



University
of Glasgow

Al-Tuwaijri, Hamad Ibrahim Abdul Rahman (1996) *Political power and rule in Kuwait*. PhD thesis.

<http://theses.gla.ac.uk/1687/>

Copyright and moral rights for this thesis are retained by the Author

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge

This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the Author

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the Author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given

**POLITICAL POWER
AND RULE IN KUWAIT**

**Ph.D. Study by
HAMAD IBRAHIM ABDUL RAHMAN
AL-TUWAIJRI
Glasgow University
SCOTLAND**

I dedicate this Ph.D. to my wife and children

Acknowledgment

Many persons have contributed either directly or indirectly to this work. I would like to pay tribute to and to mention some of them by name.

- 1. My wife for her compassion and support during this ordeal.**
- 2. Professor John Mattock who deserves many thanks for accepting my Ph.D. proposal and for his guidance, support and friendship during the formulation of this Ph.D. and to Dr. James Montgomery**
- 3. My warmest thanks to all the people who helped me in acquiring the necessary tools for this research, especially the people I interviewed:**

- * Shaykh Salem Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah**
- * Mr. Ahmad Al Saadoun**
- * Mr. Sulaiman Al Makames**
- * Mr. Abdel Wahab Al Wazzan**

- 4. Special thanks to Shaykh Salem Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah for his moral support and for his guidance**
- 5. Special thanks also to my eldest brother Abdul Rahman Al Tuwaijri for his guidance and his belief and pride in me**

CHAPTER ONE

Historical Background of the State of Kuwait

- Location**
- Establishment**
- Name**
- Al-Sabah Family**

CHAPTER TWO

Political Movements in Kuwait

CHAPTER THREE

- 1. Interview with Shaykh Salem Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah**
- 2. Interview with Mr. Sulaiman Al Makames**
- 3. Interview with Mr. Ahmad Al Saadoun**
- 4. Interview with Mr. Abdel Wahab Al Wazzan**
- 5. Second interview with Shaykh Salem Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah**

CHAPTER FOUR

The evaluation of the Democratic Experience in Kuwait

***** All arabic names and expressions have been given in the form in which they most commonly occur. A list of such names & expressions, in arabic, is appended to the thesis.**

**Historical Background
of the State of Kuwait
Location - Establishment -
Name - Al-Sabah Family**

* * *

Kuwait is located in the Northern section of the Arabian Gulf between Tropics 28 and 30 and Meridians 46 and 48. Its surface area is 18,000 square kilometers. It is bordered on the north by Iraq and on the south by The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. On the east, it is bordered by the Arabian Gulf, with a coast of 290 KM. Part of Kuwait is formed of Nine Islands located in the Arabian Gulf: Bobyan, Fylaka, Oha, Meskan, Warba, Kubar, Um Al Maradem, Qaroh, Um Namel.

Bobyan is the biggest of these Islands and is located north-east of Kuwait City with an area of 415 square KM. It is not populated.

Fylaka is populated by 5,300 people. It boasts Greek Monuments left by Alexander the Great of Macedon.

The other Islands are not populated.

The name Kuwait derives from "Kut", a square magazine of ammunition and supplies near the sea, a river or a lagoon, usually used by ships to buy their supplies.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi - Hussein Khalaf Al-Shaykh Khazaal - Chapter 1 - Pages 18, 19)

It is said that the name of Kuwait was given by the Al-Sabah family after their settlement near the Kut. Kuwait is the diminutive.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait - Abdel Aziz Al-Rashid - Page 32. Safahat min Tareekh Al Kuwait - Yussef Bin Issa Al-Qinai - Page 11)

KUWAIT'S FOUNDATION AND ITS POPULATION:

Most historians agree that Amir Bani Khaled established the Kut; opinions, however, differ on whether the prince was Mohammad Laska or Barrak. One of his slaves lived in it and looked after it in order to assist the Prince in his Northern raids.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait - Page 32 ff. Kuwait Abra Al Tareekh - Yussef Shehab - Page 13 - Safahat min Tareekh Al Kuwait - Yussef Bin Issa Al-Qinai - Page 11)

The area was frequented by some nomads and farmers, but nothing encouraged people to settle there.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE SABAH FAMILY IN THE REGION:

Al-Sabah are members of the Jamil Branch of the famous Anza Family. Their place of origin is disputed among Historians but Najd is the most probable. Their name is attributed to Shaykh Sabah the first Bin Jaber Bin Salman Bin Ahmad.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi - Chapter 1. Page 40. Kuwait Abra Al Tareekh. Page 13. Tareekh Al Kuwait - Page 33).

It is established that Al-Sabah were living in Al-Hadar in Al-Aflage province in Najd. A dispute arose between them and their cousins of the Jamil Branch, who defeated them and drove them out of Al-Hadar. The Sabah Family then took refuge with the Dowasser Tribe in the valley. They did not seek a permanent stay however and left the area after conflict among Al-Dowasser. They then went to Al-Muslim who were the rulers of Qatar at the time. It is reported that a member of the Sabah family killed a person in Qatar, so its rulers asked them to leave. They left by sea and were followed by the Al-Muslim, which prompted them to land at Ras Tanoura where they confronted the Al-Muslim and defeated them.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait - Abdel Aziz Al-Rashid. Page 35).

Another version of the story is that Al-Muslim feared the growing power of the Sabah family and asked them to leave Qatar, which they left on boats in the year 1086 H

(1676 AD). Al-Muslim wanted to call the Sabah family back and followed them out to sea for this purpose. The Sabah family thought that they had come to fight them, and so they landed near Ras Tanoura, where they confronted and defeated them.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi - Hussein Khalaf Al-Shaykh Khazal. Part 1. Pages 40-41).

Al-Sabah then walked north and reached the South of Kuwait in the Qurain region. In the year 1125 H - 1714 AD, the Jamil Clan dispersed. Some of them lived in Al-Sabia, others in Abadan and others lived in Thul Al-Mekhrak. Al-Sabah settled near Shat Al-Arab in the Um Qasser area, where they resorted to piracy and raids, conventional behavior at that time in the region, similar to land raids. The Sabah family was later threatened by the Ottoman Empire because of their raids and had to move to Al-Sabia, where they joined some of their brothers the Jamilians. The Thufair Tribe knew of their movements and decided to raid them, but the Sabah family and their cousins left the area and headed to Kuwait after asking permission from the Prince of Bani-Khaled to settle near the Kut in the year 1128 H - 1715 AD.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi - Part 1 Page 40 ff. Tareekh Al Kuwait . Page 35 ff)

After their settlement near the Kut of the Prince of Bani Khaled, members of the Jamil family worked in trade and fishing, helped by the geographical location of Kuwait. With time and the advent of stability, in addition to the growing number of foreigners, three families, the family of Sabah Bin Jaber Bin Salman Bin Ahmad, the family of Khalifa Bin Ahmad and the family of Jaber Bin Arhama (head of Jalahma), formed an alliance and agreed in the year 1130 H - 1718 AD to share responsibilities. Sabah Bin Jaber assumed rule, Khalifa Bin Mohammad assumed financial and trade responsibilities and Jaber Bin Arhama assumed responsibility for sea-faring activities.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi. Part 1 . Page 42. Tareekh Al Kuwait Page 109.)

The aim behind the formation of the Coalition was to share power and to counter any possible foreign raid. The selection of Sabah Bin Jaber was probably due to his wisdom and problem-solving capabilities, and his two colleagues agreed to give him unlimited authority. We may therefore consider that this was the start of Kuwait as a state with a ruler, in 1130 H - 1718 AD.

KUWAIT'S RULERS

1- SABAH THE FIRST 1130 - 1190 H (1718 - 1776 AD.)

Sabah Bin Jaber Salman Bin Ahmad, was the ruler of Kuwait during the tripartite Coalition, which is considered to be the date when Kuwait was founded. His rule began with the enforcement of internal security and justice. Kuwait flourished and was famous for its neighborly qualities. He also promoted foreign relations with Shaykh Hamad Bin Gharir, the prince of Al-Ihsaa, sending his son, Shaykh Abdallah Bin Sabah to negotiate bilateral recognition and sign a Non-Aggression treaty. This legitimized further the rule of Shaykh Sabah as an independent ruler of Kuwait. The promotion of foreign relations helped promote trade, such as the visit of Shaykh Sabah to the headquarters of the Dutch East Indian Company in the island of Kharaj in the north of the Gulf to negotiate trade issues with its chairman, Baron Ben Hawzen. His failure to reach an agreement did not mean that he was not keen on promoting foreign relations.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi. Part 1. Page 43-44. Kuwait Abra Al Tareekh. Page 27.)

2- SHAYKH ABDALLAH THE FIRST BIN SABAH: 1190 - 1229 H (1776 - 1814 AD)

After the death of Shaykh Sabah in 1776, rule was assumed by his youngest son Shaykh Abdallah Al-Sabah due to his wisdom and courage, an example of which was shown when Shaykh Saadoun Bin Arar, the Prince of Al-Ihsaa, ventured near Kuwait. Shaykh Abdallah Al-Sabah went to test his will, and Prince Saadoun's intention proved to be peaceful, but he blamed Shaykh Abdallah Al-Sabah for receiving him with only a small group of men

without taking the necessary precautions. Shaykh Abdallah Al-Sabah replied that he came with a few men only because he knew that he was receiving someone who had the respect and consideration of a father or a brother, a matter that pleased Prince Saadoun who later left. The wisdom and courage of Shaykh Abdallah Al-Sabah led Shaykh Mohammad Bin Khalifa, the son of Shaykh Khalifa Bin Mohammad who had concluded the Coalition with Shaykh Sabah Bin Jaber, to ask permission to leave Kuwait after admitting to himself that he had no chance to rule in the presence of Shaykh Abdallah. He then left for Zubara, Qatar in 1182 H, 1766 AD.

After the departure of AL-Khalifa, Shaykh Abdallah Bin Sabah wanted to establish the rule of Al-Sabah in Kuwait. He started to delay payments to Al-Jalahma, the third party of the Coalition, and then succeeded in driving them out of Kuwait. The rule of Shaykh Abdallah was also full of incidents which endorsed the presence of Kuwait as a state, for example, Bani Kaab, the princes of Arabistan, exercised power in the region and the flourishing of Kuwait drew their attention, especially when the Al-Sabah family started to refuse to pay taxes to them. The Kaab clan then tried to marry one of Shaykh Abdallah Al-Sabah's daughters, Shaykha Maryam, to the son of Shaykh Barakat the prince of Bani Kaab.

H.R.B. Dickson says in his book *Al Kuwait wa jaratiha* that AL-Khalifa urged their cousin Shaykh Abdallah Al-Sabah to marry his daughter to the son of Shaykh Barakat. Shaykh Abdallah's Reply was "What? do you want me to give my daughter to those bastards whose origins are doubted to save myself?"

(Al Kuwait wa jaratiha - First Edition. 1964. page 9)

When Bani Kaab knew that Shaykh Abdallah would not give them his daughter and that the Sabah Family would not pay taxes to them any more, they resorted to violence and prepared a fleet to invade Kuwait. The Kuwaitis

prepared a fleet of light ships and met the Kaab near the island of Fylaka, where a fierce battle took place and the courage and persistence of the Kuwaitis enabled them to win it, in addition to capturing ships and munitions. This was the first battle the Kuwaitis fought against Bani Kaab, in 1197 H - 1783 AD.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi. p 49, Tareekh Al Kuwait . p110. Kuwait Abra Al Tareekh p28 and Al Kuwait wa jaratiha p9.)

The era of Shaykh Abdallah Al-Sabah was full of similar incidents by powers seeking to collect taxes or to occupy this geographically important area. His political know-how and the economic and military power he had helped to build thwarted all these attempts.

THE BUILDING OF THE FIRST WALL

Owing to the rise of Kuwait as a political and economic entity, interest in it grew, on the southern side in Saud Bin Abdel Aziz Al-Saud, and on the north in the Princes of Al-Muntafak. As a consequence, the Kuwaitis built the first wall to protect themselves, in 1213 H - 1798 AD.

According to Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi, Part 1, p65-66 and Kuwait Abra Al Tareekh p29, Dickson says that the wall had seven gates.

KUWAIT'S FOREIGN RELATIONS:

Shaykh Abdallah not only established security and stability in Kuwait, he also promoted its foreign relations, following the tracks of his father Shaykh Sabah The First who had tried to establish relations with the Dutch company.

BRITISH-KUWAITI RELATIONS:

The Honourable East India Company was established in 1011 H - 1600 AD by British merchants to promote trade with India and was greatly active in the Gulf. Kuwait also had a trading fleet capable of competing with the Company's fleet.

In 1188 H - 1775 AD, when Iranian forces besieged Basra, the company transferred its activities to Kuwait during the three-year Iranian occupation.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait. P1. p55-56. Al Kuwait wa jaratiha p106. Kuwait Abra Al Tareekh. p29)

In 1208 H - 1773 AD, the customs of Basra were entrusted to Abdallah Agha who wanted to impose high taxes on traders and merchants, who along with the British, moved their stocks and operations to Kuwait for two years.

The British government tried to use the Company to play a political role in Kuwait by asking Shaykh Abdallah Al-Sabah to put the country under British protection. Shaykh Abdallah, however, refused the offer which was made in 1222 H - 1807 AD. The British government renewed these attempts in the same year, but Shaykh Abdallah only promised to consider the offer without giving a final reply.

Shaykh Abdallah Al-Sabah died at the age of 100 in 1229 H - 1814 AD.

3. SHAYKH JABER THE FIRST BIN ABDALLAH AL-SABAH: 1229-1276 H - 1814-1859 AD.

Following the death of Shaykh Abdallah Al-Sabah, his son, Shaykh Jaber the First assumed power in Kuwait. He was a man of decision, wise, courageous and tolerant and was known for his generosity since he was given the name of "Jaber the Feeder" due to his charitable actions. He followed the path of his father in promoting Kuwait's

foreign relations, including relations with Ibrahim Basha, the son of Mohammad Ali Basha, who was seeking to occupy Najd and defeat Bin Saud. His convoys carrying support to his army used to pass by Kuwait. Ibrahim Basha also asked permission to send a representative to Kuwait to arrange the passage of Egyptian ships through its ports. Shaykh Jaber accepted and the delegate stayed in Kuwait until the end of his mission.

KUWAIT'S POSSESSION OF THE FAO AND SOFIA PROVINCES IN BASRA:

Two main events characterized the rule of Shaykh Jaber :

The first concerned Rashid Al-Saadoun, whose dispute with the Ottoman Empire led him to take refuge in Kuwait, where he was accepted by Shaykh Jaber the First. Following his return, Al-Saadoun presented the Fao region to Shaykh Jaber.

The second event was the seeking refuge by one of the members of the Zuheir family in Kuwait. When he returned, he also presented the Region of Palm called "Sofia" to Shaykh Jaber the First in 1249 H - 1834 AD.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi. P1 - p105 - Tareekh Al Kuwait p119 ff).

KUWAIT'S REVENUES DURING THE RULE OF SHAYKH JABER THE FIRST:

Kuwait's main revenues during the rule of Shaykh Jaber the First were from trade and from the dates of the region of Palm (Sofia) and Fao.

THE BRITISH-KUWAITI TREATY OF 1257 H - 1814 AD:

Shaykh Sabah Bin Jaber concluded a one-year treaty on behalf of his father with the British government, including clauses on navigational safety and fighting slavery.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi P1 p117)

4. SHAYKH SABAH THE SECOND BIN SHAYKH JABER AL-SABAH, 1276-1283 H 1859-1866 AD:

He came to power after the death of his father Shaykh Jaber the First. His reign was relatively short but full of events, including the battle of Melh, when Abdallah Al-Saud launched an attack against the tribe of Ajman. The survivors took refuge with Shaykh Sabah the Second. Abdallah Al-Saud sent a messenger to Shaykh Sabah the Second asking him to deport them. The messenger, who had little diplomatic knowledge, said to Shaykh Sabah the Second : "Your master the Imam wants you to hand over to him those of the Ajman Tribe who have taken refuge in your territory". Shaykh Sabah the Second's brother, Duaij, who was present at the meeting, protested at the way the messenger spoke and refused to hand over the Ajman survivors. When Abdallah Bin Saud heard of the behavior of his messenger, he expressed regret over the incident and said that he did not mean any harm to Kuwait and its rulers.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait . p127. Kuwait Abra Al Tareekh p33. Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi P1 p121 ff).

BELL'S VISIT TO KUWAIT 1282 H - 1865 AD:

Kuwait's rulers were able to establish good relations with neighbouring states and Britain. When Colonel Bell, the British Political Delegate to the Gulf, visited Kuwait, he conveyed to Shaykh Sabah his wish to visit Riyadh. Shaykh Sabah wrote to Al-Saud who accepted and asked him to send a delegation to accompany Colonel Bell. The visit to Saudi Arabia however was not completed because of the objection of the Ulema.

In his speech to the Royal Geographical Society in London Colonel Bell said: "Kuwaitis are the most

experienced sailors in the Gulf and by their good manners and treatment, they imposed their respect on all. 50 years ago, their city was nothing while now it is one of the Gulf's greatest ports. Their Shaykh has a good reputation and he was able to promote internal administration, political wisdom, health and moderate taxes. All this contributed to the transfer of trade centers from Basra and Bou Shafer to Kuwait."

(Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi. P1 p129-130. Tareekh Al Kuwait p130. Kuwait Abra Al Tareekh. p33).

THE EFFECT OF TRADE ON RULE:

THE BEGINNING OF MERCANTILE INFLUENCE ON RULE:

After trade expanded and the profits increased during the era of Shaykh Sabah, and subsequently the rulers' burden of maintaining security increased, Shaykh Sabah opted to impose fees on imported commodities. But the merchants, after they had held a meeting, asked him not to impose the fees and expressed readiness to supply him with any funds he might request, to which he consented.

On another occasion, when Shaykh Sabah charged a servant named Anbar to collect fees on caravans passing through Kuwait, chiefs of a Najdi caravan asked Anbar to take their fees and speed up their departure, but he did not respond. When a prominent merchant, Abdallah Al-Anjari, tried to mediate, Anbar insulted him and beat him. The merchants protested to Shaykh Sabah and requested him to expel the servant. He promised to do this, but they were not satisfied, so he pledged to beat and jail him; but they maintained that he must be deported. When they saw that Shaykh Sabah was not responding to their requests, they told him that they were leaving Kuwait for another country. Shaykh Mohammad bin Shaykh Sabah, who attended these discussions and saw the tradesmen's

resolve, immediately killed the servant and assuaged their anger (1280 H - 1863 AD)

(Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi, pages 128-129-131).

In 1865, Shaykh Sabah the Second died and was survived by eight male children: Abdallah, Jaber, Jarrah, Ahmad, Mohammad, Mubarak, Athbi and Humoud.

5- SHAYKH ABDALLAH THE SECOND AL-SABAH (1866-1891):

Shaykh Abdallah the Second, who was born in 1814 and ruled the emirate of Kuwait after the death of his father, was courageous, daring, generous and shrewd. He often harbored escapees from struggles in nearby areas and mediated in conflicts. For example, he mediated between the ruler of Bahrain of the Al-Khalifa family and his brother Shaykh Ali. During his time, Kuwait invaded and captured Al-Ihsaa and Al-Qatif.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait, from page 133, Al Kuwait abra Al tareekh , page 36, Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi, page 136).

6. SHAYKH MOHAMMAD AL-SABAH THE FIRST BIN SHAYKH SABAH (1891-1896):

He governed the emirate of Kuwait from 1891 after the death of his brother, Shaykh Abdallah Al-Sabah. Shaykh Mohammad was known as good-hearted and sincere, but, lacking will and resolve. He made his brother, Shaykh Jarrah, a partner in managing Kuwaiti affairs in an informal fashion, particularly the financial affairs.

Shaykh Jarrah viewed himself as the founder of the Kuwaiti treasury. During his time, the meat and fish markets were built. Shaykh Jarrah and Shaykh Mohammad gave their uncle Shaykh Yussef Al-Ibrahim many responsibilities and great authority to the extent that he was seen by some as the real governor of Kuwait. This

dismayed Shaykh Mubarak who was by nature ambitious and a warrior and who liked to appear as the governor of Kuwait, who could spend money, even for unjustified purposes. He was thus on a collision course with his brothers, Shaykh Mohammad and Shaykh Jarrah, who refrained from supplying him with sufficient money for his expenses and his raids.

He once bought camels for 500 Riyals to raid the tribe of Bani Hajer and referred the seller to his brother, Shaykh Mohammad, who refused to pay the money. The merchant followed Shaykh Mohammad, who was on his way to the Bani Hajer, and told him what his brother had done. He became very upset and referred the merchant to his dear friend, Nasser Al-Bader who consented to pay, on condition that Shaykh Mohammad declared that he himself had paid the money, considering the fact that his brother was about to carry out the raid. Shaykh Mohammad agreed reluctantly. Such incidents deeply dismayed Shaykh Mubarak, who later killed his brothers, Shaykh Mohammad and Shaykh Jarrah, in 1896.

7. SHAYKH MUBARAK AL-SABAH (1896-1915):

Shaykh Mubarak, the brother of Mohammad and Jarrah, was born in 1844 and became the ruler after the death of his two brothers in 1896. Shortly after this, old grudges between him and Yussef Al-Ibrahim started to surface, as he resented the latter as much as his dead brothers. Al-Ibrahim annoyed and teased Shaykh Mubarak many times and aligned himself with Mohammad Al-Rashid who staunchly detested Mubarak. Mohammad Al-Rashid advised his successor, Abdel Aziz, before dying to be vigilant of Shaykh Mubarak. Mubarak, aware of the ill feelings of Al-Rashid tribe towards him, raided and pillaged their settlement in 1318 H.

THE AL-AREEF INCIDENT:

Intending to take Al-Rashid by surprise, Shaykh Mubarak prepared a large army, mustering Bedouin tribes such as Al-Mutair, Al-Awazem, Al-Ajman, Arab Ar, Al-Muntafek, Al-Murah, Bani Hajer, Al-Thufair and around 700 inhabitants of Kuwait. He led the army along with Humoud, Khalifa and Sabah bin Humoud of the Al-Sabah, Imam Abdel Rahman Al-Faysal Al-Saud and his son Abdel Aziz (the Sultan of Najd), Al Salim (the rulers of Barbara) and Saadoun Al-Saadoun. The raid was launched for the following reasons:

- 1. Shaykh Mubarak calculated that in order to win control of Najd and surrounding areas, he would have to defeat and demoralize Al-Rashid.**
- 2. Prince Abdel Aziz Al-Saud had always expressed readiness, in front of Shaykh Mubarak, to retake the emirate of Najd which had been captured by Al-Rashid from his fathers. He told him that the notables of Najd, including Al-Qassim, were in support of Al-Saud and looked to regain their property. Considering the warm relationship between Shaykh Mubarak and Al-Saud, Shaykh Mubarak was aware that retaking Najd would boost the defenses of Kuwait and foil Al-Rashid's assaults.**
- 3. Shaykh Mubarak realized that control of the ravines of Najd were necessary to revive trade. These routes were dangerous because of recurring attacks by Al-Shummar tribes and other clans affiliated with Al-Rashid, on the tribe that carried the traders' money out of Kuwait.**
- 4. Shaykh Mubarak realized that the recurring raids by Al-Rashid on the road used by pilgrims distorted the image of Kuwait and its ruler, so he had to launch the Al-Areef or Tarfiah. The two armies engaged in a fierce battle that claimed the lives of many combatants.**

Al-Rashid tribesmen, who won, tracked down wounded Kuwaitis and killed them.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait, page 161. Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi, starting from page 42).

THE REASONS FOR THE DEFEAT OF SHAYKH MUBARAK'S ARMY:

- 1. He had a miscalculated over-confidence in the large number of his fighters and his lack of preparation.**
- 2. Most combatants fought for the sake of money and were not inspired by ideology or principles.**
- 3. Al-Rashid tribesmen, who fought for the sake of their souls and their homeland, were well-prepared and had experience in warfare.**
- 4. Shaykh Mubarak was wrongly told upon arrival in Al-Qussaim that Al-Rashid's ranks were weak and that some of his supporters were retreating, which made Shaykh Mubarak allow some of his fighters to go home.**
(Tareekh Al Kuwait, page 164).

Despite his heavy losses, Shaykh Mubarak re-grouped his forces and vowed to take revenge, given the fact that he was fond of assaults and took pride in the territories under his control. He was a shrewd politician. During his era, whilst Germany, Britain, France and the Ottoman Empire fought over zone's of hegemony in the world, Shaykh Mubarak followed his ancestors' example and chose to align with Britain. The fruit was the signing of the protection treaty with the British government on January 3, 1899, by Malcolm John Meed, who represented the British government in the Gulf and Persia, and by Shaykh Mubarak himself. According to the accord, Shaykh Mubarak and his successors might not receive any senior representatives of foreign states without the prior approval of the British government, and they might

not sell, grant or lease any part of their territories to any other government or citizens without Her Majesty's consent.

(Al Kuwait fi Al Watha'eq Al Baritaniya 1752-1960- Ali Hamdi Al-Aazami, pages 64, 65. Al Kuwait wa jaratiha, page 130).

This political step by Shaykh Mubarak was intended to protect Kuwait from Ottoman ambitions and to deter recurring attempts by the Ottoman empire to interfere in the domestic affairs of Kuwait and the surrounding region, particularly after the Ottoman government had agreed with the German government to construct a railway from Germany, crossing Turkey and ending at Sabbiah to supply ships with coal, as Kuwait is located at a strategic spot in the Gulf.

