

Shultz, in Region After Finds A 'Sense of Mo

By Ahmed Lutfy
Middle East Times staff

CAIRO - Despite the continued U.S. hesitation to increase its involvement in the Middle East, last week's visit of Secretary of State George Shultz to the region raised hope that the Arab-Israeli peace process is moving again. Although there is still no agreement on who should represent the Palestinians, all of the other key players, the Americans, the Israelis, the Jordanians and the Egyptians seem ready to enter the arena.

The move towards America re-emerging as a key figure in the peace process began with the recent shuttle tour of the assistant U.S. secret-

ary of state, Richard Murphy. It was followed by Mr. Shultz's four day tour. This week, King Hussein will be in Cairo for talks with President Hosni Mubarak before the king goes to Washington at the end of the month.

Throughout all this movement around the region there has been a recurrent theme that the U.S. should take a more active role in shepherding the peace process something the Reagan administration has been reluctant to do ever since its debacle in Lebanon two years ago.

But even with the renewed involvement, Washington seems to be aiming for a low-key role in the effort, one that would be limited



MAJED JABER / REUTERS

The central figure in the Middle East peace process, PLO leader Yasser Arafat, with China's leaders in Beijing last week and earlier with King Hussein in Amman.

Sudan Still Attracts Refugees Despite a Coup, Drought and Hunger

By Jay Mallin
Washington Times News Service

KHARTOUM - A coup, a drought and a rapidly dwindling food supply would seem to be all the troubles this country could handle but refugees in search of better living conditions continue to stream across the borders from neighbouring nations, adding further to Sudan's burdens.

With the main influx - several thousand a day - coming from the famine- and war-stricken provinces of northern Ethiopia, refugee camps in eastern Sudan are filled beyond capacity and aid officials are working frantically to open more reception centres to receive the overflow.

As of 22 April - and new bulletins are issued weekly - an estimated 1.3 million refugees had fled to Sudan. About half of those are receiving direct assistance from international donors.

Visitors to the Wad Sherife camp in eastern Sudan last February were told the camp was filled "as if it will explode" with 64,000 people. Today, the flimsy shelters that stretch endlessly across the desert at Wad Sherife hold almost double that number.

About 18,000 arrived in the second week of April alone.

The phenomenal growth of population in the camps is making it almost impossible to give the refugees the help they need to survive.

Although enough food seems to be coming in at the moment, "right now we have problems of water supply," said Hassan Attiyah Mussa, Sudan's deputy commissioner for refugees.

In Wad Sherife, constant drilling of boreholes has yet to turn up enough water to maintain the refugees already there, and so the camp's water supply is supplemented from the nearby town of Kassala, itself running short of water.

In Wad Kowli, another camp to the south, water is trucked in from a riverbed 25 kilometres away. Every time a truck breaks down, the water rations for the camp's 54,800 residents are cut back.

"We are going to open new reception centres in the central region of Sudan to take some of the refugees and relieve the eastern camps," said Mr. Hassan. But there, too, water is a problem. The opening of the new camps, which eventually will hold more than 100,000 people, is being delayed for the completion of a system to pipe in water from a lake several miles

See Refugees, page 20

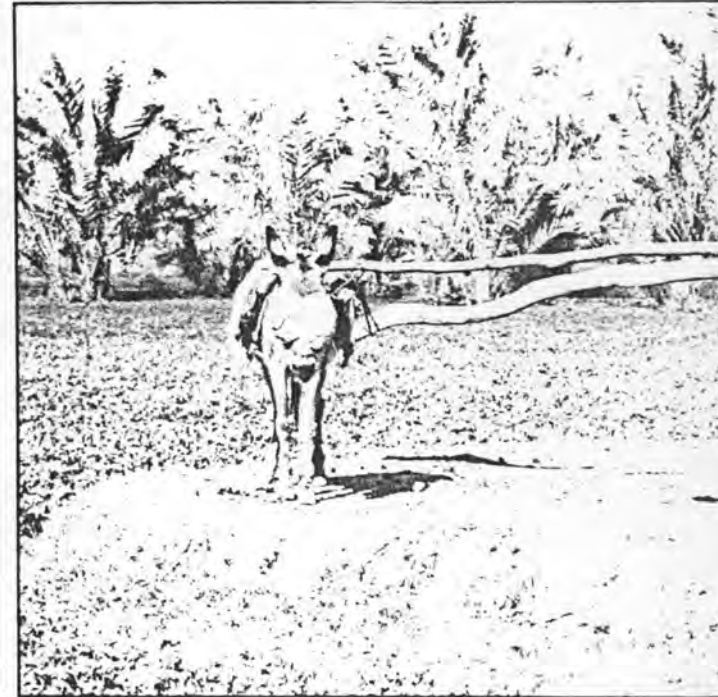
inside

■ **Archbishop Chrysostomos**, head of the Greek Cypriot Orthodox Church, settles settlement between Greeks and Turks on Cyprus. **Interview on page 2.**

■ **The American CIA**, in an unusual public comment, denies bombing the

■ **Egypt's Supreme Court** has struck down the 1979 'Personal Status Law' back to the 1920s - a severe setback for women's rights. **Page 8.**

■ **Nicaraguan refugees** are flooding neighbouring Costa Rica to escape the



As Egypt's food import bill continues to rise each year, the most serious land to construction. **A special feature on pages 12 and 13.**

water supply

Syria.

At least three sites of Soviet-made SAM-5 missiles in Syria are believed to be linked to the overall Soviet air defence command. The sites are east of Aleppo, northeast of Damascus and near Homs. The missiles have a range of close to 280 kilometres and blanket Lebanon and the northern part of Israel, as

limited. Many doubt that the Soviet Union would want to risk a direct combat involvement in such an unstable area as the Middle East.

