explained that the support of women voters could help if his son wanted to run for office. Also, a high voter turnout could help the region win more food benefits or schools.

'The sheiks are under pressure because people say 'They're not doing anything for us,' says Abdo Ali Othman, a Sana'a University sociologist who studies tribes. So sheiks are becoming more open to outside help.

The women can be a bigger challenge, coordinators found. Only one of 10 rural women in Yemen can read or write, partly because men don't want to send teenage daughters to school with boys. In the afternoons, while many rural men chat and chew qat, women carry water, herd cattle and grind wheat. Bearing more than a dozen children is considered a reasonable life goal. Many women had no idea their members of Parliament were elected, ADI coordinators reported.

In one report from Hajjah, Ms. Ali Oman describes meeting 25 women of various ages, all listing their occupation as 'housewife.' Those who were registered to vote said their husbands were holding the registration certificates, because the women might lose them. One woman said, 'How can we take part in the elections when we are like

animals, not able to read and write?' Ms. Ali Oman told them they had a right to vote and could even use party symbols, like a flower or a sword, if they couldn't write the names of candidates.

Tribesmen in Hajjah see no danger the women will demand changes in their status if they vote. 'No way. I dare them to demand it,' says Abdullah Mohammed Ishaak, a village sheik, resting his hand on a ceremonial dagger and his head on a sitting-room cushion. Mr. Ishaak continues: 'This is the reality here: If a husband or brother tells a wife to go and register to vote, they'll go and do it. And if he says don't do it, she won't do it.'

But in one district visited by ADI, women are organizing a candidates' debate. Sitting beside Mr. Ishaak is Ahmed Abdulrahman Jahaf, whose daughter, an ADI coordinator, has been encouraged to run for Parliament. He says he doesn't object, but worries how 'backward' villagers would react. Also, an educated girl is more attractive as a bride, but a girl who is working commands a smaller dowry, he says. 'The nature of women leads us to the conclusion that a woman's right place is home,' Mr. Jahaf says.

The Islah party also has mixed feelings about women as candidates. Islah recently allowed the head of its women's division to give a brief speech at the party conference — then had her escorted back to a separate room. And it presented a paper at an ADI seminar saying women could be elected to any position — except president. Still, that represented a 'major change in attitude,' according to Jamal Al-Adimi, an Islamic lawyer who is directing ADI's women's project.

Mr. Adimi's sister is among Islah's new crop of female activists in the city of Hodeidah. But when asked if they will consider running for Parliament this year, she and her colleagues glance at their male bosses and say the time isn't right. 'Allah did not prohibit women to be voters, or to be candidates,' explains Mohammad Qahtan, Islah's political director. But 'there is another point of view within the Islah that still rejects such a change.'

The ruling People's General Congress also has been tentative. One month ago, during a conference in Sana'a, party leaders promised to work for at least 20 women in Parliament. 'They said the same things five years ago. I swear it makes me so sleepy,' Dr. Hassan commented, half-listening to a speech from the back row. Sure enough, this week only two women appeared on the ruling party's list of 221 candidates. Confronted by Dr. Hassan at a dinner reception Tuesday, party official Mohamed Al Tayeb told her there weren't enough qualified women to choose from.

The change of heart is, in a way, a sign of Yemen's budding democracy. The top parties recently had an agreement not to compete with each other this year in most districts. But now that agreement is breaking down. 'We do not want to lose anywhere,' Mr. Tayeb says.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 22, 1998

His Excellency Ali Abdullah Saleh
President of the Republic of Yemen
Sanaa

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of the American people, I want to congratulate you and the Government of Yemen on the success of the Emerging Democracies Forum held in Sanaa. The President and I are greatly impressed by the serious commitment the participants have made in tackling the twin challenges of democratization and economic reform. The Sanaa declaration stands as an unambiguous social contract between the participating governments and their peoples.

Please accept my thanks for the opportunity to address such an inspiring gathering, and I very much appreciated your closing statement on the rights and the role of women in political and economic life.

I would like to commend you personally for your vision in hosting this very important meeting. You have the support and admiration of the American people as Yemen continues its commitment to democratic rights and principles, and shares this commitment with others.

Sincerely,


Hillary Rodham Clinton

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الموافق :
المرفقات :



الجمهورية اليمنية
مجلس الوزراء
البريد الإلكتروني

26 December 1998

Mr. Leslie Campbell
Regional Director, Middle East & North Africa
National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
1717 Massachusetts Avenue, Fifth Floor
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Campbell,

Let me first of all thank you for your recent visit to Yemen and for your efforts in support of Yemen's on-going democratic transition. The Emerging Democracies Forum that we are proposing will be an important step in helping to consolidate Yemen's own transition, as well as that of the other participating countries.

The Government of Yemen is, as we discussed, very supportive of this endeavor. In that respect, I want to communicate to you and NDI President Mr. Ken Wollack our every intention to work in cooperation with the Institute. As prime Minister and pursuant to our discussions, the Government of Yemen will take all necessary steps in support of the summit, including but not limited to:

- transpiration of delegations in Yemen;
- venue of the summit and related arrangements;
- hospitality; and
- security arrangements.

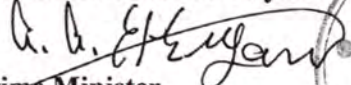
As I wrote in my letter to you of last fall, the Government of Yemen will continue to rely on NDI to provide their resources and expertise for the actual organization of the summit itself, and in soliciting the cooperation of international support and participation. This will include the country delegations to be invited, which we can submit, as you suggested, to the consideration of the International Advisory Board.

I believe our next steps will be the designation of the Yemeni counterpart who will represent myself and my delegate Minister Tayeb in day-to-day workings with NDI, as well as the appointment of the International Advisory Board and its chairperson.

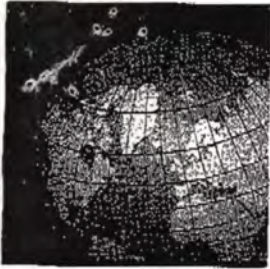
I think you once again for your support to Yemen and our democratic experience, and I look forward to working with you on this very exciting and challenging project.

Sincerely,

Dr. Abdul Karim Al-Eryani


Prime Minister
Government of Yemen



*file Yemen
conf'ce*

EMERGING DEMOCRACIES FORUM

THE NATIONAL
DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

AND

THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

To: Melanne S. Verveer

From: Ken Wollack /KW

Date: July 8, 1999

I thought you would be interested in receiving the declaration issued by the participants at the Emerging Democracies Forum in Yemen. Sixteen countries were represented by: government officials, including heads of state and government, and cabinet ministers; governing and opposition party leaders; parliamentarians, including speakers of legislatures; and representatives of civil society, labor and business.

The conference was an unusual gathering of diverse participants and countries, most of which are carrying out their democratic transitions in relative obscurity. Perhaps even more important, however, was the content of the Sana'a Declaration which went well beyond broad democratic principles that are commonplace at conferences like this. The document gives specific ways in which to apply these principles. Promoting civil society, for example, would include tax-exempt status for civic organizations and legislation which would not restrict the activities of these groups.

It was also significant that the participants called upon the donor community and international financial institutions to use democratic criteria in determining aid, loan and debt reduction policy.

As I mentioned, the First Lady's remarks at the final plenary session made a real impact. They flowed naturally from the previous discussion on women's political participation, creating the impression that the First Lady was listening in on our conversation. About 500 people were present in the conference room when the video was played and the speech was broadcast on Yemen television and many other media outlets in the region. Her involvement, albeit on tape, was warmly received and greatly appreciated.

We are hoping that the international community will take note of the outcome of this Forum. For our part, NDI is planning a series of follow-on activities in individual countries that can build upon the sharing of experiences and ideas at the Sana'a meeting.

Many thanks for your interest and support.



EMERGING DEMOCRACIES FORUM

SANA'A DECLARATION

June 30, 1999

THE NATIONAL
DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

AND

THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Sponsored by:

THE UNITED NATIONS
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

AND

THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN

In Partnership with the Governments of:

THE NETHERLANDS

THE UNITED KINGDOM

THE UNITED STATES

And the:

CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR
ORGANIZATION

IRISH AID

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR
DEMOCRACY

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR
INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

WESTMINSTER FOUNDATION
FOR DEMOCRACY

WORLD BANK

We who attended the Emerging Democracies Forum in Sana'a, Yemen from June 27 to 30, 1999 from 16 countries, assembled to acknowledge our democratic achievements, to address common challenges we face in the transition to full democracy and to reaffirm our commitment to democratic rights and principles. The Forum was a unique gathering, bringing together a diverse group of participants and countries whose democratic advances are less known.

We recognize that the transition process is not complete and that much needs to be done to consolidate our democratic systems and to implement further political and economic reforms. While we are proud to have joined the growing community of democracies, the international community has tended to focus on countries that are considered strategically more important or are in crisis. However, democratic progress in our states contributes to peace, stability and prosperity both within and beyond our borders.

Reflecting the importance of all sectors of society in this endeavour, the participants at the Forum included government officials, members of governing and opposition parties, and representatives of labor, business and civic groups from Benin, Bolivia, El Salvador, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Macedonia, Malawi, Mali, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal and Yemen. We represent a diversity of democratic experience, but our attendance at this Forum demonstrates the universality of the democratic idea. This group of nations with different traditions, cultures and historical experiences was brought together by a shared commitment to democracy and a belief that the promise of economic prosperity enjoyed by all citizens is more likely realized in a democratic political environment based on respect for human rights, popular participation and the rule of law. Further we share a commitment to:

- pursue economic reforms and secure fundamental workers' rights, while making every effort to educate and build widespread consensus for these goals;
- improve protections for human rights for all our people;
- hold regular free and fair elections, with special attention to the need to build public confidence in the process;
- develop our legislatures as an essential instrument for broad public participation and representation as well as for policy debate and oversight of government;
- empower democratic governance at local levels;
- deepen our commitment to, and implement measures to ensure, the full participation of women in political life;

- ensure that the rights of minorities are respected and that every effort is made to engage marginalized groups in the political process;
- broaden the democratic experience by adopting all reasonable means to encourage public access to, and participation in, the policy making process;
- support the strengthening of civil society;
- uphold the freedom of the press;
- address the urgent challenge of corruption by instituting meaningful reforms, including those that increase governmental transparency; and
- foster judicial independence, enhance public access to legal redress and ensure that the laws are fairly applied to all.

These are the principles that brought us to Yemen, which we discussed in the context of our specific experiences. Following are some examples of measures recommended by Forum participants that give concrete expression to our shared democratic principles.

The successful implementation of economic reforms is advanced by:

- transparent and inclusive decision making, the involvement of civil servants, the public, labor, business groups and political parties in the design and implementation of reforms;
- a social safety net to meet basic human needs and/or a complementary poverty alleviation program; and
- a recognition of the role of the civic sector in the implementation of economic reforms, including the use of such groups to help deliver government-funded social services.

Public confidence in elections is enhanced by:

- working towards the establishment of independent election commissions that are nonpartisan or politically balanced;
- regulating, by legislation, government financing of elections to ensure that they are fair and equitable for all parties; and
- inviting election observers, whether domestic or international, to mount more comprehensive efforts, including the monitoring of registration and campaign periods;

The legitimacy of parties and legislatures is advanced by:

- the adoption by political parties of internal democratic procedures, ongoing training of political leaders and elected officials, and public accountability and transparency;
- the implementation of legislative procedures that ensure public access to plenary and committee meetings, the holding of public hearings, and the provision of committee documents and bills to the public.

Public participation in democratic decision making is enhanced by:

- providing for private ownership of media and ensuring the impartiality of state-owned media through independent boards or other means;
- ensuring that governments and political parties take measures to increase the number of women in parliament and appoint women to key government posts;

- conducting civic education in schools, nongovernmental organizations, parties and the media to address cultural attitudinal and legal barriers to the political and economic participation of women;
- encouraging governments and legislatures to enhance the viability of nongovernmental organizations, including removing legal barriers and providing tax exempt status, and engaging non governmental organizations in policy debates;

The achievement of good governance, the improvement of administration, controlling corruption and strengthening the rule of law can be advanced by:

- instituting public information mechanisms, such as budget transparency, freedom of information laws and the publication of regulations;
- depoliticizing and professionalizing the civil service;
- implementing a comprehensive program to fight corruption, including institutions such as politically independent anti-corruption commissions, ombudsmen and auditors general, codes of conduct and financial disclosure rules, and open procurement processes.

As a result of this conference, we hope to establish mechanisms between our countries to continue the sharing of ideas and experiences through consultations, exchange programs, an interactive web site and other means. We also look forward to working together in a variety of international fora to promote democratic principles and practices. We intend to support the efforts of other countries that are beginning the process of democratic transition.

The international community should renew its commitment to countries working to build democratic institutions and processes and dedicate the resources for this task. In particular, the donor community and the international financial institutions, in considering loans, aid and debt policy, should give priority to those countries implementing political as well as economic reforms. These political reforms would include measures that advance popular participation, build public trust in elections and legislatures, and enhance government transparency and accountability.

ooo0ooo

file Yemen

MEMORANDUM

To: Melanne Verveer
From: Stephenie Foster *sf*
Date: May 27, 1999
Re: Yemen

This memo sets forth (1) a brief synopsis of the role of women in Yemeni electoral politics, (2) examples of programmatic work ongoing in Yemen, focusing on the role of women in politics, and (3) key contacts in Yemen.

ROLE OF WOMEN IN YEMENI ELECTORAL POLITICS

Women in Yemen have the right to vote and to run for office. Since Yemeni unification in 1990, two elections have been held for the 301 seat parliament -- one in 1993 and one in 1997. In both elections, two women were elected to Parliament, although the circumstances differed in each election.

In 1993, only 18% of registered voters in Yemen were women.¹ Women's participation was low, with approximately 15% of women registered actually voting. Of the 3,181 candidates for Parliament, only 44 were women. Only two women -- both from the former South Yemen -- were elected to Parliament. Both were nominated by the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), which boycotted the 1997 elections. The party receiving the majority of women's votes, however, was the Islah Party, which is widely seen as the most conservative of Yemeni's three major parties on social issues.

Leading up to the 1997 elections, Islah's success in motivating women voters led to a larger emphasis overall on registering women for the 1997 elections. An additional 825,984 women were added to voter lists in 1996 in preparation for the 1997 election. As a result, in 1997, women made up 28% of those registered to vote.² Approximately 60% of registered voters actually voted in 1997.

However, the number of women running for Parliament decreased in 1997. Of the approximately 2,000 candidates, only 23 were women. The General People's Congress (GPC), Yemen's ruling party, was the only major party to nominate women candidates, and both of its candidates won. Again, both were from the former South Yemen.

¹ The total number of registered voters in 1993 was 2,694,877, of which 2,216,311 were men and 478,566 were women.

² The total number of registered voters in 1997 was 4,637,728, of which 3,333,178 were men and 1,304,550 were women.

In both elections, the majority of women candidates were independents. While Islah made major efforts to register women, it put forth no women candidates in either election.³

PROGRAMMATIC WORK ENCOURAGING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

Numerous NGOs are working throughout Yemen on programs designed to increase women's participation. This memo is not intended to catalogue all of those programs; I am sure that you will hear about many of them in your preparation for Mrs. Clinton's trip. Instead, I will summarize my experiences in Yemen, which I believe provide a good snapshot of the types of work ongoing there.

Since March 1997, I have participated in three programs in Yemen, two sponsored by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and one sponsored by the Arab Democratic Institute (ADI), a group formed by Yemenis in March 1996 to work towards building democracy and civil society in Yemen. ADI's activities have included election monitoring, promoting women's participation and voter education.

March 1997 Training for Women Parliamentary Candidates: In July 1996, ADI began a women's program, under the leadership of Dr. Raufa Hassan and Mr. Jamal Adimi with the goal of increasing women's participation in Yemeni politics and elections. Specifically, ADI hoped to encourage more women to vote and to increase the number of women in the Parliament. This program was funded by the European Union.

ADI recruited, hired and trained approximately 70 women to serve as geographically based coordinators, with the responsibility to organize discussions with women about the upcoming 1997 election, the importance of voting and their electoral rights. ADI targeted 63 districts (or constituencies) where less than 500 women registered in 1993. The program reached thousands of women.

A second focus was to promote women candidates for Parliament. In late March 1997, ADI hosted a three-day training program for all women candidates and their campaign managers -- regardless of political party. All of the major parties and the Yemeni government participated in the program. I was the main trainer for the three-day session.

I was asked to participate in this program because ADI was very impressed with the role that women voters played in the 1996 re-election of President Clinton and Vice President Gore. Raufa Hassan was interested in having the participants hear about my role as the National Director of Women's Outreach for the campaign, which she had learned from NDI.

I structured the training to focus on:

³ While the GPC and the YSP have nominated women candidates, the Islah Party has never done so. However, for the first time, Islah recently nominated seven women to its party central committee.

- (1) how to develop a message,
- (2) how to organize a campaign, and
- (3) how to marshal resources.

An important outgrowth of the training session was the development of a Women Candidate Support Fund -- supported primarily by the Yemeni government -- to provide women candidates with much needed resources. During the March 1997 session, the participants developed a model budget for a campaign, and that was used as the basis for the Women Candidate Support Fund. The Fund covered the purchase of campaign materials and subsidized the cost of related expenses for women candidates. A group, comprised of representatives of the major parties, as well as Dr. Hassan, served as the Fund's steering committee.

An additional benefit of the March 1997 training program was the heightened media attention to women's participation because of my visit. I did numerous media interviews, in which I spoke about the importance of women voters. In addition, I was asked to meet with President Saleh, and I used that meeting as an opportunity to talk about the importance of increased women's participation.

Under Tab 1, I attach the program for the session and a Wall Street Journal profile of Dr. Hassan.

Observer Delegation to the April 1997 Parliamentary Elections: I was a member of NDI's observer delegation for the 1997 elections. As I am sure you will read in depth elsewhere, there was increased participation by women voters, pollworkers and election monitors. The delegation also found that much work remained to be done to solidify women's role, particularly with respect to increasing the number of women candidates. Under Tab 2, I attach a Washington Post piece on the role of Yemeni women in the 1997 election.

Trainer in May 1998 NDI Political Party Training Sessions: In May 1998, former Manitoba Prime Minister Howard Pawley and I conducted two political party training sessions for NDI in Yemen:

- (1) one for the Islah Party entitled "The Development of an Effective Party Caucus," and
- (2) one for the General People's Congress entitled "Increasing the Role of Women in the Party."

Each session lasted two days, and was attended by members of Parliament, party leaders and activists. Each session had been specifically requested by the political party attending.

The goal of the Islah program was to give party leaders tools to become a more effective opposition party and to help the party strengthen the relationship between its Parliamentary caucus and its party's leadership. The objectives were (1) to give concrete examples of how opposition parties in established democracies have used legislative proposals -- even if unsuccessful -- to their party's political benefit electorally, and (2) to assist the Islah party

develop skills. Prime Minister Pawley and I conducted workshops to help Islah develop its message and to translate that message into legislative proposals. I used examples from the Democratic Party's experience as the minority party in Congress, and from the 1996 Clinton/Gore campaign.

The goal of the GPC program was to give party leaders the tools to maximize women's participation in the GPC. The objectives of the session were (1) to give GPC leaders concrete examples of how increasing the involvement of women in the political process has been beneficial, and (2) conversely how not involving (or speaking) to women voters can have negative consequences electorally. During this program, Prime Minister Pawley and I conducted workshops to help the GPC leaders develop concrete plans for involving more women in the party, and also strategies for implementing those plans.

Needless to say, these programs heightened interest in women's participation in Yemeni politics, and Prime Minister Pawley and I were interviewed on this subject. The Prime Minister and I also met with President Saleh. During that meeting, we discussed the important signal that Yemen could send to the international community by appointing a woman to a diplomatic posting on behalf of Yemen.