(Al Kuwait fi Al Watha'eq Al Baritaniya page 75, Al Kuwait abra Al Tareekh, page 63. Al Kuwait wa jaratiha, page 130.)

By the ratification of this accord the ties between Kuwait and Britain were cemented. Britain made its first successful attempt to protect Kuwait in 1901, when it stood on the side of Shaykh Mubarak when the Turks pressed him to accept the deployment of a military force in Kuwait and to reside in Constantinople.

(Al Kuwait wa jaratiha, page 133).

The Emergence Of Kuwait As An Internationally-Recognized Entity In The Era Of Shaykh Mubarak:

in our assessment, the British-Kuwaiti treaty is significant on the following grounds:

- 1. In 1903, Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, visited Kuwait and solidified the relationship with Shaykh Mubarak, and London appointed a permanent political representative in Kuwait in August 1904.**
- 2. In 1907, Shaykh Mubarak agreed to lease the British government land located two miles from Kuwait city for**

60 rupiyahs a year. The British government affirmed to Shaykh Mubarak that they recognized his ownership of Kuwait with the borders that then existed. They consented that he and his successors should enjoy full powers to impose fees and that the British government would not impose fees in regions rented from him or his successors.

(Al Kuwait wa jaratiha, page 134-135).

- 3. The German government was keen to establish a base in the Arabian peninsula and favored Kazma, north of Kuwait. So, Metternich, the German ambassador in Istanbul in 1900, inspected areas where Germany intended to construct a railway. After cabling Shaykh Mubarak about his intention to visit Kuwait, he was received warmly, along with his delegation. Moreover, Metternich expressed good will towards Shaykh Mubarak and argued that the railway was vital, as it would upgrade the status of Kuwait. Metternich offered to purchase a large piece of land in Kazma upon which to build a railway station at any price Shaykh Mubarak would like to offer. He also asked to rent 20 square miles in nearby areas. Shaykh Mubarak rejected all these requests. All this indicates that Kuwait existed as an international entity with a ruler.**

(Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi, pages 131-131. Al Kuwait fi Al Watha'eq Al Baritaniya, page 58).

- 4. In 1901, the Russian political representative in Bou Shafer arrived in Kuwait aboard a Russian frigate to meet Shaykh Mubarak. Upon learning that Shaykh Mubarak was in Al-Jahra, he went there and offered to work out an agreement more relevant than that previously crafted with the British government, but Shaykh Mubarak apologized and declined.**

(Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi, page 132).

Following the Russian's visit, the British political representative in the Gulf travelled to Al-Jahra and renewed the treaty with Shaykh Mubarak, adding a pledge that Britain would safeguard the independence of Kuwait.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi, page 133).

5. In 1903, Lord Curzon, acting for his Britannic Majesty, visited the Gulf region, to explain Britain's cordial intentions towards Kuwait.
6. The British government expressed willingness to open a post office to facilitate trade, and Shaykh Mubarak blessed the plan.
7. In 1903, the British government renewed its treaty with Shaykh Mubarak and declared that it would safeguard the independence of Kuwait and refrain from intervening in the affairs of Shaykh Mubarak's rule. It also pledged that rule would be confined to males of Shaykh Mubarak's family. All these events proved that Kuwait was being treated as an independent entity.

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION IN KUWAIT:

Simultaneously with Shaykh Mubarak's intensive efforts to establish Kuwait as a state with foreign relations, he organized domestic affairs covering various fields:

1. EDUCATION:

THE FOUNDATION OF AL-MUBARAKIAH SCHOOL (1912):

The introduction of modern teaching took place when the first well-organized school was opened and named Al-Mubarakiah school, funded by the merchants with Shaykh Mubarak's blessing. This was the prelude to the growth of education in the country.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait, from page 43, Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi, page 295).

2. HEALTH:

The first clinic was opened in 1913 after the foundation of the charitable society to dispatch students abroad for higher education. The first public library was opened, water was distributed among the poor, sanitary burial practice was encouraged, public preachers were hired, a doctor and a pharmacist were appointed to treat the poor without charge. Shaykh Mubarak granted financial assistance to this society.

3. FINANCIAL AFFAIRS:

After his ambitions widened and his expenses increased, Shaykh Mubarak became short of money. He founded in 1899 customs departments and imposed fees estimated at five per cent on imported products and gradually increased to 10 per cent on some items.

4. TRADE AFFAIRS:

Commerce was free in Kuwait. Shaykh Mubarak sought to expand it and drew up an agreement with the British-Indian shipping company according to which it would dispatch a ship carrying passengers and commodities each week. In some cases, Shaykh Mubarak paid money for these ships to encourage the Kuwaitis to hold commercial ties with other countries.

5. FOREIGN AFFAIRS:

After signing the Kuwaiti-British treaty in 1899, Shaykh Mubarak founded an agency in Bombay to facilitate contacts between him and the Indian government which was affiliated to Great Britain and in order to grant

financial assistance to Kuwaitis who frequented the region. It constituted the first Kuwaiti embassy abroad. (*Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi*, page 294, *Tareekh Al Kuwait*, from page 218).

Shaykh Mubarak passed away in January 1915 and was survived by Shaykh Jaber, Shaykh Salem, Shaykh Fahed, Shaykh Nasser, Shaykh Mohammad and Shaykh Abdella. They were all legitimate heirs apparent along with their sons, as stipulated in the treaty with Britain in 1899 and as approved by the Kuwaiti constitution in 1962.

8. SHAYKH JABER THE SECOND BIN SHAYKH MUBARAK AL-SABAH (JANUARY 29, 1915-FEBRUARY 7, 1917):

After Shaykh Mubarak, his eldest son, Shaykh Jaber bin Mubarak Al-Sabah, took over. Shaykh Jaber was both courageous and merciful, fair and sincere. When he took over, the emirate was involved in a wider political life, and later Lord Hardinek, the Viceroy of India, cabled Colonel Gray, the political representative in Kuwait, to send a letter of condolence to Shaykh Jaber on the death of his father.

This message, along with other messages addressed to Shaykh Jaber from the British government, reflected London's recognition of Kuwait as an independent entity along with its ruler. Although Shaykh Jaber's era did not extend more than two years, the conference of Kuwait was held at the invitation of the governor of Al-Basra, Sir Percy Cooks. It was attended by Shaykh Jaber, Prince Abdel Aziz bin Saud, Shaykh Khazaal and Cooks, and was intended to rally Arab backing for Britain in its war against Germany. The conferees also agreed to bolster mutual ties and stand together against any foreign aggression. Shaykh Jaber's efforts at strengthening relations with Great Britain resulted in Britain granting him the Order of the Star of India.

Shaykh Jaber died on February 7, 1917, and was survived by Shaykh Ahmad and Shaykh Humoud.

(Al Kuwait abra Al tareekh , page 65. Al Kuwait fi Al Watha'eq Al Baritaniya. Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi. from page 105.)

9. SHAYKH SALEM BIN MUBARAK (1917-1921):

He succeeded his brother Shaykh Jaber Al-Mubarak. Shaykh Salem was smart, calm, merciful, religious and hateful of sin. The first things that he did upon assuming power were to slash customs fees to 4 per cent, and to give orders to clear Kuwait of prostitution. He also appointed representatives in the various regions to maintain morals.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi, page 7, Tareekh Al Kuwait, page 233, Al Kuwait abra Al tareekh , page 71).

In the era of Shaykh Salem, Kuwait became linked up with the world through telegraph facilities after the telegraph line between Basra and Kuwait was established in 1917.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi, page 13. Tareekh Al Kuwait. page 237. Al Kuwait abra Al tareekh , page 71, Al Kuwait fi Al Watha'eq Al Baritaniya, page 113).

Although the rule of Shaykh Salem was short, several battles took place with neighboring tribes. The first, called Al-Hamd, occurred in 1920, when the tribes of Shaykh Duaij Al-Fadel were targeted by a surprise raid by the forces of Faysal Al-Doweish, who represented the brotherhood group, and was aligned with prince Abdel Aziz bin Saud. Al-Doweish's forces easily seized large amounts of territory.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait, page 248. Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi, page 115, Al Kuwait abra Al tareekh , page 71).

While the forces of Shaykh Al-Duaij were grouping in Al-Jahra, it was learned that other forces under the command of Shaykh Salem were at the palace in that region, so the Shaykh held a meeting with Shaykh Abdallah Al-Jaber and Shaykh Salem, and Al-Doweish's

forces surrounded them, but two soldiers sneaked through the net and arrived in Kuwait seeking assistance. So a land-naval force headed to the scene. When Al-Doweish realized that his position had become untenable, he requested a truce and to be allowed to withdraw.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait, page 248. Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi, page 225. Al Kuwait abra Al tareekh , page 79).

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE THIRD WALL (1920):

After the battle of Al-Hamd, Shaykh Salem called upon the people of Kuwait to cooperate in building a strong wall to protect the country from foreign aggression. They hurriedly responded and succeeded in building it within two months. It had four gates.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait, page 250. Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi, page 226-227. Al Kuwait abra Al tareekh , page 82).

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN KUWAIT AND ABDEL AZIZ AL-SAUD:

After the Al-Hamd battle and the construction of the wall, Shaykh Salem consulted the country's notables on ways to retake the territory that had been seized by Al-Doweish. The Doweish were affiliated with Abdel Aziz Al-Saud, in other words followers of the Wahhabi doctrine. They notables proposed sending an envoy, so he sent two envoys to Al-Saud requesting the return of the territory. He also informed Britain about Al-Saud's ambitions and about the battle. Britain pledged itself to persuade Al-Saud to stop his interference with the border on condition that Shaykh Salem would stop harming Al-Saud's followers. He also requested that the border of Kuwait be demarcated from the island of Al-Ammar in the south to the mountains of Senam, Safwan and Um Qasr.

Clearly, the successive rulers of Kuwait dealt with other states on the grounds that Kuwait was an independent state recognized borders. This was upsetting to Al-Saud and led to disputes during the era of Shaykh Salem Al-

Sabah. Britain played the role of go-between between the ruler of Kuwait and the governor of Najd in order to resolve the border dispute.

THE DEATH OF SHAYKH SALEM AL-SABAH:

In 1921, Shaykh Salem Al-Sabah died and was survived by Shaykh Abdallah Shaykh Ali, Shaykh Fahed, Shaykh Sabah and Shaykh Duaij.

10. SHAYKH AHMAD AL-JABER AL-MUBARAK AL-SABAH (1921-1950):

He was born in 1880 and took charge of Kuwait in February 23, 1921. He was a respected figure, a politician, calm and proud.

THE FORMATION OF THE FIRST CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL:

After the Kuwaitis had declared allegiance to Shaykh Ahmad Al-Jaber as the Amir of Kuwait, they submitted a memorandum requesting the formation of a consultative body to share in the ruling. This had been promised by Shaykh Salem who had passed away unexpectedly. Shaykh Ahmed Al-Jaber consented but told them that he would not take a final decision without the approval of the Council. This was formed under the chairmanship of Hamad Al-Saqer and contained as members Shaykh Yussef bin Issa Al-Qinai, Ahmad Fahed Al-Khaled, Abdel Rahman Al-Naqeeb, Meshaan Al-Khudair, Ahmad Al-Humaidi, Shamlan Al-Mutairi Ibrahim bin Modaf, Khalifa bin Shaheen Al-Ghanim and Abdel Aziz Al-Rashid.

This Council combined the notables of Kuwait and prominent merchants who were influential in political life. It was, however, quickly dissolved, for unknown reasons. It seems that the members spent much of their time in

mutual insult and general intransigence. Gradually, members failed to attend and it ceased to exist within two months.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait, page 277, Tareekh Al hukum Al Mutlaq fi Al Kuwait, a research by professor Khaldoon Al-Naqeeb, Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi, page 12).

THE APPEARANCE OF OIL ALONG WITH FOREIGN PRIVILEGES:

During Shaykh Ahmad Al-Jaber's rule, oil was discovered in Kuwait, and soon states started contesting for oil drilling concessions. Among the concessions granted by Shaykh Ahmed Al-Jaber were:

1. The concession granted to the British Petroleum Company jointly with the Gulf Petroleum Company on December 23, 1934, under which this corporation could drill for oil for 75 years within a region of 6,000 square miles. In 1951, this concession was modified, the mandate was limited to 17 years, and Kuwait's share of the profits was put at five per cent of exported oil.
2. On June 28, 1948, another concession was signed with the Independent American Company, for 60 years.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION:

During the rule of Shaykh Ahmed Al-Jaber, the educational field was expanded further. The Al-Ahmadia school was established, and teachers were sent abroad for higher education. More schools were opened later.

(Tareekh Al Kuwait, page 280 and Al Kuwait abra Al tareekh , page 96).

THE FORMATION OF AN ELECTED PARLIAMENTARY COUNCIL IN 1938:

With the spread of schools, the people became more educated and aware of their rights, so the Amir ordered the formation of a parliamentary Council representing all

communities of the people, by election. In 1938, the first Council was formed by election. Most of its members were sons of merchants advocating reforms. It lasted for only six months. It formulated a draft constitution and sought to quell monopolization; it also dealt with the issue of expatriates in Kuwait, particularly the wave of Iranians seeking refuge in the country. It reorganized the municipality, the customs departments, the courts, and it formed the departments of health, police, public security and the treasury. For the first time, there was a separation between the budget of the Amir and that of the state.

(Booklet of Khaled Salman Al-Adassani entitled Nurf Aam lil hukum Al niyabi fi Al Kuwait 1947. Muhawalat Insha'a Diwan Amiri, page 41).

As Adassani mentions in his memoirs, the dissolution of the Council had something to do with the fact that merchants in Kuwait monopolized some commercial fields, such as gas and water. The Council opposed this monopolization, but was then confronted by the merchants.

Moreover, the interference of the legislators and their desire to take part in the Amir's transactions with foreign companies with oil concessions, opposed by the British who favored dealing solely with the Amir, helped the Amir to dissolve the Council, on December 21, 1938.

(Muthakarāt Sulaiman Al-Adassani, page 30).

The dissolution of the Council resulted in prolonged public uproar, which culminated in the events of March 10, 1939. Government forces confronted the protestors, and the confrontation turned out to be bloody. Members of the legislative body were arrested and the country reverted to autocracy.

THE DEATH OF SHAYKH AHMAD AL-JABER:

On January 29, 1950, Shaykh Ahmad Al-Jaber died. He was 69.

11. SHAYKH ABDALLAH AL-SALEM AL-MUBARAK AL-SABAH (1950-1965):

He is the son of the Amir of Kuwait, Shaykh Salem Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah. He took office after the death of his cousin, Shaykh Ahmad Al-Jaber, on February 25, 1950. He has been designated 'the Father of the Constitution and of Democracy.' After he took charge, the returns from oil started to balloon and Shaykh Abdallah began to distribute significant funds to the people, some in return for the use of properties or real-estate. These citizens were also granted houses in other areas free of charge during the boom of construction.

During the era of Shaykh Abdallah, the number of government departments has increased by 4, namely the departments of justice, labor, the radio and television. Simultaneously, Shaykh Abdallah Salem Al-Sabah sought to end the British mandate, and this was accomplished on June 19, 1961, when Kuwait became an independent Arab state. Seeking public participation in ruling, Shaykh Salem founded a 20-seat consultative Council, which introduced the constitution of 1962.

The Amir's approval of this constitution and his relinquishing of part of his powers have reflected his keenness in the interests of the people rather than his own privileges. This has boosted the status of the Al-Sabah family.

After independence, Kuwait joined the Arab League and later the United Nations. Since then, it has opened embassies throughout the world.

Finally, Kuwait, 300 years after the laying of the foundation stone by Shaykh Sabah the First, is now

prominent as such in the world with an international image.

POLITICAL MOVEMENTS IN KUWAIT

Kuwait was not isolated from its surroundings in the Gulf region and the Middle East: it rather interacted with the political movements in the region. Taking into consideration Kuwaiti society, where people are characterized by a family-oriented attitude, whether it be the ruler or the ordinary people, Kuwaitis have seized every opportunity to express their opinions and defend their interests. Based on this, we can say that the Kuwaiti people have played a major role in creating and then preserving parliamentary life in the country.

Another truth is that most of Kuwait's rulers, since the country's establishment as a political entity, accepted the principle of consultation (Shura), especially in trade matters with leading traders and notables, even before the endorsement of the current constitution, which consolidates this right and establishes it as law. By the principle of Shura, the ruler is required to consult his notables in emergencies, on issues of particular importance and outside aggression. The ruler, moreover, has no right to reject the decision taken by the majority, since the real authority is in their hands, while he possesses only the title.

(Dr. Najat Abdel Qadder Al-Jassem - "Kayfa bada'at Al dimoucratiah fi Al Kuwait " - Al-Watan Newspaper, July 6, 1995...)

Even if, in some cases, Kuwait's rulers have adopted a rather individual rule, this has not meant that they have abstained from consulting the notables, especially in issues related to trade.

TRADERS

In Kuwait, where fishing and trade were the main economic activity of the citizens, traders represented the majority of the people and had the final say in many issues. The number and power of the traders is first observable at the start of the 18th Century. Their first recorded activity is their objection to the idea of imposing taxes on Kuwait's imports during the rule of Shaykh Sabah the Second Bin Shaykh Jaber Al-Sabah (1859-1866) also the case of the servant Anbar.

Another indication of the importance of the traders and their political influence was the keenness of the rulers to consult with them.

In the wake of the battle of Hamd, in 1920, the fact that the forces of Al-Doweish had confiscated and looted a great deal from Kuwait, and the fact that Al-Doweish was a follower of King Abdel Aziz Al-Saud of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait's notables and traders conferred with Shaykh Salem Al-Mubarak and decided to send a messenger to Al-Saud to detail the damage that Al-Doweish had done to Kuwait after the Jahra incident and to demand the return of looted property and money.

Shaykh Salem Al-Mubarak complied with their demand, just as he had complied with a previous demand to build

the third wall in 1920. When they asked for the establishment of a Consultative Council, he promised to consider the matter, but he died before the finalization of the project.

The role of traders was not confined to reactions to certain incidents, they also took positive actions based on their patriotic feeling and their keenness to establish the foundations of the Consultative Council and to uphold the right of the people to participate in ruling.

Following the death of Shaykh Salem Bin Mubarak, in February 1921, a number of traders met in the Diwania (Gathering Place) of Nasser Al-Bader and discussed the need to establish a Consultative Council. A number of them, in addition to some notables and ordinary citizens, signed a memo to this effect which was later presented to Shaykh Ahmad Al-Jaber.

Shaykh Ahmad Al-Jaber approved the memo and an appointed 12-member Consultative Council was established in June 1921. It was chaired by Hamad Al-Saqer.

THE NATIONAL GROUP

It is possible to say that the first political group in Kuwait was secretly formed by 12 traders in the 30's and was called the National Group. It included Ali Sulaiman Al-Rifai, Sulaiman Al-Adassani, Meshaan Al-Kudeir Al-Khaled, Abdallah Hamad Al-Saqer, Yussef Saleh Al-Humaidi, Abdel Latif Mohammad Thunayan Al-Ghanim, Khaled Al-Adassani, Sultan Ibrahim Al-Kulaib, Abdel Aziz Hamad Al-Saqer, Hamad Saleh Al-Humaidi, Mohammad Thunayqan Al-Ghanim and Yussef Al-Marzouk.

This group played a positive role in demanding the establishment of an elected Consultative Council. Their demands were accepted in 1938, when an elected Council was formed under the chairmanship of Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

This Council devised Kuwait's first Constitution, whose first article stipulates that the nation, the source of legislation, is represented by its elected members. Article two stipulates that the Council is the source of all internal and external treaties and legislations, while article 5 stipulates that the head of the National Assembly is the representative of the Executive Authority in the country.

This put an end to the separation of authority and gave considerable powers to the National Assembly, a matter

that triggered anger among the supporters of the ruler and traders, in addition to the British, leading to the abrogation of the Council.

The traders, however, assumed their political role on all levels during the rule of Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem who was keen on sharing their worries and who gained their trust after admitting the importance of their role in developing the country. He therefore advocated their rights and interests:

A- When British companies started to bid for government developing projects, Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem introduced a law demanding the presence of a Kuwaiti partner. Despite repeated attempts by British companies to cancel this law, Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem insisted on his demand, thus reflecting his keenness on the interests of the traders.

B- When the government's developmental projects went into the phase of implementation, the British coordinator "Hasted", gave the majority of these projects to five British Companies, thereby barring the way for other British and Non-British companies. The majority of traders objected to the decision, the government had to comply with their demands, cancel the contracts signed with the five British companies and allow all authorized companies to operate in Kuwait.

C- A number of Kuwaiti traders expressed their desire to establish a national Bank to face the financial monopoly then awarded to the Iranian Imperial Bank (British Bank), which ended in the year 1971. The British objected to the idea, but Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem insisted that the monopoly laws did not cover local Banks. As a result, the first national bank was established in Kuwait, the National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) in 1952. Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem deposited the sum of one million Pounds Sterling, with no interest in the bank, in a move aimed at expressing his support for the newly established Kuwaiti venture. The formation of the bank was a great victory for the Kuwaiti traders.

D- The government's developmental programs needed land for their work; therefore, members of the ruling family confiscated large areas of land between 1951 and 1952, awaiting compensation when these lands would be needed. This action triggered the anger of the traders, who informed Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem and asked for action aimed at sharing this fortune. Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem issued an Amiri Decree forbidding ownership outside the regulations and plans of the developmental program of 1952.

As a result, 97 percent of Kuwait's land became state-owned.

These examples, and others, show the role of the traders, who maintained their importance despite certain changes.

THE ACTIVITY OF THE TRADERS IN THE POST-INDEPENDENCE ERA

The traders sustained their eagerness for political reforms after the independence of Kuwait, especially since some of these were related to political groups wanting to establish parliamentary rule. Their role, associated with many other elements, contributed to the government announcement a few months after independence that it was about to establish parliamentary rule and elect a 20-member Founding Council to draft the constitution.

The results of the elections were to the benefit of the traders.

The elected Founding Council in turn elected a five-member Committee to prepare the draft constitution; this Committee represented the traders and included Abdel Latif Thunayan Al-Ghanim (chairman), Humoud Al-Zeid, Saud Al Abdel-Razak, Yacoub Al-Humaidi and Shaykh Saad Al-Abdallah Al-Salem. It was apparent that most of the Committee's demands would then be approved by the founding Council, where traders constituted the majority.

Divergence of points of view with respect to some issues was accepted as healthy, and the traders were able to reduce the differences between elected members and Shaykh Saad.

A point of dispute was the number and the means of selection of ministers, and whether or not they should be selected from within the Council, in addition to the mandatory resignation of the government after every parliamentary chapter. The issue was solved by Shaykh Saad's acceptance of a government including 16 ministers instead of 20 as previously envisaged, and his acceptance of the idea that the government should resign after every parliamentary chapter.

The traders, in return, approved the selection of ministers from outside the Council. The ministers were accepted as members of parliament in their capacity as government members and were given the right to vote inside the Council, except for the right to vote on no-confidence motions.

This reflects the positive role of the traders in solving one of the most important phases of the type of rule desired, and demonstrates the critical task given to the Council, the formulation of the constitution. It is proof of their political might, that the traders were able to secure the

votes needed for the decisions taken by the constitutional Committee.

After the constitution's endorsement, on November 9, 1962, and its Amiri ratification on November 12, 1962, a transitional government was formed of the ruling family, with the participation of three trader members of the elected Founding Council.

In accordance with the constitution of 1962, the government organized general elections to elect a 50-member parliament.

Kuwait was divided into 10 constituencies and five members were to be elected from each constituency . The traders became a parliamentary group, with certain exceptions, while members of the ruling family, who became parliament members in their capacity as ministers, formed another group, and the middle class and professionals constituted a third group.

In the legislative elections of January 25, 1967, some candidates objected to what they termed 'rigged elections'. Some of them even signed a memo jointly with the opposition, despite the fact that they had won parliamentary seats in their constituencies.

THE NATIONAL YOUTH GROUP

Even if the National Assembly of 1921 was not successful, attempts by educated Kuwaitis to establish parliamentary life did not end, on either the open or the covert level.

During the rule of Shaykh Ahmad Al-Jaber (1921 - 1950) an attempt to form a National Assembly and establish a constitution was made by a group of Kuwaiti young people under the name of the National Youth Group or the National Group. Their efforts resulted in the formation of a Consultative Council which was not able to survive for more than five months (July 1938 - December 1938). The group was supported by Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem who was keen on supporting national movements even before taking office.

Shaykh Abdallah was elected by the Council as its chairman, thus putting most authority in the hands of the Council. The constitution proposed by the Council stipulated the following:

Article I:

The People is the source of power and shall be represented by the members of the Council.

Article II:

The Legislative Council shall set the following laws:

- A- The Budget Law: aimed at the just control of all expenses and revenues of the state, including their just spending, with the exception of the properties and belongings of the ruling family.**
- B- The Judicial Laws : Aimed at the implementation of the public law and issues related to the Sharia (Religious Laws) in order to establish justice among the people.**
- C- The Public Security Law : Aimed at securing Kuwait's internal and external security.**
- D- The Educational Law : Aimed at paralleling similar laws adopted in advanced and developed states.**
- E- The Public Health Law : Aimed at protecting the health of citizens from disease and epidemics.**
- F- The Developmental and Reform Laws : Aimed at opening roads outside the city, building prisons, wells and any other reforms needed for the public good inside and outside Kuwait City.**

Article III:

The Legislative Council is the source for all treaties, authorizations and monopolies, whether internal or external. None of the present treaties or agreements needing renewal shall be legitimized without the Council's approval.

