

its black woe of death, destruction and drought over all the countries of central Africa. This is because geographically, Egypt is located in an area where rainfall is scarce all year around. As a result of this climate, ever since the dawn of history our people have lived along the banks of

the Nile. In 1985, our supply was 35 billion cubic meters, and we compensated by drawing 20 billion cubic meters from the reservoir. In 1986, the supply was 47 billion cubic meters, and we drew 8 billion. In 1987 our supply was 42 billion cubic meters, and we drew 13 billion.

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NEAR EAST

This question is no longer hypothetical, now that the Alliance tyre factory of Hadera, the country's only tyre manufacturer, has been officially closed down. But before panicking, people should bear in mind that Alliance's subsidiary, the small Shimshon tyre factory in Petah Tikvah, is still open and operating, albeit under the supervision of a receiver.

"In principle," the defence ministry acknowledges, there is a need for a tyre plant in Israel but with one qualification—"it must be profitable, economical, and modern." Although the ministry says it has no figures on what percentage of its tyres were supplied in the past by Alliance, it is clear that it relied heavily on the company, since one of Alliance's main areas of specialization was tyres for army vehicles.

What does the defence ministry intend to do now that one of its main suppliers has shut down? It will continue to purchase from Shimshon as well as its three traditional suppliers abroad, but it is also now looking into the possibility of finding other manufacturers abroad from whom it can purchase the special types of tyres it used to buy from Alliance.

Yes, the defence establishment admits, "the closure of Alliance does present us with a problem right now."

Interestingly, however, over the past two years, the share of tyre imports in total tyre consumption in this country has increased dramatically. Imports grew from \$7.5 million in 1984 to \$35m last year while Alliance's sales in the local market dropped from \$42m in 1984 to \$35m last year. In other words, by 1987, tyre consumption was split evenly between local production and imports.

Although Alliance had accounted for half the local tyre market, when it came to passenger car tyres, its share was only 30%, because it focused more on special tyres.

According to Ohad Orenstein, head of the chemical and mineral department at the Industry Ministry, the reason for the dramatic increase in imported tyres in recent years is that generally they are better-quality and longer-lasting.

Moreover, he says, there was an incentive for more people to go into the tyre-importing business because they made a lot of money on brokering. Orenstein does not foresee any problem in finding new sources of tyre supplies for the country, although he admits that with special types of tyres, particularly those used on military vehicles, there may be a problem in the short-run until new suppliers are found.

On the whole, he says he does not believe that tyres are strategic commodities, because they are produced all over the world and there is really no problem getting hold of them because the market has become very

competitive. In fact, it was this very fierce competition in the world market, he points out, which was at the heart of Alliance's own problems.

The Transport Ministry is not overly concerned about tyre shortages and says that if they occur at all, they will last only a week or two until importers begin to stock up again. With regard to whether or not tyres should be viewed as strategic products, the ministry points out that even though Alliance manufactured tyres here, it was forced to import all its raw materials and could have easily fallen victim to a world embargo.

/12223

Water Salinization Increases in Yizre'el Valley 44230020a Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 17 May 88 p 9

[Article by Yitzhaq Meridor]

[Text] Will the swamps of Yizre'el Valley be revived? Is the danger of annihilation looming for the soil of the valley? Efrayim Ben-Me'ir, a member of Moshav Ram-On, in the Ta'anakh region, and general manager of the Palgey Mayrim company of the regional council of the Yizre'el Valley believes that this chilling scenario is not impossible.

"The process of salinization of the soil of the Yizre'el Valley, which began years ago," says Ben-Me'ir, "has accelerated in the past three years at an alarming rate, which no one had foreseen: those responsible for the water economy guessed that the process would be slow, and that, even if the problem were very serious, it would be critical only in another ten to fifteen years. In actuality, in the region things developed differently."