What worries the Israelis is not so much the number of tanks and warplanes in Syria as the improvement in the performance of the Syrian troops. Of particular concern is the degree of training of the elite commando battalions, 15 of which

western assessments concur. "Every new war in the Middle East shows the Syrian performance to have improved a notch," one diplomat said.

Commented another, "The Syrian retreat in Lebanon was not a rout. It was an organized and well coordinated withdrawal. The Syrians retreated while fighting."

Since Israel's 1982 invasion of

There is a lot of ground to be covered. A visiting Western team of experts was allowed to watch gunnery exercises of a supposedly crack Israeli armoured brigade. The targets were relatively easy but none was hit, until the irate commander chased one tank crew out and himself fired the gun, with 'old school' precision.

must be found to include the PLO if a peace process is to continue and have any chance of success.

Well-connected sources say that the PLO is still divided over whether to accept the American offer to meet with a Jordanian-Palestinian team. Mr. Arafat wants to enter the talks but agreeing to a non-PLO negotiating team would amount to an act of political suicide and make any progress towards rapprochement with the Syrian-backed Palestinian factions impossible.

such a team meet with American officials as a prelude to peace talks with the Israelis.

Israel, Jordan and the PLO have all agreed to the principle of the joint negotiating team but there still remain enormous difficulties in reaching a consensus on who should man it.

In Israel, Mr. Shultz was told that the often fragmented Israeli government was united in its insistence that no member of the PLO be included in the team. But in Jordan and Egypt the secretary of state was told clearly and forcefully that a way

now understood that Israel will reserve the right to review proposed candidates on a case by case basis, and has not shut the door on PNC members who are willing to negotiate.

Mr. Shultz laid special emphasis on the importance of Palestinian representation and the difficulties of identifying who should comprise the Palestinian team. Indeed, an agreement on the composition of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian team was a key goal on Mr. Shultz's agenda.

Mr. Mubarak has suggested that

Shultz

five, together with some "positive" signs from Israel, there was now a "genuine sense of movement, a pretty widely shared desire to see things move forward."

Diplomatic sources here explained that one source of optimism was Mr. Shultz's success in convincing Israeli leaders not to give a flat refusal to the idea of members of the Palestine National Council being part of any future Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to peace talks. It is

Refugees

away. Although the current flood of refugees is without precedent here, Sudan has become a traditional haven over the years for refugees trying to escape wars and famines in Chad, Uganda, Zaire and Ethiopia.

problems of its own. Food stockpiles are expected to run out in a few months, well before the next harvest, and a large number of Sudanese already have been uprooted by famine.

Still, the officials of the new military government say they have no plans to change the country's

open-door policy.

Gen. Abdul Rahman Sewar Al Dahhab, leader of the military regime that ousted Gen. Jaafar Nimeiri, has reaffirmed his government's "unswerving commitment to the continued policy of granting asylum to refugees."

And although the Ethiopian

government has accused relief officials of 'luring' refugees across the border, Mr. Hassan said the new government's plans to improve relations with Ethiopia will not affect Sudan's refugee policy.

"It is a peaceful act that should hurt nobody," he said.

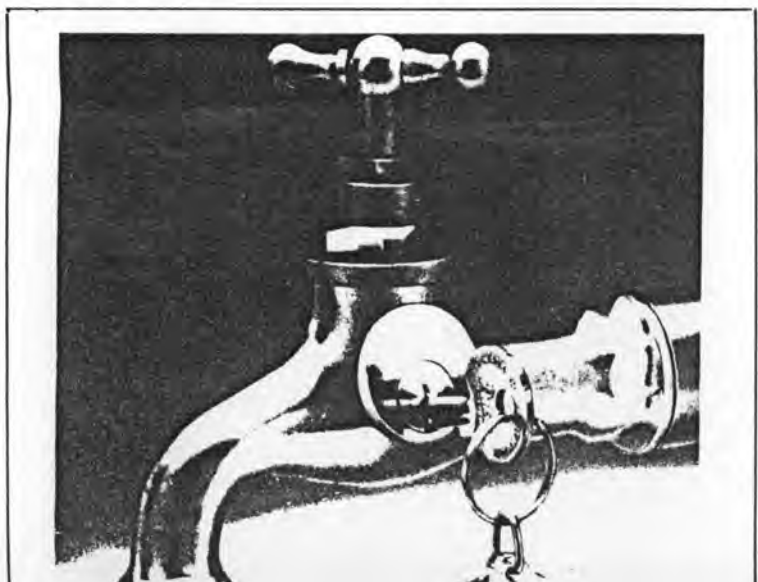
of energy can be found to make sea water convertible into usable water can there be a lasting take-off in comprehensive development.

So far, most GCC countries have not been aggressive enough nor assertive enough in their determination to change production patterns. Most of the food we eat is imported, our clothes are manufactured in foreign factories, and machinery and equipment are imported along with service and maintenance. Financially rich, the GCC is relatively feeble economically.

Yet this circle can and should be broken. Saudi Arabia has already awakened to the danger and has been pursuing a conscious strategy of industrializing its basic oil and mineral resources. The huge petrochemical industry stands as witness to this determination. Not unnaturally, difficulties will be encountered, some even emanating from inside partners. Marketing obstacles manipulated to inhibit growth of a giant competitor are not unfamiliar tactics in cut-throat competition.

Undaunted, the GCC countries should pursue the course of diversifying their economies and render their growth more self-sustaining.

Saudi Arabia's recent stress on offsetting investments and concomitant joint ventures stands as a new and vigorous example



Calceolaria rosea. Many of the world's children who have suffered from Escherichia coli infections die due to the properties discovered in the rose periwinkle. It originated in Madagascar, where thousands of endemic plants are in danger.