Article IV:

Considering the fact that the state does not have a Court of Appeal, the authority and jurisdiction of such a court shall be permanently put in the hands of the Legislative Council until the formation of the appropriate Court.

Article V:

The head of the Legislative Council shall represent the Executive authority in the country.

The constitution canceled the conventional rule which was based on "shared rule" and separated its authority, concentrating it in the hands of the Council. As a result, Shaykh Abdallah Salem remained for 29 years with the opposition before taking over in 1950; he formed a Founding Council on December 30, 1961 after independence.

This Council was formed of 20 elected members and 11 appointed members of the ruling family and former public servants. It established the constitution of 1962, which in turn established the three authorities in the country: the Legislative Authority, the Executive Authority and the Judicial Authority, and determined the jurisdiction of each of them, putting an end thereby to the unlimited authority of the ruler.

It was not easy for the National Youth Group to achieve its goals; it had to work secretly at certain points and its members were even subject to oppression. During the rule of Shaykh Ahmad Al-Jaber, the group's Club was closed and its activities banned. Its members were also prosecuted.

One aspect of the group's positive role was their objection to the British government's Bell report, relating to the partition of Palestine, which was judged pro-Zionist. The group sent memos of objection to the League of Nations, the British House of Commons and the British Secretary of State for Colonial Affairs.

The group's nucleus took shape in 1936, when a Committee of seven Kuwaiti notables was formed to support the Palestinian Cause. It included : Yussef Bin Issa Al-Qinai, Ahmad Al-Humaidi, Mohammad Thunayan Al-Ghanim, Abdel Rahman Bin Mohammad Al-Bahar,

Meshan Al-Khudair, Sayed Bin Ali Sayed Sulaiman and Mohammad Ahmad Al-Ghanim.

This Committee summoned traders and notables to attend a rally to collect donations for the Palestinians. The rally was attended by more than 150 persons.

In the year 1937, Sulaiman Khaled Al-Adassani, Abdel Mohsen Al-Khurafi, Ahmad Al-Ghanim, Abdallah Hamad Al-Saqer, Khalifa Shaheen Al-Ghanim and Khaled Al-Zeid joined the Committee.

The Committee was eager to recruit the largest number possible of young people, mostly traders and educated people, including Ahmad Al-Zeid Al-Sarhan, who was selected the Group's Secretary, Abdel Latif Thunayan Al-Ghanim, one of the founders and later honorary chairman of the group, Mohammad Al-Barrak, Jassem Al-Saqer, Abdel Latif Saleh Othman, Meshari Hilal Al-Mutairi and Ahmad Bicher Al-Roumi.

Some of the group's members drafted a reform program which they published in the Iraqi Al-Zaman newspaper on April 3, 1938. The program included the groups' goals and demands, in addition to its principles, hierarchy and membership conditions.

THE ARAB NATIONALIST MOVEMENT

From the start of the 50's, and in the wake of the Zionist occupation of Palestine, Kuwait was the arena for considerable political activity by Kuwaiti intellectuals and Arab expatriates.

The Movement was launched at the American University in Beirut (AUB) by a number of Arab students, including Dr. George Habash and Dr. Wadie Haddad from Palestine, Dr. Ahmad Al-Khatib from Kuwait and Dr. Hani Al-Hindi from Syria, with the slogan of "Unity, Liberation, Revenge."

In the early 50's, Dr. Ahmad Al-Khatib was able to form the Movement's first cells in Kuwait, benefiting from the relatively democratic atmosphere prevailing in the era of Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem, which started in 1950. At the time, several newspapers and magazines were launched in Kuwait, including Al-Iman, Al-Irshad, Al-Raed, Al-Yaqza and Al-Baath (magazines), Al-Fajr, Al-Sha'ab and Sadaa Al-Iman (newspapers), and other magazines and newspapers, totalling 20.

Also at this period, cultural, sports and popular Clubs flourished, including the Ahli Club, the Graduates Club, Al-Jezira Club, the Teachers Club, the Arab Nationalists

Club, Al-Taoun Club, the Workers Club, the Arab Club, the Islamic Guidance Assembly, the Literature League, the Kuwaiti League and the League of Kuwaiti Clubs. Dr. Ahmad Al-Khatib took part in establishing some of these Clubs, such as the Ahli and the National Cultural Clubs, which became a gathering place for the Movement's members.

THE MOVEMENT'S PRE-INDEPENDENCE ACTIVITIES

The Movement was successful in taking advantage of the democratic freedom in the country to advocate its principles through magazines, newspapers and Clubs. Some of the newspapers also helped in publishing the principles and goals of the Movement, thus creating a wide popular base. Among these newspapers were the Iman and Sadaa Al-Iman, Al-Fajer, which was published by the Graduates Club, and the Talia publication of the Nationalist Cultural Club.

The Movement was keen on promoting political reforms, popular participation in decision making, fighting colonialism and abrogating the British mandate over Kuwait, in addition to advocating Kuwait's adhesion to its Arab environment.

In 1954, a delegation of Clubs headed by Dr. Ahmad Al-Khatib presented a memo of protest to Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem asking for the establishment of a municipal

Council, endowments, and education and health Councils. Shaykh Abdallah promised to consider the matter.

The demand was however rejected and, on September 9, 1954, Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem issued decree 1/1954, forming the Higher Executive Authority. This six-member Authority included only Shaykhs and was entrusted with the organization of the operation of the state's bodies.

Protesting against the ruler's rejection of its demands, the Movement called for a popular rally in the market mosque to elect a Public Executive Authority of 27 members, with the task of preparing legislative elections and establishing a constitution.

The government sent a delegation, headed by the head of the education department, Abdel Aziz Hussein, to convince the representatives of the Clubs to call off their gathering off, in order to prevent a confrontation with the authorities. In the meantime, the authorities closed down all newspapers and magazines, in accordance with the information law at the time.

The Movement ignored the threats and resorted to publishing secret pamphlets under titles such as the Youth of Kuwait and Free Democrats, calling for the suspension of un-democratic measures.

Their action proved fruitful; Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem announced the replacement of the Higher Executive Authority by the Higher Authority in 1955, which was also restricted to Shaykhs.

The Movement continued its pressure to obtain broader popular participation and was able to get the authorities approval to limited elections of municipal, educational, public health and public works Councils.

Some members of the ruling family however demanded that certain people, including Dr. Ahmad Al-Khatib, Jassem Al-Qutami and Abdel Razaq Khaled Al-Zayed, all members of the Movement, should be deprived of the right of candidacy to the Councils.

In view of the fact that the elections did not require official candidacy, the three were successful but were later replaced by Fahed Al-Khaled, Abdel Latif Al-Moslem and Abdel Aziz Al-Mezeini.

The 56 elected members met at the Al-Hamra Cinema and formed a delegation including Yussef Al-Fuleij, Abdel Aziz Al-Saqer, Nusef Al-Nusef and Abdel Hamid Al-Sane to inform the authorities of their rejection of the elimination of the three elected members. The members tendered their collective resignation in protest against government interference. Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem was at that time away from Kuwait.

The Movement also asked the authorities, through its mouthpiece, Al-Fajer newspaper, to negotiate with the British government in order to abrogate the 1899 mandate treaty. It also launched an intensive campaign to free oil wealth from British control in order to market oil under government monitoring and to Kuwaitize the National Petroleum Company.

The Movement called for the transference of the Post, Communication and Ports services to national companies and the putting of their administration into the hands of Kuwaitis instead of the British. It also called for the withdrawal of Kuwaiti funds from British banks and the termination of the contracts of the five British companies overseeing the implementation of developmental projects in Kuwait since the 50's.

THE MOVEMENT'S POST-INDEPENDENCE ACTIVITIES

The Arab nationalists enjoyed good relations with Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem, who was on especially good terms with Dr. Ahmad Al-Khatib and Jassem Al-Qutami. Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem also knew of their connection with the Arab National Movements.

Owing to the isolation that Iraq was trying to impose on Kuwait under the pretext that it constituted part of its territories, and Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem's need for as

much Arab support as possible, he asked Dr. Ahmad Al-Khatib and Jassem Al-Qutami to participate in the government; he promised them in return to activate their demands for the formation of a parliament and the expansion of public freedom. Dr. Ahmad Al-Khatib excused himself from participating, owing to his clinical engagements, while Jassem Al-Qutami was assigned to form a Foreign Ministry, which had a special importance for the state. A decree appointing him Foreign Undersecretary was issued and Al-Qutami was able to employ Kuwaiti youth, mainly Arab Nationalists, in the Diplomatic Corps.

When the Founding Council was formed, Arab Nationalists occupied key positions in it. Dr. Ahmad Al-Khatib was elected to the Council and was also its vice-president. The Nationalist elements were keen on establishing a parliamentary system supported by a constitution, and after the endorsement of the constitution and the formation of the National Assembly, the Arab Nationalists were among the most active groups in the parliament.

The Movement, among other political groups, also condemned the rigging of the 1966 elections.

The Movement was affected by the Arab defeat in the 1967 war and its popularity, not only in Kuwait, but also in the Arab world generally, declined. A group headed by

Jassem Al-Qutami was then formed under the name of the "Patriotic Group". It voiced complete support of the Egyptian President Jamal Abdel Nasser.

The group could be described as a reformist Movement with some Socialist ideas. It was also very influential in the Foreign Ministry, which was formed by Al-Qutami.

Another group, including Dr. Ahmad Al-Khatib, Sami Al-Menayes, Abdallah Al-Nibari and Ahmad Al-Nafisi was also formed under the name of the "Democratic Progressives" and then the "Democratic Group".

The group had a very effective media campaign and advocated Socialist ideas. It had control over the Istiqlal Club and the Talia magazine.

The smallest of these groups was formed of partisans opposed to peaceful protest to the rigged election. This group was formed of intellectuals of various social backgrounds and was active on behalf of the Labor Unions and Students. The group advocated a Marxist path and raised the slogan of Armed Struggle to overthrow conventional Arab regimes. It also placed some explosives in various parts of the country on the second anniversary of the election-rigging scandal, as well as on the occasion of the visit of the Shah of Iran to Kuwait. Most of its members were arrested and jailed. The Amir, however, pardoned them.

Despite the sharp differences between these groups, their internal criticism was centered on the other group's pro-governmental positions. They were all, however, in the ranks of the opposition.

In the 1975 National Assembly elections, divergence was at its peak between the Patriotic group of Al-Qutami and the Democratic Progressive Movement of Dr. Ahmad Al-Khatib. The two opposition groups competed in the elections, resulting in the reduction of their chances of being represented in the Parliament.

THE BAATH ARAB SOCIALIST PARTY

The Baath party was one of the first Arab nationalist parties to call for a socially-oriented nationalism with the slogan of "Unity, Freedom and Socialism", unlike other parties who rather focused on pure Nationalism.

The party was formed in Syria in the year 1947, it spreaded to Iraq after party members took power in military coups inside both Syria and Iraq. The party addressed students in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Egypt.

In 1951, in the wake of the oil discovery in Kuwait, many expatriate Arab workers brought the party's ideas and beliefs with them, including Naji Aloush and the former Secretary General of the pro-Syrian Palestinian Baath faction "Al-Sa'ikah", Zuheir Mohsen, as well as the former Secretary General of the pro-Iraqi Palestinian Baath "Arab Liberation Front", Abdel Wahab Al-Kaiali. They were all involved in forming a Kuwaiti Baath party consisting mainly of expatriates and students.

The party then tried to expand its activities among Kuwaitis through the Nationalist Cultural Club, whose internal laws allowed the membership of Arab expatriates on its board of directors.

The Baathists were able to win the Club's leadership in the 1956 elections, taking it from the Arab Nationalist Movement, who responded to their defeat by calling for new elections, in which they sacked the members of the Baath party from the board of directors, including Naji Aloush, Ahmad Al-Shihabi and Fikri Abu Attieh.

The party then oriented its activities to Bedouins working in the oil fields. This attempt however failed, in view of the fact that the Bedouins were preoccupied with ameliorating their living conditions and cared little about partlssan activities. The Baath party was more successful in forming the Arab Union Club which it used to target and recruit expatriates.

Nevertheless, the activities of the Baath party did not go beyond holding seminars and publishing documents, in addition to participation in the 1959 ceremonies of the establishment of the United Arab Republic.

The party was not popularly successful for a number of reasons, such as:

- 1. The party had no Kuwaiti leadership able to influence the people. It was rather formed of Arab expatriates.**
- 2. In the struggle between Jamal Abdel Nasser and the Baath party over the United Arab Republic, the Kuwaitis were pro-Nasser.**
- 3. The slogans of the Baath party called for Socialism and struggle among the classes, while other parties**

adopted slogans calling for the liberation of Palestine and Arab Unity.

4. It conducted no efficient media campaigns.

After the independence of Kuwait in 1961, the Baath party centered its activities among the League of Kuwaiti Writers and the League of Socialist Kuwaitis. Some of the writers of the Baath party used to write in the Rissala newspaper in the 60's, which may allow us to suggest that this newspaper was the party's mouthpiece.

The party was also active in Kuwait during the Iran-Iraq war in the 80's, when the Iraqi Embassy supported a Kuwaiti political group named the National Group, which was active among University Students, and a Student Organization bearing the name of the National List participated in the elections of the National League of Students of Kuwait. This Baathist activity was later less successful in Kuwait.

Faysal Al-Sane, one of the leaders of the pro-Iraqi Baath party, did well in the 1981 National Assembly elections but was not able to secure enough votes to qualify. He later won in the National Assembly's 1985 elections in the Keifan constituency, but his election did not mean that the Baath party had supporters in Keifan; it rather meant that the candidate had supporters in the area, in addition to the support he received from the leftist and liberal

groups opposing the religious group represented by Jassem Al-Oun and Dr. Adel Al-Subeih.

For the record, Faysal Al-Sane was detained by the Iraqis during the 1990-1991 occupation of Kuwait for his anti-occupation position and his refusal to cooperate with the Iraqis. Faysal Al-Sane is still detained in jail in Iraq.

THE ISLAMIC BROTHERHOOD GROUP

THE GROUP'S FORMATION IN KUWAIT

Kuwaiti society is an Islamic Society. It tends however, to reject religious groups and parties, which it fears would try to control peoples' lives, taking into consideration previous experiences in Saudi Arabia. The word 'Brotherhood' itself reminds Kuwaitis of the Wahhabi Brotherhood raids on Kuwait in the year 1921.

In the year 1913, some Kuwaitis formed the Charitable Assembly which aimed at confronting Christian Missionaries and delegating Kuwaiti students to Islamic universities in Egypt, Beirut and Damascus.

In the mid 40's, Shaykh Abdel Aziz Ali Al-Mutawa, met the founder of the Islamic Brotherhood Movement Hassan Al-Bana while studying in Egypt. Abdel Aziz Al-Mutawa formed the first group of the Islamic Brotherhood Movement in Kuwait in 1947 and suggested the establishment of a social facade called the Islamic Guidance Committee in 1952, under which the Movement would operate.

The declared goals of the Committee were restricted to the advocating of Islamic Culture and the portrayal of

Islam as a Doctrine and a Universal Order capable of solving economic and social problems.

Despite the fact that the Committee's rules emphasized that it would not interfere in political life, it was a facade for the Islamic Brotherhood Movement's political activities, similar to clubs used as facades by other political Movements. The Student branch of the Committee was the most active in recruiting Kuwaitis, Arab and Moslem Expatriates.

The Movement founded Al-Irshad school in the 50's and used it as a way to advocate their political beliefs. A considerable number of the Movement's partisans graduated from this school. Their activities even spread to other schools and institutions, especially the Religious Institution, which was in turn transformed into a facade for their activities, since most of its teachers were from the Azhar university in Cairo, which was one of the Islamic Brotherhood's strongholds. The Movement adopted an organizational plan similar to the cells systems in conventional political parties. Their Families spread in all the schools in Kuwait. In the year 1952, the Movement published the Irshad monthly magazine, which was its mouthpiece.

The Islamic Brotherhood Movement in Kuwait remained a purely religious Movement from its establishment until the 60's. Regional developments and interaction with

similar Arab Movements, however, changed the situation. After the formation of the Social Reform Committee in Kuwait and the publication of the Mujtama magazine, the Movement took to political activities in the same way as any other political group.

Here lies the difference between the Islamic Brotherhood Movement and other political groups in Kuwait; the first started with a religious purpose and then shifted to political activity, based on the belief that Islam regulates both religion and politics, while the others started or were formed with a political goal. All, however, had the aim of achieving power.

One leading Islamic figure has said explicitly : "We do not seek power, nor do we refuse it; we do not ask for it, but we prepare ourselves for it. We are ready to cooperate with anyone who says: 'There is no God but God..'; when authority comes to hand, then we will take it easily."

(Al Islamiyoun fi Al Kuwait - Waqeh Mahalli Am Imtidad li tanzeem douali - Al-Seyassah newspaper, May 23, 1995).

THE MARXIST-LENINIST LEAGUE

The discovery of oil in Kuwait and the resulting immigration of Arab and foreign labor power resulted in the diversification of imported political, national and economic ideas, including Marxist-Leninist beliefs, which were brought to Kuwait by some expatriates who were members of the Iraqi Communist Party, the Iranian Communist Party and the Indian Communist Party.

Communist workers participated in the 1948 turmoils in the oil fields and, in 1953, Communists were able to form the first Labor Union in Kuwait, which issued various demands to the government. Also in 1953, Kuwaiti workers who were members of the Communist party took part in the Third Conference of International Labor Unions in Vienna.

In 1954, pamphlets signed by the National Committee of Peace Advocates expressed opposition to the United States Defense Project. Later, the first Kuwaiti Communist Organization, the Kuwaiti Democratic League, was active in distributing statements condemning western interests in Kuwait and the region and complaining of the internal situation.

The League had a weekly Bulletin entitled the Flag of the Kuwaiti People which called for the endorsement of the constitution and free elections.

Following the campaign that Jamal Abdel Nasser launched against Communists in his famous 1959 speech, Communists in Kuwait were prosecuted and more than 200 Communist Arab expatriates were deported.

THE KUWAITI CLUBS COMMITTEE

In the wake of the Egyptian President Jamal Abdel Nasser's naturalization of the Suez Canal in 1955, the Arab Nationalists Movement employed intensive efforts to unify the activities of Clubs under the name of Kuwaiti Clubs Committee with the aim of supporting Arab causes.

Eight Clubs in total took part in the Committee, including the National Cultural Club, the Graduates Club and the Teachers Club.

Among the activities of the Committee were the organization of popular activities to support the struggle of the Egyptian people against the West.

On August 14, 1955, the Committee organized a popular gathering attended by more than 4,000 people to express support for Abdel Nasser's decision to nationalize the Suez Canal.

During the Tripartite French-British-Israeli Aggression against Egypt in 1956, the Committee issued a memo calling for the boycott of British commodities for and considering violators as traitors.

A sub-Committee also campaigned to end cooperation with British and French Institutions and to sack all British

and French employees in government departments, in addition to the abrogation of all economic and trade treaties with Britain and France.

Another sub-Committee was able to collect 250,000 Pounds Sterling in support of the Egyptian army over a period of three days.

The Committee also appealed to oil sector employees in Al-Ahmadi port to boycott British and French oil carriers and urged the Amir of Kuwait, Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem, to prevent British and French ships using Kuwait ports and territories.

The Committee also contributed to efforts to support the Algerian Revolution against French Occupation and the struggle of the Arab Maghreb against French Colonialism.

It called for a general strike on October 28, 1956 to express support for the head of the Algerian Revolution Ahmad Bin Bella when the latter was arrested by the French Authorities, in addition to collecting more than three million Rupees to support the Algerian Revolution.

Following its repeated successes, other Clubs joined the Committee, whose name was changed to the Union of Kuwaiti Clubs in 1958.

An executive Council of the Union was also elected, including Mohammad Jassem Al-Sadah (later Secretary General), Ali Al-Sabti (assistant Secretary General), Hussein Maki, Khaled Al-Hamad, Khaled Al-Bader, Mohammad Al-Masoud and Khaled Al-Mudaf.

On February 1959, The Union organized a popular rally at the Shuwaikh High School to celebrate the first anniversary of the formation of the United Arab Republic between Syria and Egypt. Following the rally, the authorities banned the Union and arrested some of its leaders.

THE KUWAITI LEAGUE

In the year 1958, the Kuwaiti League was formed as a political and social facade for traders who had previous political experience under the National League and The Kuwaiti Youth League.

A large number of Kuwaiti intellectuals and traders took part in the formation of the league, which aimed at:

- 1. Studying and finding solutions to Kuwait's problems;**
- 2. Establishing freedom of expression;**
- 3. Asserting Kuwait's Arab identity and calling for Arab unity.**

The league spearheaded the call to join the Egyptian-Syrian union and submitted a memo in this regard to Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem.

It also prepared some studies and surveys on the different aspects of Kuwaiti society, in addition to its participation in the political rally organized by the Union of Kuwaiti Clubs at the Shuwaikh High School, following which the authorities banned the League and arrested some of its leaders.

THE POPULAR REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

From the start of the 60's, political events on the Arab scene developed in a dramatic way. In 1961 Syria and Egypt ended their Union, when a number of Syrian army officers organized a coup, while Jamal Abdel Nasser adopted several Socialist resolutions.

These events resulted in differences among the Movement of Arab Nationalists on the issue of Socialism and the need to abide by its rules.

In 1963, the Movement's leadership held an extraordinary meeting in Beirut during which two main views were discussed, the first calling for the adoption of Scientific Socialism and the second calling for the adoption of Idealism and refusing Socialism as a goal in itself.

Marxist ideas were then starting to attract considerable attention, as some elements in the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf started to study the Publications of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tse Tung.

In the wake of the 1967 Arab defeat, the leftist elements of the Arab Nationalist Movement called for a meeting in

Dubai of the Gulf branches of the Movement under the sponsorship of the leadership in Beirut.

The branches were operating under the leadership of the regional bureau of Kuwait, which was blamed by leftists for ignoring important regional tasks. The meeting resulted in the following:

- 1. Commitment to Scientific Socialism.**
- 2. Commitment to the armed struggle to liberate territories occupied by the British and to overthrow Tribal regimes.**
- 3. Formation of two central committees and two politbureaus for the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf.**

In the second half of 1968, leftist elements of the Movement in Oman called for an extraordinary Conference which adopted the following decisions:

- 1. Commitment to Marxist-Leninism.**
- 2. Centralized Operations following the election of a politbureau.**
- 3. Suspension of the Movement's leadership in Kuwait.**
- 4. Changing the name of the Movement from the Arab Nationalist Movement to the Popular Revolutionary Movement.**

In the summer of 1968, the Movement leadership in Kuwait called for a regional conference to discuss the recommendations of the Dubai meeting.

The call was led by Ahmad Al-Rubei and Nasser Al-Ghanim, two of the students' and workers' leaders having relations with the leftist elements of the Arab Nationalist Movement. The conference was held in October 1968 and adopted the following resolutions:

- 1. Commitment to Marxist-Leninism**
- 2. Sacking the leadership of the Arab Nationalists Movement (Al-Khatib, Al-Menayes, Al-Wasmi, Al-Nibari and Ali Al-Radouan)**
- 3. Selection of a temporary leadership for the Movement in Kuwait.**
- 4. Adopting the name of the Popular Revolutionary Movement in Kuwait and commitment to the Dubai resolution adopted at the July 1968 meeting.**

The Politbureau of the Popular Revolutionary Movement in the Gulf and Oman expressed readiness to admit the Popular Revolutionary Movement in Kuwait, provided the latter adopted revolutionary violence against the Kuwaiti regime.

In fact, some of the Movement's elements placed explosives near the Iranian Embassy and on the road to the Airport when the Shah of Iran visited Kuwait, in

addition to those at the Salam Palace, the Interior Ministry and the National Assembly, in protest against the rigging of the 1967 elections.

In mid February 1969, the Movement held its founding conference with the participation of delegates from the politbureau of the Movement's Oman and Gulf branch. The conference adopted the following resolutions:

- 1- Linking the Movement in Kuwait to the politbureau in Oman and the Gulf.**
- 2- Commitment to the organizational and ideological strategy of the Popular Revolutionary Movement in Oman and the Gulf.**
- 3- Commitment to Revolutionary Violence.**
- 4- Changing the name of the Movement in Kuwait to the Popular Revolutionary Movement In Oman and the Gulf (Kuwait Branch).**

By the end of May 1969 the authorities had uncovered the Movement and arrested most of its leadership.

THE PATRIOTIC GROUP

Jassem Al-Qutami was one of the leading figures in the Arab Nationalist Movement in Kuwait, but at the start of the 70's he seceded from the Movement and combined efforts with other pro-Nasserists to establish a Patriotic Group aiming at:

- 1- Adopting peaceful means to reform rule in Kuwait and rejecting extremist calls to overthrow the regime.**
- 2- Adopting Democracy as the ideal form of rule.**
- 3- Ending laws contravening public freedoms.**
- 4- Opening the way for political and syndicalist activities for citizens through authorized organizations.**
- 5- Respecting the Constitution and the Laws.**
- 6- Calling for the amending of the constitution, to allow the selection of ministers from the National Assembly and selecting a prime minister representing the parliamentary majority.**
- 7- Recognition of the traders' leading role in promoting and developing society and support of a free market economy.**

In the 1971 legislative elections, the group called on political parties to boycott the elections under the pretext that the government had naturalized a large number of Bedouins, in order to undermine the majority secured by

the opposition. The parties, however, did not boycott the elections.