The frightening acceleration of the process surfaced in the salinization of the soil itself, and more severely, in the Kefar Barukh reservoir, which was installed in 1954 in order to collect water from a number of sources: from the drilling surpluses in the western Galilee, from flood water, from runoff, and drilling surpluses in the region itself. The reservoir served these purposes until the establishment of the national carrier in the mid-60's. The completion of the Qishon integration in the '30s replaced part of the carrier water that reached the reservoir with runoff and increased, in a small yet intentional amount, the salinity level of the reservoir water. It reached a rate of 350 to 360 milligrams of chlorine per liter.

As long as the condition was "satisfactory to acceptable," no one delved further into the extent of that what was occurring beneath the ground; recently, when findings indicated salinity in the reservoir at the rate of 600 to 700 milligrams of chlorine per liter of water, the red lights lit up. Experts raised conjectures, and a research group began collecting data.

answers for these questions." He gripped my hand and said, "Of course we do, using the scientific method. I hope we can get together again to go over these questions and draw up some scenarios for dealing with the shortage of Nile water and the problems which result." I said, "I hope so, too!"

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abroad and in many countries as well, and rarely they yielded the desired benefits unless such coalitions are merely a means for allowing a party that does not enjoy an absolute majority to form a government comprised of other parties thus staying in power, an unlikely prospect under our current conditions. Nonetheless, we must exchange views on what the New Wafd Party is proposing, which is close to what we have sought in the

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NEAR EAST

Regarding the source of the main problem, clear proof was accumulated, which became solidified this year: the ground water in the region, which has been found for years at a depth of eight to ten meters, has risen to a level of between a meter and half of a meter (!) of the surface. The salinity level of this ground water is, as is known, half of the salinity level of sea water, i.e., 15,000 to 20,000 milligrams of chlorine per liter, water which all soil contains.

Says Ben-Meir: "Approximately 15,000 tons of salt have been accumulating in recent years, each year, to the ground water. The Kefar-Barukh reservoir, which stretches over 3,700 dunums of heavy soil, collects salty flows and, because of the difficult drainage problems of the closed valley between the mountains of Nazareth and Menashe—its eastern portion slopes toward the western valley—these vast amounts of salt have nowhere to escape."

The Kefar Barukh reservoir was established in the midst of a stream and cut off its natural flow. It is possible—Ben-Meir expresses the view—that the reservoir disturbed, in its 34 years of existence, the natural flow and drainage of the valley, and now, farmers are paying the price for the interference of progress in the hydrological and geological balance of nature.

The rise of the ground water, the fateful meeting between it and the water in the reservoir, and the constant pressure of the reservoir on the ground water have all caused vast environmental damage. The Kefar Barukh reservoir has ceased to be a blessing to farmers and has become a monster that has turned against its creator.

Farmers of the valley are now asking themselves why they even need this reservoir. The first real comparison that was done points to the negative aspect the establishment of the reservoir, from all points of view. The reservoir has no advantages: first, it is causing the salinity of good water that flows toward it; second, the carrier water that reaches the reservoir from Bet Netofa loses in the reservoir all of the energy that it had, and it has to be pumped, to the farmers, with a repeating pump. Because of this, \$300,000 are wasted every year. Third, there is a fear that the difficult phenomenon of the development of algae in the reservoir, as there was in 1985, when the algae clogged the drip irrigation systems in the valley, will return.

There are other negative considerations. Basically, almost the only positive consideration that supporters of the reservoir point out is that it serves as an operational reservoir for emergency situations or difficulties in the operation of the carrier. The intended meaning is for failures in the carrier or a water shortage. "Even this is not precise," says Ben-Meir, "because from the day that the Ma'ale Qis'ion installation was established, there has been a reserve in the valley of up to 12 million cubic meters of water, which can be used in such emergency situations."

In Palgey Mayim, they think that if their demand for the elimination of the reservoir is accepted, the valley will lack an operative capability of collecting one to two million cubic meters, but that this deficiency can be overcome with the help of a side reservoir covering an area of 400 dunums, in place of the 3,700 dunums currently taken by the large reservoir.

There are those who claim that this is a hasty conclusion. Palgey Mayim rejects this claim. "All of the data relating to the reservoir is in our possession," they say. "An objective team of experts must be sent back for a month to a month and a half to examine the findings and reach conclusions."