KEY CONTACTS

Each of these people are themselves good contacts, and also can put you in contact with other key women leaders.

Ambassador Abdulwahab Al-Hajjri
Yemeni Ambassador to the United States
2600 Virginia Ave., NW, #705
Washington, DC 20037
(202) 965-4760

The Ambassador has been very helpful to NDI, and other NGOs, in their work in Yemen.

Dr. Raufa Hassan
Professor, Sana'a University
967-1-264245

Prominent woman activist in Yemen. Founder of the Women's Center at Sana'a University. Co-founder of ADI, and director of the women's participation program. Has a very good network of women who have worked with her over many years. Has worked extensively with NDI and other NGOs. In 1993, ran unsuccessfully for Parliament as a GPC candidate. A Wall Street Journal profile is under Tab 1.

Dr. Oras Sultan Naji
Member of Parliament (Aden)
P.O. Box 352 Al-Tahreer
Sana'a
967-1-242765 (office); 967-2-232218 (home)

By training a medical doctor. Was one of the two GPC candidates who won election in 1997. Was a very active participant in the March 1997 ADI training program for women candidates. In 1998, visited the United States on a USIA trip.

Hon. Ammat Al-Aleem Alsoswa
Deputy Minister of Information
Yemen

Highest ranking woman in the Yemeni government. In 1997-8, the Ministry of Information produced a good statistical report on the status of women in Yemen.

Shada Nasser Mahamed
Assistant General Secretary, Election Monitoring Committee
Al-Zubairi Street (near International Bank of Yemen)
Sana'a
967-1-412700/280390.

Prominent woman attorney in Yemen, who is active in The Election Monitoring Committee, a domestic election monitoring group. Has worked with NDI.

Shahedah Tabet Ali Nasher
967-2-232594

One of four women civic coordinators working with NDI, responsible for (1) organizing discussion groups of women in three districts in Aden to discuss issues important to women and (2) working with members of Parliament on how to more effectively address women's concerns. (The member of Parliament in this case is Dr. Oras.) Has also worked with ADI. Will also have contact information for the other three civic coordinators.

Raqia Humaidan
Aden
967-2-232520/253824

Prominent woman attorney; was a judge in South Yemen before unification. Was recently selected by the Yemeni government as one of 10 defense attorneys representing British citizens accused of plots to kill foreign tourists (was the only women attorney selected). Has served as an NDI trainer.

Radia Shamsher Ali
Aden
967-2-232727

Prominent woman attorney, who has been active in various civic efforts in the country. Active in NDI programs.

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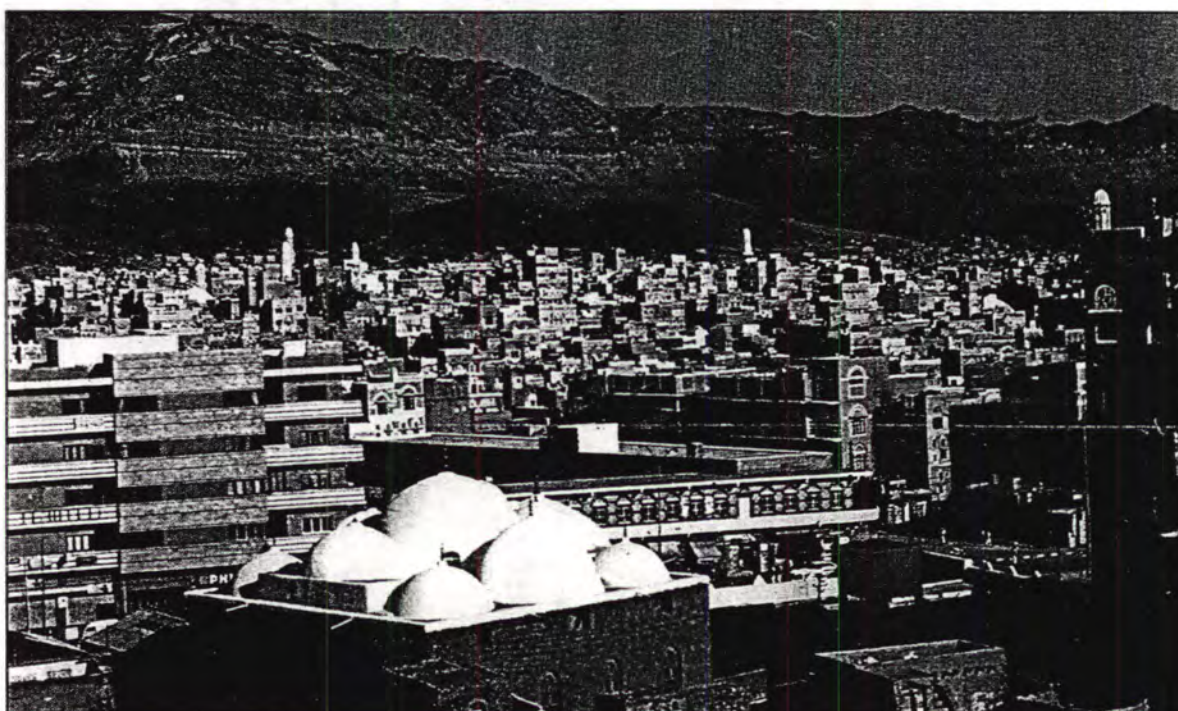
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GONFERENCE

" Challenges of the xxlst Century to Women and Democracy"

Sana'a 27 - 29 May 1997



List of the Candidates (1993 - 1997)

No.	Name	No.	Name	No.	Name
1	Samia Alahmadi	9	Fathia Al-Hethami	17	Waheeba Shaher
2	Mona Basharaheel	10	Faheema Al-Eryani	18	Fatma Al-Awlaqi
3	Amat Al-Razaq Jahaf	11	Narjes Obaad H. Ali	19	Ileredal Dearia
4	Lebnan Saadoon	12	Nadia Al-Aghbari	20	Afrah Saleh
5	Intisar Saeed Ali	13	Afrah Al-Shana	21	Dr. Rawfa Hassan
6	Anisa Al-Herwi	14	Thuria Ahmed Ali	22	Lebnan Shalan
7	Dr. Balqis Al-Hadrani	15	Radia Shamsheeri	23	Wafaa Obaid
8	Khawla Sharaf	16	Taiba Barkat	24	Najeeba Haddad

List of the Participants in the Second Women Candidates Workshop (April 5-7, 1997)

No.	Name	No.	Name	No.	Name
1	Aluf Ba - Hubeira	9	Halimah Abdulqawi	17	Oras Sultan Naji
2	Kifah Abdullah	10	Samira Abdulkelq	18	Samia Al-Kuraidi
3	Marwa Said M. Saleh	11	Mahlia Arumi	19	Bilquis Al-Hadhrani
4	Widad Al-Rumeima	12	Nobila Al-Amri	20	Anisa Al-Harwi
5	Fathia Heithami	13	Kifah Al-Saqqaf	21	Fathia Al-Qudsi
6	Salwa Ajlan	14	Fatma Al-Ashabi	22	Nadia Al-Agbary
7	Fatma Shui Zeila	15	Amal Ali M. Heidar	23	Afrah Al-Sheena
8	Nobila Al-Basir	16	Muna Basharaheel		

List of Governorate Coordinators

No.	Name	Governorate
1	Manal Ahmed Noaman	Sana'a
2	Amat Al-Rahim Amir Al-Din Al-Huthi	Sana'a
3	Najjat Al-Saqqaf	Sana'a
4	Samira Kassim Sallam	Taizz
5	Najjat Al-Sheibani	Al-Hodeidah
6	Wafa Abdullah Obeid	Dhamar
7	Amria Abdullah Taizzi	Ibb
8	Ilham Al-Kibsi	Ibb
9	Amat Al-Sallam Jahhaf	Hajja
10	Naziha Al-Surmi	Mahweet
11	Um Hani Mohammed Sharif	Al-Jawff
12	Hadija Feisal	Sa'ada
13	Ahlam Ali Al-Wasai	Marib

List of Constituency Coordinators

No.	Name	No.	Name	No.	Name
1	Amal Ali Mohammed	32	Fatma Ali Salah Jashman	63	Ifrah Mohammed Faia
2	Amat Al-Malik Ahmed	33	Fatma M. Al-Sadi	64	Bilquis Nasser Futeini
3	Amat Al-Haliq Al-Hauri	34	Afraah Ghalib Al-Thari	65	Bahia Ahmed Al-Wasabi
4	Iptisam Al-Marwani	35	Afraah Hizam Wahban	66	Badria Ahmed Abdullah
5	Iman Al -Nashery	36	Ghania Hamoud Abdullah	67	Taqia Mohammed Salah
6	Iman Abdul-Rahman	37	Huda Ahmed Al-Hadi	68	Jamila G. Al-Kawkabani
7	Ikram A. Al-Masawi	38	Afraah Mohammed Said	69	Hadidja Al-Ammari
8	Dhikra Salah Hanash	39	Iman Mahmoud Al-Sanani	70	Hadidja Al-Dais
9	Bushra Ali Al-Hamdani	40	Hana'a Abdullah Saleh	71	Rahma Ahmed Abdullah
10	Bushra Ali M. Al-Kadri	41	Warda S. K. Al-Ragdan	72	Rasmia Shua'a Arjaf
11	Hahan S. Abdul-Wahab	42	Nobila H. S. Al-Jumali	73	Salwa M. Al-Sheibani
12	Najjat A. Al-Muhtadi	43	Intisar M. Al-Moudh	74	Salam M. Makin
13	Mahia A. Kassim Khalil	44	Qaima H. Al-Arsha'a	75	Samah Ali Al-Zamani
14	Saida Ahmed Mohammed	45	Bushra Ali Al-Aqar	76	Suad Salam Kadab
15	Samira A. Sinan	46	Fathia Y. Hussein	77	Alima Ali Salah
16	Mariam Ali Ahmed Said	47	Sina Hamoud Al-Ulafi	78	Aisha Mahdi Ammar
17	Abida Abdullah Qadab	48	Sheikha Sabai	79	Abeer Salah Mohmmmed
18	Amat Al-Rahim Abbasi	49	Najjat Al-Baidani	80	Fauzca Yahhya Al-Kamdi
19	Fatma Mohammed Hufan	50	Hiyam A.H.Al-Fadhali	81	Fatma Abdullah Sagir
20	Huda Darham Salah	51	Kamila A. Mohammed	82	Shafa'a Hamoud Dahan
21	Najjat Mansour Al-Waji	52	Haifa H. Al-Shami	83	Nowal Ghaleb Ismail
22	Nada Yahhya Al-Madari	53	Latifa M. H. Sharif	84	Nobila Mouqbel
23	Safia Ali Al-Namari	54	Iman Ali S. Al-Bashari	85	Najla Ahmed Salah
24	Hadidja Salah Omar	55	Feiruz Said Hussein	86	Najwa Al-Banus
25	Fatma Ali Hussein	56	Fatma Ali Hajjar	87	Najeeba M. Al-Shami
26	Shoukia M. Ismael	57	Intisar M. Al-Sah'abi	88	Nadhira Ali Auth
27	Fauzea Salah Jiash	58	Iman Abdo Seif M.	89	Intisar Abdul-Karim K.
28	Iptisam Feisal Al-Sharif	59	Amat Al-Lla Wasal	90	Fatima Mohammed Najjar
29	Amat Al-Malik A.Rahman	60	Amat Al-Latif Al-Masri	91	Samah Salah Hadrash
30	Bilquis Hassan	61	Asia M. H. Dammaj	92	Bushra Mohammed Ghaleb
31	Huda Abdullah	62	Ifrah Nasser Al-Futeini	93	Aisha Ali Mudahar
				94	Ifrah Ali Saleh

Conference "Challenges of the XXIst Century to Women and Democracy"

Women's Programme Overview

Arab Democratic Institutes (ADI)

The Arab democratic Institute is a non-government, non-profit making organization and it does not affiliate with any political party.

The ADI was established in March 1993 as a elections monitoring committee aimed to promote democracy and civil society in Yemen. Since then it has been functioning as a democratic institution, first of its kind in Yemen. ADI has been authorized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism on March 23 , 1996 by license no. 60.

In June 1996 the ADI has launched a major programme aiming to introduce internationally recognized

democratic practices to Yemeni electoral procedures, to modify the existing elections law and to reactivate domestic electoral monitoring. Throughout 1996 - 1997 the ADI has developed and implemented four main projects in connection with 1997 Parliamentary elections; the Project for Support and Increase of Women's Participation Rate and the Project for Civic Education. Also the ADI issues a monthly newsletter "Democratic Forum" aimed to promote voter education and to serve as an intellectual forum for political parties and outstanding personalities.

Project for Support and Increase of Women's Participation Rate In the Yemeni Elections

The project is headed by Dr. Raufa Hassan Al-Sharki (Vice-President of the ADI).

Goals of the Project:

1. To increase women's electoral participation through voters civic education and encouragement women to practice their political rights.
2. To support women candidates, combining all efforts to ensure women's success by means of cooperation with political parties and civil society.

To implement these goals, the ADI recruited and trained 13 governorate and 63 constituency coordinators to work in the constituencies with the lowest figures of female participation registered in 1993. Also special training and campaigning have been organized for women candidates of 1997. Different seminars and workshops have been conducted in the framework of the Project, including "Quota System" workshop, "Women's political and Electoral Rights in Islamic Legislation" seminar and other activities.

Women Candidates' Fund (WCF)

Women Candidates' Fund (WCF) has been established during the first women candidates workshop, it is financially independent body, aimed at:

1. Technical and financial support of women candidates.
2. Training of campaigning teams.
3. Design and printing of electioneering materials and elections guides.
4. Documentation of the experience.

Women candidates fund is headed by the executive committee, composed of:

Dr. Amat Al-Razzaq Jahhaf - head of the PGC women's section
Amat Al-Sallam Ali Rajja - head of the "Islah" women's section.
Amat Al-Alim Al-susuwa - chairperson of National Women Committee
Dr. Raufa Hassan Al-Sharki - head of the ADI women's project

WCF Exhibition

WCF Exhibition will be open during the whole period of the conference. Exhibition is to illustrate the role of women in the society and their electoral participation.

The exhibition will display and offer for sale: Works of Yemeni female artists, handicrafts and embroidery of Yemeni women, audio-cassettes of Yemeni female singers, video-cassettes about electoral activities, pieces of applied and fine arts created by Yemeni women.

All funds raised from the exhibition items fair will be transferred to the WCF.

Goals of the Conference

- I. Evaluation of the Project for Support and Increase of Women's Participation Rate in the Yemeni elections.
- II. Discussion of the problem faced by women candidates in 1993/1197 Elections.
- III. Working out action - plan for women candidates empowerment in 2001 Parliament.

Future Prospects

The conference is to lay the foundation for the activities during the coming four-year period till the next Parliamentary elections. Participants of the conference will produce final report and major programme for the next stage of the electoral programme aimed to secure women's equality in the field of political and electoral participation. Different aspects of this programme will be drawn by three main groups of the participants: experts, candidates and coordinators. The conference will issue guidelines for design of civic education programme, women candidates training and means of support of future women candidates.

PROGRAMME OF THE CONFERENCE

First day - May 27. 1997

Opening Ceremony

WCF Exhibition Inauguration

Evaluation of the current Project and related activities (General and group sessions)

Discussion of the group work findings

Report Drafting

Second day - May 28, 1997

Work-plan till 2001: objectives and outlines (General and group sessions)

Women candidates' empowerment for 2001 elections (group work)

Legal aspects: quota system and open constituencies (group work)

Debate on the action plan for the coming period

Third day - May 29, 1997

Plenary meeting: finalizing of the action-plan till 2001

Closing Ceremony

Certificates of Merit award

Voting Rites

Yemen Steers a Path Toward Democracy, With Some Surprises

Islamist Party Buses Women
To the Polls, and Sheiks
Back Suffrage Movement

But Men Retain the Clout

By DANIEL PEARL

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

HAJIAH, Yemen—Ask most Arab leaders about the obstacles to democracy, and they will mention tribalism, Islamic fundamentalism and the thorny question of whether women should be allowed to vote.

But consider what happens when Raufa Hassan, Yemen's most outspoken feminist, organizes get-out-the-vote meetings among women in the most backward parts of this conservative Arab country. Local tribal leaders give enthusiastic support. Yemen's Islamist party, Islah, praises her and sends its own female activists hiking on jagged mountainsides in full veil to teach the benefits of voting to goatherding women.

"Everybody is helping us. For now, we have common goals," says Dr. Hassan, a 38-year-old university professor who has achieved renown in Yemen in the 1970s delivering television news broadcasts without a veil. "Islamist democrats do not work within the system, it's their stake."

Yemen is ahead of most of its neighbors in moving toward democracy, and the preparations for the country's second parliamentary elections next month show how democracy might really look in the Arab world. Tribes, rather than resisting elections, adapt to them by acting like Western-style pressure groups. Islamists embrace women's voting rights—if doing so increases their clout. At the same time, women rarely challenge male ascendancy when they vote.



Raufa Hassan

though. Dr. Hassan is training her young charges to take part in tribal affairs; currently, it is considered unusual for a woman even to enter the sitting rooms where sheiks make decisions for their tribes. The nonpartisan Arab Democratic Institute, which she helped start, plans to bankroll seven women candidates for the 301-seat Parliament, which has two women, and Dr. Hassan is trying to convince the Islah party to run a woman.

It wouldn't be the first unusual occurrence in Yemen, a land where ancient mud skyscrapers rise inexplicably to the sky, where the Arabic word for "OK" means "no" and where the biggest natural resource isn't oil but an intoxicating plant called qat.

Unification and War

Democracy had unusual roots here. Conservative north Yemen and socialist south Yemen warred for decades before uniting in 1990. Allowing multiple parties, with women voting, was a way to bring southerners on board. That effort hasn't always been a success. After the first elections in 1993, southern separatists tried to break away, but were routed by the north in a brief civil war. Many southerners now complain bitterly about dominance by the tribal north, where women had much less freedom. And the southern Yemen Socialist Party is boycotting next month's elections.

The elections haven't helped the government assert much control over tribes, either. Tribal representatives won most of the parliamentary seats in 1993. Highways near the capital, Sana'a, are dotted with homemade traffic barriers where Kalashnikov-wielding tribesmen sometimes stop government cars. Tribal areas have their own court systems: The sheik and the families often work out compensation for a murder. Sheiks typically collect taxes and recruit soldiers. Some tribes kidnap Westerners when they want to pressure the government to reroute a highway or fund a water project.

Nor have elections threatened Ali Abdullah Saleh's two-decade-long hold on the presidency. He was elected by the new Parliament in 1994, and his People's General Congress party controls Yemen's television and radio stations and army. He has had little trouble imposing wrenching economic reforms on Yemen.

A Feminist's Role

But the rival Islah party, which seeks stricter application of Islamic law, did win 62 seats in Parliament in 1993. Islah did so in part by busing women to the polls, and last summer, during voter registration for the April 27 election, Islah was the most active party in signing women up to vote. "They assume they'll vote like their husbands," says Renaud Detalle of the French Center for Yemeni Studies in Sana'a.

One of the unsuccessful independent candidates in 1993 was Dr. Hassan, a liberal professor from a family of traditional Islamic judges. At 12 years old, the age her mother had conceived her, Raufa Hassan was giving literacy lessons to the elderly under the guidance of an early Yemeni feminist. At 30, she was earning a doctorate in social communications from the University of Paris by spending

Please Turn to Page A10, Column 1

Yemen Steers Toward Democracy

Continued From First Page

months in remote tribal villages to study the effects of television. Between starting Sana'a University's Empirical Research and Women's Studies Center and running a host of nonprofit groups, she says she hasn't had time to get married.