In the 1975 legislative elections, the group competed with the Progressive Democrats Movement before the government dissolved Parliament and suspended some of the articles of the constitution, meanwhile adding article 35 (repeated), which allowed the closure of some newspapers.

On February 1980, the government formed a Committee of 35 persons to amend the Constitution, thereby prompting the opposition to coordinate its factions in order to abort any attempt by the government to amend the Constitution and to confront the religious wave.

The dialogue resulted in the establishment of coordinated actions by the Patriotic Group, the Democratic Group, which included the Progressive Democrats, and other independent figures. A joint statement was issued by the new opposition Coalition and was published by the Talia newspaper.

The joint action prompted the government to withdraw its plans to amend the Constitution and call for legislative elections in February 1981.

The 1985 parliamentary elections witnessed a considerable coordination between the two groups.

Nevertheless, each had its own candidate list and the Patriotic Group was represented by MP Hamad Al-Jouaan and MP Jassem Al-Qutami.

On July 3, 1986, the National Assembly was again dissolved and the Patriotic group signed a memo of protest. Jassem Al-Qutami was arrested on May 1990 when he openly called for the return of the National Assembly in the Monday Diwania.

THE KUWAITI PROGRESSIVE DEMOCRATS MOVEMENT

Following the changes that the events of 1967 introduced in the Arab Nationalist Movement and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and owing to Al-Khatib's relations with the historic leadership of Dr. George Habash, whose group was influenced by Marxist-Leninist ideas, Al-Khatib called for a conference in 1971, during which two political positions confronted each other:

The first position called for the adoption of a Marxist-Leninist identity, while the other opposed this demand on the grounds that Kuwait differed from other Arab countries where Marxist ideas were accepted. The views of the second position prevailed, and the name of the group was changed to the Movement of Progressive Democrats.

The Movement's program was based on democracy and the Movement accepted workers and the petit bourgeois in its ranks. Its organizational structure was also based on centralized democracy.

The Progressive Democrats Movement launched distinguished election campaigns during the

Parliamentary elections and, in 1971, four of its leaders won parliamentary seats: Dr. Ahmad Al-Khatib, Sami Al-Menayes, Abdallah Al-Nibari, Ahmad Al-Nafisi.

These MP's, in cooperation with independent opposition MP's, were able to promote their demands at the Assembly, including those for the naturalization of oil and the establishment of a constitutional court. Three of the Movement's leaders also won in the 1975 parliamentary elections: Dr. Ahmad Al-Khatib, Sami Al-Menayes and Abdallah Al-Nibari. The Assembly, however, was dissolved in 1976.

After the dissolution of parliament, the Movement aimed at forming the Democratic Group, which included leftist elements, Baathists and some national figures. This group, however, failed owing to the vast differences between its members.

The Movement participated in the 1981 elections under the name of the Democratic Group, but its members, like all other opposition members, failed to win parliamentary seats.

This failure prompted the Movement to reform the Democratic Group, which this time included representatives from the Movement, the Popular Union Party and groups related to Dr. Rubei. The Group was

able to win three seats in the 1985 elections: Dr. Ahmad Al-Khatib, Sami Al-Menayes and Ahmad Al-Rubei.

The National Assembly included several representatives from the left and the Islamists, who were able to offer considerable opposition inside the parliament in major issues, such as the Manakh Souk Crisis and the interrogation of the Justice Minister, in addition to the inspection of the Central Bank files.

Following the dissolution of parliament, the Movement's MP's participated in the waves of protest. Immediately after the liberation, the Movement joined the Kuwaiti Democratic Forum.

THE POPULAR DEMOCRATIC PARTY

This party was formed by the former members of the Popular Revolutionary Movement after their release from jail, in addition to other students, intellectuals and workers.

The party's principles were adopted as follows:

- 1- Promoting national freedoms and allowing political activities of parties;**
- 2- Establishment of a free national economy and ending the mandate of colonial oil companies;**
- 3- Building and promoting national industry;**
- 4- Equal distribution of the Domestic Product in such a way as to secure productivity;**
- 5- Equal treatment of Kuwaitis;**
- 6- Liberation of women to allow their participation in the construction of Kuwait;**
- 7- Building a modern university to promote scientific research;**
- 8- Adoption of a free foreign policy taking into consideration Kuwait's national and local interests;**
- 9- Liberation of the region of Oman and the Gulf from colonial rule in all possible ways.**

THE DEMOCRATIC ACTION MOVEMENT

The Kuwaiti Popular democratic party, in an attempt to increase its popularity, formed the Democratic Action Movement. Its main founders were Dr. Ahmad Al-Rubei, Khaled Al-Wasmi, Dr. Abdel Aziz Sultan and Dr. Mohammad Al-Rumeih.

The Movement's manifests stipulates the defense of the interests of the working and middle class.

THE POPULAR UNION PARTY

The Popular Union Party was formed in 1975 by a group of former members of the Popular Revolutionary Movement. This party is considered one of the leading Arab parties committed to the Communist path, in addition to its position as the leading Labor party in Kuwait.

The party's political program includes the following goals:

- 1- Promoting the political independence of Kuwait and enhancing its economic independence;**
- 2- Launching public freedom;**
- 3- Preserving and expanding Constitutional guarantees, implementing parliamentary life, reducing the voting age to 18 years and endorsing women's and naturalized people's electoral rights, in addition to the right to elect of Governors and Mayors;**
- 4- Improving the living standards of the working class;**
- 5- Fighting corruption in government bodies, the army, and the police;**
- 6- Promoting educational standards and national culture;**
- 7- Adoption of an independent foreign policy based on the promotion of peace.**

The party also formed the Union of Democratic Youth in Kuwait, a youth facade for the party which was active in publishing pamphlets condemning the Constitutional Amendment Committee and the authorities' actions against public freedom.

POST LIBERATION POLITICAL **TRENDS**

Following the liberation from Iraqi aggression, Kuwaiti political powers started a complete reassessment of Kuwait's political direction, with regard, in particular, to leftist, nationalist and Islamist parties. A re-organizational process was launched, in view of the fact that the Iraqi aggression destroyed all Arab national forms and caused loss of confidence among the Kuwaitis in popular Arab/Muslem support abroad, and in view also of the end of the Cold War and the fall of Communism and Socialism in Europe. Since all these political parties had foreign political origins, the leadership re-organized them and gave them new names, having regard to the Kuwaiti people's readiness to accept such ideas, following the Iraqi occupation and the pro-Iraqi position adopted by most of the foreign political parties.

Nine political parties emerged after the liberation and a tenth, the National Unity Group, emerged after the 1992 National Assembly elections.

1 - THE PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The Parliamentary Group emerged three years after the 1986 dissolution of the National Assembly and after a group of 45 leading figures aimed at ending the constitutional void, by opening dialogue with the government. This group worked on a memo signed by all eligible Kuwaiti voters, asking for the return of constitutional life, to present to His Highness the Amir. The Group sometimes referred to itself as the Constitutional Movement (CM).

Considering the fact that the group was formed in 1989 at a meeting of 32 deputies from the dissolved National Assembly, as its founder Ahmad Al-Saadoun says, it thereby comprised all political, religious and ideological trends that were represented in the dissolved Parliament. Thus, the Group had no defined political program, guiding ideology or organizational charter.

(Majallat Assiyassah aldoualiyah - October 1993, Dirasat Al tajammouat assiyassiyah fi Al Kuwait - Marhalat ma baada Al tahreer- Dr. Falah Al-Mudeiris).

As a result, it was perfectly normal that the group should have remained without real popular support, despite the fact that represented the greater part of society, since it

called for the preservation of the 1962 Constitution, a matter of great interest for all Kuwaitis.

The Parliamentary group did not believe in the necessity of political expansion for success, as did the Islamic Brotherhood, the Shiites and the Nationalists. They based their belief on the fact that the situation in Kuwait was different from that in other places and that political expansion had proved to be against Kuwait's interests during the 1990-1991 crisis.

The head of the Group, Ahmad Al-Saadoun, considered that political development and action could not be achieved in the absence of political parties.

The Group also judged it unimportant to raise the issue of separation between the Premiership and the post of Crown Prince, saying that what was more important was the commitment to the Constitution. They also said that if the Crown Prince and Prime Minister was able to combine these two positions without violating the Constitution, then the issue would no longer merit further debate.

The Group also rejected violence as long as the Kuwaiti people possessed the constitutional means to ask for its rights, while at the same time drawing attention to the element of youth, owing to its dangerous readiness for confrontation if Constitutional rights were violated.

As to the issue of naturalization, the Group considered the building of the Wall in 1920 a turning point in the Kuwaiti Nationality issue, which based nationality on two criteria : Founding Kuwaiti and Naturalized Kuwaiti. It also considered the events of August 2, 1990 as a turning point in the issue with respect to the participation of all Kuwaitis in the resistance.

As to the issue of Bedouns (stateless persons), the Group rejected naturalization on a general basis and said that every case should be studied separately.

The Group voiced its complete support for voting rights for women, through the amendment of the voting laws, regardless of the Religious Affairs Ministry's rulings.

(Majallat Assiyassah aldoualiyah - October 1993, P 1038/62 - Dirasat Al tajammouat assiyassiyah fi Al Kuwait - Marhalat ma baada Al tahreer- Dr. Falah Al-Mudeiris).

2 - THE KUWAITI DEMOCRATIC FORUM

The Forum appeared directly after the liberation on March 2, 1991. It was formed on the grounds of:

A- The August 2, 1990 Iraqi occupation and the supportive position of most leftist and nationalist Arab parties, resulting in the collapse of the ideology of these parties and the repercussions of this on the internal level.

B- The effect on leftist parties in Kuwait after the Eastern Bloc's shift to Liberalism.

These factors unified previous leftist parties into the Kuwaiti Democratic Forum.

The Forum expressed its views and its orientations in its periodical Sawt Al-Shaab, which was issued from March 1991 to June 1992. After the liberation, Al-Talia newspaper resumed publication and became the mouthpiece of the Forum.

The Forum was in complete harmony with other political parties with respect to democratic and national goals. It even co-signed several statements on national issues of concern.

This however did not mean that the Forum accepted all the demands or views of other political groups. It repeatedly diverged on points of view with the religious groups on the source of legislation and the status of women.

It also advocated the need for multi-party systems and the need to allow these parties to operate.

Despite the fact that the Forum condemned the position of Arab political parties during the Iraqi aggression, it nonetheless reiterated its commitment to the Palestinian cause and the Arab identity of Kuwait.

The Forum is a Kuwaiti Independent Group, which was keen on promoting relations with leftist groups in the world in order to promote dialogue. Its organizational work is based on dialogue, diversification of points of view and freedom of expression.

The Forum insists on the application of the principle of questioning political and military leaders on their duties in facing the Iraqi aggression.

It also calls on the need to share power between the people and the ruling family.

Some of its members even call for the separation of the post of Prime Minister and the post of Crown Prince and

the need to grant the ministries of Defense, the Interior and Foreign Affairs to members of the National Assembly and not to the ruling family.

3 - ISLAMIC CONSTITUTIONAL MOVEMENT

The Movement was officially announced on March 30, 1990 in the wake of liberation from the Iraqi occupation.

It is considered the political aspect of the Islamic Brotherhood Movement in Kuwait which was operating until the day of the invasion under the name of the Social Reform Committee. The Movement is also the continuity of the Murabitoun Movement, which was formed during the occupation and issued six volumes of the Murabitoun newspaper before moving to London, owing to the oppression exercised by the Iraqis.

The Movement's Secretary General, Issa Majed Al-Shaheen, said that his group wanted to move closer to the application of Islamic social, legal and political rules in Kuwait

(Al-Anba Newspaper, Volume 6770, March 15, 1995 - Interview)

The Movement rejects violence and advocates the separation of the Premiership and the office of Crown Prince. It also calls for granting Naturalized people their political rights and supports the voting rights of women, with the exception of the right of candidature. It also supports the existence of political parties.

Despite the fact that Al-Shaheen denies any link with external groups, it is known that the Islamic Constitutional Movement is a member of the International Organization of the Islamic Brotherhood.

4 - ISLAMIC POPULAR GROUP

The Islamic Popular Group is the facade of the Salafist groups in Kuwait, who played a major role in the Kuwaiti resistance against the Iraqis and in supporting locals under the occupation. Their name was adopted after the liberation, while the Committee of Revival of Islamic Culture is their official facade.

This group's program consists of the gradual establishment of an Islamic state, preserving constitutional gains.

The Group is known to be independent and not to oppose the authorization of political parties in Kuwait.

It also rejects violence because of its religious beliefs, and advocates the consideration of each stateless case separately.

5 - THE ISLAMIC NATIONAL COALITION

The Coalition represents the Shiites in Kuwait, and in particular Shiites of Iranian origin, and not Shiites of Saudi origin.

The Shiites proved their patriotism during the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait, when they efficiently took part in the military and civil resistance under the slogan of "Kuwait Above All".

In the post-liberation period, they took part in political meetings and issued a statement of their views for the future in March 1991.

The Coalition is a popular group that has adopted Islamic views of national actions. It is possible to say that the Coalition does not have a defined political program; it rather represents the individual perspectives of its members.

The Coalition does not have access to the media and depends largely on local newspapers. It is normally connected with Shiites outside Kuwait.

The Coalition supports the separation of the Premiership and the post of Crown Prince but does not show

enthusiasm for the prevention of Shaykhs holding ministerial posts. It supports the idea of opening the door to naturalization, with the safeguard of limited and defined laws in this regard.

As to stateless persons, the Coalition agrees that each case should be considered separately. It also supports the promotion of the voting rights of women with no prejudice.

(Al-Qabas newspaper - Volume 7770, February 5, 1995 - Interview with Abdel Wahab Al-Wazan)

(Al-Anba newspaper - Volume 6728, January 30, 1995 - Interview with MP Abdel Mohsen Jamal)

(Al-Anba newspaper - Volume 6736, February 7, 1995 Interview with Dr. Seif Abbas, Chairman of the Political Sciences Division at Kuwait University)

6 - CONSTITUTIONAL GROUP

The Constitutional Group was formed immediately after the liberation. It was a continuation of the Patriotic Group, which was active in the 30's, and which represented the traders.

A group of traders, members of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, also known as the "Chamber Group" and the "Group of Abdel Aziz Al-Saqer", had certain nationalistic feelings.

Abdel Aziz Al-Saqer, current president of the Chamber and first National Assembly Speaker, is one of the Groups leading figures.

He played an important role in the Jeddah popular conference of October 1990, during the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, by reducing the differences between the rulers and the Kuwaiti opposition.

The group adopts a mild constitutional policy, and thus does not require to have a political program or an organizational plan.

It supports the authorization of political parties in Kuwait and rejects violence. It also agrees with all political

parties on public affairs but considers that Kuwaiti society has an excess of political parties.

The Coalition supports the separation of the Premiership and the post of Crown Prince and does not object to the participation of members of the ruling family and the National Assembly in the cabinet.

It calls for equality among citizens and considers that every case of statelessness should be dealt with separately.

It also calls for the promotion of women's voting rights.

7 - INDEPENDENTS

Independents, as they are described by some, are a group of national figures not affiliated to any party or group. They differ in their points of view and have no ideology in common.

Their presence could be attributed to the presence of many political parties, thus limiting their activities to the call to preserve constitutional gains without having to confront the authorities.

Independents consider that the Kuwaiti people rejects political parties for two main reasons:

- 1- Absence of a political parties law;**
- 2- Fear that party activities would hinder national interests.**

They nevertheless agree that if political parties were authorized, things could change. They also call for balanced political reforms.

They agree with most parties on the need to adopt peaceful means and reject violence in dealing with the authorities.

Independents call for the application of new and effective laws with respect to naturalized citizens, while considering that the issue of statelessness needs additional study and consideration of the different circumstances of each file.

INTERVIEW WITH SHAYKH SALEM SABAH AL SALEM AL SABAH

The researcher decided to interview various senior officials and leading figures in the Kuwaiti Political arena with the aim of unveiling several obscure incidents and answering questions raised at the Kuwaiti, Regional and International levels.

The meeting was held on Saturday October 1, 1995 with His Highness Shaykh Salem Sabah Al-Salem Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah. The interviewee is the son of the late Shaykh Sabah Al-Salem Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, the 12th ruler of Kuwait and the grandson of the ninth ruler of Kuwait, the late Shaykh Salem Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, who in turn is the son of Kuwait's seventh ruler, Shaykh Mubarak Al-Sabah. Shaykh Salem is one of the leading figures among Kuwait's politicians. He started his political career in the diplomatic corps as an Ambassador, before being selected Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, Minister of Defense, Minister of the Interior and First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. He then turned to humanitarian activities and followed up Kuwait's prime concern: efforts aimed at bringing about the release of Kuwaiti Prisoners of War and Detained Persons in Iraqi jails.

Shaykh Salem, we welcome you and thank you for according us part of your precious time, which I believe you are according to Kuwait and History. Allow me, Shaykh, to ask you the following questions about our political system.

Q 1. Shaykh Salem, many partisans of political parties claim that the Political System in Kuwait is a *De Facto* reality, meaning that Kuwait was not a state 300 years ago and that the Sabah family settled in this land and established a ruling system that can be called anything but Democratic. What is your comment?

A 1. If we go back in History and read all that has been said or written in this regard, we would find one reality which crystallized later in the will of Mubarak Al-Kabeer. It is true that Kuwait used to be called Kut before it was named Kuwait. Water was available and Bedouins roamed the region, their gatherings slowly transformed into settlements in the region. Moreover, Sabah the First was known for his wisdom which enabled him to gather the people who sought his advice or mediation in any dispute or problem.

This made Sabah the First a great father, or the Shaykh of the tribe or even the chief of the group ..etc. When he died, his responsibilities were passed on to his son, as the people gave the Sabah family the task of looking after their interests, not because Kuwaitis are simple and none of them have the ambition to rule, but rather because they tried, especially the Bani Khaled Tribe (Ibn Araier), to rule but reached the conclusion that the Sabah family was the key to stability and security in the region.

The rule was successive and Mubarak Al-Kabeer told the Sabah family: "Your eldest, your wisest, is your ruler, and your matters should be tackled by Shura (Consultation) among you." This will is important since it lays the foundations of respect that people should accord to age, social status and wisdom. When Mubarak Al-Kabeer added that decision-making should be based on Shura, he also laid the foundation of consultation among the family to decide who is worthy of rule and most

importantly who is qualified to rule. Therefore, we find that since the official establishment of Kuwait, the ruling family never clashed over the nomination of the Crown Prince who is usually automatically named. Moreover, the Democracy of Councils we attend and organize as families (Diwania) constitute in reality the basic preliminary steps for the selection of the Crown Prince after evaluating and assessing the opinions of people during their gatherings or encounters with the Amir when they visit him in his Diwania: "X is known for his good manners, Y is known for his eloquent abilities", thus hinting at their possible choices and contributing to the process of selecting a Crown Prince who one day will become Amir. This also is a part of the deep-rooted Democracy set by the Sabah family, which, as I said before, was not arbitrarily crowned as a ruling family. Sabah I proved himself a wise, loving, caring and faithful man and legitimized his rule by the support of the people and the reputation he obtained for himself and his family as a trust-worthy dynasty with excellent relations with its people. This was proved during the 1990-1991 Iraqi aggression against Kuwait, when Kuwaitis were dispersed in the world and the opportunity was convenient for any party wishing to revolt against this family to fulfill its wish. What happened was exactly the contrary, as the Kuwaitis fully supported and stood behind the Sabah family in a manifestation of gratitude and honor, a matter that earned both the rulers and the ruled respect and support from the International Community. So political harmony and achievements over the years earned Kuwait its international status because the allegiance of our grand fathers and their grand fathers to the Sabah family in the 1800's was manifested again by Kuwaitis during the Iraqi aggression on August 2, 1990.

Q 2. As you know, following the rule of late Shaykh Mubarak Al-Sabah and after he signed the agreement with the British Government, the state of Kuwait started to

transform from a Shaykhdom to an institutionalized state. The period was also marked by the emergence of different political parties such as the Arab Nationalists, Moslem Brotherhood and Wahabites in Kuwait. What do you think about this cultural expansion and to what extent you think these political trends contributed to the demands made for a Consultative Council, a People's Council or a National Assembly, which was first an appointed Council during the reign of late Shaykh Ahmad Al-Jaber in 1921 and was dissolved shortly afterwards?

A 2. People decided to settle in Kuwait because of its easy access to both sea and land. Kuwait's political and economic importance prompted people to settle on its land. When Mubarak Al-Sabah came, Kuwait started to take its path of stability, international representation and presence as an entity. Mubarak Al-Sabah, a very clever leader with innate shrewdness which he enriched further by advice he enlisted from Kuwaitis who used to gather around him, was aware of nearby dangers and decided to work out an agreement with Britain. This accord protected Kuwait at the International level, while Kuwaitis on the domestic front had the time and security to build a nation.

The Mubarakiah school was established during these times and by giving it its name, the people of Kuwait were expressing gratitude to the man who came up with the idea of building it. Some Kuwaitis also traveled and came back with ideas they wished could be applicable in Kuwait. Others even traveled to study abroad and became professors such as Abdel Aziz Al-Rasheed, another member of the Ateeqi family, and others who traveled to Asia, Malaysia and Indone'sia. At the Mubarakiah school, Kuwaitis taught the Holy Quran, religion and the Arabic language, while teachers from Palestine, Egypt and the Fertile Crescent brought with them their political ideas and beliefs. This proved that

Kuwaiti society was not a closed one, and the new foreign ideas were discussed among the people. As usual, some accepted them and others emphatically rejected them.

Moreover, Kuwaiti society, like any other Arab or Islamic society, is committed to Islam. Every Friday, Kuwaitis gather at mosques for the Friday noon prayer. This does not mean that all Kuwaitis are partisans of a political Islamic trend but rather means that they are committed to Islamic doctrine and belief.

As to the 1921 Council, or the Shura Educational Council, I wish not to approach the reasons of its dissolution since it was excessively analyzed. I would rather discuss the philosophy behind the formation of this Council. It is known that rulers also need advice, and the ruler of Kuwait selected a number of elite figures in Kuwait at the time to seek advice and assistance from them should the need arise, based on the saying of Shaykh Mubarak "your decisions should be made by Shura among you." The selection had its political, social and economic importance since the Sabah family believed that its love for Kuwait was not greater than the love Kuwaitis themselves had for their homeland. The family based its judgment on the saying "Those who cooperate are never defeated."

Thus, and in consideration of external dangers and the urge to develop and modernize Kuwait, the principle of Diwania was developed and organized in a normal way and a Shura Council was formed. In a Diwania, when addressing a certain issue, people tend to forget it shortly after leaving the room, while the Council organized these issues and approached ideas and proposals in a proper way before referring them to the government for action. There is no doubt that the Shura Council was a major step towards organizing political life in Kuwait and shaping its political future.

Q 3. Public demands for an elected Council and the following elections took place in 1938 and the Council was dissolved six months later after clashes with the authorities. Do you believe that the demands made at the time were influenced by the different political trends or were merely due to the Educational Movement that flourished in the country after the establishment of Mubarakiah school during the rule of the late Shaykh Mubarak?

A 3. I have no doubt Kuwaitis wanted to develop their country but new ideas were also coming in from abroad. I was once told that people used to buy the Egyptian Ai-Ahram newspaper two months after its publication. This proved that Kuwaitis were ambitious and looked forward to knowledge and change, which should materialize in the development of countries and nations. Also, foreign dangers, increasing levels of education and communication with the outside world contributed to the promotion of the people's wish to participate in the development of Kuwait.

At the time, the ruler considered that the presence of a Shura Council would be beneficial for him, especially if the members of the Council acted as his advisors and aids; so the Council was formed.

The eagerness accompanying the fulfillment of any project for the first time usually prevents the assessment of its negative aspects. The idea of having a legislative Council was a great idea based on Islamic beliefs "Your decisions should be made by Shura among you." Mubarak Al-Sabah also laid the foundations of the family and promoted the idea of interaction with the people by marrying into Kuwaiti families and allowing marriage

between Al-Sabah family daughters and Kuwaiti men from outside the family.

Q 4. The Constitutional Movement or the Constitutional Group and the Chamber of Commerce say a dispute between the government and the Legislative Council led to its dissolution. Your Highness, do you think that the dispute was caused by a row among the members of the Council themselves or between them on one hand and the authority on the other or it was simply triggered by the British government?

A 4. I cannot answer your question in the way you wish but the reasons could be many.

Hamad: I would like to raise something I noticed during my examination of British documents. The British representative at the time was in direct contact with the ruler and informed his government about this particular contact. Do you think this also contributed to the dissolution of the Council? Not to forget that all this is mentioned in the British Documents...

Shaykh Salem: Britain could have had interests at the time in causing factions in Kuwaiti-Iraqi , Kuwaiti-Saudi and Kuwaiti-Iranian relations for various reasons and due to its alliance at the time with Turkey. Britain had interests in solving some problems and had also interests in causing many others.

On the local level, however, the members of the Council could have had personal differences which helped deteriorate the situation. The ambitions of some members sometimes conflict with the actual type of rule at the time. But in fact, three different elements played a major role in the dispute that triggered the dissolution of the Council : foreign interference from Iraq, the Britons

and all their allies and aides, in addition to personal ambitions of some of the Council's members or their conflicting interests and leadership. I believe this human factor of benefits and personal ambitions which conflicted with the authorities' plans to set the foundations of a state caused the dispute and its later outcome.