The farmers of the valley emphasize, in a conversation, that this year was very difficult for them, and that they have no desire "to see this film a second time." They want to once again get water of the original quality.

The farmers' concerns are understood by the Minister of Agriculture (who is highly praised), the water commissioner, and virtually anyone dealing with the subject. The question is how to solve such a problem in a short time-frame. It is difficult for people to free themselves from a 34-year-old routine, and the Kefar Barukh reservoir has already become part of the scenery in the valley. But the farmers of the valley cannot afford to deal with nostalgia. It has been definitely decided among them not to permit the "red tape" and bureaucracy to take the valley back 60 years to a period of swamps and desolation.

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LEBANON

Pro-Syrian Groups, Leaders Condemn 'Arafat's Conduct in Lebanon

44040343a Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 7 Jul 88 p 3

[Text] Lebanese nationalist parties, leaders and forces and the detachments of the Palestine revolution have continued their condemnation of 'Arafat's conspiracy to inflame dissension among Palestinians, perpetuate and escalate the infighting in the camps and commit allegations and slander against Syria, in order to provide cover for the document of capitulation which Bassam Abu-Sharif has proclaimed and divert the world's attention from the heroic uprising on the occupied territories.

These circles have emphasized the need to bare and expose 'Arafat's conspiracy of capitulation and stand up to attempts to split Palestinian-Lebanese national ranks, asserting at the same time the need to deepen the combative alliance between Syria and the Lebanese and Palestinian national forces to confront the imperialist and Zionist challenges and also asserting that there is no alternative to establishing a strategic alliance between the Syria of perseverance, the Syria of al-Assad, and the

purpose. For its part, the PLO should give up its concept of self-determination and the right of return. At the end of his lecture, the Israel professor said, "The real problem in Israel lies in certain basic concepts that are nothing but delusions and distortions of facts. Israel's friends must alert Israel to the fact that it must discard these concepts in order to be able to acknowledge its mistakes and change its position."

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RATZ Achieves Major Party Status
44230041A Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 26 Jun 88 p 7

[Article by 'Alisa Wallack: "This Time Like the Big Boys"]

[Text] This will be the first election in which RATZ will compete for votes as a major party, small, but major. Gone is the mentality of the isolated Knesset participant to which all kinds of attachments are loosely stuck out of a sense of duty, so loosely that they come off. This is the first time that Shulamit Aloni will stand at the starting line surrounded by a team that may well reach the finish stronger than it started. The encouragements will be supplied by the fan, she has to provide the muscle and the stamina.

Aloni made it to the 11th Knesset with two Knesset members, both faithful sons of the party. One was replaced by his "brother" in mid term, and two step-sons were added to him. Today one can no longer differentiate between veterans and late comers. They are all the same skin color and have identical fingerprints. A top-notch opening quintet. Polls fluttering to RATZ pave the way for additional entries. This is both good and bad. It is good because there is no better incentive for an average party that courts the voter than optimistic forecasts and the promise that it has real chances. It is bad because it may become corrupted. In the case of RATZ, corruption means lowering its standards, becoming less serious, and adopting populist norms.

In the case of RATZ, one popular and false slogan would be: "We need to be reinvigorated." Who needs to be reinvigorated? Dodi Zucker, who has been in the Knesset only 2 years? Yossi Sarid the asset? Ran Cohen, a quarrelsome one more than one from? Only Shulamit Aloni, the veteran, who is now for the fourth time in the Knesset for RATZ, can be reinvigorated. Aloni is synonymous with RATZ and she is still the glue and the source of strength for all the younger ones in the team. RATZ can be refreshed only by co-opting new people of no lower quality than those who already occupy its seats in the Knesset. And there are many like that in the party; the matter depends on its committee.