To Dr. Hassan, the key issue is giving women more political power. Tribal government works fine, she says, except for excluding women, and she espouses democracy largely because it helps her build support from Westerners. She ran for Parliament in part to write a book about her experiences. One that stood out was a campaign rally in which a veiled woman started charging up from the back, shouting that "the voice of woman is haram"—or forbidden. Dr. Hassan handed her a microphone to amplify the irony.

The 1993 elections inspired a new cadre of democracy advocates. Thousands of volunteers monitored the elections, though the government declined to sanction official monitors. Afterward, Dr. Hassan joined with the group's leaders — including a traditional Islamic lawyer and an American-educated businessman—to form the Arab Democratic Institute, or ADI.

Dr. Hassan proved a wily fund-raiser,

to the point that other Yemeni women gripe about her monopolizing foreign contributions. As part of a successful bid for Dutch funding to expand her women's center, she had students occupy her office to make it so cramped, the Dutch ambassador had nowhere to sit during a visit. ADI's proposal for a women's voting project was about to be rejected by the European Union when Dr. Hassan made a long telephone appeal to a female EU official she had never met. The EU gave the project \$500,000.

"I'm getting everyone to support me, but I'm not focusing that much on the elections," Dr. Hassan says. "I want to create women leaders in little villages."

ADI placed radio advertisements that made no mention of the elections, merely touting good pay for educated women who were willing to travel. The 11 women selected became regional organizers and fanned out across the country to hire local women as "constituency coordinators" at \$200 a month.

Many of the 79 coordinators who arrived in Sana'a for the first meeting had never eaten in a restaurant or used a flush toilet, let alone spoken publicly. As fathers and husbands took care of babies in an adjacent room, the women walked through imaginary election discussions with strangers. To get her regional organizers used to dealing with men, Dr. Hassan had them sit in alternating seats for a televised ceremony so male dignitaries had no choice but to mingle when they arrived.

First, Get Permission

Meeting with village women can be hazardous without men's approval, ADI coordinators soon found. One coordinator says she relied on a local woman to set up a meeting in a eastern Yemen village, but the woman's father found out, stormed into the meeting and beat his daughter in front of everybody. Other coordinators hold meetings by inviting women to soda parties, or sneaking some time at village weddings.

More often than not, though, sheiks have given their support. Khadija Saleh Ali Oman and her husband, Abdul Mohammad

Al Gofli, knocked on the door of one sheik and were invited in for lunch. She explained the project, and the sheik immediately rounded up some women for a meeting. The sheik later explained that the support of women voters could help if his son wanted to run for office. Also, a high voter turnout could help the region win more food benefits or schools.

"The sheiks are under pressure because people say 'They're not doing anything for us,'" says Abdo Ali Othman, a Sana'a University sociologist who studies tribes. So sheiks are becoming more open to outside help.

The women can be a bigger challenge, coordinators found. Only one of 10 rural women in Yemen can read or write, partly because men don't want to send teenage daughters to school with boys. In the afternoons, while many rural men chat and chew qat, women carry water, herd cattle and grind wheat. Bearing more than a dozen children is considered a reasonable life goal. Many women had no idea their members of Parliament were elected, ADI coordinators reported.

'We Are Like Animals'

In one report from Hajjah, Ms. Ali Oman describes meeting 25 women of various ages, all listing their occupation as "housewife." Those who were registered to vote said their husbands were holding the registration certificates, because the women might lose them. One woman said, "How can we take part in the elections when we are like animals, not able to read and write?" Ms. Ali Oman told them they had a right to vote and could even use party symbols, like a flower or a sword, if they could not write the names of candidates.

Tribesmen in Hajjah see no danger the women will demand changes in their status if they vote. "No way. I dare them to demand it," says Abdullah Mohammed Ishaak, a village sheik, resting his hand on a ceremonial dagger and his head on a sitting-room cushion. Mr. Ishaak continues: "This is the reality here: If a husband or brother tells a wife to go and register to vote, they'll go and do it. And if he says: don't do it, she won't do it."

But in one district visited by ADI, women are organizing a candidates' debate. Sitting beside Mr. Ishaak is Ahmed Abdulrahman Jahaf, whose daughter, an ADI coordinator, has been encouraged to

run for Parliament. He says he doesn't object, but worries how "backward" villagers would react. Also, an educated girl is more attractive as a bride, but a girl who is working commands a smaller dowry, he says. "The nature of women leads us to the conclusion that a woman's right place is home," Mr. Jahaf says.

The Islah party also has mixed feelings about women as candidates. Islah recently allowed the head of its women's division to give a brief speech at the party conference — then had her escorted back to a separate room. And it presented a paper at an ADI seminar saying women could be elected to any position — except president. Still, that represented a "major change in attitude," according to Jamal Al-Adimi, an Islamic lawyer who is directing ADI's women's project.

Mr. Adimi's sister is among Islah's new crop of female activists in the city of Hodeidah. But when asked if they will consider running for Parliament this year, she and her colleagues glance at their male bosses and say the time isn't right. "Allah did not prohibit women to be voters, or to be candidates," explains Mohammad Qah-tan, Islah's political director. But "there is another point of view within the Islah that still rejects such a change."

The ruling People's General Congress also has been tentative. One month ago, during a conference in Sana'a, party leaders promised to work for at least 20 women in Parliament. "They said the same things five years ago. I swear it makes me so sleepy," Dr. Hassan commented, half-listening to a speech from the back row. Sure enough, this week only two women appeared on the ruling party's list of 221 candidates. Confronted by Dr. Hassan at a dinner reception Tuesday, party official Mohamed Al Tayeb told her there weren't enough qualified women to choose from.

The change of heart is, in a way, a sign of Yemen's budding democracy. The top parties recently had an agreement not to compete with each other this year in most districts. But now that agreement is breaking down. "We do not want to lose anywhere," Mr. Tayeb says.

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The Washington Post

SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 1997

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Feminists on the March in Traditional Yemen

By John Lancaster
Washington Post Foreign Service

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For the last several months, however, women here have been subjected to tireless proselytizing on the meaning of democracy by Warda Ghaylan, a 25-year-old mother of three and one of the few village women with any formal education. Ghaylan is a foot soldier in a nationwide effort to boost women's participation in Sunday's national parliamentary elections, the second since North and South Yemen were merged in 1990 after decades of warfare.

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Notwithstanding such challenges, a beguiling experiment in representative government has begun in this tradition-bound Muslim country of 14 million people—an isolated, otherworldly

See YEMEN, A20, Col. 1

Women in Remote Villages Urged to Vote in Tradition-Bound Yemen

YEMEN, From A1

place where men while away afternoons chewing a mildly narcotic plant called khat and rarely appear in public without a curved dagger strapped to their waists.

It is an experiment, moreover, in which women are playing a prominent role. Yemeni feminists in veils and billowy black robes are organizing voter registration drives, fielding female candidates and even cutting political deals with conservative tribal chiefs and the country's largest Islamic party, the Yemeni Islah Party.

The outcome could reverberate well beyond Yemen's borders. In a region where political life is dominated by dictators, monarchs and Islamic fundamentalists, democracy advocates look to Yemen as a potential bright spot. Saudi Arabia and other autocratic neighbors, meanwhile, see it as a bad example that could weaken their grip on power.

"I think we are having a unique experience in the Arab world," said Abdel-Karim Iryani, a Yale-educated biogeneticist and computer aficionado—he is especially fond of Yemen's home page on the World Wide Web—who serves as the country's foreign minister.

Situated on the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula at the entrance to the Red Sea, Yemen seems closer in spirit to Mogadishu than Monticello. One of the poorest Arab countries, Yemen is famously anarchic, to the point where government officials sometimes have to seek permission from local sheiks when crossing tribal boundaries. Many tribes consider the taking of hostages, including Western tourists, an honorable way of settling disputes with the government.

Only three years ago, the former South Yemen tried to secede from the north, bombarding the capital city, Sanaa, with Scud missiles in a month-long civil war. Relations between north and south are still so strained that the largest southern opposition party, the Yemeni Socialist Party, is boycotting Sunday's election.

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For Hassan, who holds a doctorate in communication from the University of Paris, the trick is to focus on the long term. "We tell them, 'Even though voting isn't going to get you anywhere . . . it's going to be good for your kids,'" she said.

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Despite weak representation in parliament, women are not entirely powerless. Earlier this month, for example, the highest-ranking woman in Yemen's government, Undersec-

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 22, 1998

His Excellency Ali Abdullah Saleh
President of the Republic of Yemen
Sanaa

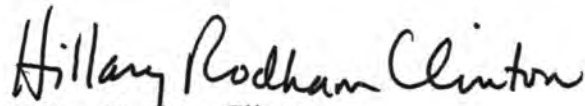
Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of the American people, I want to congratulate you and the Government of Yemen on the success of the Emerging Democracies Forum held in Sanaa. The President and I are greatly impressed by the serious commitment the participants have made in tackling the twin challenges of democratization and economic reform. The Sanaa declaration stands as an unambiguous social contract between the participating governments and their peoples.

Please accept my thanks for the opportunity to address such an inspiring gathering, and I very much appreciated your closing statement on the rights and the role of women in political and economic life.

I would like to commend you personally for your vision in hosting this very important meeting. You have the support and admiration of the American people as Yemen continues its commitment to democratic rights and principles, and shares this commitment with others.

Sincerely,


Hillary Rodham Clinton

freeyemen

الرقم : ٢٨٩١/٥٥/٢
التاريخ :
الموافق :
المرفقات :



الجمهورية اليمنية
مجلس الوزراء
البرئاسة

26 December 1998

Mr. Leslie Campbell
Regional Director, Middle East & North Africa
National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
1717 Massachusetts Avenue, Fifth Floor
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Campbell,

Let me first of all thank you for your recent visit to Yemen and for your efforts in support of Yemen's on-going democratic transition. The Emerging Democracies Forum that we are proposing will be an important step in helping to consolidate Yemen's own transition, as well as that of the other participating countries.

The Government of Yemen is, as we discussed, very supportive of this endeavor. In that respect, I want to communicate to you and NDI President Mr. Ken Wollack our every intention to work in cooperation with the Institute. As prime Minister and pursuant to our discussions, the Government of Yemen will take all necessary steps in support of the summit, including but not limited to:

- transpiration of delegations in Yemen;
- venue of the summit and related arrangements;
- hospitality; and
- security arrangements.

As I wrote in my letter to you of last fall, the Government of Yemen will continue to rely on NDI to provide their resources and expertise for the actual organization of the summit itself, and in soliciting the cooperation of international support and participation. This will include the country delegations to be invited, which we can submit, as you suggested, to the consideration of the International Advisory Board.

I believe our next steps will be the designation of the Yemeni counterpart who will represent myself and my delegate Minister Tayeb in day-to-day workings with NDI, as well as the appointment of the International Advisory Board and its chairperson.

I think you once again for your support to Yemen and our democratic experience, and I look forward to working with you on this very exciting and challenging project.

Sincerely,

Dr. Abdul Karim Al-Eryani

Prime Minister

Government of Yemen



1ST STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

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June 28, 1999; Monday 14:28 Eastern Time

SECTION: International news

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HEADLINE: Yemen forum agrees that women are vital to democratic process

BYLINE: AHMAD AL-HAJ
Yemen-Democracy Conference ,0356

DATELINE: SAN'A, Yemen

BODY:

Delegates from 17 nations agreed Monday that women have a vital role to play in the democratization of their countries.

'The democratic process will not develop or be complete unless women participate fully and completely in it,' Kenneth Wollack, head of the U.S.-based National Democratic Institute, told the Emerging Democracies Forum.

More than 200 participants representing 17 countries from Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin and North America, are taking part in the three-day forum whose goal is to draw attention to the democratic success stories in countries that have little international exposure. The conference is being held at the Presidential palace in San'a amid tight security.

Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh spoke about the challenges facing developing democratic nations.

'Democracy is in danger when economic and development programs are not also supported,' Saleh said in his opening speech.

'Today, more people enjoy the right to democratic self-governance than ever before. In the mid-70's, there were some 40 democracies in the world compared to 120 today,' U.S. Under Secretary of State Frank E. Loy said. He added that Latin America, dominated by military dictatorships until a little over a decade ago, now boasted 33 democracies.

Former Canadian Prime Minister Kim Campbell said democracy was the only path to development.

Funding for the conference came from Canada, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Last month, a militant Islamic group threatened to carry out suicide attacks on foreigners, including those attending the conference, if its leader was not

set free.

The Aden-Abyan Islamic Army demanded the release of Zein Al-Abidine al-Mihdar, who was convicted with three other men of abducting 16 Western tourists in December. Four of the hostages died during a botched rescue attempt. Al-Midhar was sentenced to death on May 5. Their case is currently under appeal.

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For the last several months, however, women here have been subjected to tireless proselytizing on the meaning of democracy by Warda Ghaylan, a 25-year-old mother of three and one of the few village women with any formal education. Ghaylan is a foot soldier in a nationwide effort to boost women's participation in Sunday's national parliamentary elections, the second since North and South Yemen were merged in 1990 after decades of warfare.

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Access No: 970328000133 ProQuest - The Wall Street Journal (R)
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Title: VOTING RITES: YEMEN STEERS A PATH TOWARD
DEMOCRACY, WITH SOME SURPRISES; ISLAMIST PARTY
BUSES WOMEN TO THE POLLS, AND SHEIKS BACK
SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT; BUT MEN RETAIN THE CLOUT
Authors: Daniel Pearl Staff Reporter of The Wall Street Journal
Source: The Wall Street Journal
Date: Friday Mar 28, 1997 Sec: A p: 1
Length: Long (1947 words) Type: News Illus: Illustration
Subjects: Elections; Democracy; Governmental reform; Women; Voting
rights

Abstract: Yemen is ahead of most of its neighbors in moving toward
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parliamentary elections in Apr 1997 show how democracy
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Article Text:

HAJJAH, Yemen — Ask most Arab leaders about the obstacles to democracy, and they will mention tribalism, Islamic fundamentalism and the thorny question of whether women should be allowed to vote. But consider what happens when Raufa Hassan, Yemen's most outspoken feminist, organizes get-out-the-vote meetings among women in the most backward parts of this conservative Arab country. Local tribal leaders give enthusiastic support. Yemen's Islamist party, Islah, praises her and sends its own female activists hiking up jagged mountainsides in full veil to preach the benefits of voting to goat-herding women.

'Everybody is helping us. For now, we have common goals,' says Dr. Hassan, a fast-talking, 38-year-old university professor who achieved renown in Yemen in the 1970s by delivering television news broadcasts without a veil. 'If democrats do not work within the tribes, it's their mistake.'

Yemen is ahead of most of its neighbors in moving toward democracy, and the preparations for the country's second parliamentary elections next month show how democracy might really work in the Arab world. Tribes, rather than resisting elections, adapt to them by acting like Western-style pressure groups. Islamists embrace women's voting rights — if doing so increases their clout. At the same time, women rarely challenge male ascendancy when they vote.

They will if Dr. Hassan has her way, though. Dr. Hassan is training her young charges to take part in tribal affairs; currently, it is considered unusual for a woman even to enter the sitting rooms where sheiks make decisions for their tribes. The nonpartisan Arab Democratic Institute, which she helped start, plans to bankroll seven women candidates for the 301-seat Parliament, which has two women, and Dr. Hassan is trying to convince the Islah party to run a woman.

It wouldn't be the first unusual occurrence in Yemen, a land where ancient mud skyscrapers rise inexplicably to the sky, where the Arabic word for 'OK' means 'no' and where the biggest natural resource isn't oil but an intoxicating plant called qat.

Democracy had unusual roots here. Conservative north Yemen and socialist south Yemen warred for decades before uniting in 1990. Allowing multiple parties, with women voting, was a way to bring southerners on board. That effort hasn't always been a success. After the first elections in 1993, southern separatists tried to break away, but were routed by the north in a brief civil war. Many southerners now complain bitterly about dominance by the tribal north, where women had much less freedom. And the southern Yemen Socialist Party is boycotting next month's elections.

The elections haven't helped the government assert much control over tribes, either. Tribal representatives won most of the parliamentary seats in 1993. Highways near the capital, Sana'a, are dotted with homemade traffic barriers where Kalashnikov-wielding tribesmen sometimes stop government cars. Tribal areas have their own court systems: The sheik and the families often work out compensation for a murder. Sheiks typically collect taxes and recruit soldiers. Some tribes kidnap Westerners when they want to pressure the government to reroute a highway or fund a water project.

Nor have elections threatened Ali Abdullah Saleh's two-decade-long hold on the presidency. He was elected by the new Parliament in 1994, and his People's General Congress party controls Yemen's television and radio stations and army. He has had little trouble imposing wrenching economic reforms on Yemen.

But the rival Islah party, which seeks stricter application of Islamic law, did win 62 seats in Parliament in 1993. Islah did so in part by busing women to the polls, and last summer, during voter registration for the April 27 election, Islah was the most active party in signing women up to vote. 'They assume they'll vote like their husbands,' says Renaud Detalle of the French Center for Yemeni Studies in Sana'a.

One of the unsuccessful independent candidates in 1993 was Dr. Hassan, a liberal professor from a family of traditional Islamic judges. At 12 years old, the age her mother had conceived her, Raufa Hassan was giving literacy lessons to the elderly under the guidance of an early Yemeni feminist. At 30, she was earning a doctorate in social communications from the University of Paris by spending months in remote tribal villages to study the effects of television. Between starting Sana'a University's Empirical Research and Women's Studies Center and running a host of nonprofit groups, she says she hasn't had time to get married.

To Dr. Hassan, the key issue is giving women more political power. Tribal government works fine, she says, except for excluding women, and she espouses democracy largely because it helps her build support from Westerners. She ran for Parliament in part to write a book about her experiences. One that stood out was a campaign rally in which a veiled woman started charging up from the back, shouting that 'the voice of woman is haram' — or forbidden. Dr. Hassan handed her a microphone to amplify the irony.

The 1993 elections inspired a new cadre of democracy advocates. Thousands of

volunteers monitored the elections, though the government declined to sanction official monitors. Afterward, Dr. Hassan joined with the group's leaders – including a traditional Islamic lawyer and an American-educated businessman – to form the Arab Democratic Institute, or ADI.

Dr. Hassan proved a wily fund-raiser, to the point that other Yemeni women gripe about her monopolizing foreign contributions. As part of a successful bid for Dutch funding to expand her women's center, she had students occupy her office to make it so cramped, the Dutch ambassador had nowhere to sit during a visit. ADI's proposal for a women's voting project was about to be rejected by the European Union when Dr. Hassan made a long telephone appeal to a female EU official she had never met. The EU gave the project \$500,000.

'I'm getting everyone to support me, but I'm not focusing that much on the elections,' Dr. Hassan says. 'I want to create women leaders in little villages.'

ADI placed radio advertisements that made no mention of the elections, merely touting good pay for educated women who were willing to travel. The 11 women selected became regional organizers and fanned out across the country to hire local women as 'constituency coordinators' at \$200 a month.

Many of the 79 coordinators who arrived in Sana'a for the first meeting had never eaten in a restaurant or used a flush toilet, let alone spoken publicly. As fathers and husbands took care of babies in an adjacent room, the women walked through imaginary election discussions with strangers. To get her regional organizers used to dealing with men, Dr. Hassan had them sit in alternating seats for a televised ceremony so male dignitaries had no choice but to mingle when they arrived.

Meeting with village women can be hazardous without men's approval, ADI coordinators soon found. One coordinator says she relied on a local woman to set up a meeting in a eastern Yemen village, but the woman's father found out, stormed into the meeting and beat his daughter in front of everybody. Other coordinators hold meetings by inviting women to soda parties, or sneaking some time at village weddings.

More often than not, though, sheiks have given their support. Khadija Saleh Ali Oman and her husband, Abdul Mohammad Al Gofli, knocked on the door of one sheik and were invited in for lunch. She explained the project, and the sheik immediately rounded up some women for a meeting. The sheik later explained that the support of women voters could help if his son wanted to run for office. Also, a high voter turnout could help the region win more food benefits or schools.