Q 5. Based on what has been said and based on history itself, similar incidents calling for the re-establishment of Democracy occurred at the end of the 50's and resulted in the closure of sports and cultural Clubs until the formation of the Founding Council and the announcement of elections to establish the Constitution on December 30, 1961. Political groups, such as the Arab Nationalists, Communists, Baathists and the Moslem Brotherhood say they were the driving force who brought the Sabah family to accept the idea of Constitutional elections.

A 5. In my opinion, the incidents of 1954 were triggered by Jamal Abdel Nasser because Nasserism was at its peak and outweighed any other political trend at the time. It was even fighting other political orientations such as Baathists and the Moslem Brotherhood. Nasserism flourished because the Arabs were longing for certain ideologies and Abdel Nasser, using the intelligence of his aides and the media, presented these ideologies in a revolutionary way. Subsequent incidents such as the Suez Canal war and Abdel Nasser's victories promoted further the established idea of the possibility for the oppressed to defeat their oppressors and the poor to defeat the rich since any rich person believes that his wealth is not enough while any poor person feels that he is oppressed. All this contributed to transform ordinary individuals into politicized persons whose political ideas dealt with generalities and emotions instead of dealing

with realities. As a result, demonstrators took to the streets in all the Arab world and some of the Islamic world, overcoming any other political and even social trend. Even when the Moslem Brotherhood Movement was at its peak in Egypt, Abdel Nasser was able to crush it and reduce its popularity. Its leaders took refuge outside Egypt and decided to keep a low profile until they started reorganizing again and until the mistakes of the Egyptian revolution started to be known and also when totally warring political trends started to ally against Nasserism. The events of 1956 were a kind of distraction since we took to the streets and started to chant anti-British slogans and boycotted English lessons. We were acting on our emotions, forgetting that we might fail at the end of the year. The Britons must have felt that such incidents could cause them problems and acted to close down all sports and cultural Clubs, arguing that sports and cultural Clubs should not deal with politics. The British legal argument was in reality a political one, since emotionally motivated people marched in these demonstrations, but the organizers of the demonstrations were not emotionally motivated, on the contrary, they were politically motivated. Authors, politicians and critics and the general trend prevailing since the days of Sabah the First and Mubarak Al-Sabah were looking forward to Education and Shura, and this same trend was the driving force behind the changes that happened afterwards.

Hamad: I can say then that the elections of the Founding Council were the direct result of the Kuwaitis' experience of life and the principle of Shura practiced by the people?

Shaykh Salem: It was based on both; elders and followers of Mubarak Al Kabeer felt it should be Shura, and the intelligent elite argued that it should accompany scientific development and progress.

Q 6. After the election of the first Kuwaiti national Assembly, political trends such as the Nationalist Group and the pro-regime Bedouin families and others emerged and started a parliamentary political game of right and wrong for 16 years, until 1976, when the Council was dissolved. Then, you were Minister of Social Affairs. In your opinion, what were the reasons behind the dissolution of this Council?

A 6. Before answering your question, I would like to point out that you classified the Bedouins as a pro-ruling segment of society, but in fact.....

Hamad: I based my classification on the claims of other political groups and not on my own judgment.

Shaykh Salem: This is wrong and I know it from my personal experience, because the National Assemblies I attended as a member of the Government grouped people representing all segments of Kuwait's society: Sunnas, Shiites, Bedouins. Some of them were pro-ruler, based on their personal convictions while other were opponents, not due to their conviction put rather due to the allegiance and commitment they had for their political ideas. Here lies the difference. Since all were convinced that the Sabah family was the guarantor of Kuwait's security and stability, a matter proved by time from the days of Sabah the First to the days of Jaber Al-Ahmad during the Iraqi Aggression against Kuwait, as I said before, many figures and groups supported the government, since they believed that it constituted a guarantee for the security of Kuwait, while others opposed it due to their political beliefs and not because they considered that the Sabah family was not able to protect Kuwait and safeguard its security and safety.

As to the Dissolution of the 1976 Council, I think it was the outcome of foreign and local political factors and

unfortunately, the direct result of the lack of harmony between the Executive and Legislative authorities over several issues, especially foreign policy which affected internal policy to a large extent, such as the bombs placed in public cafes. They were all reflections of what was going on inside the National Assembly, and the speeches made on the suspension of some of the Constitution's Articles were clear and temporary because the ruler at the time, the late Shaykh Sabah Al-Salem, asserted that re-elections would take place four years later.

I even recall that we discussed the issue of re-elections day and night and everywhere inside the parliament and during cabinet sessions. Political conditions at the time required the adjournment of the elections, such as the Iran-Iraq war and other issues. Despite all these factors, H.H. the Amir Shaykh Jaber and H.H. the Crown Prince and Prime Minister Shaykh Saad were clear with respect to the need to honor the pledge of the Sabah family and Sabah Al-Salem and hold the elections on time, as promised, a commitment of a political nature, since it proved that the Leader or the Amir always honored his word. The elections were accordingly held on time in 1981.

Hamad: Your Excellency, with respect to the dissolution of the '76 Council, you said the reasons were political at the time. What do you mean by political at the time? Were they internal or external reasons due to Iranian influence and ambitions at the time?

Shaykh Salem: The reasons in general were external, putting pressure on the political trends and groups inside Kuwait and thus those who represented them inside the National Assembly. An example was the discussion by the National Assembly of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) summit decisions to extend financial assistance to some Arab countries. At the time, some members wanted

to increase the shares of some Arab countries at the expense of other Arabs, thereby wishing to change a matter strictly guided by Kuwait's interests and not by the influence foreign countries have on the political parties the MP's represented. This situation created a kind of divergence between the National Assembly as the Legislative body and the Government as the Executive body and was one of the factors leading to the dissolution of the Parliament.

Q 7. After the reinstatement of parliamentary life in 1981, it is said that the elected Assembly was not a fractional one. This Assembly stayed in office for four years, before being succeeded by the 1985 Assembly, which they say was very active in the field of legislation and caused clashes with the government on several occasions, which resulted in its dissolution in 1986, also a period during which you were a minister. What is your comment on this?

A 7. First I would like to underline that the use of expressions that increase tension is unnecessary. Who said that the Council should make trouble in order to increase its strength? Some realities should be made clear to the public; a trouble-making Council has two options: either dissolving itself directly or indirectly or dissolving the government. In such cases, who would be the winner? Is it the nation? Is it the Economy? or Is it the country's security? Well I think the answer is none of these, because words and expressions of that nature exaggerate things. The aim behind having a National Assembly is to have a monitoring body and a legislative body. It should legislate laws aimed at serving the highest interests of the country, citizens and the nation's security. As to its monitoring duties, the National Assembly should employ an accurate, clear and as you have said, sincere supervision. However, this monitoring should never

exceed the limits of its original purpose. When things reach this far, a clash between the authorities occurs, and a clash of this kind can never serve the highest interests of the nation. For instance, the National Assembly's interference in the country's Economic affairs should only be from a legal and a pragmatic point of view. When it starts interfering in Economic affairs, this interference affects Kuwait's economic credibility abroad, a credibility often hard to rebuild. Monitoring is one of the duties of the National Assembly, but monitoring should never turn into interference and so, what happened to the 1976 Council happened to the 1986 Council for exactly the same local, regional and international reasons.

Q 8. How do you view the claims of some 1985 Parliament Groups who allege to having employed intensive efforts to restore parliamentary life in 1989 and 1990 but in vain, since the government had established a Consultative National Council instead of the Constitutional National Assembly?

A 8. First of all, the Kuwaiti Constitution did not close the door to any Consultative or other Council. It stipulated the presence of an elected National Assembly, but did not ban the presence of other Councils, such as the elected Municipal Council which was not even mentioned by the Constitution. But if we return to the Mubarak Shura principle and to the spirit of the Constitution, it is necessary to have one or more Consultative bodies should the need arise and should it be deemed necessary to have a third opinion. When the Government and the National Assembly diverge over an issue, it is important and healthy to have a third opinion to set the balance straight for one side. This third opinion, which could be manifested by a Shura Council, would have the final say. This Shura Council could be elected or appointed or even both at the same time. The important

issue is its presence and its representation of both elected and appointed people in order to guarantee a continuity of issues. I personally believe that this would lay the foundations of Democracy and further promote its future. When we have a conflict between the government, which assumes real and executive powers, and the Assembly, which assumes legislative powers, it is healthy to have a third party representing both elected and appointed people to have the final say over the topic of dispute instead of having to resort to the Courts. The Consultative National Council was the outcome of a similar idea and it respected legislative, constitutional and religious laws. It also had political, economic and social aspects, since its presence was aimed at saving the country from a certain situation which was feeding on the influence and propaganda of foreign powers.

Actually, the National Council was intended to set the record straight and to put an end to a controversy between the Legislative and Executive authorities since an article of the Constitution allowed the Assembly and the Amir to review and amend the Constitution, in view of the fact that the Constitution was man-made and its application and convenience could be limited to a certain period of time, without being valid for another. Not only the Constitution, but also all other applicable laws should be re-evaluated every now and then in a comprehensive way in order to keep up with the development and progress of mankind.

The National Council aimed at reviewing these laws and procedures at a time when change and re-organization were sought by all parties. It was formed to complete these political, legislative and legal tasks.

As I said before, the situation was not ideal at the time and our colleagues on the National Council were about to fall into the same trap and get overwhelmed by

the daily problems of the state instead of re-evaluating the political, legal and legislative situation in the country. Each period of time should be given the contemplation and attention it deserves and this is the major role of the National Council at this period of time.

Hamad: It is true that the invasion changed many aspects of the National Council, but I have a question concerning the Constitution Amendment Committee. As Your Excellency has said, the National Council aimed at evaluating the future, and the authorities wanted the majority-elected and partially-appointed Council to evaluate parliamentary life in Kuwait. In the year 1976, and after the dissolution of the National Assembly, an Amiri Decree ordered the formation of a Constitution Amendment Committee, which included representatives of all major parties and political groups. How do you view the contradiction in the same persons who accepted the Constitution Amendment Committee and refused the National Council as a Consultative Council, which, as you have said, was in harmony with legislative, constitutional and religious laws?

Shaykh Salem: These particular issues have a dual aspect: the Constitution Amendment Committee and the fact that some of the parties that did not favor the amendment of the Constitution, participated in the Committee.

Hamad: On the contrary, they supported the amendments and joined the Committee only after being informed of its aims and purposes and approving them at the time (1976), such as Dr. Hayati and Ayash Al-Nazer.

Shaykh Salem: We do not want to mention names. The first idea is the Constitution Amendment Committee and the second is the position of political powers who were against the amendment of the Constitution but accepted to join the Committee.

Hamad: And these same powers rejected the National Council and accused the Authorities of deceiving them... Is this a contradictory position and how do you view this, as one of the decision-makers at the time?

Shaykh Salem: Let me tell you that I am analyzing things as much as you are. You are conducting research and I am analyzing facts. First of all, the timing of the Constitutional Amendment Committee was not a good one. The idea was excellent but the timing could have been better. Why? Because the Committee should have grouped legal and political experts. The appointment or the invitation of those who participated or even refused to participate reflected the adherence of the Sabah family to the principles of Freedom and Democracy, meaning that the authorities knew that some invited people were against the idea but insisted on inviting them to express their points of view. Even the opinion of the opposition should be represented and the Committee should group all political trends so that the final decision would be the better. This also reflected the government's keenness on representing all political opinions and promoting the principles of Democracy and Freedom. This is the first section. As to why these colleagues participated in the Committee, I believe they participated because they wanted to know what was happening; they wanted to destroy it from the inside and prove their presence as opposition. They wanted to stay posted, to obstruct the Committee's work as much as possible and to report to their masses and leadership on their success in this. But in the end, democracy and freedom were served.

Hamad: Frankly, I would like to say that with the provision of such documentation, I would rather say that a person with a certain belief should be totally convinced of it. I agree with you that the National Council was based on correct constitutional, legal and religious points of view while the Constitution Amendment Committee was

not. Some parties participated in the Committee and rejected the Council. This contradiction is due, I believe, to ideological differences among political groups more than anything else and this is what I was aiming at.

Q 9. What is your comment on the fact that more than 10 Political Groups emerged after the liberation of Kuwait? Do you think these groups freely prosecute their activities? If so, why is it then that they remain unofficial?

A 9. I personally believe in the inevitability of having official groups or parties if you wish to call them so because development goes in this direction. And if so, why don't we take the initiative and set the rules and regulations for these political parties or groups. This is bound to happen sooner or later, and I personally believe in this type of development.

The current development is a *De Facto* one. religious, political and ethnic groups are acting in this direction; so why should I leave these groups to act as they please because of the absence of regulations and laws. It is better to legalize the activities of two or three political parties, whose programs are free of sectarianism and social discrimination and serve best the higher interests of Kuwait.

We as a Kuwaiti regime, a family, a government and scholars, are keen promoters of the interests of the country and should act to safeguard the social segments from ethnic and sectarian groups, which nowadays openly nominate themselves and equally lose in the elections due to their open nomination. This proves that Kuwaitis have not totally digested the idea of political parties. I myself advocate it in the future - a certain candidate may win in one constituency while his direct ally loses in the other, not because this region supports the political trend the winning candidate represents but

rather because of personal connections, which are deeply rooted among Kuwaitis. I knew someone who voted for two opposed candidates and when asked about the reason behind his rather contradictory choices, his answer was that he voted for one patriotic candidate who was known for his love for Kuwait and he voted for the second candidate whose interesting political programs he said should be encouraged.

It is true that some segments of Kuwaiti society are calling for legalizing political parties but society in general is not yet ready for a partlssan system. Nevertheless, I emphasize that I personally advocate the legalization of these parties.

Hamad: As you know, the Constitution stipulates the formation of political parties and unions in Kuwait through legislation, meaning that the National Assembly should issue legislation in this regard. This means that the Constitution legitimizes the presence of political parties and groups.

Q 10. It is said that the authorities employed efforts to form a pro-government group or party, but this group was not successful in the Kuwaiti political arena, is this true?

A 10. The Authorities always have the upper hand and those in power can impose their will either by force or by conviction, by tempting or by terrorizing. If the authorities were planning such an action and it failed, this signals the presence of a certain disorder. The authorities did not act in this direction. If they had, believe me, they would have had what they wanted.

This is the information I have and this is what I know, whether I am acting from within or from outside.

We never discussed the possibility of forming a pro-governmental group because by doing so, the authorities' neutrality comes to an end and they become part of the conflict; this should not happen. I assert that the authorities and the Sabah family are above all this and would never act in this direction.

Q 11. Since we have tackled the issue of political groups and since you are in favor of legalizing political parties, a matter we highly appreciate since it implies that the rulers are keen on modernizing the political system. However, some say that the government turns a blind eye on political groups because it concludes political deals with them after each poll, a matter they say is reflected by the appointments following each election. What are your comments on these allegations?

A 11. Political and popular analysis are always based on information. When this information is wrong, the analysis is wrong and when this information is right, the analysis could be right. What is said to the effect that the authorities or the government concludes under the table deals with some groups is totally unfounded because H.H. the Amir and H.H. the Crown Prince always consult previous National Assembly Speakers with respect to the nomination of ministers. H.H. the Crown Prince also consults previous ministers and people he deems wise before taking any decision in this regard. Nominations thereto are based on seniority and competence, but coincidence also plays a big role with respect to the political inclinations of these people. This is why our Diwania are open during such periods, the Diwania of H.H. the Crown Prince and Prime Minister Shaykh Saad, the Diwania of First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah Al-Ahmad, my Diwania which you regularly visit yourself and see how open it is for people and representatives of all political trends.

When I hear a good argument or when I am convinced of a certain candidate, I nominate him regardless of whether he prays or not. What I care about is to what extent he can serve Kuwait. The government should be neutral in all terms and should deal with the National Assembly as a whole, meaning that the government should not reject a draft law from the National Assembly because it was proposed by the Left or by the Right, it should rather view its benefit for Kuwait. Yesterday, Dr. Ahmad Al-Rubei was asked on TV about the fact that he is an elected minister, meaning that he is also a Member of Parliament. He replied that he was shouldering his responsibilities as a minister and not as a Member of Parliament. I personally appreciated what minister Rubei said; if I were a Parliament Member, I might say things different from what I would say or do if I were a minister, because we should know the difference between assuming governmental responsibilities and dealing with all segments of society. Furthermore, the presence of a group of employees who have climbed the employment scale and have reached a certain position at a certain period of time is not a phenomenon. Also, some groups might know a certain figure more than another and therefore nominate him at the expense of other groups. I personally adopted this option when I was in office: I never looked at the person's political orientation but rather looked at his qualifications. Is he good for the job? and how would I know that?

Q 12. A few minutes ago you expressed support for the idea of legalizing political parties or groups. But in fact, we do have political groups in Kuwait and as we all know, some of them, such as the Islamic Constitutional Movement, has a Secretary General, who in the case of the Islamic Constitutional Movement is Jassem Mehalhal Al-Yasseen, who also represents the Movement as a political group. It is true that the Islamic Constitutional

Movement published its charter in newspapers during the elections, but what I am driving at is that people are saying that the authorities know about these groups and secretly support them. Today, in the National Assembly , Islamists have the majority if we count the Islamic Constitutional Movement, the Popular Islamic Group and the Islamic National Alliance together. Another example is that Mehalhal Al-Yasseen is also the head of the Higher Authority for Charitable Societies which is directly financed and supported by the state. Doesn't all this form a contradiction between the rule's neutrality and the exploitation of public jobs? These in fact are some of the comments average people are making and comments by other political groups such as the parliamentary Democratic Forum.

A 12. First of all you have mentioned two conflicting groups whose aim is to criticize each other, and this is a virtue we have acquired as Kuwaitis since the Constitution advocates freedom of expression. The fact is that we, as government, are aware of what you have mentioned, but is Shaykh Mehalhal Al-Yasseen acting against the interests and security of Kuwait? If so, he should be stopped and questioned, and the Kuwaiti people should stop extending donations to his Societies. But as far as I know, he and his Movement are serving and helping Moslems abroad, they are campaigning for Islam which I believe should be re-taught to a large section of society and to many Moslems abroad who do not understand Arabic and understand Islam as simple belief in God.

For instance, when we were in Beijing, we went to a mosque for the Friday prayer and to our surprise, the prayer was restricted to the act of worship itself and did not observe the accompanying rituals. Also in Japan, I met a Japanese Moslem who spoke Arabic fluently and he told me that he prays five times a day but all together at

night since he can not pray at work. What I mean is that teaching the true values and rituals of Islam, advocating good values and giving good examples to follow, in addition to building hospitals or schools where sciences and other materials could be taught along with Arabic, is an important service since it allows us to have future Moslem scientists and gives a good impression of Islam.

Islamic groups should therefore focus on this point and know that building a mosque is very important but that priority should be given to what serves Islam best.

To get back to your question, if these groups are serving Kuwait and are striving to spread Islam and help Moslems, I would surely allow them to keep their work and support their plans.

Hamad: I would like to express my highest appreciation for this documented interview Your Excellency has accorded me and pray God Almighty to help you and guide your steps.

Shaykh Salem: I hope some of the topics we have discussed bring answers to your questions and help you in your Ph.D. research on Kuwait's political system, and I look forward to reading your comments and other interviews you are planning to conduct. God bless you my son.

INTERVIEW WITH MR. SULAIMAN MOHAMMAD AL- MAKAMES

In our series of political interviews, we met Mr. Sulaiman Mohammad Al-Makames on Saturday December 11, 1994. Mr. Makames is a prominent political activist. He worked at the Ministry of Planning before turning to business and a political career. He played an important role in efforts at rapprochement between various Kuwaiti political trends and, in the post-liberation era, he crowned his work with the formation of a political group he named the "National Unity Group - The Land". The nucleus of this group was established before the 1992 elections, when it nominated one of its members for the elections. Mr. Sulaiman Al-Makames is the group's Secretary General.

Q : Mr. Sulaiman, I would like to start by asking about your opinion of the birth of the state of Kuwait 300 years ago. In your opinion, was it a democratic birth through the selection of the Sabah family as the ruling clan or was it a *De Facto* birth imposed on those who resided in Kuwait at the time?

A : I believe it was a democratic birth.

Q : How?

A : Based on what our ancestors have passed to us and I would like to indicate that it is not very important whether this information is documented or not, because verbal history is also reliable when it comes to relatively short periods of time, such as the information passed on by our parents and grandparents in my opinion, I think the information is true, because otherwise, contrary tales

would have survived and would have been circulated as well.

Q : Some political groups say in their publications that the birth was democratic for the Sabah family alone, meaning that the Sabah family had the opportunity to select a ruler among them and they selected Sabah the First, while other residents of Kuwait had to accept the fact that the Sabah held the reins of power.

Many political groups and trends emerged later and I wish you would comment on each one of them, those that emerged directly after the rule of Mubarak Al-Kabeer, in other terms in the second half of the 30's:

1. The Patriotic Group
2. The Arab Nationalist Movement
3. The Arab Socialist Baath party
4. The Kuwaiti Democratic Group
5. The Moslem Brotherhood Group
6. The Popular Revolutionary Movement
7. Nationalist Group
8. The Movement of Kuwaiti Progressive Democrats.
9. The Kuwaiti Democratic People's Party.
10. The People's Union Party.
11. The Democratic Labor Party.

Were these parties an outcry for a larger margin of freedom following the pressures and frustration resulting from a totalitarian rule, as some might say? Or were they a normal reaction to international cultural and scientific development? Or were they simply a kind of recreation ground allowed and approved by the rulers themselves?

A : I believe the formation of some of the parties was an outcry for additional freedoms while others were simply an answer to call for development in a swiftly changing and growing environment.

Q : In the last section of my question, I asked whether the parties were a kind of a recreation ground the ruler gave to the people?

A : If they constituted a recreation ground, they would have been supported by government laws and regulations such as the law on societies or the law on political parties allowing them to operate legally. Nowadays, groups are named and known but have no official status. If the government or the ruler wishes to give these parties an official status, they can easily legislate a special law in this respect legalizing the work and actions of political parties or groups.

Q : Do you think that a legislation regulating the work and activities of parties and political groups is imminent?

A : Political parties are necessary for a natural function of the National Assembly. When a citizen wants to elect someone, he would then elect him on the basis of the political program his party offers. Right now, the Parliament is not functioning as it should because of the lack of political programs. In all developed nations, the presence of political parties is indispensable for a normal parliamentary life. Parties launch political programs and citizens choose among them, so that when something goes wrong, the program or the party itself is challenged, not the individuals who represent it.

Q : In your opinion, who is responsible for the delay in passing such legislation? Bearing in mind that the Constitution stipulates legislation regulating and legalizing the work of political parties, groups and societies; why are we exercising incomplete parliamentary life, as you have said, despite the fact that we have had an elected parliament since 1960?

A : In my personal opinion, there is no one to take the blame, but rather conflicting opinions. Two contradicting opinions are now prevailing in Kuwait, the first believing that we do not need political parties for the time being and that the present parliament can fulfill its tasks without political parties. The second opinion however says that without political parties, the parliamentary experience will fail. I personally believe that if the majority wants political parties then legislation in this regard should be passed.

Q : I would like to ask a question and frankly comment on what you just said. Most of our unofficial political groups are represented in the National Assembly of 1992. The problem is that no one of these groups presented a draft law aimed at legalizing political parties. It is true that the issue is still debated but no one has even raised it in an official and constitutional way. What are the reasons for this abstention in your opinion? And what are the reasons that have prevented political groups or the government from coming out with an initiative in this regard?

A : I think it is not time yet for such a project, because if there had ever been a popular demand for the legalisation of political parties or even if the people had said that they wanted a National Assembly with a defined program, the Members of Parliament and the government would have moved in this direction.

The fact is that the majority of the people want a National Assembly with services, a case true in most of Kuwait's regions. This is what I believe and I want this opinion to get to the government: in our particular case, the government should take the initiative, following the example set by late Abdallah Al-Salem (the father of the Constitution) who initiated the parliament as a system long before anyone else did or even called for it. Abdallah

Al-Salem launched the initiative and set an example to follow for our current system because it would be much better for everyone if the government legalized political parties.

Q : Why better?

A : I think the presence of political parties would help fight sectarianism and the tribal system. A strong political party would then be the one with a strong political program together with openness. When political parties are publicly operating, then their figures, media and programs are circulated among the people. Parties with weak political programs would automatically fail and if by any chance they won in one round, they would definitely fail in the second. The presence of parties would also help the government, since a partial sharing of power with political parties reduces confrontation. The presence of parties will also be helpful for Kuwaitis since it would enlighten them on political realities. Not to forget that some political groups enter the elections without a specific or a declared political program.

Q : What are the reasons that led to the formation of the National Unity Group - The Land and those that led to its later suspension?

A : During the invasion, our national unity was manifested in its best forms. Kuwaitis, especially those under occupation, were equal and united during the days of crisis. This beautiful picture affected us but when we returned in the post-liberation era, we were upset by the weakness this national unity amounted to and the people's concern with their own problems. We simply tried to revive this beautiful picture of unity through a group we named the "National Unity Group - The Land" because we knew that other groups were also active in this regard but we wanted to fight sectarianism, classes

and tribal discrimination or anything that might affect our National Unity.

Q : I recall that during the legislative election of 1992, one of your colleagues was nominated in Bayan neighborhood?