Opinion polls predict a significant growth for RATZ. According to Aloni's assessment, its voter potential is 150,000 ballots. It can secure this "slice of the market" if it preserves its character, image, and uniqueness. This

uniqueness is due, aside from ideology, to the quality of its representatives. Its Knesset members are not of the type that have their parliamentary questions formulated for them by the party spokesman, that pride themselves on insipid bill proposals on marginal topics. They are real fighters, naggers, alert and nosy. Each one of them is a leader. The election bodies of the parties possess a collective wisdom and a line of logic that balances the exceptions and corrects distortions.

On the national committee of RATZ, which meets today to elect its Knesset list, sit the oldest party members, as well as people who joined over the years. If the latter have internalized the values of the former, then the committee will today elect a *new* quintet which, after its warming-up period in the Knesset, will become as good as the opening quintet. The human potential is there.

The potential exists among former SHELI members, which merged with RATZ on the eve of the previous elections. It also exists among the Arab candidates and the women. As a genuine fighter for civil rights, Shulamit Aloni and her party struggle for equal rights for Jews and Arabs and for men and women. That is why she is interested in having the Arab sector represented on her list; she is equally interested in increasing women's representation. Aloni will undoubtedly feel on an equal footing with, for example, Professor Rachel Alterman and Professor Na'omi Hazan. They are both 42 years old and both enjoy a distinguished academic reputation; the former is an expert in urban planning and environmental protection, is one of the founders of RATZ, and one of the pioneers of the feminist movement in Israel; the latter is an expert in international relations and issues of the third world.

If the next government is formed by the Labor Party, RATZ will be a partner in the coalition. Being a senior partner is not a meaningless matter of quantity. It is up to RATZ itself to improve the quality of the next coalition, and even more so that of the opposition. A victory of the right wing in Israel will require a militant opposition, a watch dog, not common howlers or dazed housepets. As the marketing professionals put it, RATZ's slice of the market expects great things from it, and it had better not disappoint them. Considering the point at which it is today, RATZ must grow within its matrix and must not lose its shape. This time RATZ must be told: you either "run," or you walk around in circles. [word play: "rats" in Hebrew means run].

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The Factory Closure Poses Potential Problem for Military
4400018 In Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 13 Jul 88 p 8

[Article by Judy Maltz: "Tyres and the Strategic Issue"]

[Text] Is it strategically necessary for Israel to have its own tyre manufacturing plant?

This question is no longer hypothetical, now that the Alliance tyre factory of Hadera, the country's only tyre manufacturer, has been officially closed down. But before panicking, people should bear in mind that Alliance's subsidiary, the small Shimshon tyre factory in Petah Tikvah, is still open and operating, albeit under the supervision of a receiver.

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Yes, the defence establishment admits, "the closure of Alliance does present us with a problem right now."

Interestingly, however, over the past two years, the share of tyre imports in total tyre consumption in this country has increased dramatically. Imports grew from \$7.3 million in 1984 to \$35m last year while Alliance's sales in the local market dropped from \$42m in 1984 to \$35m last year. In other words, by 1987, tyre consumption was split evenly between local production and imports.

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"The process of salinization of the soil of the Yizre'el Valley, which began years ago," says Ben-Meir, "has accelerated in the past three years at an alarming rate, which no one had foreseen: those responsible for the water economy guessed that the process would be slow, and that, even if the problem were very serious, it would be critical only in another ten to fifteen years. In actuality, in the region things developed differently."

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Regarding the source of the main problem, clear proof was accumulated, which became solidified this year: the ground water in the region, which has been found for years at a depth of eight to ten meters, has risen to a level of between a meter and half of a meter (!) of the surface. The salinity level of this ground water is, as is known, half of the salinity level of sea water, i.e., 15,000 to 20,000 milligrams of chlorine per liter, water which all soil contains.

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There are other negative considerations. Basically, almost the only positive consideration that supporters of the reservoir point out is that it serves as an operational reservoir for emergency situations or difficulties in the operation of the carrier. The intended meaning is for failures in the carrier or a water shortage. "Even this is not precise," says Ben-Meir, "because from the day that the Ma'ale Qishon installation was established, there has been a reserve in the valley of up to 12 million cubic meters of water, which can be used in such emergency situations."

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