'The sheiks are under pressure because people say 'They're not doing anything for us,' says Abdo Ali Othman, a Sana'a University sociologist who studies tribes. So sheiks are becoming more open to outside help.

The women can be a bigger challenge, coordinators found. Only one of 10 rural women in Yemen can read or write, partly because men don't want to send teenage daughters to school with boys. In the afternoons, while many rural men chat and chew qat, women carry water, herd cattle and grind wheat. Bearing more than a dozen children is considered a reasonable life goal. Many women had no idea their members of Parliament were elected, ADI coordinators reported.

In one report from Hajjah, Ms. Ali Oman describes meeting 25 women of various ages, all listing their occupation as 'housewife.' Those who were registered to vote said their husbands were holding the registration certificates, because the women might lose them. One woman said, 'How can we take part in the elections when we are like

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Tribesmen in Hajjah see no danger the women will demand changes in their status if they vote. 'No way. I dare them to demand it,' says Abdullah Mohammed Ishaak, a village sheik, resting his hand on a ceremonial dagger and his head on a sitting-room cushion. Mr. Ishaak continues: 'This is the reality here: If a husband or brother tells a wife to go and register to vote, they'll go and do it. And if he says don't do it, she won't do it.'

But in one district visited by ADI, women are organizing a candidates' debate. Sitting beside Mr. Ishaak is Ahmed Abdulrahman Jahaf, whose daughter, an ADI coordinator, has been encouraged to run for Parliament. He says he doesn't object, but worries how 'backward' villagers would react. Also, an educated girl is more attractive as a bride, but a girl who is working commands a smaller dowry, he says. 'The nature of women leads us to the conclusion that a woman's right place is home,' Mr. Jahaf says.

The Islah party also has mixed feelings about women as candidates. Islah recently allowed the head of its women's division to give a brief speech at the party conference — then had her escorted back to a separate room. And it presented a paper at an ADI seminar saying women could be elected to any position — except president. Still, that represented a 'major change in attitude,' according to Jamal Al-Adimi, an Islamic lawyer who is directing ADI's women's project.

Mr. Adimi's sister is among Islah's new crop of female activists in the city of Hodeidah. But when asked if they will consider running for Parliament this year, she and her colleagues glance at their male bosses and say the time isn't right. 'Allah did not prohibit women to be voters, or to be candidates,' explains Mohammad Qahtan, Islah's political director. But 'there is another point of view within the Islah that still rejects such a change.'

The ruling People's General Congress also has been tentative. One month ago, during a conference in Sana'a, party leaders promised to work for at least 20 women in Parliament. 'They said the same things five years ago. I swear it makes me so sleepy,' Dr. Hassan commented, half-listening to a speech from the back row. Sure enough, this week only two women appeared on the ruling party's list of 221 candidates. Confronted by Dr. Hassan at a dinner reception Tuesday, party official Mohamed Al Tayeb told her there weren't enough qualified women to choose from.

The change of heart is, in a way, a sign of Yemen's budding democracy. The top parties recently had an agreement not to compete with each other this year in most districts. But now that agreement is breaking down. 'We do not want to lose anywhere,' Mr. Tayeb says.

1ST STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

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HEADLINE: Yemen forum agrees that women are vital to democratic process

BYLINE: AHMAD AL-HAJ
Yemen-Democracy Conference ,0356

DATELINE: SAN'A, Yemen

BODY:

Delegates from 17 nations agreed Monday that women have a vital role to play in the democratization of their countries.

"The democratic process will not develop or be complete unless women participate fully and completely in it," Kenneth Wollack, head of the U.S.-based National Democratic Institute, told the Emerging Democracies Forum.

More than 200 participants representing 17 countries from Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin and North America, are taking part in the three-day forum whose goal is to draw attention to the democratic success stories in countries that have little international exposure. The conference is being held at the Presidential palace in San'a amid tight security.

Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh spoke about the challenges facing developing democratic nations.

"Democracy is in danger when economic and development programs are not also supported," Saleh said in his opening speech.

"Today, more people enjoy the right to democratic self-governance than ever before. In the mid-70's, there were some 40 democracies in the world compared to 120 today," U.S. Under Secretary of State Frank E. Loy said. He added that Latin America, dominated by military dictatorships until a little over a decade ago, now boasted 33 democracies.

Former Canadian Prime Minister Kim Campbell said democracy was the only path to development.

Funding for the conference came from Canada, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Last month, a militant Islamic group threatened to carry out suicide attacks on foreigners, including those attending the conference, if its leader was not

set free.

The Aden-Abyan Islamic Army demanded the release of Zein Al-Abidine al-Mihdar, who was convicted with three other men of abducting 16 Western tourists in December. Four of the hostages died during a botched rescue attempt. Al-Midhar was sentenced to death on May 5. Their case is currently under appeal.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: June 28, 1999

The Washington Post

SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 1997

c

Feminists on the March in Traditional Yemen

By John Lancaster
Washington Post Foreign Service

ARHAB AL HINA, Yemen—It is hard to imagine a more unlikely outpost of women's political activism than this tiny village of crude stone houses and hand-tilled fields, lying in a narrow valley almost two hours by four-wheel-drive vehicle from the nearest paved road.

There is no school, no electricity, no television. Most residents can neither read nor write. The main legal authority is not the central government but the local tribal leader, who adjudi-

cates land disputes and criminal cases in the manner of a feudal lord.

For the last several months, however, women here have been subjected to tireless proselytizing on the meaning of democracy by Warda Ghaylan, a 25-year-old mother of three and one of the few village women with any formal education. Ghaylan is a foot soldier in a nationwide effort to boost women's participation in Sunday's national parliamentary elections, the second since North and South Yemen were merged in 1990 after decades of warfare.

"I tell them, 'Your vote is the key to the future

of your children,' " said Ghaylan, a graceful woman in a floral-print robe, her gleaming white teeth contrasting vividly with her black head scarf. "Yes, they listen to me, but sometimes when they hear that I've come to talk to them about the elections, they hide. They think people will come in big cars and take them away to vote in a faraway place."

Notwithstanding such challenges, a beguiling experiment in representative government has begun in this tradition-bound Muslim country of 14 million people—an isolated, otherworldly

See YEMEN, A20, Col. 1

Women in Remote Villages Urged to Vote in Tradition-Bound Yemen

YEMEN, From A1

place where men while away afternoons chewing a mildly narcotic plant called khat and rarely appear in public without a curved dagger strapped to their waists.

It is an experiment, moreover, in which women are playing a prominent role. Yemeni feminists in veils and billowy black robes are organizing voter registration drives, fielding female candidates and even cutting political deals with conservative tribal chiefs and the country's largest Islamic party, the Yemeni Islah Party.

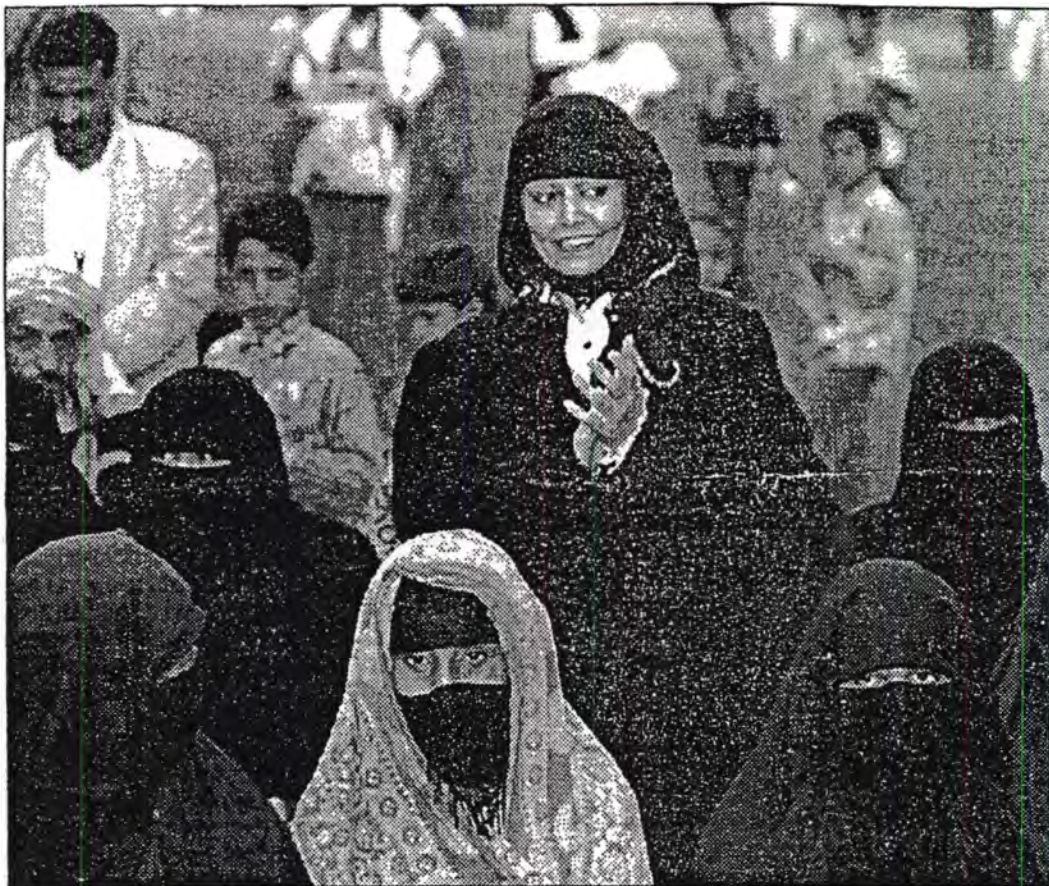
The outcome could reverberate well beyond Yemen's borders. In a region where political life is dominated by dictators, monarchs and Islamic fundamentalists, democracy advocates look to Yemen as a potential bright spot. Saudi Arabia and other autocratic neighbors, meanwhile, see it as a bad example that could weaken their grip on power.

"I think we are having a unique experience in the Arab world," said Abdel-Karim Iryani, a Yale-educated biogeneticist and computer aficionado—he is especially fond of Yemen's home page on the World Wide Web—who serves as the country's foreign minister.

Situated on the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula at the entrance to the Red Sea, Yemen seems closer in spirit to Mogadishu than Monticello. One of the poorest Arab countries, Yemen is famously anarchic, to the point where government officials sometimes have to seek permission from local sheiks when crossing tribal boundaries. Many tribes consider the taking of hostages, including Western tourists, an honorable way of settling disputes with the government.

Only three years ago, the former South Yemen tried to secede from the north, bombarding the capital city, Sanaa, with Scud missiles in a month-long civil war. Relations between north and south are still so strained that the largest southern opposition party, the Yemeni Socialist Party, is boycotting Sunday's election.

Nor is the central government a model of political enlightenment. The government of President Ali Abdallah Salih, who has ruled for



BY ALI JAREKI

One of the few women running for a seat in parliament in Yemen applauds at a campaign rally in Sanaa.

nearly 20 years, stands accused of numerous human rights abuses.

Women face their own problems. Roughly 80 percent of Yemeni women are illiterate, compared with 35 percent of men; the country's limited supply of secondary schools is largely reserved for boys.

Such disparities are reflected in political life. Just two of 301 members of parliament are women. During the last elections in 1993, the 43 female candidates encountered so much hostility that only three have chosen to run again. This year, only 16 of more than 2,000 candidates are women; most of them are running as independents because major parties refuse to back them.

None of that deters Raufa Hassan, 38, a university professor who directs a voter-education project for the Arab Democratic Institute in Sanaa with backing from the European Union.

For Hassan, who holds a doctorate in communication from the University of Paris, the trick is to focus on the long term. "We tell them, 'Even though voting isn't going to get you anywhere ... it's going to be good for your kids,'" she said.

Yemen's experiment with democracy happened almost by chance. The unification of the conservative north and the socialist south left Salih and his ruling party, the General People's Congress, on top. So the northern leaders sought to placate the south by granting more power to opposition parties. Tribal leaders, meanwhile, have begun to learn the art of ward politics, promising to deliver votes in exchange for roads, schools and water projects.

Despite weak representation in parliament, women are not entirely powerless. Earlier this month, for example, the highest-ranking woman in Yemen's government, Undersec-

retary of Information Amat Aleem Sosowa, was horrified to learn that parliament had passed legislation lifting the ban on marriage for girls under 15. So she contacted the legal adviser to Salih, who obligingly sent the law back to parliament without his signature.

Even the Islah party, whose extremist wing has barred the use of Western musical instruments in its campaign jingles, has been signing up women voters in its strongholds—betting that most of them will vote as their husbands do.

Saudi Arabia has taken a dim view of the democratic goings-on next door. At a January meeting in Tunisia, the Saudi interior minister, Prince Nayef, urged his Yemeni counterpart to cancel the parliamentary elections as a threat to stability in the region, according to a senior Yemeni official and Western diplomats.

The involvement of women in politics is especially disturbing to Saudi Arabia—a country so conservative that it does not permit women to drive—and other autocratic states on the Arabian Peninsula.

The center of the get-out-the-vote effort in Yemen is the Arab Democratic Institute, Hassan's organization, which has dispatched women field coordinators to the 83 voting districts with the lowest turnout by women in the 1993 elections.

One such coordinator is Nabila Hassan Saleh, who works out of her village near Taiz, a bustling mountain city about 100 miles south of Sanaa. Draped from head to toe in black cloth, Saleh meets regularly with local women to explain the basics of democracy.

Saleh and another, similarly attired coordinator, Samira Khassem Salem, recently invited a foreign visitor to sit in on a session under the watchful eye of Saleh's elderly father in Saleh's house.

At first, the listeners expressed befuddlement. "We are goatherds and women," said Fatemah Gorham, a 35-year-old mother of eight in a bright red head scarf. "How can we vote? We can't read and write."

But the two women patiently pressed on. "You say you're a goatherd, but you are human," Salem told Gorham. "Do you have any demands?"

"I want cheap sugar, I want low prices," Gorham replied, warming to the topic. "I have a hundred demands—water, electricity, education."

"The man you vote for, ask him, 'What will you do for me when you go to parliament?'" Salem urged.

But another woman was doubtful as she recalled her experience during the last parliamentary election. "They told us they would give us sugar and wheat," she said, cradling a sleeping toddler. "We were so pleased that I took my daughters and we voted. But we didn't even get soap."

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Access No: 970328000133 ProQuest - The Wall Street Journal (R)
Ondisc
Title: VOTING RITES: YEMEN STEERS A PATH TOWARD
DEMOCRACY, WITH SOME SURPRISES; ISLAMIST PARTY
BUSES WOMEN TO THE POLLS, AND SHEIKS BACK
SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT; BUT MEN RETAIN THE CLOUT
Authors: Daniel Pearl Staff Reporter of The Wall Street Journal
Source: The Wall Street Journal
Date: Friday Mar 28, 1997 Sec: A p: 1
Length: Long (1947 words) Type: News Illus: Illustration
Subjects: Elections; Democracy; Governmental reform; Women; Voting
rights

Abstract: Yemen is ahead of most of its neighbors in moving toward
democracy, and the preparations for the country's second
parliamentary elections in Apr 1997 show how democracy
might really work in the Arab world. Tribes, rather than
resisting elections, adapt to them by acting like Western-style
pressure groups, and Islamists embrace women's voting rights,
if doing so increases their clout.

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Article Text:

HAJJAH, Yemen – Ask most Arab leaders about the obstacles to democracy, and they will mention tribalism, Islamic fundamentalism and the thorny question of whether women should be allowed to vote. But consider what happens when Raufa Hassan, Yemen's most outspoken feminist, organizes get-out-the-vote meetings among women in the most backward parts of this conservative Arab country. Local tribal leaders give enthusiastic support. Yemen's Islamist party, Islah, praises her and sends its own female activists hiking up jagged mountainsides in full veil to preach the benefits of voting to goat-herding women.

'Everybody is helping us. For now, we have common goals,' says Dr. Hassan, a fast-talking, 38-year-old university professor who achieved renown in Yemen in the 1970s by delivering television news broadcasts without a veil. 'If democrats do not work within the tribes, it's their mistake.'

Yemen is ahead of most of its neighbors in moving toward democracy, and the preparations for the country's second parliamentary elections next month show how democracy might really work in the Arab world. Tribes, rather than resisting elections, adapt to them by acting like Western-style pressure groups. Islamists embrace women's voting rights – if doing so increases their clout. At the same time, women rarely challenge male ascendancy when they vote.

They will if Dr. Hassan has her way, though. Dr. Hassan is training her young charges to take part in tribal affairs; currently, it is considered unusual for a woman even to enter the sitting rooms where sheiks make decisions for their tribes. The nonpartisan Arab Democratic Institute, which she helped start, plans to bankroll seven women candidates for the 301-seat Parliament, which has two women, and Dr. Hassan is trying to convince the Islah party to run a woman.

It wouldn't be the first unusual occurrence in Yemen, a land where ancient mud skyscrapers rise inexplicably to the sky, where the Arabic word for 'OK' means 'no' and where the biggest natural resource isn't oil but an intoxicating plant called qat.

Democracy had unusual roots here. Conservative north Yemen and socialist south Yemen warred for decades before uniting in 1990. Allowing multiple parties, with women voting, was a way to bring southerners on board. That effort hasn't always been a success. After the first elections in 1993, southern separatists tried to break away, but were routed by the north in a brief civil war. Many southerners now complain bitterly about dominance by the tribal north, where women had much less freedom. And the southern Yemen Socialist Party is boycotting next month's elections.

The elections haven't helped the government assert much control over tribes, either. Tribal representatives won most of the parliamentary seats in 1993. Highways near the capital, Sana'a, are dotted with homemade traffic barriers where Kalashnikov-wielding tribesmen sometimes stop government cars. Tribal areas have their own court systems: The sheik and the families often work out compensation for a murder. Sheiks typically collect taxes and recruit soldiers. Some tribes kidnap Westerners when they want to pressure the government to reroute a highway or fund a water project.

Nor have elections threatened Ali Abdullah Saleh's two-decade-long hold on the presidency. He was elected by the new Parliament in 1994, and his People's General Congress party controls Yemen's television and radio stations and army. He has had little trouble imposing wrenching economic reforms on Yemen.

But the rival Islah party, which seeks stricter application of Islamic law, did win 62 seats in Parliament in 1993. Islah did so in part by busing women to the polls, and last summer, during voter registration for the April 27 election, Islah was the most active party in signing women up to vote. 'They assume they'll vote like their husbands,' says Renaud Detalle of the French Center for Yemeni Studies in Sana'a.

One of the unsuccessful independent candidates in 1993 was Dr. Hassan, a liberal professor from a family of traditional Islamic judges. At 12 years old, the age her mother had conceived her, Raufa Hassan was giving literacy lessons to the elderly under the guidance of an early Yemeni feminist. At 30, she was earning a doctorate in social communications from the University of Paris by spending months in remote tribal villages to study the effects of television. Between starting Sana'a University's Empirical Research and Women's Studies Center and running a host of nonprofit groups, she says she hasn't had time to get married.

To Dr. Hassan, the key issue is giving women more political power. Tribal government works fine, she says, except for excluding women, and she espouses democracy largely because it helps her build support from Westerners. She ran for Parliament in part to write a book about her experiences. One that stood out was a campaign rally in which a veiled woman started charging up from the back, shouting that 'the voice of woman is haram' – or forbidden. Dr. Hassan handed her a microphone to amplify the irony.

The 1993 elections inspired a new cadre of democracy advocates. Thousands of

volunteers monitored the elections, though the government declined to sanction official monitors. Afterward, Dr. Hassan joined with the group's leaders – including a traditional Islamic lawyer and an American-educated businessman – to form the Arab Democratic Institute, or ADI.