A : Meshref, Bayan and Hawalli as part of the Eighth Constituency and the candidate was Yussef Al-Tarrah. Actually the nomination of our colleague Yussef aimed at making our presence felt by the people and did not aim at winning the election. But we were surprised in the Eighth Constituency by the election of Al-Sayed Al-Galaf and Ismail Al-Shatti, which happened only because one was Sunna and the other Shiite. What happened there affected National Unity and established a surprisingly bitter reality.

In fact, we realized that it wasn't time yet to try to promote national unity, but at the same time we wanted to be known to the public and well prepared so that whenever official legislation on political parties was passed, we would be ready and known by the public.

Also, it is not necessary that our activities be carried within the framework of a group, we can act publicly. For instance, we are now exercising efforts to promote national unity in one way or another in the eighth constituency.

Q : Do you think that the Kuwaiti Political System and Kuwaiti Political Groups operate within the framework of the ruler's political game?

A : As I said before, there won't be any political game without the presence of legislation on political parties. Anything lacking supporting legislation would be an underground activity and would cause problems. The presence of legislation on political parties would mean

the presence of a program. Both the government and the parties would then have to have defined political programs. The government can also have its own party if it is successful. This is when the real political game begins and competition among programs is observed.

I assure you that no political game would be observed without such a legislation and such political programs.

The current elections, for instance, promote sectarianism, differences among classes and tribal allegiance. Where is the political game here? Do the rules of the game stipulate that a successful candidate is the one who rejects everything or is he the one who accepts everything? What could he accept or what could he refuse as long as there is no program to refuse or accept? What if I am an independent candidate? But if we have a political program, the path to follow would be clear and when anyone wanted to judge it, he would do so based on this program which is also the program of the party. This is what happens in the United States of America and elsewhere in the modern world. Why do we fear this change so much. Some modern states such as Israel have a multi-party system.

Q : According to what I have heard from many sides and independent sources, there is a belief that political parties try to feed on sectarianism, classes and tribal differences. Some also feed on a combination of tribal origins and political allegiances.

Many are those who speak this language and want the situation to remain as it is because it facilitates peripheral agreements between the government and political groups, such as the rise of Arab Nationalism in the 60's and 70's, which was countered then by the government's support of Islamic groups.

Nowadays, the government has started to support Liberals and old Arab Nationalist groups to counter the expansion of Islamic groups. It is also said that political groups want the situation to stay as it is and prefer to stay illegal instead of becoming political parties with defined responsibilities. What do think of those who use these groups? The case of many candidates I know who have apparently joined political groups in order to be known but their real political life and their success in legislative elections have totally depended on their tribal origins?

A : Are you saying that political groups have a hand in the lingering situation we are facing?

Q : Let's say they want it to stay unchanged.

A : So that it continues to serve their interests!

Q : This means that whenever they reach the National Assembly, they start bargaining with the government. You raised an important point by saying that with the presence of political programs, candidates would be elected on the basis of these programs and their personal qualifications, instead of being elected on the basis of their tribal origins or sectarian beliefs.

This means that what we are facing today is due to the absence of a defined political game, which is also due to the absence of legal political parties and the presence of only shallow political groups.

A : Does the political game dictate the destruction of the country? I don't think so because these groups will also disintegrate and cause the disintegration of the country. When the political game is played as it should be, it reflects positively on the growth of the country and encourages hone'st competition. Whereas what is happening today is destructive.

Q: For instance, MP Mubarak Al-Dweila represents the Islamic Movement but was able to win in the elections only due to the support of his tribe (Al-Rashaied). This is only an example and I mentioned MP Al-Dweila's name only because he is a known figure.

This is what people say: they want the situation to stay as it is, without defined electoral programs.

A : You are suggesting political parties, right? A party means that you have the free will to either join it or not, but if you want to join a party you also have to meet certain criteria or else you won't be accepted. This, in my opinion, destroys both the political game and national unity.

Q : Thank you for your wise answers.

A : I wish you all the best.

Q : Allow me to thank you and ask God Almighty that what we have discussed today may help Kuwaiti and other researchers.

INTERVIEW WITH MR. AHMAD ADBUL AZIZ AL SAADOUN

Continuing our political interviews, today the 30th of October, 1995, we meet Mr. Ahmad Abdel Aziz Al-Saadoun, the Speaker of Kuwait's National Assembly (Parliament) and a well known and influential political figure in Kuwait whose efforts to lay the basis of Democracy in Kuwait during the 1976 and 1985 dissolutions of Parliament are beyond dispute. Mr. Al-Saadoun also played a major role in securing the return of legislative life in Kuwait.

Q 1. How do you evaluate the democratic experience in Kuwait and in your opinion, have we reached a comprehensive and modern democracy?

A 1. I would like to start by thanking you and expressing my content for the opportunity availed to me to humbly contribute to your Ph.D. research, which I hope will be successful and beneficial. As to the evaluation of democracy, I do not want to go way back in time, but with respect to the recent condition of democracy, there is no doubt it developed, laid its basis and was observed in the Constitution of 1962, which was the direct result of constant and deeply rooted popular contributions since the formation of the Consultative Council of 1921.

The 1938 Constitution was modest with respect to its wording but good with respect to its content. But the 1962 Constitution was based on modern Constitutions and was established by an elected Founding Council which in turn formed a Constitution Committee, containing experts such as the late Dr. Othman Khalil Othman, who was one of the leading Constitutional experts in the Arab World. This Committee also viewed

and evaluated several Constitutions of neighboring nations and countries whose political systems are similar to ours, such as the Constitution of Belgium, the Libyan Constitution, the Iraqi Constitution (Iraq at the time was ruled by a monarchy), and finally the Egyptian Royal Constitution which was applied before the 1952 revolution in Egypt.

As a result, we find that the Kuwaiti Constitution is largely based on the Egyptian Constitution of 1932, some parts are even identical copies to which minor amendments were introduced. The Constitutional Committee worked during the period defined by the Founding Council, which in turn finalized the Constitution in 1962, complying thereby with the one-year time frame it had to observe.

The Kuwaiti Constitution observed the characteristics and new conditions in Kuwait as a nation and the fact that changes occurring since the formulation of 1938 Constitution were many. It was obvious that two different Political trends were competing at the time, the first advocating a Presidential System Constitution and the second advocating a Parliamentary System Constitution. The Presidential system appeared to be alien to Kuwait's nature and characteristics, as was the Parliamentary system, which stipulates that the members of the Cabinet are directly selected from the elected parliament, thereby preventing the selection of members from the ruling family, since they in turn, according to the Constitution, do not have the right to nominate themselves for Parliamentary elections.

This issue is clearly explained in the Constitution's Explanatory Memorandum, which also reflects the balance the Constitution draws between a Complete Parliamentary System as demanded by many members of the Constitution Founding Council and the political nature and characteristics of Kuwait.

The Constitution stipulated a Parliamentary system while taking into consideration Kuwait's characteristics with respect to the formation of the government.

Despite the fact that the Constitution was adopted and ratified by the late H.H. Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem (known also as the Father of the Constitution), normal parliamentary life, as wished by many, was not observed in the year 1967, when elections were rigged and many candidates who had won the elections resigned directly afterwards in protest at the falsifications.

In my opinion, this was the first blow to the Kuwaiti Constitution and the first obstacle to Constitutional and Parliamentary life in Kuwait. When the third legislative elections were held, their credibility was beyond doubt, but they did not last, while in the fourth legislative chapter of 1975, parliamentary life was suspended by an unconstitutional Amiri decree aimed at amending the Constitution.

Parliamentary life was scheduled to resume in four years, after a specially appointed Committee amended the Constitution; all these procedures were unconstitutional.

During the four years between August 29, 1976 and the new legislative elections of 1981, a Specialized Committee was appointed to amend the Constitution. Even the structure of the Committee was similar to the National Assembly with respect to its representation of tribal and sectarian figures and symbols representing the various segments of Kuwaiti society.

Despite the fact that the Committee was appointed and its formation was unconstitutional, some of its members rejected unconstitutional measures and amendments, such as holding a referendum or introducing amendments to the National Assembly's work

and duties. When the 1981 National Assembly was elected, the proposed amendments were not submitted to the National Assembly as stipulated by the Amiri Decree to amend the Constitution, they were replaced by new proposals in order to overcome the gaps in the previous one's, mainly resulting from the lack of harmony between the Committee and the government.

Nevertheless, I believe that the proposed amendments aimed at overcoming and grounding the Constitutional rights of the Legislative Authority and transforming the National Assembly from an effective and Constitutionally-strong Council to a merely consultative body with no real powers. The proposed amendments, however, were strongly countered by both the Kuwaiti people, the Assembly and all active groups and institutions in Kuwait.

As a result, the Government - despite obtaining the required majority to pass the amendments - withdrew the amendments in 1982 after realizing that final ratification of the amendments was practically impossible.

The Fifth Legislative Chapter completed its Constitutional term but during the Sixth Legislative Chapter, Parliamentary life was suspended once again for the same reasons mentioned in the suspension order of 1986; this, if valid, should have resulted in the dissolution of Parliament according to Article 107 of the Constitution before holding new Legislative elections in order to allow Kuwaitis to express their point of view with respect to the continuity of Parliamentary life.

When parliamentary life was suspended in 1986, the suspension decree did not specify a date for the resumption of legislative activities - yet another violation of the Constitution . But when parliamentary life was suspended in 1986, the popular reaction was different. In 1976, when the parliament was suspended, the decision

was countered by protests and condemnation of the temporary suspension. People sent letters in this respect to the officials concerned and especially H.H. the Amir. In 1986, it was different; opposition to the suspension was mainly made by a group of 30 members of the parliament who continued their weekly sessions and meetings to discuss the political situation. This same group also repeatedly urged the Amir to restore Parliamentary life and the rule of the Constitution.

A major change was also the increasing popular demand for the restoration of parliamentary life by asking "Until when will these meetings continue and what will be our role in them?" The answer was that citizens could play a major and Constitutional role according to Article 45 of the Constitution, which allows citizens to contact and urge the authorities and H.H. the Amir to restore Parliamentary life. Accordingly, a decision was made to sign a memo asking for the restoration of parliamentary life.

We were hoping for symbolic figures expressing sympathy with us in a way that would not exceed 50 voters in each of the 25 constituencies - to total some 1,500 to 2,500 signatories. To our surprise, more than 30,000 people signed the memo that we addressed to H.H. the Amir asking for the restoration of Parliamentary life.

Then, we started feeling the responsibility and the weight of our actions and asked for increasing participation on the part of some notables who signed the memo with us. We decided to select a group of notables among those who had signed the memo, in such a way as to allow the representation of all segments of Kuwaiti society. A group which was called "the 45 group" was then selected and we started negotiations on the way the memo should be sent to H.H. the Amir. But when we realized that H.H. the Amir had rejected the principle of memorandum and petitions, we decided to inform the

people about the developments and the deadlock we had reached.

Then, we faced another problem, how could we inform the people that their memo of complaint was rejected? We had no access to the official state media channels, so we decided to communicate our message through gathering places or Diwania.

We started the first meeting on December 4, 1989 at the Diwania of Jassem Al-Qutami, and other meetings followed until the January 22, 1990 meeting at the Diwania of MP Abass Menawer, where some 32,000 to 35,000 citizens were gathered despite attempts by the authorities to seal off the Diwania - something that also happened at the Diwanias of MP Meshari Al-Anjari, MP Ahmad Al-Shreian and MP Faysal Al-Sane.

This popular movement sent a message to the Kuwaiti authorities that Kuwaitis were keen on the restoration of parliamentary life and the rule of the law and the Constitution.

As to the evaluation of the members of the National Assembly, it is viewed as an institution, not as a group of people, the majority of its members change after every legislative elections. This fact largely contributed to the Amir's decision to talk to the Assembly instead of confronting it. The talks, however, resulted in the call for elections to a National Council, a body that is not mentioned in the Constitution and which cannot look into the Constitution itself, due to its incompetence.

Nevertheless, the elections were held in an atmosphere of distrust and were boycotted in many constituencies despite the pressures the government exerted at the time, ranging from the mobilization of the Ministry of Information for media campaigns one month before the elections, to warnings given to some

individuals in some constituencies, and the Teachers' Society seminar which was attended by Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad, during which many remarks implying pressure were made.

Despite all the pressure the government employed, participation in the National Council elections dropped to 30% or 33% in most constituencies. The August 2, 1990 Iraqi aggression against Kuwait followed and after the liberation on February 26, 1991, things were back to normal through the restoration of Parliamentary life and the rule of the Constitution; this proves that our Constitution has no deficiencies in itself.

As to theories that the procedural laws of the Assembly should be revised, I think the issue should be dealt with through elections and debates. If I have elaborated on this specific period it is because I want to say that our democracy, which we cherish so much, did not come from nowhere and faced a lot of obstacles, from forging to suspension of assemblies, before imposing itself as a personal and characteristic Kuwaiti political experience.

In the post-liberation era, however, and after the elections of October 5, 1992 and the following first session of the National Assembly, democracy as we know it developed in a significant way in Kuwait and both the Legislative and Executive authorities gained experience in exercising their Constitutional rights without giving concessions and without wasting time in side disputes.

According to my own experience and after participating in the assemblies of 1975, 1981, 1985 and 1992, I believe that circumstances helped the National Assembly of 1992 with respect to the type of problems it had to face, such as the alleged embezzlement of Investments and Public Funds, the reasons behind the Iraqi aggression, aimed particularly at avoiding its

repetition and learning from the mistakes of the past rather than holding any party responsible for the invasion.

The National Assembly is also dealing with one of the most controversial issues the Kuwaiti Legislative body has ever faced: How to keep public funds under the monitoring of the Legislative Authority and thereby under the monitoring of the Kuwaiti people. For instance, in the Assembly of 1985, we wanted to know the real volume of Public Investments while in 1993, we passed a law aimed at protecting Public Funds which puts all investments under the indirect monitoring of the Audit Bureau and thereby under the monitoring of the Kuwaiti people, so that all have access to the real conditions of the invested funds.

Another major problem the National Assembly had to deal with was the issue of Hard Debts, which had lingered on since 1981. Regardless of my personal opinion on the solution the National Assembly adopted, it was able to put an end to the problem by adopting a series of comprehensive measures and solutions.

Finally, I hope we have learned from past mistakes, obstacles and difficulties, that democracy is our path to development and political success, since it gives the opportunity for every individual to express his views and opinion and allows a kind of collective decision-making mechanism through elections. Furthermore, I personally believe that democracy in Kuwait will maintain its steady development despite the difficulties it faced in its early stages.

Q 2. As a Speaker of the National Assembly, what is your opinion about the status of political groups in Kuwait and do you think this status should be changed?

A 2. First of all I have an old and personal approach towards political powers and political groups; I really think that no Democracy can develop without the legalization of political groups or any other name you wish to give to political entities.

It is simply impossible. The development of democracy is in fact a complement of political organization.

But to be frank, our experience in the Arab world is not encouraging with respect to political organization and the legalization of political parties. With no exception whatsoever, no Arab political party has stood by its words and lived up to the expectations of its people and its aspirations, despite the fact that many of them have used slogans attracting people and addressing their emotions. Experience however has proved that these slogans remain merely words and that when the party's officials reach power, they forget about these slogans and even act against them.

We have current and extremely various examples of parties that have reached power raising slogans of freedom, progressive ideas and nationalism, such as the Baath Arab Socialist Party experience in Iraq, where a supposedly one-party system respecting nationalistic slogans is being ruled by a single dictator. The party's slogans won the respect of the people and helped recruit partisans but the party at the same time proved incompetent and totalitarian in many ways, thus allowing Saddam Hussein and his entourage to monopolize power.

Another example is the Islamic Nationalist Front in Sudan, who, like the Baath party, hid behind Islamic slogans instead of nationalistic slogans. The (Hassan) Al-Turabi junta voiced the same slogans of freedom, development and social equality but when they reached

power none of them revolted for the sake of democracy, pluralism or social equality in Sudan.

These two examples, unfortunately, give a clear image of what a one-party show can lead to. I am not saying that this is a general case but I do believe that most parties -- In the Arab World -- tend to deprive and oppress any form of opposition whenever and no matter when they reach power.

I certainly hope and believe the situation would be better in Kuwait, not only because we do not have ideological trends, but also because we do not have political parties in the broad meaning of the world. What we have is rather a kind of political groups or gatherings. I also believe that our political ground is much more prepared for this political game of multi-party-system, considering the heritage of Diwania, which will oblige any political trend to communicate and interact with the community instead of hiding behind closed doors and false slogans.

It is true that some Diwania have represented single political trends at one time or another but the fact is that whenever you enter any Diwania nowadays, you come across people representing diverse and even contradictory political groups who, in accordance with the social laws regulating and guiding the Diwania legacy, tend to engage in open discussions, thus encouraging healthy debates and dialogue.

I strongly believe that Kuwait is prepared to deal with slogans raised by political parties and can easily select what is convenient for its nature and what is alien to its political experience. So political organization is welcomed in Kuwait, provided political parties act as they say and openly say what they have in mind in order to avoid the repetition of the disastrous examples we have seen occurring in Arab countries and elsewhere.

Q 3: In your opinion, is it the right time to pass legislation on political parties?

A 3: I think it is wrong to impose a law regulating the work of political parties. Let these groups develop and mature in a natural way so that citizens judge them and deem when they are ready and good enough to be joined and sincere to a point that earns them legislation to organize their work.

The Constitution itself does not ban the legalization of political parties, but in order to propose a draft law in this regard, we must make sure that this particular issue is of great interest to citizens and that the people are ready for such a change. What we are dealing with is parties wishing to recruit people from all segments of society based on a particular political and cultural trend. If the ground is not prepared for such a change and if the citizens are not able to judge whether these parties are acting according to the slogans they are raising, then such a proposal would be rejected by both the National Assembly and the people it represents.

Q 4: Do you think these Political Groups should be forced to distance themselves from sectarian and racist slogans and ideas in future legislation?

A 4: We cannot talk about a law dealing directly with sectarianism; this simply can't be. What we are talking about are political parties with defined ideologies which should be open for all segments of society regardless of their race and sect.

When we say political organization, we mean conventional political parties which tolerate all those who believe in their ideas and ideologies. In contrary cases,

political parties would then be a destructive factor in society.

Q 5. The reason behind my question is that as you know, seven major group are represented in the National Assembly with various theoretical and ideological trends, such as the Moslem Brotherhood, which was inspired by the teachings of the Egyptian Moslem Brotherhood party and which bases its ideology on religion and the Sunna. We also have the Cultural Group which became later the Islamic Popular Group and which comprises the Salafists, in addition to our colleagues who were among the Democratic Group and the Patriotic Group and who later formed the Democratic Forum.

What I see is various trends, including three Islamic trends. I agree with you that political parties help promote solidarity in society, even our Constitution grants different freedoms to Kuwaitis. But I think that the presence of political parties has not helped separate religion from the state. What is your opinion on that?

A 5. In fact I am not speaking about our current situation but rather about political organization as a key factor for the promotion of democracy, to be more precise, I was dealing with what should be. When we say political organization we mean established and theoretical political groups with defined and clear orientations. I start considering the possibilities of joining a party when I accept its program and discover that there are no sectarian or ethnic barriers preventing me from joining it.

In brief, we are not talking about what is now but rather about what should be. When we say political organization as a means to promote democracy we mean that no individual would be asked to give up his beliefs or

denounce his ethnic origins, because this is impossible, even if this particular individual wishes to do so. And this also applies to ideologies and beliefs.

If Kuwait is to organize its political life and legalize political parties -- something I do not see as imminent -- a clearly expressed clause of this legal bill should ban any ethnic or sectarian party; otherwise we would be helping the disintegration of Kuwaiti society by laying the foundations of negative aspects of our life which most people would not accept. I therefore believe that the individual has the right to keep his commitment to his sect and religion but when it comes to political activity, which is also a patriotic activity, he should rather aim at the well-being of society as such regardless of its social segments and with a comprehensive approach to the welfare of all.

Q 6. Do you think it is time to restore some of the Public Utilities Societies which were closed, such as the Cultural Society or the Independence Club?

A 6. There is no such thing as "it is time or it is not time yet". The right to form Public Utility Societies should not be revoked under any circumstances, as long as a certain group of people presents an application to form a Public Utility Society according to the Constitution and the relevant laws. The Kuwaiti Constitution grants every group of citizens, whose number should exceed a certain legal minimum, to apply for the formation of a Public Utility Society. And here I do not mean a specific society which was dissolved at a certain moment of time; I am rather talking about the rights of groups and societies in general.

In this regard, I do not think that the Government's decision to ban the formation of a Human Rights Committee in Kuwait is justified and I truly believe it

should be revised and that any application meeting the requirements set by the law should be accepted.

The Government and the Ministry of Social Affairs should not hesitate to grant any society the right it deserves and earns because I believe all societies are run by scholars and constitute a supplement to popular activities in Kuwait.

Q 7. Some of the persons I have met have insisted that some political groups "have concluded certain agreements between themselves to make it to the National Assembly but have not agreed on a framework for cooperation inside the Assembly itself." As a Speaker of the National Assembly who deals with all members, do you think harmony between independent Parliament Members and MP's representing political groups is the same as it used to be before the elections?

A 7. There is no doubt that the Parliamentary Group that included representatives of all political groups and trends inside Kuwait had a defined and common target at the time. These groups were united over the common objective of restoring the Constitution and the Parliament. Furthermore, the open discussions we used to have would witness heated debates between various trends. However, we all agreed on the need to restore the Constitution and parliamentary life, but unjustifiably we did not agree on other types of coordination once parliamentary life and the Constitution were restored. I don't want to talk about the reasons but the fact is that many political groups inside the Assembly know that some issues could have been agreed upon. It is true that certain differences would have remained no matter what we did about them, but certain achievements could have been reached while secondary issues could have been

left untackled. Unfortunately, this did not happen at the beginning, but all political groups know now that many issues could have been tackled, including major and important issues and all these groups were keen on commenting and expressing their views concerning all topics offered for discussion. This enabled them to voice their opinions in a similar way to what happens in absolute democracies, when the opposition has the right to voice its opinion even in cases when it loses its argument and is defeated in the voting.

What I am talking about is a comprehensive and continuous parliamentary life continually looking forward to additional and renewed achievements.

Q 8. What is your position with respect to the participation of women in political life?

A 8. After all the development that has taken place and after the participation of Kuwaiti women in the Kuwaiti Resistance against the Iraqi occupying forces, I think the Kuwaiti woman is educated and has the ability to judge and select. Nevertheless, when it comes to the legal and religious aspects of the matter, several opinions have to be taken into consideration.

The first says that women have the right to nominate themselves to Parliament and become members while the second says that women do not have the right to vote or to nominate themselves to the National Assembly, and a third says that women have the right to vote but do not have the right to nominate themselves to the National Assembly because they would be assuming public authority. I myself am in favor of granting women the right to vote because this would expand the number of voters and increase public representation, in addition to the fact

that women participate in academic, public utilities, Clubs and cooperative societies elections, so there is no real barrier preventing their participation in the election of the National Assembly.

As to the right of nomination, we should get the religious answer before giving our own opinion about it. Do not forget that even if the religious law approves it, social laws and traditions also have to be taken into consideration, because as I have said before, as long as political organization is not complete and political parties are not publicly operative, it would be difficult for a woman to present herself as an independent candidate. On what grounds would she address the people? The situation would be totally different and much easier if we had a definite political organization and women could nominate themselves through political parties. Then, it would be enough to go through the program of this party to decide and select.

If women were allowed to participate in the polls, it would take them only a few minutes to cast their votes and leave, but when it comes to nomination, candidates would have to communicate and deal with every voter in electoral campaigns, and this would have to be carried out within a social context we have to observe and respect.

Q 9. Finally, I would like to ask about your opinion on the separation of the title of Crown Prince and the Premiership?

A 9. I think that we are not entitled to deal with this issue since it is not mentioned or covered in any clause in the Constitution, thus, if we came to talk about separation, it would seem as though we were advocating separation as a necessity.

I personally think the issue comes within the authority and jurisdiction of H.H. the Amir, who, whenever the need arises, has the right to select a new Prime Minister without any Constitutional restrictions. H.H. the Amir would be exercising his Constitutional authority whether he selected the Crown Prince as Prime Minister or not. The only rule to observe is that concerning the details related to consultation with the Speaker of the National Assembly and leading lawmakers. In this respect, I personally consider that it is and a waste of time to raise the issue of the separation between the Premiership and the title of Crown Prince, since it is totally left to the judgment of H.H. the Amir.

The fact that the Crown Prince is selected as Prime Minister as become a tradition and a norm that has been observed and followed since the establishment of Kuwait's modern political heritage. Nevertheless, its continuity or suspension remain in the hands of H.H. the Amir.

Q 10. I raised this question because some political leaders view the separation from a political and not from a constitutional point of view. They also view it with respect to political relations between the National Assembly as a legislative body and the Council of Ministers as an Executive body, since the Crown Prince is the would-be Amir and this embarrasses the National Assembly and therefore limits its political maneuverability to a certain extent.

A 10. First I was not precise in my previous response but we should know why the Constitution stipulates that the Amir hold consultations with the head of parliamentary groups and other notables before designating a new Prime Minister. Every person has the right to name a competitive candidate for the Premiership and the Amir also has the superior right of having a

favorite candidate whom he sees as the Crown Prince. Those consulted by H.H. the Amir have the right to express their dissent from the fact that the Crown Prince is also the Prime Minister, the Amir might consider their demand or not. Furthermore, I have said before that the nomination of the Prime Minister, whether he be the Crown Prince or another candidate, remains one of the Constitutional prerogatives of H.H. the Amir alone.

Q 11. From a political standpoint, would you prefer a separation of the Premiership and the title of Crown Prince?