Dr. Hassan proved a wily fund-raiser, to the point that other Yemeni women gripe about her monopolizing foreign contributions. As part of a successful bid for Dutch funding to expand her women's center, she had students occupy her office to make it so cramped, the Dutch ambassador had nowhere to sit during a visit. ADI's proposal for a women's voting project was about to be rejected by the European Union when Dr. Hassan made a long telephone appeal to a female EU official she had never met. The EU gave the project \$500,000.

'I'm getting everyone to support me, but I'm not focusing that much on the elections,' Dr. Hassan says. 'I want to create women leaders in little villages.'

ADI placed radio advertisements that made no mention of the elections, merely touting good pay for educated women who were willing to travel. The 11 women selected became regional organizers and fanned out across the country to hire local women as 'constituency coordinators' at \$200 a month.

Many of the 79 coordinators who arrived in Sana'a for the first meeting had never eaten in a restaurant or used a flush toilet, let alone spoken publicly. As fathers and husbands took care of babies in an adjacent room, the women walked through imaginary election discussions with strangers. To get her regional organizers used to dealing with men, Dr. Hassan had them sit in alternating seats for a televised ceremony so male dignitaries had no choice but to mingle when they arrived.

Meeting with village women can be hazardous without men's approval, ADI coordinators soon found. One coordinator says she relied on a local woman to set up a meeting in a eastern Yemen village, but the woman's father found out, stormed into the meeting and beat his daughter in front of everybody. Other coordinators hold meetings by inviting women to soda parties, or sneaking some time at village weddings.

More often than not, though, sheiks have given their support. Khadija Saleh Ali Oman and her husband, Abdul Mohammad Al Gofli, knocked on the door of one sheik and were invited in for lunch. She explained the project, and the sheik immediately rounded up some women for a meeting. The sheik later explained that the support of women voters could help if his son wanted to run for office. Also, a high voter turnout could help the region win more food benefits or schools.

'The sheiks are under pressure because people say 'They're not doing anything for us,' says Abdo Ali Othman, a Sana'a University sociologist who studies tribes. So sheiks are becoming more open to outside help.

The women can be a bigger challenge, coordinators found. Only one of 10 rural women in Yemen can read or write, partly because men don't want to send teenage daughters to school with boys. In the afternoons, while many rural men chat and chew qat, women carry water, herd cattle and grind wheat. Bearing more than a dozen children is considered a reasonable life goal. Many women had no idea their members of Parliament were elected, ADI coordinators reported.

In one report from Hajjah, Ms. Ali Oman describes meeting 25 women of various ages, all listing their occupation as 'housewife.' Those who were registered to vote said their husbands were holding the registration certificates, because the women might lose them. One woman said, 'How can we take part in the elections when we are like

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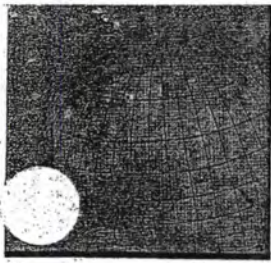
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Mr. Adimi's sister is among Islah's new crop of female activists in the city of Hodeidah. But when asked if they will consider running for Parliament this year, she and her colleagues glance at their male bosses and say the time isn't right. 'Allah did not prohibit women to be voters, or to be candidates,' explains Mohammad Qahtan, Islah's political director. But 'there is another point of view within the Islah that still rejects such a change.'

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file Yemen

EMERGING DEMOCRACIES FORUM

THE NATIONAL
DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

AND

THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

In Partnership with:

UNITED NATIONS
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR
DEMOCRACY

And the Governments of:

CANADA

JAPAN

THE NETHERLANDS

THE UNITED KINGDOM

THE UNITED STATES

April 20, 1999

Mrs. Clinton
did not attend
in person - she
taped video
remarks.

Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
Office of the First Lady
The White House
Room 2/WW
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mrs. Clinton:

On behalf of the Government of Yemen and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) we are pleased to invite you to participate in a unique three-day Forum entitled, *Managing the Twin Transitions: Economic and Political Reform in Emerging Democracies*, to be held in Sana'a, Yemen, from June 27 to June 29, 1999. The Forum will provide support and encouragement for a group of newly emerging democracies. They include: Benin, Bolivia, El Salvador, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Macedonia, Malawi, Mali, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, and Yemen.

The Forum will bring together political, civic and economic leaders – heads of state and government, cabinet ministers, political party and parliamentary leaders, civil society activists and key players in public and private sector economic reform – of countries advancing democratic reform. This progress has come despite challenges such as weak economies, corruption, conflicts or post-conflict tensions, and few or no participatory traditions. In addition to providing a setting to analyze and address the common hurdles of democratic transition, the Forum will draw attention to the achievements of countries that, unfortunately, receive relatively little international exposure.

Funding and in-kind contributions for the event are being provided by the United Nations Development Programme, and the governments of Canada, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Key topics in addressing political reform in this group of small, unheralded democracies will include: confidence building and gaining public trust; government accountability; the promotion of civil society; the imperative of women's participation; making hard choices in simultaneous economic and political transitions; and developing policy to address the rule of law and corruption.

We are in the process of inviting prominent international figures to serve as Forum co-chairs, and we would be honored if you would consider joining this group. The State Department views this event as a precursor to a broader initiative by the Administration to convene a worldwide meeting of democratic governments next year. Senior U.S. Government officials from the State Department and USAID are planning to attend the Yemen event.

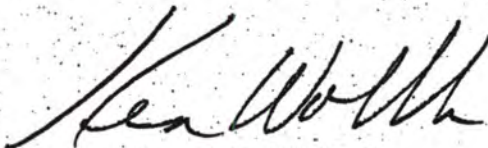
We believe that you are in a unique position to bring your knowledge, experience and international profile to bear on the issue of popular political participation, particularly on the vital role of women in the democratic transformation process. It is noteworthy that this initiative is being hosted by the Republic of Yemen, the only country on the Arabian peninsula to have held legislative elections with the full participation of women as candidates, party activists and voters and the only country on the Arabian peninsula with women in the national parliament. At the same time, while Yemen has made laudable political progress, it remains a conservative society where greater civic education is necessary to promote the role of women in public and social life.

Given that a main objective of this initiative is to showcase little known democracies, your presence would mean a great deal to the participants who are well aware of your ongoing efforts to focus international attention on many of these countries. Your role as Forum co-chair would be to address a plenary session, perhaps lead one of the specific topic panels, and to help facilitate a summit joint declaration.

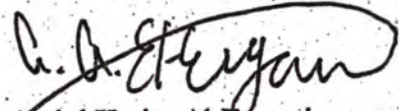
Your leadership would contribute measurably to the Forum and we hope you will be able to join us. We have attached a draft agenda for your review and look forward to your response.

With highest regards and appreciation for your continuing interest.

Sincerely,



Kenneth D. Wollack
President, NDI



Dr. Abdul Karim Al-Eryami
Prime Minister, Republic of Yemen

Emerging Democracies Forum

"Managing the Twin Transitions Political
and Economic Reform in Emerging Democracies"

Sana'a, Yemen

27 to 30 June, 1999

Working Agenda

Sunday, 27 June

All day Participant Arrival

Evening Registration, Informal Reception at Sheraton Hotel

Distribution of welcome/orientation packets; country briefing materials

Monday, 28 June

7:00-8:30 Breakfast

9:45-11:25 Welcome and Opening Address at Dar Al-Riassa (Presidential
Conference Center)

11:25-13:20 Opening Plenary

(Brief remarks from designee of each country group, presided by international
co-chairs)

14:20-15:30 Lunch

15:30-17:30 Topic Discussion I - Politics of Hard Choices

Political Transition and Economic Restructuring

19:30 Reception and Dinner hosted by Prime Minister at Taj Sheba Hotel

Brief Remarks to be determined

Tuesday, 29 June

7:00-8:30 Breakfast

9:00-11:30 Topic Discussion II - Building Public Trust

Elections and Legislatures

12:00-13:30 Lunch

13:30-15:45 Topic Discussion III-

Participation

Democratic Decision Making: the vital voices of women, civil society, and
pluralism

17:30-20:30 Reception and Dinner hosted by Partners and Donors

Wednesday, 30 June

7:00-8:30 Breakfast

9:00-11:30 Topic Discussion IV-Achieving Good Governance

Controlling Corruption, Improving Administration and Strengthening the Rule of
Law

1ST STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

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June 28, 1999; Monday 14:28 Eastern Time

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More than 200 participants representing 17 countries from Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin and North America, are taking part in the three-day forum whose goal is to draw attention to the democratic success stories in countries that have little international exposure. The conference is being held at the Presidential palace in San'a amid tight security.

Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh spoke about the challenges facing developing democratic nations.

"Democracy is in danger when economic and development programs are not also supported," Saleh said in his opening speech.

"Today, more people enjoy the right to democratic self-governance than ever before. In the mid-70's, there were some 40 democracies in the world compared to 120 today," U.S. Under Secretary of State Frank E. Loy said. He added that Latin America, dominated by military dictatorships until a little over a decade ago, now boasted 33 democracies.

Former Canadian Prime Minister Kim Campbell said democracy was the only path to development.

Funding for the conference came from Canada, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Last month, a militant Islamic group threatened to carry out suicide attacks on foreigners, including those attending the conference, if its leader was not

set free.

The Aden-Abyan Islamic Army demanded the release of Zein Al-Abidine al-Mihdar, who was convicted with three other men of abducting 16 Western tourists in December. Four of the hostages died during a botched rescue attempt. Al-Midhar was sentenced to death on May 5. Their case is currently under appeal.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: June 28, 1999

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
VIDEOTAPED REMARKS
THE EMERGING DEMOCRACIES FORUM
SANA'A, YEMEN
JUNE 29, 1999

It is a great pleasure to be able to join all of you, as you conclude this historic Emerging Democracies Forum. As some of you may know, I had hoped to attend in person, to hear firsthand about the challenges and opportunities you are facing in the often daunting struggle toward democracy. But when I learned I would be unable to come, I was determined, at the very least, to speak to you through the wonders of technology. Because the discussions you have had over the past few days will have an impact not only on the future of your own nations – but on our common dreams of living in a just and peaceful world.

I want to thank our sponsors, the Government of Yemen and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs. We are particularly grateful to NDI's Les Cambell and the Prime Minister of Yemen, Abdul Karim Al-Iryani for their vision to bring us all together. I want to thank Margreeth de Boer for speaking to us just now about the vital role that women can – must – play in developing democracies. Appreciation also to Sally for her kind words of introduction, and for all she is doing at USAID to promote democracy and economic opportunity worldwide.

I especially want to thank all of you, the political, civic and economic leaders of your nations, for participating in this important international forum. America's Secretary of State Madeleine Albright always reminds us that unlike dictatorships -- democracy can't be imposed. "It's always a choice." And I want to commend all of you for the work you do every day to ensure more citizens of the world not only make that choice for democracy, but can begin to fulfill its promise.

And what better place to hold this global conversation and strengthen these bonds of support among us than here in Yemen, where so much progress is being made. Yemen's multiparty system, and its democratically elected legislature, serve as a model for the region.

I'm impressed as well with Yemen's efforts to expand the rights and opportunities for girls and women. Wherever I go – in my own country and overseas -- I talk about Yemen's remarkable commitment to girl's education. By eliminating school fees; providing families with other incentives to keep their girls in schools; and by encouraging more women to enter the teaching profession, you are sending a powerful message. That access to education – for every citizen -- is the very foundation of democracy – and choice.

And that no nation can move forward until all of its citizens – including women -- are full participants in the social, economic, and political life of their communities.

We've come together here in this historic capital of Yemen at a time of unparalleled possibilities – as the forces of democracy are literally sweeping across the world. As Undersecretary of State Frank Loy noted a few days ago, 40 democracies existed in the 1970s. Today, the people of 120 nations are engaged in building democratic societies. Even now, we witness the first free elections in Indonesia in 40 years; the re-affirmation of multi-racial democracy in South Africa; and renewed hopes for peace in the Middle East. And finally – Serbia's brutal and systematic efforts to drive ethnic Albanians from their homes has been halted, and refugees are returning home.

As Kosovo so painfully reminds us, even as the forces of freedom move forward, age old ethnic, religious and tribal hatreds continue to tear apart communities and nations. And human rights continue to be trampled in almost every corner of the globe.

We also see that in newly emerging democracies, crime, violence, corruption – and citizen apathy -- threaten to dismantle many of our hard fought gains. And today, the rapidly changing world of technology and a global economy pose new challenges to democracies – young and old.

The work that all of you have been engaged in at this conference – to advance an international agenda of cooperation among democracies, and to help create the citizens of tomorrow -- has never been so critical.

Just a few weeks ago, I met in Palermo, Italy with a number of remarkable women leaders from around the world who are deeply engaged in making democracy real in their communities. They had come to Palermo to participate in an international conference promoting civic education. One woman from Argentina talked to me about how few women in her country held positions of power or authority – and how she and others are setting up a website to identify and promote women leaders.

A woman from Northern Ireland spoke about how women in her country were just beginning to find their own voices, and take their rightful place in society.

Many are joining the work force for the first time – and are beginning to organize themselves around issues like expanded child care, and access to loans and credit that have been denied to them for so long.

A young woman from Kuwait told me how proud she was that women in her country had just gained the right to vote only a few weeks earlier. But she is concerned that even the most educated women in Kuwait are not sure that casting a ballot is part of their civic responsibilities. She's working to mobilize women to vote in the upcoming elections – and to teach everyone that being part of the political process is the key to citizenship in a democratic society.

From what I've heard about your discussions over the past few days, these are the kinds of daunting challenges that many of you are grappling with in your own countries, as you struggle to expand economic and political reforms.

We know that establishing and maintaining a democracy is very hard work, for emerging and established democracies alike. It is, in fact, a never ending process. My own country became a democracy over 220 years, and we're still struggling to fulfill its promise.

But over the years, we have all learned some of the same lessons. That strengthening the rule of law, and creating the institutions of civil society, and moving toward a market-based economy are absolutely critical steps. And we must work together to support countries struggling to make progress in these areas. But we also know that democracy can only be sustained when its values are rooted in the hearts, minds, and actions of ordinary men and women. When citizens practice the responsibilities of citizenship in their daily lives. And when parents pass on that tradition to their children by their example, and by the stories they tell them as they put them to bed at night.

Over the years, I've been privileged to travel on behalf of my country, and I've seen firsthand the remarkable work that many of you have been doing – to strengthen civil society, and widen the circle of human rights in your countries.

A few years ago, I visited Mongolia, and saw how the people of that country were moving from a one-party dictatorship to a pluralistic political system. I was told that citizens demonstrated in the streets in freezing weather to advocate for their rights and freedoms. And that when elections were held – 90% of the people voted. That's a voting rate any democracy would envy -- including my own.

In Guatemala and El Salvador, I saw people struggling to make the difficult transition from war to a peaceful, democratic society. I met with women who were on opposite sides of those conflicts – but who became the architects of peace and reconciliation. They realized that what they held in common was far stronger than what had kept them apart. And they led the way as people began to rebuild their communities and put back their lives.

In countries as far apart as Nepal and Bolivia, I've seen how women's lives have been transformed – and empowered – as they gain access to life's basic tools of opportunity, like maternal health care and education. A few months ago in Morocco, I saw those same opportunities open up when I visited a small village nestled at the base of the Atlas mountains.

A non governmental organization was working with the villagers there to help spur new businesses, to encourage girl's literacy programs, and to organize a village cooperative. For the first time, these villagers had the tools and support to shape their own futures.

And in country after country throughout this region, I've seen young people of different cultures and religions spending time together -- learning to overcome stereotypes. Learning to respect each other's differences. Learning to become the leaders of tomorrow.

Many may not have heard your stories of progress and success -- whether it's expanding voting rights; strengthening the institutions of civil society; ensuring greater economic and political opportunities for women and ethnic minorities; or teaching the lessons of democracy to the next generation of citizens. But the world should know that while we all face different struggles, we speak the universal language of democracy and freedom. The overwhelming passage of the "Right to Democracy" resolution by the UN Commission on Human Rights a few months ago confirms that democracy is a fundamental human right -- and the only path to peace and prosperity.

So I hope that this historic conference will bring attention to the remarkable work that you are doing to nurture and sustain democracy in your own countries. But I also hope this gathering will help forge a new global community of democracies that can support each other in the years ahead.

We cannot minimize the formidable challenges each one of you is facing today. But nor should we underestimate the benefits that will come with increased international support and cooperation on your behalf.

Last year, in addressing the citizens of Poland, President Clinton said that "the struggle for democracy is never over, it must be fought every day." I want to thank all of you for the invaluable work you do, every single day, to make democracy real in your own countries, and around the world. Thank you.

The Washington Post

SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 1997

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Feminists on the March in Traditional Yemen

By John Lancaster
Washington Post Foreign Service

ARHAB AL HINA, Yemen—It is hard to imagine a more unlikely outpost of women's political activism than this tiny village of crude stone houses and hand-tilled fields, lying in a narrow valley almost two hours by four-wheel-drive vehicle from the nearest paved road.

There is no school, no electricity, no television. Most residents can neither read nor write. The main legal authority is not the central government but the local tribal leader, who adjudi-

cates land disputes and criminal cases in the manner of a feudal lord.

For the last several months, however, women here have been subjected to tireless proselytizing on the meaning of democracy by Warda Ghaylan, a 25-year-old mother of three and one of the few village women with any formal education. Ghaylan is a foot soldier in a nationwide effort to boost women's participation in Sunday's national parliamentary elections, the second since North and South Yemen were merged in 1990 after decades of warfare.

"I tell them, 'Your vote is the key to the future

of your children,'" said Ghaylan, a graceful woman in a floral-print robe, her gleaming white teeth contrasting vividly with her black head scarf. "Yes, they listen to me, but sometimes when they hear that I've come to talk to them about the elections, they hide. They think people will come in big cars and take them away to vote in a faraway place."

Notwithstanding such challenges, a beguiling experiment in representative government has begun in this tradition-bound Muslim country of 14 million people—an isolated, otherworldly

See YEMEN, A20, Col. 1

Women in Remote Villages Urged to Vote in Tradition-Bound Yemen

YEMEN, From A1

place where men while away afternoons chewing a mildly narcotic plant called khat and rarely appear in public without a curved dagger strapped to their waists.

It is an experiment, moreover, in which women are playing a prominent role. Yemeni feminists in veils and billowy black robes are organizing voter registration drives, fielding female candidates and even cutting political deals with conservative tribal chiefs and the country's largest Islamic party, the Yemeni Islah Party.

The outcome could reverberate well beyond Yemen's borders. In a region where political life is dominated by dictators, monarchs and Islamic fundamentalists, democracy advocates look to Yemen as a potential bright spot. Saudi Arabia and other autocratic neighbors, meanwhile, see it as a bad example that could weaken their grip on power.

"I think we are having a unique experience in the Arab world," said Abdel-Karim Iryani, a Yale-educated biogeneticist and computer aficionado—he is especially fond of Yemen's home page on the World Wide Web—who serves as the country's foreign minister.

Situated on the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula at the entrance to the Red Sea, Yemen seems closer in spirit to Mogadishu than Monticello. One of the poorest Arab countries, Yemen is famously anarchic, to the point where government officials sometimes have to seek permission from local sheiks when crossing tribal boundaries. Many tribes consider the taking of hostages, including Western tourists, an honorable way of settling disputes with the government.

Only three years ago, the former South Yemen tried to secede from the north, bombarding the capital city, Sanaa, with Scud missiles in a month-long civil war. Relations between north and south are still so strained that the largest southern opposition party, the Yemeni Socialist Party, is boycotting Sunday's election.