A 11. I would speak my political position when asked as a Speaker of the National Assembly.

Hamad: Allow me Mr. Al-Saadoun to thank you for your precious and beneficial contribution in this interview, which will be documented in the University of Glasgow for all future researchers in Political Science and the affairs of Kuwait. I seize the opportunity to express my respect and appreciation for your long record as an advocate of democracy and Constitutional life in Kuwait.

Ahmad: I thank you in turn and wish you all the best in your task and the Ph.D. you are preparing. I want to add that preserving democracy and Constitutional Life in Kuwait is the possibility of all Kuwaitis and if we have been able to achieve something in this regard, it is due to the support we have had from the Kuwaiti people. What I have done myself was a small and personal contribution to the efforts of a group of activists whose aim is to preserve democracy in our beloved country.

INTERVIEW WITH MR. ADBEL WAHAB MOHAMAD AL WAZZAN

We meet today the 30th of October, 1995, Abdel Wahab MoHamad Al-Wazzan, one of the effective Kuwaiti decision-makers in his capacity as a member of Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry and member of many Kuwaiti Committees, as well as of the Petroleum Higher Council. As he is a man sought for consultation on many decisions concerning the country, we have sought this meeting.

Q 1 - Mr. Abdel Wahab, we have a question concerning democracy in Kuwait. What is your assessment of democracy in Kuwait and do you believe that we have formed a full-fledged democratic system?

A 1 - We thank brother Hamad and the Professor for their attendance. I'm flattered that they seek to consul me. We aspire to consultations in a democratic state with institutions. In fact, consultations and freedom of expression are part of the nature of Kuwait. This is not new as far as the Kuwaiti people are concerned, as democracy has been implanted as a seed in their spirits since the era of Sabah I. It is true that democracy is occasionally marred by recessions and instability, and this is the case in Kuwait and other states of deep-rooted democracy. We aspire to a democracy that is indeed genuine. Moreover, we have to be aware that western democracies which conform to the character of western nations should be differentiated from democracy in Kuwait or the region because we have different style of life, habits and tradition. Additionally, there are several criteria concerning the democratic system in Kuwait and the Arab and Islamic worlds. The democracy which we

experience now is indeed fully affiliated with the Kuwaiti Constitution. We have to evaluate highly the role of the late Shaykh Abdallah Al-Salem who along with some other prominent figures documented the Constitution, because they laid the basic seed of organizing democratic action although the task was not organized and was based on consultation between the ruler and the ruled.

It is true that some previous Councils were formed such as the 1938 and the 1939 Councils, which were closed on the orders of the British High Commissioner, because their presence constituted a threat to British interests, and Kuwait at the time was under the trusteeship of Britain according to the agreement of 1899 between Mubarak Al-Kabeer and the British government. We as Kuwaitis were not able to accept any political activity outside the context of democracy and decided to carry on our activities through popular and cultural Forums which I remember Shaykh Abdallah Al-Jaber used to call "Our Forums".

At the time and within the same Forums, we had three political trends, one of which was related to the Egyptian party of Saad Zaghloul and the other to foreign Nationalist and Islamic political trends. Democracy in Kuwait sprung from its history and later from its Constitution, which protects both the people and the Kuwaiti ruling family. One of the members of the ruling family once said "we did not understand the Constitution and when we finally understood it, we realized it was to our benefit and that we should defend it in order to give each his real position according to the Constitution's laws."

Thereto, I think that democracy started to lay its foundation at the formation of Kuwait, as we know, more than 300 years ago.

As to whether Kuwait has successfully formed a full-fledged democratic system, I think that our democracy is relatively young. Moreover, 11 years of our 30-years-old democracy has passed in suspensions. We are newly embracing democracy, which requires long actions to lay its foundations in Kuwait before reaching its goals, especially since we have only accomplished some articles of the Kuwaiti Constitution and many others are still to be completed, while taking other issues into consideration, such as the questions of justice, equality, freedom of expression, freedom of the press and others.

There are some factors necessary in the democratic process and these factors should be taken into consideration. We have to resolve these matters on a scientific basis. In other words, we should not boast of democracy while it is confined to a section of society and is not expanded to all the other segments of society. Indeed, the basis of democracy was widened after sons of naturalized Kuwaitis were granted the right of voting and electing . This has taken place, instead of allowing only 80,000 citizens or less, according to a new regulation, the number of eligible voters has climbed to 124,000, expanding the basis of democracy and popular participation. Moreover, the foundation of public utilities or public welfare societies should be guaranteed by the Constitution. Such aspects were not seen in the democratic process. Furthermore, there are many persons who have not been granted Kuwaiti citizenship for political reasons. Democracy exists in Kuwait but it is largely non-existent in practice.

We aspire to the application of democracy and expanding its basis to realize our objective, that democracy should be in line with the text of the Constitution and the Explanatory Memorandum in full.

Q 2 - What is your opinion in regard to the status of political forces and do you believe that it is correct or not?

A 2 - All contemporary societies aspire to adopting the democratic process and pluralism. Kuwaiti parties and groups have existed in the country for a long time. Nationalistic, Islamic and Sectarian thoughts and the like exist in Kuwait and are being adopted by the groups that act in the domestic arena now. If the Constitutional Islamic movement represents reformists, the Islamic People's Grouping represents the Salafists, the National Coalition represents the Shiites, the Constitutional Grouping represents the merchants, the Democratic Free Party represents Nationalists, the Coalition of Parliamentarians represents the lawmakers of the 1985 Council and the Independent Movement represents itself.

Those groups which acted under one umbrella after liberation won seats in the National Assembly. Many of the legislators who occupy seats now became members of the Assembly with the assistance of these groups which acted together from the liberation to the polls. In the post-poll period, these political forces started to take independent courses because of the nature of each Coalition and not as a result of political ideologies or sound democratic objectives. Regrettably, the groups stopped cooperating, driven by greed in the elections for membership of the National Assembly and the Municipal Council. Each one wanted a portion of the pie. These political forces, regrettably, deviated from their aspired objective to maintain joint action and expand the basis of democracy beyond the elections for the National Assembly. I see now that political action has weakened since the parliamentary poll. Each political group has become weaker in one way or another, and the Executive Authority has started to undermine these groupings,

which have began to consider private interests as more important than public interests. The interests of the parties has become dominant over the public interest. They think that this is the way to ensure the interests of Kuwait and that those who have won the majority of the votes should reign. The political system of Kuwait is different from those of foreign states where the parties propose electoral programs. The party that wins a majority in Parliament, as is the case in the US Congress, becomes in control of decision-making. We do not have a system under which political parties reach the highest decision-making posts. Under the Kuwaiti system, the ceiling of the active political forces is to have membership in the National Assembly, the Municipal Council, the Welfare and the Cooperative societies. A nominee cannot become Prime Minister or ruler merely by winning the majority of votes. There are lines that cannot be crossed. The political groups have realized good objectives in cooperation for the sake of the country's interests and political action but they have lost strength as a result of internal disputes or ideological differences in the camps of the Liberal Democrats, the Islamic Democrats and the Islamists who take the idea of consultation as synonymous with Western democratic ideas. I believe that the conflict of ideologies and parties has resulted in the break-up of these political forces whose interests only intersect in the elections. I deeply regret that political activists think only about the electoral period and not about the post-poll period of consolidation.

They should instead think from a wide perspective and promote democratic thought in any way possible. That is what we are experiencing in Kuwait; we want democracy for ourselves but not for others. This is narrow-minded thinking; democracy should be for all, and we should make concessions for the sake of Kuwait. Regrettably, we do not see this in political parties in the Kuwaiti arena.

Q 3 - Do you believe that time is ripe to devise a law for political parties in Kuwait? Based on what you just said, political powers act with the sole aim of reaching the National Assembly or the Municipal Council, etc... This is the political vision they have, and this is why a law for political parties would organize their work and help shape their political vision.

A 3 - The fact is that we have organization of political activities in Kuwait through legislation, simply because it encourages open political action and outlaws underground action. Allow political parties and groups, and let them operate under the umbrella of the Law. Somehow, we have developed a kind of phobia against political parties and Kuwaitis have not been able to accept this expression until now, so we have replaced it with words like groups, gatherings and forums. But if the Legislative and Executive Authorities agree on the organization of political life and the legalization of political parties, we would have the advantage of legally monitoring and observing the activities of these parties. In fact, I personally think that the organization of political life in Kuwait should be the prime concern of political groups and powers.

Q 4 - You mean that there should be a law for political parties in Kuwait and it is time to publicize them?

A 4 - I think we should start by publicizing political forces because if we hold a referendum in Kuwait right now, we would see that many people would reject the issue of legalizing political parties, mainly because of the discouraging Arab experience in this domain with respect to foreign loyalties and secondly because of the three-year old Kuwaiti experience of blocs and lobbies inside

the Parliament which led to the rise of a silent majority rejecting the idea of political parties.

I myself have a different approach, I would prefer the legalization of political parties so that their activities become guided by the rules of the Law.

Q 5 - Don't you think that the responsibility of educating the people and informing them on the meaning of partlssanship lies with the political groups? Because as you have said, Kuwaiti society dislikes political parties due to their eagerness to reach key positions without even caring to inform the people about democracy and the positive aspects of political pluralism?

A 5 - In reality, we believe that most Coalitions have ideologies of partlssanship and organization such the Social Islah Party, the Islamic Constitutional Movement, the Salafists and the Democratic Party. They undoubtedly have thoughts of organization and these thoughts are affiliated with prevailing thought in the Arab and Islamic arenas. The Arab arena has witnessed nationalistic ideas since the decade of Jamal Abdel Nasser and the Islamic Movements of Al-Banna and Al-Hodaibi. Therefore, there are ideas and theories in Jordan, Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia and the Arab peninsula that continue to exist. These trends are affected by ideas of partlssanship but they differ from one state to another in terms of formulating these ideas. For example in Egypt, there is an experience of partlssanship richer than the one that exists in Kuwait. Moreover, Kuwaitis view ideas of partlssanship as some sort of extravagance, and this approach reflects the fact that these parties do not act to alleviate the sufferings of the people, because in fact such hardships do not exist in the country as is the case in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Turkey. It is true that we have some problems in Kuwait related to Finance and

Housing Demography but they are still marginal compared to the problems other countries are facing.

Political parties contribute to the resolution of these problems, many of which are related to the demographic structure.

Q 6 - Do you believe that there is ideological and religious fanaticism in Kuwait?

A 6 - This religious fanaticism comes from misinterpretation of Islam and some short-lived ideological Movements that have sought isolation, and this has resulted in promoting short-sighted thoughts and perspectives. Some believe that we should abide strictly by the Islamic texts and others believe that the Islamic heritage and the Holy Quran are applicable in any place or time. The difference lies in interpretation and the search for the truth in Islam. Islamic trends are divided by issues of a jurisprudenced nature but these differences should lead us to open a continuous dialogue and we should refrain from isolating ourselves. This religious fanaticism you referred to was born from certain conditions in these countries. The predominance of materialism has prompted some to abandon their attachment to property and to seek refuge in God while the poor have opted to join groups with particular ideas. But I believe that radicalism is related to extreme radicalism, which should have been tackled through dialogue to alleviate its dangers.

Islam is moderation, and this is noted in the Quran. We should renounce violence and killing, as Islam is a religion of dialogue and tolerance.

Hamad: Do you believe that there is no religious fanaticism or radicalism in Kuwait?

Abdel Wahab: It exists in some groups; that is why dialogue is necessary.

Q 7 - This leads us to another question in respect of political parties. You are a supporter of the idea of promulgating a law to organize political parties. Do you believe that such legislation should have nothing to do with radicalism or racism in terms of partisanship, in line with the fact that we aspire to democracy on a sound basis. The parties should not only be non-racist but nationalistic and encourage ideas for the interests of both the state and the people. So there is religious radicalism in Kuwait in some groups. Do you believe that the projected law should be non-religious?

A 7 - We cannot separate religion from politics. We are Moslems and Islam, according to my view and the view of Islamic scholars, is the religion of the state according to the Constitution. Our state is oriented by Islam and Arab nationalism and Islam is part of our heritage, values and morals and constitutes the basis for our political activity. Our life-style is entirely related to Islam in terms of marriage, divorce, inheritance and even the way of walking on the streets. All this has something to do with Islamic norms, as Moslem men and women have been fostered by Islam. We should not be slack in expanding the democratic basis within an Islamic framework and ridding ourselves of radicalism which is marked with violence. In other words, we should rid politics of violence rather than religion. It is possible that violence may affect politics, any kind of violence and not necessarily Islamic. Violence can be perpetrated by disoriented radicals, as is the case in the United States, Japan and other countries. There, radicalism is not related to religion but to certain ideas or ideologies, Communist, Baathist or Capitalist. But the West makes a grave mistake by linking Islam to terrorism and radicalism as allegedly implanted in the spirit of the Arab and Islamic nations. The Moslem is neither radical nor a terrorist, but

there are certain radical Arab and Islamic groupings that brandish certain slogans. The constitution of the Islamic state stipulates that we should establish a state with institutions based on democracy and dialogue while renouncing political violence and adopting a genuine progressive outlook. This means that I hold a dialogue with a human being because of the Islamic religion but I do not impose religion on him nor oblige him to assent to it. Only in the case of issuing state legislation as part of common action with people who approve these laws this is a different matter, and in this way radicalism is separated from politics.

Q 8 - What is the way to control religious groups in projected legislation? Because as you have said, we should not totally separate religion and politics. I understood that it is acceptable to have political parties in the coming legislation representing the Moslem Brotherhood or the Salafists or any other ideological idea. How do we control religious groups in the coming legislation? You mentioned extremism, which we all reject, based on our belief in democracy, which requires that all groups and trends have freedom of expression?

A 8. I say we should have penal restrictions similar to those available in any law. The formation of political parties should be guided by the Constitution, the Explanatory Memorandum and a defined constitutional mechanism which should cover all possible problems or violations and the appropriate penalties, in addition to a rule of conduct. For instance, we can have a law stipulating that parties should operate within the framework of a Constitutional Democratic Dialogue and that any change resulting from the use of other methods than dialogue would be severely punished. What I say is that we should have deterrent laws because political activities, like any other group activities, may engender wrongful acts; a perfect example is the bomb which was

placed at Kuwait University. Religious groups condemned the assault at the time and were clear in denouncing the use of violence and extremism. I firmly believe that our experience and conditions are different and our social structure and characteristics are also different. We have to act within the framework of our traditions, norms and Constitution. We have a Kuwaiti form which we should develop and act according to our Kuwaiti nature when it comes to partlssanship, without being influenced from the outside.

Q 9 - You mentioned earlier that political parties in Kuwait were active a long time ago. These groups were the Traders Movement and what is known as the Patriotic Movement or the Patriotic Youth which was formed in 1938 with the formation of the first Legislative Council. With time, and along with the presence of organized political parties such as the Moslem Brotherhood, which was based in Egypt, Arab Nationalists, Baathists and Communists there were many other political groups who later were indirectly represented in Parliament by candidates running independently. In your opinion, why did none of the of seven political groups who successfully coordinated with each other to make it to parliament present a draft law to legalize political parties? I mean we cannot wait for the government to present such a law; it is required from us as Kuwaitis who have ideological beliefs, whether religious or nationalist, to press for such a legislation. Why none of them had the courage to present a draft law in this regard even if the demand were to be rejected or aborted? No one has! Don't you agree that this is a strange phenomenon?

A 9 - There is currently some deliberation about a draft law aimed at organizing political parties in Kuwait. The fact is that deliberations inside the National Assembly always conclude that the time is not right yet, especially since most of these groups do not believe in raising an issue just for the sake of consumption rather

than for the sake of reaching a defined target. From their standpoint, the time is not convenient yet for such a draft law in Kuwait, in addition to the fact that the issue itself might be popularly rejected, especially since prominent MP's and trends inside the National Assembly have voiced their opposition to political parties on several occasions. This particular conflict inside the National Assembly has itself led to delaying any draft law in this regard.

It is possible that by the preparation of the various trends and groups inside Parliament, the issue might stand more change of being adopted.

Q 10 - What is your reaction to the government's decision to close Public Utilities, including the Cultural Society? and in your opinion, is it time to open them again?

A 10 - I believe that the closure of public welfare societies contradicts the Constitution, and that any action that breaches the constitution should not be applied but should be rebuffed by the Kuwaiti people. The problem here in Kuwait is that the executive authority always thinks how to discredit a certain group and promote another at certain periods of time for certain political purposes. The executive authority has viewed those who acted under the umbrella of the Social Cultural Society as actually dealing with politics. Likewise, the little-known General Students Union has not been given publicity although it has been under the sponsorship of the Crown Prince. The licensed public welfare societies can be shut down because of involvement in politics. The same applies to the Independence Club. It was erroneous to close this Club and the Cultural Society. This question should be resolved and the societies should be given the right to act in line with the law. The Ministry of Social Affairs should put restriction on these societies to prevent them from violating the laws. But this did not

happen, as these societies gained publicity and mushroomed in the country beyond any imagination while other groups were instructed to strike at certain groups for the sake of certain political purposes and gains and this created a kind of oppression against the people who started to wonder: Why did this happen? They closed my institution. Why did they not act so against the other group? We have experienced unfortunately this oppression, which should be removed. The Kuwaiti people are educated and aware of the importance of political action. Moreover, the unity of the Kuwaiti people does not exist in other nations, and this was proved during the flagrant Iraqi aggression. All Kuwaitis joined hands and acted jointly and sacrificed their blood on the pure sands of the homeland. The period of the invasion is a good indication of loyalty not to an individual or a family but to the homeland. This standing error should be corrected and justice should be served.

Hamad:- We note that the seven political forces exist in Parliament including the Al-Manbar grouping, the Independence Club and the Islamic Coalition represented by the Culture Society. So where does the National Assembly stand with regard to this subject, considering that seven political parties collaborated to occupy seats in Parliament? Why do they not back them as members of the National Assembly, considering the fact that they constitute the majority. Where do they stand with regard to this unjust situation?

Abdel Wahab:- I see a slackness on the part of the political forces and the influential members of the National Assembly. They should act to tackle this situation and lift the oppression against some groups of society. These groups, which knew each other and worked together, should join hands to resolve this problem, because their unity is necessary for the reconstruction of Kuwait while their disintegration is tantamount to the disintegration of Kuwait. This means

that the people are not united and that the internal front is weakened and this will lead to disintegration of Kuwaiti society. There is a mistake that should be corrected and an oppression that should be lifted. The political forces and notables in the National Assembly should demand that justice be served to allow the Independence Club and the Cultural Society, and they should work as one block to issue bills to legalize the restoration of these societies.

Hamad - I would like to clarify the statement that the seven forces have consensus among them regarding certain basic issues, why do they intentionally neglect the issue of the two closed societies?

Abdel Wahab - I say that the slackness lies with the parties concerned, not only with the other political forces. The political forces as I previously mentioned, stopped dealing with each other in joint leadership after the elections. Coordination among them has remained weak. For this reason, I think that there is no dialogue whatsoever; instead private interests prevail over public interests.

Q 11. One final question. What do you think about the separation between the Premiership and the title of Crown Prince?

A 11. This is an issue we tackled even in the 1992 elections. One of the opinions debated was that the Premiership represents the Executive member in the Legislative body, with all the pros and cons of this representation, while the title of Crown Prince indicates that its holder will one day become the Amir. The fact that the holder of this title was once the target of criticism by members of the parliament in his capacity as Prime Minister is hard to digest. One way to avoid this unpleasant situation is to protect this title. We should

seriously consider the separation in the interests of us all.

Hamad: According to the Constitution, we cannot vote on a no-confidence motion against the Prime Minister but rather against Ministers as individuals. Even if we assume that the time will come when no-confidence motions against the Prime Minister are voted on, he would not be sacked. Ministers, however, are questioned, interrogated, then sacked. So some people consider that the separation of the Premiership and the position of Crown Prince would lead to a political confrontation between political groups, sects, tribes and prominent families in Kuwait on the position itself.

Abdel Wahab: I did not say that the Prime Minister has to be from the people. He could be from the ruling family. The Premiership could even be shared. But it should not be a tradition to keep it to one person. Even inside the ruling family, there should be a dynamic exchange of power. By promoting this idea, we would be promoting democracy. The idea of the separation of the Premiership and the title of Crown Prince is being discussed among the members of the ruling family, who put forward their views in the paper they circulated two years or 18 months ago. I personally think that the members of the ruling family consider the Constitution as a protection for them. This common keenness on the Constitution between the ruling family and the Kuwaiti people is the base for democracy and solidarity in Kuwait. Anyway, I am not saying that the Prime Minister should be from the people; let him be from the ruling family if this would help achieve a better perspective and the promotion of democracy that all seek.

Hamad: Mr. Abdel Wahab, I thank you for this valuable meeting which, God willing, will help future researchers and assist me in my research. Thank you.

Abdel Wahab: I thank you for your efforts and hope your Ph.D. will serve as a reference for us all.

SECOND INTERVIEW WITH SHAYKH SALEM SABAH AL SALEM AL SABAH

Today the 29th of October 1995, we are continuing our first interview with Shaykh Salem Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah, in the presence of Professor John Mattock from Glasgow University. This interview was conducted in English and the transcript contains what was said.

H. Shaykh Salem, we have some questions to be raised by Prof. Mattock.

J.M. I have read your previous interview. In the matter of democracy in Kuwait, would you say that it is now satisfactory or have you still further ambitions for it ?

Sh.S. No doubt that democracy in general in the world has not reached its peak varying to people's consent in each country. They see it differently and they see it in different ways. My ambition is to see democracy in Kuwait practiced according to the idealism of democracy in one's mind. So I think still it has not reached its peak but, having said that, I have to admit that democracy of Kuwait has gone a long way towards one's ambition, based on the traditional in the Kuwaiti society and on the traditions governed by the society as well as the democracy. That directed the democracy to be unique for the Kuwaiti society.

J.M. How precisely does one achieve the idea of democracy. It is obviously easier in a small community than in a large one but people often say that we have not had true democracy. How do you see the democratic idea?

Sh.S. It is very difficult to put the base for the real democratic system but one takes the satisfaction of the society and the people concerned with the democracy. Mentioning small society and big society, small country and big country, it is true that there is tremendous difference in that and also there is an important factor which also could be a main factor here is education. If a small country is well educated looking at the democracy in different prospect. A large society that is not educated also gives the chance to the minority who are educated to manipulate the whole society in the name of democracy. A country with large population with most of them are educated if we take in this case the United Kingdom with the majority are educated, they look at democracy differently. So it depends very much on the education number one and also the understanding of democracy. In large civilized countries and more modernized like United Kingdom, what you think as the democratic way, we might look at it here in Kuwait as a dictatorship for instance or as more liberal than what our traditional means. Therefore democracy comes in this way under the traditions of a country. So it is very delicate to pin down democracy. There is basics for democracy that the Kuwaiti Constitution has established. Freedom of thoughts, freedom of speech, freedom of attitude. These are the basics but the implementation of those basics is different from one country to another. Take the United States first amendment for example, misused in some cases in the name of democracy. Would the first amendment be successful in the United Kingdom? Nobody knows. It is opened for discussion and speculations. Would that be successful in Kuwait? Again it is opened for discussion. So it depends on the structure of the society as well as the education and the understanding. There is a very important factor that might become minor but has a lot to do, and that is the goodwill of the interpretation between the parties and

parliament with the government in the implementation of the principles of democracy.

H. So in this case, I can understand that the democracy at present is the practical democracy for Kuwait, where you believe that the people of Kuwait feel is the right understanding between the law or the state and the people?

Sh.S. There is a certain issues where the practice of democracy is misused, taking Kuwait as case of study, there is issues that have been dealt with are on the basis of democracy but actually were misused and did not go along with the proper democratic way. I understand this among politician and members of parliament, they want to play the political game under the cabinet of democracy but if you take democracy as such, it has been misused in some cases. In other cases, which is a very lively case, O.J. Simpson, the way it has been handled in my opinion sitting in Kuwait and watching TV, I think that from day one, the case has been dealt with absolutely on political basis. Therefore democracy here was not applied yet it has been used as a cover.

J.M. It surprises me that the judge allowed this to take place. The opposition demanded and did everything she could to avoid that but she doesn't seem to have done so. Inevitably the black and white issue would have come up and she should have done more than she did to express it than to try to cover the issue.

Sh.S. So the democracy has been misused in this case.

H. What I can say as a conclusion that democracy as Sh. Salem mentioned depends on the tradition of each country. So, the democracy implemented in the UK. might not be acceptable to the people of Kuwait or vice versa in the United States. Therefore, democracy is a

mutual understanding between people according to their tradition.

Sh.S. This is one way of describing democracy but also there are basic issues that should be accepted by the majority in the country even though if it does not go along with their tradition. In Kuwait, there are certain traditions we grew with, but if you put it into practice it goes against democracy. Therefore, we have to agree on the democracy as a base and if democracy is properly conducted, I believe it is the best system to ensure the stability in the country in the long run, economically, politically etc..

What I meant by "some of the traditions do not agree with the basics and principles of the democracy" let's take the questions asked once or twice in England about " do we need the queen or not ?" The existence of the Queen and to Royal family is tradition although she have nothing to do with ruling the country, but she is the bigger head and she is gathering the people around her and so on ... To certain people this question should not be asked at all, and to others why not ? why not have our say in electing our President ? and they even opened the subjects of personal matters as expenses etc. Traditions here vary. What governs that issue are the basic democratic issues, so everybody agrees on it. Government and the country should have a Head of State. This Head of State should be elected or not that is a different issue. But since the tradition of the country is royalty therefore the Queen is the head. The President of India, we don't hear his name it is always the Prime Minister also in Pakistan and in England. Tradition sometimes does not go along with democracy therefore we have to go to the basis of democracy in order to govern that relation.