Nor is the central government a model of political enlightenment. The government of President Ali Abdallah Salih, who has ruled for



BY ALI JAREKI

One of the few women running for a seat in parliament in Yemen applauds at a campaign rally in Sanaa.

nearly 20 years, stands accused of numerous human rights abuses.

Women face their own problems. Roughly 80 percent of Yemeni women are illiterate, compared with 35 percent of men; the country's limited supply of secondary schools is largely reserved for boys.

Such disparities are reflected in political life. Just two of 301 members of parliament are women. During the last elections in 1993, the 43 female candidates encountered so much hostility that only three have chosen to run again. This year, only 16 of more than 2,000 candidates are women; most of them are running as independents because major parties refuse to back them.

None of that deters Raufa Hassan, 38, a university professor who directs a voter-education project for the Arab Democratic Institute in Sanaa with backing from the European Union.

For Hassan, who holds a doctorate in communication from the University of Paris, the trick is to focus on the long term. "We tell them, 'Even though voting isn't going to get you anywhere . . . it's going to be good for your kids,'" she said.

Yemen's experiment with democracy happened almost by chance. The unification of the conservative north and the socialist south left Salih and his ruling party, the General People's Congress, on top. So the northern leaders sought to placate the south by granting more power to opposition parties. Tribal leaders, meanwhile, have begun to learn the art of ward politics, promising to deliver votes in exchange for roads, schools and water projects.

Despite weak representation in parliament, women are not entirely powerless. Earlier this month, for example, the highest-ranking woman in Yemen's government, Undersec-

retary of Information Amat Aleem Sosowa, was horrified to learn that parliament had passed legislation lifting the ban on marriage for girls under 15. So she contacted the legal adviser to Salih, who obligingly sent the law back to parliament without his signature.

Even the Islah party, whose extremist wing has barred the use of Western musical instruments in its campaign jingles, has been signing up women voters in its strongholds—betting that most of them will vote as their husbands do.

Saudi Arabia has taken a dim view of the democratic goings-on next door. At a January meeting in Tunisia, the Saudi interior minister, Prince Nayef, urged his Yemeni counterpart to cancel the parliamentary elections as a threat to stability in the region, according to a senior Yemeni official and Western diplomats.

The involvement of women in politics is especially disturbing to Saudi Arabia—a country so conservative that it does not permit women to drive—and other autocratic states on the Arabian Peninsula.

The center of the get-out-the-vote effort in Yemen is the Arab Democratic Institute, Hassan's organization, which has dispatched women field coordinators to the 83 voting districts with the lowest turnout by women in the 1993 elections.

One such coordinator is Nabila Hassan Saleh, who works out of her village near Taiz, a bustling mountain city about 100 miles south of Sanaa. Draped from head to toe in black cloth, Saleh meets regularly with local women to explain the basics of democracy.

Saleh and another, similarly attired coordinator, Samira Khassem Salem, recently invited a foreign visitor to sit in on a session under the watchful eye of Saleh's elderly father in Saleh's house.

At first, the listeners expressed befuddlement. "We are goatherds and women," said Fatemah Gorham, a 35-year-old mother of eight in a bright red head scarf. "How can we vote? We can't read and write."

But the two women patiently pressed on. "You say you're a goat-herd, but you are human," Salem told Gorham. "Do you have any demands?"

"I want cheap sugar, I want low prices," Gorham replied, warming to the topic. "I have a hundred demands—water, electricity, education."

"The man you vote for, ask him, 'What will you do for me when you go to parliament?'" Salem urged.

But another woman was doubtful as she recalled her experience during the last parliamentary election. "They told us they would give us sugar and wheat," she said, cradling a sleeping toddler. "We were so pleased that I took my daughters and we voted. But we didn't even get soap."

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Title: VOTING RITES: YEMEN STEERS A PATH TOWARD
DEMOCRACY, WITH SOME SURPRISES; ISLAMIST PARTY
BUSES WOMEN TO THE POLLS, AND SHEIKS BACK
SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT; BUT MEN RETAIN THE CLOUT
Authors: Daniel Pearl Staff Reporter of The Wall Street Journal
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Abstract: Yemen is ahead of most of its neighbors in moving toward
democracy, and the preparations for the country's second
parliamentary elections in Apr 1997 show how democracy
might really work in the Arab world. Tribes, rather than
resisting elections, adapt to them by acting like Western-style
pressure groups, and Islamists embrace women's voting rights,
if doing so increases their clout.

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Article Text:

HAJJAH, Yemen — Ask most Arab leaders about the obstacles to democracy, and they will mention tribalism, Islamic fundamentalism and the thorny question of whether women should be allowed to vote. But consider what happens when Raufa Hassan, Yemen's most outspoken feminist, organizes get-out-the-vote meetings among women in the most backward parts of this conservative Arab country. Local tribal leaders give enthusiastic support. Yemen's Islamist party, Islah, praises her and sends its own female activists hiking up jagged mountainsides in full veil to preach the benefits of voting to goat-herding women.

'Everybody is helping us. For now, we have common goals,' says Dr. Hassan, a fast-talking, 38-year-old university professor who achieved renown in Yemen in the 1970s by delivering television news broadcasts without a veil. 'If democrats do not work within the tribes, it's their mistake.'

Yemen is ahead of most of its neighbors in moving toward democracy, and the preparations for the country's second parliamentary elections next month show how democracy might really work in the Arab world. Tribes, rather than resisting elections, adapt to them by acting like Western-style pressure groups. Islamists embrace women's voting rights — if doing so increases their clout. At the same time, women rarely challenge male ascendancy when they vote.

They will if Dr. Hassan has her way, though. Dr. Hassan is training her young charges to take part in tribal affairs; currently, it is considered unusual for a woman even to enter the sitting rooms where sheiks make decisions for their tribes. The nonpartisan Arab Democratic Institute, which she helped start, plans to bankroll seven women candidates for the 301-seat Parliament, which has two women, and Dr. Hassan is trying to convince the Islah party to run a woman.

It wouldn't be the first unusual occurrence in Yemen, a land where ancient mud skyscrapers rise inexplicably to the sky, where the Arabic word for 'OK' means 'no' and where the biggest natural resource isn't oil but an intoxicating plant called qat.

Democracy had unusual roots here. Conservative north Yemen and socialist south Yemen warred for decades before uniting in 1990. Allowing multiple parties, with women voting, was a way to bring southerners on board. That effort hasn't always been a success. After the first elections in 1993, southern separatists tried to break away, but were routed by the north in a brief civil war. Many southerners now complain bitterly about dominance by the tribal north, where women had much less freedom. And the southern Yemen Socialist Party is boycotting next month's elections.

The elections haven't helped the government assert much control over tribes, either. Tribal representatives won most of the parliamentary seats in 1993. Highways near the capital, Sana'a, are dotted with homemade traffic barriers where Kalashnikov-wielding tribesmen sometimes stop government cars. Tribal areas have their own court systems: The sheik and the families often work out compensation for a murder. Sheiks typically collect taxes and recruit soldiers. Some tribes kidnap Westerners when they want to pressure the government to reroute a highway or fund a water project.

Nor have elections threatened Ali Abdullah Saleh's two-decade-long hold on the presidency. He was elected by the new Parliament in 1994, and his People's General Congress party controls Yemen's television and radio stations and army. He has had little trouble imposing wrenching economic reforms on Yemen.

But the rival Islah party, which seeks stricter application of Islamic law, did win 62 seats in Parliament in 1993. Islah did so in part by busing women to the polls, and last summer, during voter registration for the April 27 election, Islah was the most active party in signing women up to vote. 'They assume they'll vote like their husbands,' says Renaud Detalle of the French Center for Yemeni Studies in Sana'a.

One of the unsuccessful independent candidates in 1993 was Dr. Hassan, a liberal professor from a family of traditional Islamic judges. At 12 years old, the age her mother had conceived her, Raufa Hassan was giving literacy lessons to the elderly under the guidance of an early Yemeni feminist. At 30, she was earning a doctorate in social communications from the University of Paris by spending months in remote tribal villages to study the effects of television. Between starting Sana'a University's Empirical Research and Women's Studies Center and running a host of nonprofit groups, she says she hasn't had time to get married.

To Dr. Hassan, the key issue is giving women more political power. Tribal government works fine, she says, except for excluding women, and she espouses democracy largely because it helps her build support from Westerners. She ran for Parliament in part to write a book about her experiences. One that stood out was a campaign rally in which a veiled woman started charging up from the back, shouting that 'the voice of woman is haram' — or forbidden. Dr. Hassan handed her a microphone to amplify the irony.

The 1993 elections inspired a new cadre of democracy advocates. Thousands of

volunteers monitored the elections, though the government declined to sanction official monitors. Afterward, Dr. Hassan joined with the group's leaders — including a traditional Islamic lawyer and an American-educated businessman — to form the Arab Democratic Institute, or ADI.

Dr. Hassan proved a wily fund-raiser, to the point that other Yemeni women gripe about her monopolizing foreign contributions. As part of a successful bid for Dutch funding to expand her women's center, she had students occupy her office to make it so cramped, the Dutch ambassador had nowhere to sit during a visit. ADI's proposal for a women's voting project was about to be rejected by the European Union when Dr. Hassan made a long telephone appeal to a female EU official she had never met. The EU gave the project \$500,000.

'I'm getting everyone to support me, but I'm not focusing that much on the elections,' Dr. Hassan says. 'I want to create women leaders in little villages.'

ADI placed radio advertisements that made no mention of the elections, merely touting good pay for educated women who were willing to travel. The 11 women selected became regional organizers and fanned out across the country to hire local women as 'constituency coordinators' at \$200 a month.

Many of the 79 coordinators who arrived in Sana'a for the first meeting had never eaten in a restaurant or used a flush toilet, let alone spoken publicly. As fathers and husbands took care of babies in an adjacent room, the women walked through imaginary election discussions with strangers. To get her regional organizers used to dealing with men, Dr. Hassan had them sit in alternating seats for a televised ceremony so male dignitaries had no choice but to mingle when they arrived.

Meeting with village women can be hazardous without men's approval, ADI coordinators soon found. One coordinator says she relied on a local woman to set up a meeting in a eastern Yemen village, but the woman's father found out, stormed into the meeting and beat his daughter in front of everybody. Other coordinators hold meetings by inviting women to soda parties, or sneaking some time at village weddings.

More often than not, though, sheiks have given their support. Khadija Saleh Ali Oman and her husband, Abdul Mohammad Al Gofli, knocked on the door of one sheik and were invited in for lunch. She explained the project, and the sheik immediately rounded up some women for a meeting. The sheik later explained that the support of women voters could help if his son wanted to run for office. Also, a high voter turnout could help the region win more food benefits or schools.

'The sheiks are under pressure because people say 'They're not doing anything for us,' says Abdo Ali Othman, a Sana'a University sociologist who studies tribes. So sheiks are becoming more open to outside help.

The women can be a bigger challenge, coordinators found. Only one of 10 rural women in Yemen can read or write, partly because men don't want to send teenage daughters to school with boys. In the afternoons, while many rural men chat and chew qat, women carry water, herd cattle and grind wheat. Bearing more than a dozen children is considered a reasonable life goal. Many women had no idea their members of Parliament were elected, ADI coordinators reported.

In one report from Hajjah, Ms. Ali Oman describes meeting 25 women of various ages, all listing their occupation as 'housewife.' Those who were registered to vote said their husbands were holding the registration certificates, because the women might lose them. One woman said, 'How can we take part in the elections when we are like

animals, not able to read and write?' Ms. Ali Oman told them they had a right to vote and could even use party symbols, like a flower or a sword, if they couldn't write the names of candidates.

Tribesmen in Hajjah see no danger the women will demand changes in their status if they vote. 'No way. I dare them to demand it,' says Abdullah Mohammed Ishaak, a village sheik, resting his hand on a ceremonial dagger and his head on a sitting-room cushion. Mr. Ishaak continues: 'This is the reality here: If a husband or brother tells a wife to go and register to vote, they'll go and do it. And if he says don't do it, she won't do it.'

But in one district visited by ADI, women are organizing a candidates' debate. Sitting beside Mr. Ishaak is Ahmed Abdulrahman Jahaf, whose daughter, an ADI coordinator, has been encouraged to run for Parliament. He says he doesn't object, but worries how 'backward' villagers would react. Also, an educated girl is more attractive as a bride, but a girl who is working commands a smaller dowry, he says. 'The nature of women leads us to the conclusion that a woman's right place is home,' Mr. Jahaf says.

The Islah party also has mixed feelings about women as candidates. Islah recently allowed the head of its women's division to give a brief speech at the party conference — then had her escorted back to a separate room. And it presented a paper at an ADI seminar saying women could be elected to any position — except president. Still, that represented a 'major change in attitude,' according to Jamal Al-Adimi, an Islamic lawyer who is directing ADI's women's project.

Mr. Adimi's sister is among Islah's new crop of female activists in the city of Hodeidah. But when asked if they will consider running for Parliament this year, she and her colleagues glance at their male bosses and say the time isn't right. 'Allah did not prohibit women to be voters, or to be candidates,' explains Mohammad Qahtan, Islah's political director. But 'there is another point of view within the Islah that still rejects such a change.'

The ruling People's General Congress also has been tentative. One month ago, during a conference in Sana'a, party leaders promised to work for at least 20 women in Parliament. 'They said the same things five years ago. I swear it makes me so sleepy,' Dr. Hassan commented, half-listening to a speech from the back row. Sure enough, this week only two women appeared on the ruling party's list of 221 candidates. Confronted by Dr. Hassan at a dinner reception Tuesday, party official Mohamed Al Tayeb told her there weren't enough qualified women to choose from.

The change of heart is, in a way, a sign of Yemen's budding democracy. The top parties recently had an agreement not to compete with each other this year in most districts. But now that agreement is breaking down. 'We do not want to lose anywhere,' Mr. Tayeb says.

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EMERGING DEMOCRACIES FORUM

THE NATIONAL
DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

AND

THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

To: Melanne S. Verveer

From: Ken Wollack /KW

Date: July 8, 1999

I thought you would be interested in receiving the declaration issued by the participants at the Emerging Democracies Forum in Yemen. Sixteen countries were represented by: government officials, including heads of state and government, and cabinet ministers; governing and opposition party leaders; parliamentarians, including speakers of legislatures; and representatives of civil society, labor and business.

The conference was an unusual gathering of diverse participants and countries, most of which are carrying out their democratic transitions in relative obscurity. Perhaps even more important, however, was the content of the Sana'a Declaration which went well beyond broad democratic principles that are commonplace at conferences like this. The document gives specific ways in which to apply these principles. Promoting civil society, for example, would include tax-exempt status for civic organizations and legislation which would not restrict the activities of these groups.

It was also significant that the participants called upon the donor community and international financial institutions to use democratic criteria in determining aid, loan and debt reduction policy.

As I mentioned, the First Lady's remarks at the final plenary session made a real impact. They flowed naturally from the previous discussion on women's political participation, creating the impression that the First Lady was listening in on our conversation. About 500 people were present in the conference room when the video was played and the speech was broadcast on Yemen television and many other media outlets in the region. Her involvement, albeit on tape, was warmly received and greatly appreciated.

We are hoping that the international community will take note of the outcome of this Forum. For our part, NDI is planning a series of follow-on activities in individual countries that can build upon the sharing of experiences and ideas at the Sana'a meeting.

Many thanks for your interest and support.

EMERGING DEMOCRACIES FORUM

SANA'A DECLARATION

June 30, 1999

THE NATIONAL
DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

AND

THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Sponsored by:

THE UNITED NATIONS
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

AND

THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN

In Partnership with the Governments of:

THE NETHERLANDS

THE UNITED KINGDOM

THE UNITED STATES

And the:

CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR
ORGANIZATION

IRISH AID

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR
DEMOCRACY

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR
INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

WESTMINSTER FOUNDATION
FOR DEMOCRACY

WORLD BANK

We who attended the Emerging Democracies Forum in Sana'a, Yemen from June 27 to 30, 1999 from 16 countries, assembled to acknowledge our democratic achievements, to address common challenges we face in the transition to full democracy and to reaffirm our commitment to democratic rights and principles. The Forum was a unique gathering, bringing together a diverse group of participants and countries whose democratic advances are less known.

We recognize that the transition process is not complete and that much needs to be done to consolidate our democratic systems and to implement further political and economic reforms. While we are proud to have joined the growing community of democracies, the international community has tended to focus on countries that are considered strategically more important or are in crisis. However, democratic progress in our states contributes to peace, stability and prosperity both within and beyond our borders.

Reflecting the importance of all sectors of society in this endeavour, the participants at the Forum included government officials, members of governing and opposition parties, and representatives of labor, business and civic groups from Benin, Bolivia, El Salvador, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Macedonia, Malawi, Mali, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal and Yemen. We represent a diversity of democratic experience, but our attendance at this Forum demonstrates the universality of the democratic idea. This group of nations with different traditions, cultures and historical experiences was brought together by a shared commitment to democracy and a belief that the promise of economic prosperity enjoyed by all citizens is more likely realized in a democratic political environment based on respect for human rights, popular participation and the rule of law. Further we share a commitment to:

- pursue economic reforms and secure fundamental workers' rights, while making every effort to educate and build widespread consensus for these goals;
- improve protections for human rights for all our people;
- hold regular free and fair elections, with special attention to the need to build public confidence in the process;
- develop our legislatures as an essential instrument for broad public participation and representation as well as for policy debate and oversight of government;
- empower democratic governance at local levels;
- deepen our commitment to, and implement measures to ensure, the full participation of women in political life;

- ensure that the rights of minorities are respected and that every effort is made to engage marginalized groups in the political process;
- broaden the democratic experience by adopting all reasonable means to encourage public access to, and participation in, the policy making process;
- support the strengthening of civil society;
- uphold the freedom of the press;
- address the urgent challenge of corruption by instituting meaningful reforms, including those that increase governmental transparency; and
- foster judicial independence, enhance public access to legal redress and ensure that the laws are fairly applied to all.

These are the principles that brought us to Yemen, which we discussed in the context of our specific experiences. Following are some examples of measures recommended by Forum participants that give concrete expression to our shared democratic principles.

The successful implementation of economic reforms is advanced by:

- transparent and inclusive decision making, the involvement of civil servants, the public, labor, business groups and political parties in the design and implementation of reforms;
- a social safety net to meet basic human needs and/or a complementary poverty alleviation program; and
- a recognition of the role of the civic sector in the implementation of economic reforms, including the use of such groups to help deliver government-funded social services.

Public confidence in elections is enhanced by:

- working towards the establishment of independent election commissions that are nonpartisan or politically balanced;
- regulating, by legislation, government financing of elections to ensure that they are fair and equitable for all parties; and
- inviting election observers, whether domestic or international, to mount more comprehensive efforts, including the monitoring of registration and campaign periods;

The legitimacy of parties and legislatures is advanced by:

- the adoption by political parties of internal democratic procedures, ongoing training of political leaders and elected officials, and public accountability and transparency;
- the implementation of legislative procedures that ensure public access to plenary and committee meetings, the holding of public hearings, and the provision of committee documents and bills to the public.

Public participation in democratic decision making is enhanced by:

- providing for private ownership of media and ensuring the impartiality of state-owned media through independent boards or other means;
- ensuring that governments and political parties take measures to increase the number of women in parliament and appoint women to key government posts;

- conducting civic education in schools, nongovernmental organizations, parties and the media to address cultural attitudinal and legal barriers to the political and economic participation of women;
- encouraging governments and legislatures to enhance the viability of nongovernmental organizations, including removing legal barriers and providing tax exempt status, and engaging non governmental organizations in policy debates;

The achievement of good governance, the improvement of administration, controlling corruption and strengthening the rule of law can be advanced by:

- instituting public information mechanisms, such as budget transparency, freedom of information laws and the publication of regulations;
- depoliticizing and professionalizing the civil service;
- implementing a comprehensive program to fight corruption, including institutions such as politically independent anti-corruption commissions, ombudsmen and auditors general, codes of conduct and financial disclosure rules, and open procurement processes.

As a result of this conference, we hope to establish mechanisms between our countries to continue the sharing of ideas and experiences through consultations, exchange programs, an interactive web site and other means. We also look forward to working together in a variety of international fora to promote democratic principles and practices. We intend to support the efforts of other countries that are beginning the process of democratic transition.

The international community should renew its commitment to countries working to build democratic institutions and processes and dedicate the resources for this task. In particular, the donor community and the international financial institutions, in considering loans, aid and debt policy, should give priority to those countries implementing political as well as economic reforms. These political reforms would include measures that advance popular participation, build public trust in elections and legislatures, and enhance government transparency and accountability.

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The Washington Post

SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 1997

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Feminists on the March in Traditional Yemen

By John Lancaster
Washington Post Foreign Service

ARHAB AL HINA, Yemen—It is hard to imagine a more unlikely outpost of women's political activism than this tiny village of crude stone houses and hand-tilled fields, lying in a narrow valley almost two hours by four-wheel-drive vehicle from the nearest paved road.

There is no school, no electricity, no television. Most residents can neither read nor write. The main legal authority is not the central government but the local tribal leader, who adjudi-

cates land disputes and criminal cases in the manner of a feudal lord.

For the last several months, however, women here have been subjected to tireless proselytizing on the meaning of democracy by Warda Ghaylan, a 25-year-old mother of three and one of the few village women with any formal education. Ghaylan is a foot soldier in a nationwide effort to boost women's participation in Sunday's national parliamentary elections, the second since North and South Yemen were merged in 1990 after decades of warfare.

"I tell them, 'Your vote is the key to the future

of your children,'" said Ghaylan, a graceful woman in a floral-print robe, her gleaming white teeth contrasting vividly with her black head scarf. "Yes, they listen to me, but sometimes when they hear that I've come to talk to them about the elections, they hide. They think people will come in big cars and take them away to vote in a faraway place."

Notwithstanding such challenges, a beguiling experiment in representative government has begun in this tradition-bound Muslim country of 14 million people—an isolated, otherworldly

See YEMEN, A20, Col. 1

Women in Remote Villages Urged to Vote in Tradition-Bound Yemen

YEMEN, From A1

place where men while away afternoons chewing a mildly narcotic plant called khat and rarely appear in public without a curved dagger strapped to their waists.

It is an experiment, moreover, in which women are playing a prominent role. Yemeni feminists in veils and billowy black robes are organizing voter registration drives, fielding female candidates and even cutting political deals with conservative tribal chiefs and the country's largest Islamic party, the Yemeni Islah Party.

The outcome could reverberate well beyond Yemen's borders. In a region where political life is dominated by dictators, monarchs and Islamic fundamentalists, democracy advocates look to Yemen as a potential bright spot. Saudi Arabia and other autocratic neighbors, meanwhile, see it as a bad example that could weaken their grip on power.

"I think we are having a unique experience in the Arab world," said Abdel-Karim Iryani, a Yale-educated biogeneticist and computer aficionado—he is especially fond of Yemen's home page on the World Wide Web—who serves as the country's foreign minister.

Situated on the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula at the entrance to the Red Sea, Yemen seems closer in spirit to Mogadishu than Monticello. One of the poorest Arab countries, Yemen is famously anarchic, to the point where government officials sometimes have to seek permission from local sheiks when crossing tribal boundaries. Many tribes consider the taking of hostages, including Western tourists, an honorable way of settling disputes with the government.

Only three years ago, the former South Yemen tried to secede from the north, bombarding the capital city, Sanaa, with Scud missiles in a month-long civil war. Relations between north and south are still so strained that the largest southern opposition party, the Yemeni Socialist Party, is boycotting Sunday's election.

Nor is the central government a model of political enlightenment. The government of President Ali Abdallah Salih, who has ruled for



BY ALI JAREKI

One of the few women running for a seat in parliament in Yemen applauds at a campaign rally in Sanaa.

nearly 20 years, stands accused of numerous human rights abuses.

Women face their own problems. Roughly 80 percent of Yemeni women are illiterate, compared with 35 percent of men; the country's limited supply of secondary schools is largely reserved for boys.

Such disparities are reflected in political life. Just two of 301 members of parliament are women. During the last elections in 1993, the 43 female candidates encountered so much hostility that only three have chosen to run again. This year, only 16 of more than 2,000 candidates are women; most of them are running as independents because major parties refuse to back them.

None of that deters Raufa Hassan, 38, a university professor who directs a voter-education project for the Arab Democratic Institute in Sanaa with backing from the European Union.

For Hassan, who holds a doctorate in communication from the University of Paris, the trick is to focus on the long term. "We tell them, 'Even though voting isn't going to get you anywhere . . . it's going to be good for your kids,'" she said.

Yemen's experiment with democracy happened almost by chance. The unification of the conservative north and the socialist south left Salih and his ruling party, the General People's Congress, on top. So the northern leaders sought to placate the south by granting more power to opposition parties. Tribal leaders, meanwhile, have begun to learn the art of ward politics, promising to deliver votes in exchange for roads, schools and water projects.

Despite weak representation in parliament, women are not entirely powerless. Earlier this month, for example, the highest-ranking woman in Yemen's government, Undersec-

retary of Information Amat Aleem Sosowa, was horrified to learn that parliament had passed legislation lifting the ban on marriage for girls under 15. So she contacted the legal adviser to Salih, who obligingly sent the law back to parliament without his signature.

Even the Islah party, whose extremist wing has barred the use of Western musical instruments in its campaign jingles, has been signing up women voters in its strongholds—betting that most of them will vote as their husbands do.

Saudi Arabia has taken a dim view of the democratic goings-on next door. At a January meeting in Tunisia, the Saudi interior minister, Prince Nayef, urged his Yemeni counterpart to cancel the parliamentary elections as a threat to stability in the region, according to a senior Yemeni official and Western diplomats.

The involvement of women in politics is especially disturbing to Saudi Arabia—a country so conservative that it does not permit women to drive—and other autocratic states on the Arabian Peninsula.

The center of the get-out-the-vote effort in Yemen is the Arab Democratic Institute, Hassan's organization, which has dispatched women field coordinators to the 83 voting districts with the lowest turnout by women in the 1993 elections.

One such coordinator is Nabila Hassan Saleh, who works out of her village near Taiz, a bustling mountain city about 100 miles south of Sanaa. Draped from head to toe in black cloth, Saleh meets regularly with local women to explain the basics of democracy.

Saleh and another, similarly attired coordinator, Samira Khassem Salem, recently invited a foreign visitor to sit in on a session under the watchful eye of Saleh's elderly father in Saleh's house.

At first, the listeners expressed befuddlement. "We are goatherds and women," said Fatemah Gorham, a 35-year-old mother of eight in a bright red head scarf. "How can we vote? We can't read and write."

But the two women patiently pressed on. "You say you're a goatherd, but you are human," Salem told Gorham. "Do you have any demands?"

"I want cheap sugar, I want low prices," Gorham replied, warming to the topic. "I have a hundred demands—water, electricity, education."

"The man you vote for, ask him, 'What will you do for me when you go to parliament?'" Salem urged.

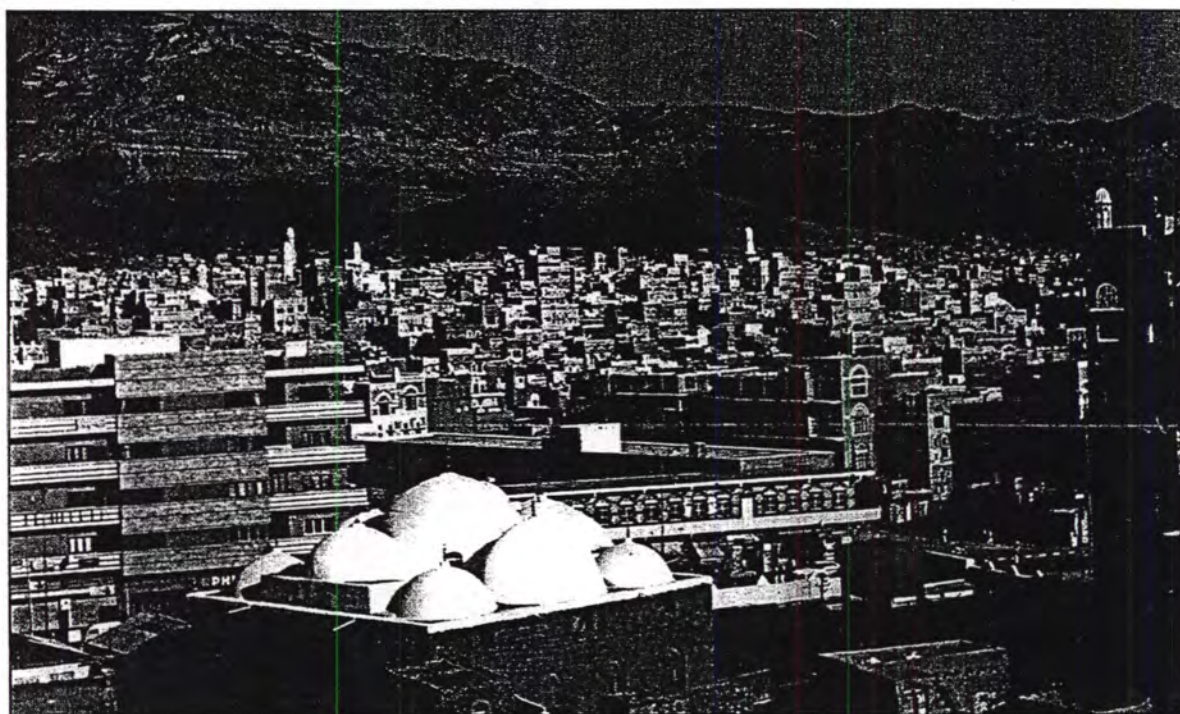
But another woman was doubtful as she recalled her experience during the last parliamentary election. "They told us they would give us sugar and wheat," she said, cradling a sleeping toddler. "We were so pleased that I took my daughters and we voted. But we didn't even get soap."



GONFERENCE

" Challenges of the xxlst Century to Women and Democracy"

Sana'a 27 - 29 May 1997



List of the Candidates (1993 - 1997)

No.	Name	No.	Name	No.	Name
1	Samia Alahmadi	9	Fathia Al-Hethami	17	Waheeba Shaher
2	Mona Basharaheel	10	Faheema Al-Eryani	18	Fatma Al-Awlaqi
3	Amat Al-Razaq Jahaf	11	Narjes Obaad H. Ali	19	Ieredal Dearia
4	Lebnan Saadoon	12	Nadia Al-Aghbari	20	Afrah Saleh
5	Intisar Saeed Ali	13	Afrah Al-Shana	21	Dr. Rawfa Hassan
6	Anisa Al-Herwi	14	Thuria Ahmed Ali	22	Lebnan Shalan
7	Dr. Balqis Al-Hadrani	15	Radia Shamsheeri	23	Wafaa Obaid
8	Khawla Sharaf	16	Taiba Barkat	24	Najeeba Haddad

List of the Participants in the Second Women Candidates Workshop (April 5-7, 1997)

No.	Name	No.	Name	No.	Name
1	Aluf Ba - Hubeira	9	Halimah Abdulqawi	17	Oras Sultan Naji
2	Kifah Abdullah	10	Samira Abdulkelq	18	Samia Al-Kuraiddi
3	Marwa Said-M. Saleh	11	Mahlia Arumi	19	Bilquis Al-Hadhrani
4	Widad Al-Rumeima	12	Nobila Al-Amri	20	Anisa Al-Harwi
5	Fathia Heithami	13	Kifah Al-Saqqaf	21	Fathia Al-Qudsi
6	Salwa Ajlan	14	Fatma Al-Ashabi	22	Nadia Al-Agbary
7	Fatma Shui Zeila	15	Amal Ali M. Heidar	23	Afrah Al-Sheena
8	Nobila Al-Basir	16	Muna Basharaheel		

List of Governorate Coordinators

No.	Name	Governorate
1	Manal Ahmed Noaman	Sana'a
2	Amat Al-Rahim Amir Al-Din Al-Huthi	Sana'a
3	Najjat Al-Saqqaf	Sana'a
4	Samira Kassim Sallam	Taizz
5	Najjat Al-Sheibani	Al-Hodeidah
6	Wafa Abdullah Obeid	Dhamar
7	Amria Abdullah Taizzi	Ibb
8	Ilham Al-Kibsi	Ibb
9	Amat Al-Sallam Jahhaf	Hajja
10	Naziha Al-Surmi	Mahweet
11	Um Hani Mohammed Sharif	Al-Jawff
12	Hadija Feisal	Sa'ada
13	Ahlam Ali Al-Wasai	Marib

List of Constituency Coordinators

No.	Name	No.	Name	No.	Name
1	Amal Ali Mohammed	32	Fatma Ali Salah Jashman	63	Ifrah Mohammed Faia
2	Amat Al-Malik Ahmed	33	Fatma M. Al-Sadi	64	Bilquis Nasser Futeini
3	Amat Al-Haliq Al-Hauri	34	Afrah Ghalib Al-Thari	65	Bahia Ahmed Al-Wasabi
4	Iptisam Al-Marwani	35	Afrah Hizam Wahban	66	Badria Ahmed Abdullah
5	Iman Al -Nashery	36	Ghania Hamoud Abdullah	67	Taqia Mohammed Salah
6	Iman Abdul-Rahman	37	Huda Ahmed Al-Hadi	68	Jamila G. Al-Kawkabani
7	Ikram A. Al-Masawi	38	Afrah Mohammed Said	69	Hadidja Al-Ammari
8	Dhikra Salah Hanash	39	Iman Mahmoud Al-Sanani	70	Hadidja Al-Dais
9	Bushra Ali Al-Hamdani	40	Hana'a Abdullah Saleh	71	Rahma Ahmed Abdullah
10	Bushra Ali M. Al-Kadri	41	Warda S. K. Al-Ragdan	72	Rasmia Shua'a Arjaf
11	Hahan S. Abdul-Wahab	42	Nobila H. S. Al-Jumali	73	Salwa M. Al-Sheibani
12	Najjat A. Al-Muhtadi	43	Intisar M. Al-Moudh	74	Salam M. Makin
13	Mahia A. Kassim Khalil	44	Qaima H. Al-Arsha'a	75	Samah Ali Al-Zamani
14	Saida Ahmed Mohammed	45	Bushra Ali Al-Aqar	76	Suad Salam Kadab
15	Samira A. Sinan	46	Fathia Y. Hussein	77	Alima Ali Salah
16	Mariam Ali Ahmed Said	47	Sina Hamoud Al-Ulafi	78	Aisha Mahdi Ammar
17	Abida Abdullah Qadab	48	Sheikha Sabai	79	Abeer Salah Mohmmmed
18	Amat Al-Rahim Abbasi	49	Najjat Al-Baidani	80	Fauzca Yahhya Al-Kamdi
19	Fatma Mohammed Hufan	50	Hiyam A.H.Al-Fadhali	81	Fatma Abdullah Sagir
20	Huda Darham Salah	51	Kamila A. Mohammed	82	Shafa'a Hamoud Dahan
21	Najjat Mansour Al-Waji	52	Haifa H. Al-Shami	83	Nowal Ghaleb Ismail
22	Nada Yahhya Al-Madari	53	Latifa M. H. Sharif	84	Nobila Mouqbel
23	Safia Ali Al-Namari	54	Iman Ali S. Al-Bashari	85	Najla Ahmed Salah
24	Hadidja Salah Omar	55	Feiruz Said Hussein	86	Najwa Al-Banus
25	Fatma Ali Hussein	56	Fatma Ali Hajjar	87	Najeeba M. Al-Shami
26	Shoukia M. Ismael	57	Intisar M. Al-Sah'abi	88	Nadhira Ali Auth
27	Fauzea Salah Jiash	58	Iman Abdo Seif M.	89	Intisar Abdul-Karim K.
28	Iptisam Feisal Al-Sharif	59	Amat Al-Lla Wasal	90	Fatima Mohammed Najjar
29	Amat Al-Malik A.Rahman	60	Amat Al-Latif Al-Masri	91	Samah Salah Hadrash
30	Bilquis Hassan	61	Asia M. H. Dammaj	92	Bushra Mohammed Ghaleb
31	Huda Abdullah	62	Ifrah Nasser Al-Futeini	93	Aisha Ali Mudahar
				94	Ifrah Ali Saleh

Conference "Challenges of the XXIst Century to Women and Democracy"

Women's Programme Overview

Arab Democratic Institutes (ADI)

The Arab democratic Institute is a non-government, non-profit making organization and it does not affiliate with any political party.

The ADI was established in March 1993 as a elections monitoring committee aimed to promote democracy and civil society in Yemen. Since then it has been functioning as a democratic institution, first of its kind in Yemen. ADI has been authorized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism on March 23, 1996 by license no. 60.

In June 1996 the ADI has launched a major programme aiming to introduce internationally recognized

democratic practices to Yemeni electoral procedures, to modify the existing elections law and to reactivate domestic electoral monitoring. Throughout 1996 - 1997 the ADI has developed and implemented four main projects in connection with 1997 Parliamentary elections; the Project for Support and Increase of Women's Participation Rate and the Project for Civic Education. Also the ADI issues a monthly newsletter "Democratic Forum" aimed to promote voter education and to serve as an intellectual forum for political parties and outstanding personalities.

Project for Support and Increase of Women's Participation Rate In the Yemeni Elections

The project is headed by Dr. Raufa Hassan Al-Sharki (Vice-President of the ADI).

Goals of the Project:

1. To increase women's electoral participation through voters civic education and encouragement women to practice their political rights.
2. To support women candidates, combining all efforts to ensure women's success by means of cooperation with political parties and civil society.

To implement these goals, the ADI recruited and trained 13 governorate and 63 constituency coordinators to work in the constituencies with the lowest figures of female participation registered in 1993. Also special training and campaigning have been organized for women candidates of 1997. Different seminars and workshops have been conducted in the framework of the Project, including "Quota System" workshop, "Women's political and Electoral Rights in Islamic Legislation" seminar and other activities.

Women Candidates' Fund (WCF)

Women Candidates' Fund (WCF) has been established during the first women candidates workshop, it is financially independent body, aimed at:

1. Technical and financial support of women candidates.
2. Training of campaigning teams.
3. Design and printing of electioneering materials and elections guides.
4. Documentation of the experience.

Women candidates fund is headed by the executive committee, composed of:

Dr. Amat Al-Razzaq Jahhaf - head of the PGC women's section
Amat Al-Sallam Ali Rajja - head of the "Islah" women's section.
Amat Al-Alim Al-susuwa - chairperson of National Women Committee
Dr. Raufa Hassan Al-Sharki - head of the ADI women's project

WCF Exhibition

WCF Exhibition will be open during the whole period of the conference. Exhibition is to illustrate the role of women in the society and their electoral participation.

The exhibition will display and offer for sale: Works of Yemeni female artists, handicrafts and embroidery of Yemeni women, audio-cassettes of Yemeni female singers, video-cassettes about electoral activities, pieces of applied and fine arts created by Yemeni women.

All funds raised from the exhibition items fair will be transferred to the WCF.

Goals of the Conference

- I. Evaluation of the Project for Support and Increase of Women's Participation Rate in the Yemeni elections.
- II. Discussion of the problem faced by women candidates in 1993/1197 Elections.
- III. Working out action - plan for women candidates empowerment in 2001 Parliament.

Future Prospects

The conference is to lay the foundation for the activities during the coming four-year period till the next Parliamentary elections. Participants of the conference will produce final report and major programme for the next stage of the electoral programme aimed to secure women's equality in the field of political and electoral participation. Different aspects of this programme will be drawn by three main groups of the participants: experts, candidates and coordinators. The conference will issue guidelines for design of civic education programme, women candidates training and means of support of future women candidates.

PROGRAMME OF THE CONFERENCE

First day - May 27, 1997

Opening Ceremony

WCF Exhibition Inauguration

Evaluation of the current Project and related activities (General and group sessions)

Discussion of the group work findings

Report Drafting

Second day - May 28, 1997

Work-plan till 2001: objectives and outlines (General and group sessions)

Women candidates' empowerment for 2001 elections (group work)

Legal aspects: quota system and open constituencies (group work)

Debate on the action plan for the coming period

Third day - May 29, 1997

Plenary meeting: finalizing of the action-plan till 2001

Closing Ceremony

Certificates of Merit award

Voting Rites

Women Steers a Path Toward Democracy, With Some Surprises Islamist Party Buses Women To the Polls, and Sheiks Back Suffrage Movement But Men Retain the Clout

By DANIEL PEARL

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

HAJJAH, Yemen—Ask most Arab leaders about the obstacles to democracy, and they will mention tribalism, Islamic fundamentalism and the thorny question of whether women should be allowed to vote.

But consider what happens when Raufa Hassan, Yemen's most outspoken feminist, organizes get-out-the-vote meetings among women in the most backward parts of this conservative Arab country. Local tribal leaders give enthusiastic support. Yemen's Islamist party, Islah, praises her and sends its own female activists hiking jagged mountainsides in full veil to teach the benefits of voting to goatherding women.

"Everybody is helping us. For now, we have common goals," says Dr. Hassan, a 38-year-old university professor who has gained renown in Yemen in the 1970s delivering television news broadcasts without a veil.

Islamist democrats do not work within the system, it's their stake."

Yemen is ahead of most of its neighbors in moving toward democracy,

and the preparations for the country's second parliamentary elections next month show how democracy might really work in the Arab world. Tribes, rather than resisting elections, adapt to them by acting like Western-style pressure groups. Islamists embrace women's voting rights—if doing so increases their clout. At the same time, women rarely challenge male ascendancy when they vote.



Raufa Hassan

though. Dr. Hassan is training her young charges to take part in tribal affairs; currently, it is considered unusual for a woman even to enter the sitting rooms where sheiks make decisions for their tribes. The nonpartisan Arab Democratic Institute, which she helped start, plans to bankroll seven women candidates for the 301-seat Parliament, which has two women, and Dr. Hassan is trying to convince the Islah party to run a woman.

It wouldn't be the first unusual occurrence in Yemen, a land where ancient mud skyscrapers rise inexplicably to the sky, where the Arabic word for "OK" means "no" and where the biggest natural resource isn't oil but an intoxicating plant called qat.

Unification and War

Democracy had unusual roots here. Conservative north Yemen and socialist south Yemen warred for decades before uniting in 1990. Allowing multiple parties, with women voting, was a way to bring southerners on board. That effort hasn't always been a success. After the first elections in 1993, southern separatists tried to break away, but were routed by the north in a brief civil war. Many southerners now complain bitterly about dominance by the tribal north, where women had much less freedom. And the southern Yemen Socialist Party is boycotting next month's elections.

The elections haven't helped the government assert much control over tribes, either. Tribal representatives won most of the parliamentary seats in 1993. Highways near the capital, Sana'a, are dotted with homemade traffic barriers where Kalashnikov-wielding tribesmen sometimes stop government cars. Tribal areas have their own court systems: The sheik and the families often work out compensation for a murder. Sheiks typically collect taxes and recruit soldiers. Some tribes kidnap Westerners when they want to pressure the government to reroute a highway or fund a water project.

Nor have elections threatened Ali Abdullah Saleh's two-decade-long hold on the presidency. He was elected by the new Parliament in 1994, and his People's General Congress party controls Yemen's television and radio stations and army. He has had little trouble imposing wrenching economic reforms on Yemen.

A Feminist's Role

But the rival Islah party, which seeks stricter application of Islamic law, did win 62 seats in Parliament in 1993. Islah did so in part by busing women to the polls, and last summer, during voter registration for the April 27 election, Islah was the most active party in signing women up to vote. "They assume they'll vote like their husbands," says Renaud Detalle of the French Center for Yemeni Studies in Sana'a.

One of the unsuccessful independent candidates in 1993 was Dr. Hassan, a liberal professor from a family of traditional Islamic judges. At 12 years old, the age her mother had conceived her, Raufa Hassan was giving literacy lessons to the elderly under the guidance of an early Yemeni feminist. At 30, she was earning a doctorate in social communications from the University of Paris by spending

Please Turn to Page A10, Column 1

Yemen Steers Toward Democracy

Continued From First Page

months in remote tribal villages to study the effects of television. Between starting Sana'a University's Empirical Research and Women's Studies Center and running a host of nonprofit groups, she says she hasn't had time to get married.

To Dr. Hassan, the key issue is giving women more political power. Tribal government works fine, she says, except for excluding women, and she espouses democracy largely because it helps her build support from Westerners. She ran for Parliament in part to write a book about her experiences. One that stood out was a campaign rally in which a veiled woman started charging up from the back, shouting that "the voice of woman is haram"—or forbidden. Dr. Hassan handed her a microphone to amplify the irony.

The 1993 elections inspired a new cadre of democracy advocates. Thousands of volunteers monitored the elections, though the government declined to sanction official monitors. Afterward, Dr. Hassan joined with the group's leaders—including a traditional Islamic lawyer and an American-educated businessman—to form the Arab Democratic Institute, or ADI.

Dr. Hassan proved a wily fund-raiser,

to the point that other Yemeni women gripe about her monopolizing foreign contributions. As part of a successful bid for Dutch funding to expand her women's center, she had students occupy her office to make it so cramped, the Dutch ambassador had nowhere to sit during a visit. ADI's proposal for a women's voting project was about to be rejected by the European Union when Dr. Hassan made a long telephone appeal to a female EU official she had never met. The EU gave the project \$500,000.

"I'm getting everyone to support me, but I'm not focusing that much on the elections," Dr. Hassan says. "I want to create women leaders in little villages."

ADI placed radio advertisements that made no mention of the elections, merely touting good pay for educated women who were willing to travel. The 11 women selected became regional organizers and fanned out across the country to hire local women as "constituency coordinators" at \$200 a month.

Many of the 79 coordinators who arrived in Sana'a for the first meeting had never eaten in a restaurant or used a flush toilet, let alone spoken publicly. As fathers and husbands took care of babies in an adjacent room, the women walked through imaginary election discussions with strangers. To get her regional organizers used to dealing with men, Dr. Hassan had them sit in alternating seats for a televised ceremony so male dignitaries had no choice but to mingle when they arrived.

First, Get Permission

Meeting with village women can be hazardous without men's approval, ADI coordinators soon found. One coordinator says she relied on a local woman to set up a meeting in a eastern Yemen village, but the woman's father found out, stormed into the meeting and beat his daughter in front of everybody. Other coordinators hold meetings by inviting women to soda parties, or sneaking some time at village weddings.

More often than not, though, sheiks have given their support. Khadija Saleh Ali Oman and her husband, Abdul Mohammad

Al Gofli, knocked on the door of one sheik and were invited in for lunch. She explained the project, and the sheik immediately rounded up some women for a meeting. The sheik later explained that the support of women voters could help if his son wanted to run for office. Also, a high voter turnout could help the region win more food benefits or schools.

"The sheiks are under pressure because people say 'They're not doing anything for us,'" says Abdo Ali Othman, a Sana'a University sociologist who studies tribes. So sheiks are becoming more open to outside help.

The women can be a bigger challenge, coordinators found. Only one of 10 rural women in Yemen can read or write, partly because men don't want to send teenage daughters to school with boys. In the afternoons, while many rural men chat and chew qat, women carry water, herd cattle and grind wheat. Bearing more than a dozen children is considered a reasonable life goal. Many women had no idea their members of Parliament were elected, ADI coordinators reported.

'We Are Like Animals'

In one report from Hajjah, Ms. Ali Oman describes meeting 25 women of various ages, all listing their occupation as "housewife." Those who were registered to vote said their husbands were holding the registration certificates, because the women might lose them. One woman said, "How can we take part in the elections when we are like animals, not able to read and write?" Ms. Ali Oman told them they had a right to vote and could even use party symbols, like a flower or a sword, if they couldn't write the names of candidates.

Tribesmen in Hajjah see no danger the women will demand changes in their status if they vote. "No way. I dare them to demand it," says Abdullah Mohammed Ishaak, a village sheik, resting his hand on a ceremonial dagger and his head on a sitting-room cushion. Mr. Ishaak continues: "This is the reality here: If a husband or brother tells a wife to go and register to vote, they'll go and do it. And if he says: don't do it, she won't do it."

But in one district visited by ADI, women are organizing a candidates' debate. Sitting beside Mr. Ishaak is Ahmed Abdulrahman Jahaf, whose daughter, an ADI coordinator, has been encouraged to

run for Parliament. He says he doesn't object, but worries how "backward" villagers would react. Also, an educated girl is more attractive as a bride, but a girl who is working commands a smaller dowry, he says. "The nature of women leads us to the conclusion that a woman's right place is home," Mr. Jahaf says.

The Islah party also has mixed feelings about women as candidates. Islah recently allowed the head of its women's division to give a brief speech at the party conference—then had her escorted back to a separate room. And it presented a paper at an ADI seminar saying women could be elected to any position—except president. Still, that represented a "major change in attitude," according to Jamal Al-Adimi, an Islamic lawyer who is directing ADI's women's project.

Mr. Adimi's sister is among Islah's new crop of female activists in the city of Hodeidah. But when asked if they will consider running for Parliament this year, she and her colleagues glance at their male bosses and say the time isn't right. "Allah did not prohibit women to be voters, or to be candidates," explains Mohammad Qah-tan, Islah's political director. But "there is another point of view within the Islah that still rejects such a change."

The ruling People's General Congress also has been tentative. One month ago, during a conference in Sana'a, party leaders promised to work for at least 20 women in Parliament. "They said the same things five years ago. I swear it makes me so sleepy," Dr. Hassan commented, half-listening to a speech from the back row. Sure enough, this week only two women appeared on the ruling party's list of 221 candidates. Confronted by Dr. Hassan at a dinner reception Tuesday, party official Mohamed Al Tayeb told her there weren't enough qualified women to choose from.

The change of heart is, in a way, a sign of Yemen's budding democracy. The top parties recently had an agreement not to compete with each other this year in most districts. But now that agreement is breaking down. "We do not want to lose anywhere," Mr. Tayeb says.

file Yemen

MEMORANDUM

To: Melanne Verveer
From: Stephenie Foster *sf*
Date: May 27, 1999
Re: Yemen

This memo sets forth (1) a brief synopsis of the role of women in Yemeni electoral politics, (2) examples of programmatic work ongoing in Yemen, focusing on the role of women in politics, and (3) key contacts in Yemen.

ROLE OF WOMEN IN YEMENI ELECTORAL POLITICS

Women in Yemen have the right to vote and to run for office. Since Yemeni unification in 1990, two elections have been held for the 301 seat parliament -- one in 1993 and one in 1997. In both elections, two women were elected to Parliament, although the circumstances differed in each election.

In 1993, only 18% of registered voters in Yemen were women.¹ Women's participation was low, with approximately 15% of women registered actually voting. Of the 3,181 candidates for Parliament, only 44 were women. Only two women -- both from the former South Yemen -- were elected to Parliament. Both were nominated by the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), which boycotted the 1997 elections. The party receiving the majority of women's votes, however, was the Islah Party, which is widely seen as the most conservative of Yemeni's three major parties on social issues.

Leading up to the 1997 elections, Islah's success in motivating women voters led to a larger emphasis overall on registering women for the 1997 elections. An additional 825,984 women were added to voter lists in 1996 in preparation for the 1997 election. As a result, in 1997, women made up 28% of those registered to vote.² Approximately 60% of registered voters actually voted in 1997.

However, the number of women running for Parliament decreased in 1997. Of the approximately 2,000 candidates, only 23 were women. The General People's Congress (GPC), Yemen's ruling party, was the only major party to nominate women candidates, and both of its candidates won. Again, both were from the former South Yemen.

¹ The total number of registered voters in 1993 was 2,694,877, of which 2,216,311 were men and 478,566 were women.

² The total number of registered voters in 1997 was 4,637,728, of which 3,333,178 were men and 1,304,550 were women.

In both elections, the majority of women candidates were independents. While Islah made major efforts to register women, it put forth no women candidates in either election.³

PROGRAMMATIC WORK ENCOURAGING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

Numerous NGOs are working throughout Yemen on programs designed to increase women's participation. This memo is not intended to catalogue all of those programs; I am sure that you will hear about many of them in your preparation for Mrs. Clinton's trip. Instead, I will summarize my experiences in Yemen, which I believe provide a good snapshot of the types of work ongoing there.

Since March 1997, I have participated in three programs in Yemen, two sponsored by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and one sponsored by the Arab Democratic Institute (ADI), a group formed by Yemenis in March 1996 to work towards building democracy and civil society in Yemen. ADI's activities have included election monitoring, promoting women's participation and voter education.

March 1997 Training for Women Parliamentary Candidates: In July 1996, ADI began a women's program, under the leadership of Dr. Raufa Hassan and Mr. Jamal Adimi with the goal of increasing women's participation in Yemeni politics and elections. Specifically, ADI hoped to encourage more women to vote and to increase the number of women in the Parliament. This program was funded by the European Union.

ADI recruited, hired and trained approximately 70 women to serve as geographically based coordinators, with the responsibility to organize discussions with women about the upcoming 1997 election, the importance of voting and their electoral rights. ADI targeted 63 districts (or constituencies) where less than 500 women registered in 1993. The program reached thousands of women.

A second focus was to promote women candidates for Parliament. In late March 1997, ADI hosted a three-day training program for all women candidates and their campaign managers -- regardless of political party. All of the major parties and the Yemeni government participated in the program. I was the main trainer for the three-day session.

I was asked to participate in this program because ADI was very impressed with the role that women voters played in the 1996 re-election of President Clinton and Vice President Gore. Raufa Hassan was interested in having the participants hear about my role as the National Director of Women's Outreach for the campaign, which she had learned from NDI.

I structured the training to focus on:

³ While the GPC and the YSP have nominated women candidates, the Islah Party has never done so. However, for the first time, Islah recently nominated seven women to its party central committee.

- (1) how to develop a message,
- (2) how to organize a campaign, and
- (3) how to marshal resources.

An important outgrowth of the training session was the development of a Women Candidate Support Fund -- supported primarily by the Yemeni government -- to provide women candidates with much needed resources. During the March 1997 session, the participants developed a model budget for a campaign, and that was used as the basis for the Women Candidate Support Fund. The Fund covered the purchase of campaign materials and subsidized the cost of related expenses for women candidates. A group, comprised of representatives of the major parties, as well as Dr. Hassan, served as the Fund's steering committee.

An additional benefit of the March 1997 training program was the heightened media attention to women's participation because of my visit. I did numerous media interviews, in which I spoke about the importance of women voters. In addition, I was asked to meet with President Saleh, and I used that meeting as an opportunity to talk about the importance of increased women's participation.

Under Tab 1, I attach the program for the session and a Wall Street Journal profile of Dr. Hassan.

Observer Delegation to the April 1997 Parliamentary Elections: I was a member of NDI's observer delegation for the 1997 elections. As I am sure you will read in depth elsewhere, there was increased participation by women voters, pollworkers and election monitors. The delegation also found that much work remained to be done to solidify women's role, particularly with respect to increasing the number of women candidates. Under Tab 2, I attach a Washington Post piece on the role of Yemeni women in the 1997 election.

Trainer in May 1998 NDI Political Party Training Sessions: In May 1998, former Manitoba Prime Minister Howard Pawley and I conducted two political party training sessions for NDI in Yemen:

- (1) one for the Islah Party entitled "The Development of an Effective Party Caucus," and
- (2) one for the General People's Congress entitled "Increasing the Role of Women in the Party."

Each session lasted two days, and was attended by members of Parliament, party leaders and activists. Each session had been specifically requested by the political party attending.

The goal of the Islah program was to give party leaders tools to become a more effective opposition party and to help the party strengthen the relationship between its Parliamentary caucus and its party's leadership. The objectives were (1) to give concrete examples of how opposition parties in established democracies have used legislative proposals -- even if unsuccessful -- to their party's political benefit electorally, and (2) to assist the Islah party

develop skills. Prime Minister Pawley and I conducted workshops to help Islah develop its message and to translate that message into legislative proposals. I used examples from the Democratic Party's experience as the minority party in Congress, and from the 1996 Clinton/Gore campaign.

The goal of the GPC program was to give party leaders the tools to maximize women's participation in the GPC. The objectives of the session were (1) to give GPC leaders concrete examples of how increasing the involvement of women in the political process has been beneficial, and (2) conversely how not involving (or speaking) to women voters can have negative consequences electorally. During this program, Prime Minister Pawley and I conducted workshops to help the GPC leaders develop concrete plans for involving more women in the party, and also strategies for implementing those plans.

Needless to say, these programs heightened interest in women's participation in Yemeni politics, and Prime Minister Pawley and I were interviewed on this subject. The Prime Minister and I also met with President Saleh. During that meeting, we discussed the important signal that Yemen could send to the international community by appointing a woman to a diplomatic posting on behalf of Yemen.

KEY CONTACTS

Each of these people are themselves good contacts, and also can put you in contact with other key women leaders.

Ambassador Abdulwahab Al-Hajjri
Yemeni Ambassador to the United States
2600 Virginia Ave., NW, #705
Washington, DC 20037
(202) 965-4760

The Ambassador has been very helpful to NDI, and other NGOs, in their work in Yemen.

Dr. Raufa Hassan
Professor, Sana'a University
967-1-264245

Prominent woman activist in Yemen. Founder of the Women's Center at Sana'a University. Co-founder of ADI, and director of the women's participation program. Has a very good network of women who have worked with her over many years. Has worked extensively with NDI and other NGOs. In 1993, ran unsuccessfully for Parliament as a GPC candidate. A Wall Street Journal profile is under Tab 1.

Dr. Oras Sultan Naji
Member of Parliament (Aden)
P.O. Box 352 Al-Tahreer
Sana'a
967-1-242765 (office); 967-2-232218 (home)

By training a medical doctor. Was one of the two GPC candidates who won election in 1997. Was a very active participant in the March 1997 ADI training program for women candidates. In 1998, visited the United States on a USIA trip.

Hon. Ammat Al-Aleem Alsoswa

Deputy Minister of Information

Yemen

Highest ranking woman in the Yemeni government. In 1997-8, the Ministry of Information produced a good statistical report on the status of women in Yemen.

Shada Nasser Mahamed

Assistant General Secretary, Election Monitoring Committee

Al-Zubairi Street (near International Bank of Yemen)

Sana'a

967-1-412700/280390.

Prominent woman attorney in Yemen, who is active in The Election Monitoring Committee, a domestic election monitoring group. Has worked with NDI.

Shahedah Tabet Ali Nasher

967-2-232594

One of four women civic coordinators working with NDI, responsible for (1) organizing discussion groups of women in three districts in Aden to discuss issues important to women and (2) working with members of Parliament on how to more effectively address women's concerns. (The member of Parliament in this case is Dr. Oras.) Has also worked with ADI. Will also have contact information for the other three civic coordinators.

Raqia Humaidan

Aden

967-2-232520/253824

Prominent woman attorney; was a judge in South Yemen before unification. Was recently selected by the Yemeni government as one of 10 defense attorneys representing British citizens accused of plots to kill foreign tourists (was the only women attorney selected). Has served as an NDI trainer.

Radia Shamsher Ali

Aden

967-2-232727

Prominent woman attorney, who has been active in various civic efforts in the country. Active in NDI programs.