J.M. It is quite extraordinary when one thinks about it how unpopular the monarchy has been in the last two hundred years. Queen Victoria was very unpopular and she ruled

for about thirty years. That was one period when republic really flourished. Also had there been a vote I suspect that the majority would have wanted nothing to do with monarchy. Yet somehow it managed to survive. I think it will continue to survive. I hope.

Sh.S. Because it is a symbol of stability and continuity and prosperity for the country. Look what is happening now in Iraq. In the name of democracy he got 99% of the votes.

J.M. In Britain, we notice in the question of parties, we don't have any demand that a party should be an established body before it can appear at elections. Almost anybody can stand as a party. The things that have given little concern at the moment is that the number of Single Issues Parties is growing up, Anti-fox hunting parties, people who are determined to preserve one particular thing at the expense of everything else. What do you think of the legality of parties and whether they should be constituted by law or allowed to range free in Kuwait ?

Sh.S. The latter part of you question is existing at the moment. We have individuals who stand for certain issues and this becomes their campaigning issue, and we have other grouping or parties which run for the election under political flavor and people vote for these groups according to their political beliefs. Individuals who run for certain issue that might look independent, when in fact these issues are related one way or another to domestic or international politics. Therefore, I think that the best way to govern such future parties is to have laws for it and make it legalized otherwise it will be chaos.

H. Regarding the parties, what sort of law you think will apply here. Is it to give parties free hand to do their own activities or the activities should be indicated in the law. Because there are some countries where they give free

hand and other countries they only legalize certain activities for the parties before being recognized, and allowed to do any political move. Such as in England they have parties gathering every year to review their activities and this is part of their tradition and the law for the parties. In which form do you see our future law for parties?

Sh.S. There is two different points here. First setting up a party by law or the points the laws should carry and have in order to set a party i.e. preset rules for the parties. Second, the procedures and the bylaws of the party itself to meet once or twice a year, having Committees and national gathering etc.. this is the system of the bylaws or the rules or the tradition of the parties and this does not concern me. The question here is that the preset should be as the Kuwaiti Constitution stated. Parties should not be set on racism basis, i.e. it should not be called Al Tuwaijri Party or Al Sabah Party and should not be set on religious basis or on certain issues that might create a future conflict. You can not call it Sunna or Shiite parties or certain families parties. A party of principles, beliefs and justice within the rules and regulations. If we take living examples, the Conservatives and the Labor parties in England. The clear cut is there, you can see it black and white but if you take the Republican and the Democrats in the States it is a very gray area, and this gray area is more than the black and white. Where in England black and white is more than the gray area. The gray area in England now is the Liberals so it has to be on that basis, belief in Nationalism. Conservatives don't believe in that, they believe in specialization. This privatization is the principle of their party. So one should have preset laws or a base for the party to be directed with.

J.M. I was just wondering how would that apply to a party that concerns me which is the Scottish National Party, the only principle which as far as I can discover for this party

is that Scotland should be independent. What happens then is remain to be seen. Not presumably that would apply in Kuwait, when you said that parties should not be on grounds that would cause a split between people.

H. There is a question from our survey with other political groups in Kuwait. There is one group who believes in the isolation of the Crown Prince's position from the Prime Minister's position. When I met different groups, they all had different opinions regarding this issue.

Sh.S. This is one of the points where people use democracy but they misuse the real democracy when handling such question. If you separate the position of Crown Prince from the position of Prime Minister what do you get? You get into a political turmoil in the country, where if you have another Al Sabah as Prime Minister then why not leave the Crown Prince to be the Prime Minister? If you are going to have elections, then why you have a Crown Prince? No need for that position to start with. Therefore, in the case of Kuwait, I think all the Kuwaitis agree that Al Sabah family are the important point of stability among Kuwaitis. And that was proved and confirmed during the occupation, when Kuwaitis who were inside Kuwait and those outside, all gathered behind Al Sabah family and refused to have any cooperation with the Iraqis. Even those who are extremely indulged in Baath parties and known to be Baathists and their leaders refused to cooperate with the Baath Party and said we are Kuwaitis and this is our country. Ideology here does not apply and they were behind the Emir and Al Sabah family. For Kuwaitis, Al Sabah family represents the balance, if you remove it, it would be like having water tins on top of each other and if you take the one in the middle, the whole thing will collapse. So this is the important part of the whole structure of the family. Take for example Prince Charles, he is in his fifties and have nothing to do therefore you

find him running this way and the other way, he is lost in the structure of his country and the system of the government. His mother is still there and the Prime Minister is there and there is no job for him and this reflected in his family's life and his attitude even in his relation with the press. He has the power and the potential yet he does not have the chance to do anything. So he is lost. This is what will happen in Kuwait later on. You will have three different powers fighting with each other. There is a saying " when two elephants fight, the grass suffers ". In this case there will be three political dimensions fighting with each other while people and the country will suffer. I am not saying this because I am one of the family but for the sake of the stability of Kuwait one should have one centralized power which is the Crown Prince and the Prime Minister. And because there is lots of powers then control will be difficult.

H. In this case I can say that to have the position of Crown Prince and Prime Minister, is for the safety of Kuwaitis and for the stability and prosperity of the country. When I met also some of the parties that are against separating the two positions, they believe that if it will change then maybe this will create a front conflict between people and families in Kuwait because they believe that each one would want to be Prime Minister which will lead to the unstability in Kuwait.

Sh.S. Absolutely. Because as you know, Kuwait is a small unique country and we are practicing democracy all the way and we are advanced in our democracy. At the same time we are still traditional, and governed by all traditions, tribes, families and so on... To implement a change of power in the Prime Minister position, with the tradition, Tribes and Families will be coming, Bedouins, Hadar, Shiite, Sunna, or business men, so the society is still not ready for such major change in political life in Kuwait. Twenty or thirty years from now, this might be acceptable but now I think for the sake of the stability and prosperity

of the country as well as the area, this tradition has to be maintained otherwise chaos will happen. Like other countries, Afghanistan for example. When there was kingdom, there was stability, with no kingdom, look what happened now there. It is no ideology because all of them are Muslims there but they are traditionalists, families and tribes and fighting to control the country without thinking of the problems. There is two elements here and I will give you examples on what I am saying, number one " Swar Al Dahab " , the person who made the revolution in Sudan and was appointed as the President. In my opinion, he has done the wisest thing in his life, when he went and opened the books and found all his accounts in the red, he closed it and resigned. Because when he read the files and understood the problems he resigned. Ruling is not an easy thing to do, running your company you think is easy but it is not easy. Ruling a country with different problems and structures and the society is difficult. I wouldn't want to be in Husni Mubarak's shoes. When he wakes up every morning, he has to think of sixty six millions pieces of bread just to feed these open mouths, just the bread without anything else, imagine how difficult is that. The other example is the dictator Franco of Spain. It was his ambition for power that made him make the revolution, he ruled the country worse than those he revolted against. Saddam is the same example. What Franco done is he brought the King back after he died because he thought that the monarchy is the best system for the country's stability. During his life, he enjoyed his dictatorship more than the king, but when dying, he thought of his country and brought the monarchy back and the monarchy now is practicing the democracy, and they have less troubles now than before. Therefore, our people are not ready yet for the change, maybe after twenty or thirty years from now.

J.M. In Kuwait, the Prime Minister will be outside the party politics unless there is a royal party but he will act

always as a President between Al Sabah family and the legislators. That must be a unique situation for a Prime Minister not to be the leader of the party that controls the majority.

Sh.S. This point you are raising is a very important point. If you have parties then the system is different but if you don't have parties then the best thing is to have a non-committed person who can be a fair judge handling all issues. Now as I said there is three important groups that works in the parliament as groups or parties. The Crown Prince being the Prime Minister he bands the power between the three parties. Otherwise we will be having one party with the majority and this party will rule for its benefit not the benefit of the country. Because of the non-parties in Kuwait, I think that the best is to have the Crown Prince as Prime Minister to stablize the whoie issue. When you have parties it is different, then we have different formula for Kuwait as well. The constitution have discussed this, the Emir nominates the Crown Prince, he will nominates three to the parliament and the parliament will choose one to be Prime Minister and Crown Prince. Also Mubarak Al Sabah, our great grand father and the creator of Kuwait said in his will " Your Eldest, your Wisest, your Ruler, and the matter is (Shura) consultation among yourselves ". Now we have primary in high ranking, Sh. Jaber Al Ahmad is the Emir, Sh. Saad Al Abdallah the Crown Prince and the third in line is Sh. Sabah Al Ahmad the Minister of Foreign Affairs. It goes like primaries among the people, we agree that such person is a good man, he is wise and looks like a good statesman, and we inform the Emir and the Crown Prince of that, so there is primaries all the time in preparing the lines all the way. So in Kuwait there is no problem, you could ask the Kuwaitis and they could tell you until five or six from the Emir all the way down who is who and who comes next. That is even accepted by the Kuwaitis from now.

J.M. In the scenario that you mentioned the Crown Prince will be selected by the parliament and not by a wider kind of election. Simply by the members of parliament at that time.

Sh.S. What I am saying is that the Emir chooses his Crown Prince, prior to that there is the primary preparation with the unanimous agreement. In case the Emir wants to nominate two persons and both of them are good, and in case the Emir can not decide which one to choose and there is an indecision among the family, he will then nominate three to the parliament and the parliament will choose one. If the Emir chooses one and the family chooses another, like in the case of Shaykh Saad, they went to the parliament and placed the nomination. Now, if the Emir dies and Shaykh Saad becomes the Emir, Shaykh Sabah is number two and will become Crown Prince, I don't think there will be an objection among the Kuwaitis and the parliament because it has already been there prepared and waived to that position and people take it for granted unless somebody comes and tries to stir the whole situation, that is different, that is a destructive work and not constructive.

J.M. I would like to ask you about your work with the P.O.Ws and the missing people from the war.

Sh.S. To start with, when I have been asked to take the responsibility of the issue, we had a strategy. Since this is an Arabic case, we move to the Arabic league and since this is an Asian case, we move to the Asian organizations, and both being members of the non-allied Movement, we moved to the non-allied Movement, and as Muslim country, we moved to the Muslim organizations, we moved through Europe, Asia, Africa and America. We opened the door for those who have interest and the usual presence and personality like the King of Morocco, who sent a special envoy, Ahmad Saharto as a Chairman of M.A.N. and President of one of the largest Muslim

countries Indone'sia, and Indone'sia will play a role within the Asian group with Asia, Australia and India to have their own grouping. They moved and sent special envoy to Iraq but what they got from Iraq was that they don't have any P.O.Ws. But with the continuation of the pressure and the Media and by cooperating closely with the Security Council's resolutions and through the ICRC, the International Red Cross, Iraq attended meetings in Geneva that consisted of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United States, United Kingdom, France from one side and the Chairmanship of ICRC and Iraq on the other side. Iraq have boycotted that meeting for two and half years but because of the pressure Iraq came with new ideas that "I don't have P.O.Ws but maybe I have missing people", and that is a change of policy. We tried to have as much as possible from them to make it work within the frame of the Security Council Resolutions and within the frame of the I.C.R.C., we insisted on that. Iraq recognized up to now one hundred and twenty six names, but the information is incomplete. They claimed that they arrested them, interrogated them but they have lost them in the desert, when they were moving them from one prison to another, the convoy have been attacked by the outlaws and they lost the Kuwaitis in the desert. We know that they are there and that the Iraqis know where they are but you know Iraq retreat step by step. This is a very short answer to your question. There are more detailed questions that am willing to answer.

J.M. How many people do they have with them ?

Sh.S. Six hundred and four. Iraq denied but we were confirming that we have this number. No doubt one of us is not doing his homework. I don't know about the Iraqis but let me tell you about my homework. I included in the files that I submitted to Iraq through the ICRC and these files have been accepted by the ICRC. I depended on four important factors. Factor one, eyewitnesses in Kuwait who saw their relatives being taken by Iraqis in front of

their eyes. Factor two are eyewitnesses who were prisoners in Iraq and when they got out they reported about other prisoners. Factor three, the eyewitnesses who were in Iraqi prisons, because we had five thousand seven hundred seventy two Kuwaitis being released during the uprising in Iraq. And the most important factor is the Iraqi documents that we found here in Kuwait stating the name of the people they arrested and the reason for that arrest, also the names of people they are going to arrest and the names of those who were arrested and transferred to Baghdad prison. All this has been documented and accepted by the international society.

J.M. What possible motive can Iraq have for still detaining these people?

Sh.S. Your guess is as good as mine in this aspect. Absolutely we have no indication whatsoever directly or indirectly about the motivation of holding those people. But I have thought of it days and nights for the last four years, the only conclusion one could reach is that Iraq lost the border when they had to recognize it, they have to pay compensation for Kuwait as well as other countries who lost tremendous amount of money and are putting pressure on Iraq. The only issue that remains between Kuwait and Iraq indirectly and a very sensitive issue is the P.O.Ws. So Iraq wants to keep that issue hanging in order for us to look up to Iraq, at least he has the upper hand in something very important. That is the only reason I could think of.

J.M. If Iraq does not admit having these people, can it then exert pressure on Kuwait?

Sh.S. Iraq will remain a major threat for the safety not only of Kuwait but the Gulf as well. And the echo is still there haunting the area, and the best way is to go back to democracy. If Iraq will conduct a proper democracy, that is the best way of assuring the understanding and

cooperation between the countries. Otherwise Iraq will remain a threat to Kuwait and to the area. Therefore we wish to see the system and the leadership changed.

J.M. Thank you very much for your time and hospitality, and for a most interesting conversation.

Sh.S. Not at all, and I hope Hamad will benefit from it. I will be reading it when it is finished.

H. Once again we thank Shaykh Salem for his valuable time.

Evaluation of Democratic Practice in Kuwait

Through our review of the history of development in Kuwait, we have found that choosing a ruler was, during state-making, limited to three families, namely Al Sabah family, Al Khalifa family and Al Jalahma family.

This practice carried on until Al Sabah family put an end to it by taking control. The real practice of popular participation, was the activity of the traders that took place after the establishment of Al Sabah family in every arena, be it political, economical or connected with security. An example is the incident of the servant Anbar, as well as the imposition of duties during Shaykh Sabah Al Jaber's era (1859 - 1866).

Popular participation in ruling the country was there and a number of other examples and incidents could be given to indicate beyond a shadow of a doubt that it existed within the framework of a society governed by customs and traditions emanating from an Arab society or from one deriving from the Arabian Peninsula. Rules and regulations depended on the respect for seniority and this in turn depended on religion, which was the pillar of legislation. In all cases religion was the reference for law and order, and this is a deep rooted factor in Kuwaiti society.

The two battles of Hamd and Al Jahra and the case of the Doweish family which took place during Shaykh Salem Al Mubarak's era, gave a political impulse to the traders. This occurred after a lull during Shaykh Mubarak's reign which, uniquely, sprang from the strength of his personality, forced upon Kuwaiti society. This incident resulted in popular stagnation, at any rate in the case of

the traders, which hindered them from political participation. However, that period was short-lived and the traders re-participated during Shaykh Salem's era. Although this participation was not formally prescribed, it was in accordance with Islamic traditions, customs and values which advocated the Shura principle. The ruler, then, had to accept and meet traders demands, one of which was to establish a traders consultant council.

Shaykh Salem accordingly requested to be given time to study this demand. He passed away before giving any decision.

His successor was Shaykh Ahmad Al Jaber, who was chosen from three candidates: himself, Shaykh Abdallah Al Saïem and Shaykh Hamad Al Mubarak. Before choosing any of the three candidates the people of Kuwait declared that they would respect anyone who established a council based on Shura i.e. Shurah as government. This in itself is clear evidence of the people's participation in the government. Hence the Kuwaiti people chose Ahmad Al Jaber as their Amir and ruler. Before this procedure, Al Sabah family nominated Shaykh Ahmad Al Jaber according to tradition. The Kuwaiti people paid homage to Shaykh Ahmad to establish the Shura and to rule. Again this is further evidence of the people's pressing demand to govern since 1863, i.e. since the incident of the Servant Anbar and the imposition of duties.

As for the events of 1938, they were the result of the Kuwaiti people's enlightenment. Thanks to Al Mubarakiah School, circles and government organizations, discipline and order were well established among the Kuwaitis. Often the leaders in this respect were from well-off families and were traders. This in turn explains why the first political force or what is known as the 1921 Council is pure Kuwaiti, as it sprang from

Kuwaiti wishes to partake in government, represented by the Shura council.

The strategy and aims of those who were elected in 1938 even though they represented two fronts, the National Front and the National Youth Front, were similar in spite of the second front's marginal involvement with Iraq and other neighboring countries. This liaison did not go beyond foreign relations. The basic target emanated from inside Kuwait on a pure Kuwaiti national base which aimed at organizing the country's affairs. It was a natural procedure because of its supporters who were from the educated, the enlightened and the learned. Desire to achieve new goals pushed them towards how to deal with the government as well as themselves.

After 1938 the steps taken for participation in ruling the country were over-hasty, so I believe that they were behind the non-continuity of legislative council.

The National assembly, then, lacked experience, awareness and community of purpose. The natural result of such actions was not healthy as was the case in Jordan, Egypt and Syria.

It is a well known fact that with the Al Mubarakiah School of 1913, the education system started in Kuwait. Therefore any comparison, I believe between Egypt or any other advanced country and Kuwait in this respect is not valid, as these countries were ahead of Kuwait by a hundred years. If these countries had political problems, they without any doubt differed from those which took place in 1938 Kuwait. The most important factor in this respect is that Kuwait's political system was and still is traditional, and the Amir represents the government, which completely rules the country. In my opinion the case of Shaykh Abdallah Al Salem who represented this system and became the speaker of the 1938 council, chosen by elected members of the council, was clear

evidence of the Amir's powers, usurpation by one of his family members. Hence we can claim that the 1938 council dissolution had two reasons.

First : Family disputes would occur between Al Sabah family members which would result in two policies and two decisions being implemented, one by the ruler and another by a member of his family, representing the legislative council.

Second: The 1938 council would deprive the Amir of all authority; this would not indicate a fault in the council itself or in the Amir himself, but would spring from a lack of experience and constitutional understanding; i.e. ignorance of how to set the country on the constitutional road.

The members of the second council of 1939 became twenty instead of twelve in the first council. All members of the second council were supporters of the previous council. They adopted the veto as a reaction to the dissolution of the first council. This was a natural procedure in the political game, but it led to the dissolution of the council and to bloody eruptions taking the lives of a number of Kuwaiti citizens and to the prosecution of others. However, this testified that democracy was deep-rooted in Kuwait, emanating from the people of Kuwait, and that its Amir was and is only a member of its people. Though Kuwait passed through times when democracy was non-existent, the people of Kuwait by no means turned away from democracy and clung to despotism, nor did the Amir himself accept to be the sole ruler and refused the people participation.

Most probably the non existence of democracy in Kuwait during certain periods was due to International circumstances. In 1939, the second World War broke out, which made the Kuwaitis abandon political activities,

observe and act cautiously towards such matters. There was an understanding between the people and their ruler, since there was no constitution that allowed the Amir to issue decrees. The case differed in 1962, because of the existence of a constitution which clearly states that the Amir can issue decrees such as martial laws.

The Kuwaitis abstained from participation in government not as a desire but as understanding the dangerous situation which made them question the destination of the Gulf area, whether it would be involved in the Second World War or not. If the area was to be involved in this War, how were they to deal with it under the British protection? Matters such as these made them in 1939 not participate directly in ruling the country in order to protect the internal front.

After the Second World War two political blocks and groups reappeared; this indicated the democracy practiced by the Kuwaitis and in turn proved that it was deep rooted in their entity. Thus the Arab National Movement and the Traders Movement, representing dignitaries, appeared in the fifties. Also, there were groups such as the National Youth Group, clubs and gatherings that we mentioned in the second chapter of this study. All these indicate the existence of democratic development in Kuwait.

When Kuwait started to export oil and get its revenue, Shaykh Abdallah Al Salem did not take into consideration, wealth only, but also Kuwait established as an entity and a State. Gradually, he started to prepare for the transition period by establishing councils like the Construction Council, the Public Works Council, the Health Council and the Education Council. All these councils were the nucleus of the modern and constitutional State of Kuwait. Also he aimed at preparation for the withdrawal of British protection from the country in order to be independent.

The ruler, in my opinion, planned to make a greater number of categories of Kuwaitis take part in the responsibility of governing the country and its constitutional system. He depended on the learned, educated and enlightened class to realize his ambition. However, Shaykh Abdallah Al Salem did not permit, during the fifties, elected people participation as far as legislative power is concerned; it was limited to a council, the reason as I believe, being that he aimed to make the transition period a real stage and practical preparation for the post-independence phase.

In 1921, a petition of payment of homage to Shaykh Ahmad Al-Jaber by Kuwait states clearly that the payment of homage was conditional on his creating a Shura council. Also in 1938 another petition was offered, after troubles had caused the death of a number of people, demanding the establishment of a legislative council.

As for independence, no immediate petition was written, although some demands in the form of a declaration appeared in the fifties. Two months after independence, the Amir issued a decree forming a Foundational Council to prepare the country's constitution.

Without any doubt, a step such as this did not appear from nowhere; it was the result of preparation and careful study during the fifties. Unfortunately, most writers have not given a fair assessment of this period of Shaykh Abdallah Al Salem's era and they have been unfair towards Kuwait and its people as there was no difference between the ruler and his people; this was the general feeling.

Al Sabah family is the ruling family, and its reign is considered as giving valuable security to the people of Kuwait. Al Sabah family has adopted a policy of fairness and equality among all the branches of the Kuwaiti

people, whose social structure differs from that of neighboring countries.

The Kuwaiti people's composition is distinctive and has no similarity in the neighboring countries in particular and in the Arab states in general. The Kuwaitis consist of nomads (Bedouins) whose different tribes came to Kuwait (i.e. they were living in different countries and immigrated to Kuwait). As an example, of a tribe from the Southern Arabian Peninsula only a number of branches came to live in Kuwait, whereas of another tribe from the Northern part of the Peninsula, all the members immigrated to Kuwait. Also families from Najd decided to live in Kuwait, as did Sunna families and Shiite families of Persian origin, besides Shiite families from Al Ihsaa in Saudi Arabia and other families from Iraq.

Had the ruler been chosen from any other family, the rest of the families would demand the right to choose him from among their members. This conflict did not arise, because all the families accepted the appointment of the ruler from Al Sabah family.

In conclusion, we observe that the transition period of government saw the light during the beginning of the fifties and that after two months of independence, the ruler issued a decree to establish a Foundation Council, to be elected and to be joined by department heads to lay down the constitution. Shaykh Abdallah Al Salem had a clear cut idea of how to deal with the rules and the political powers. He aimed at establishing a real transitional period in order to avoid any real failure. In examining the minutes of the committee for laying down the constitution, we find that they contain a number of arguments regarding the ruler and his dealing with the council.

Committee members seemed very keen on producing the best possible constitution that would not fail. Amongst

the council members were a number from the 1938 council, who knew that the reason for the failure of the previous council was that the steps taken then were hasty. Therefore the arguments for the 1962 constitution were objective, reasonable and careful. Also a number of constitutional specialists took part in preparing the new constitution; such as Dr. Al Sanhuri and Dr. Othman Khalil, who were amongst great legislators in the Arab world.

The memorandum of the committee of laying down the constitution included arguments between its members about two systems, namely the Presidential system and the Parliamentary system. Yacoub Al Humaidi and Humoud Al Zeid Al Khaled adopted the first system for stability's sake, while Abdel Latif Al Thunayan believed in the second system, saying "We are laying the general pillars of the future and we do not want to block the path to this future". He was a member of 1938 council. Shaykh Saad Al Abdallah who occupied the position of a member of the Foundation Council said "We are ready to make the utmost democracy prevail but this is a great responsibility to bear".

Humoud Al Zeid and Yacoub Al Humaidi, took a different stand, believing in the Parliamentary system, as the Presidential system requires the election of a President which is inappropriate to the type of rule in Kuwait.

To go back to the reasons behind the 1938 council's dissolution, and to observe the way the committee laid down the 1962 constitution and the more objective manner in which they discussed matters, we find that political and constitutional thinking had become more mature.

Even those persons who were members of the 1938 council and knew the peculiarities of Kuwait and the way that homage had been paid three hundred years earlier

planned to lay down a political system for the future. This was the result of their political maturity and their understanding of the Kuwaiti reality. Abdallah Thunayan Alghanim, being the speaker of the Foundation Council, was very clear in this respect as we have seen.

Shaykh Saad Al Abdallah addressed the committee thus: "Do you think that the Parliamentary system should apply? and does this mean that the Council has the right to withdraw confidence in the government? Personally, I object to this system, which will lead us to many problems to face in the future."

Naturally Thunayan Alghanim replied "We may decide on this principle as a pillar to be modified harmoniously with our situation." In this argument the legislative expert explained that in both systems modifications are applicable. Shaykh Saad then said "The Parliamentary system makes it obligatory to choose the ministers from within the council. The legislative expert replied that this was not a condition.

The situation in the session crystallized as it became clear that council members had tendencies towards the Parliamentary system, with certain modifications to suit Kuwait's circumstances, while Shaykh Saad insisted on his position and requested that the situation be judged by the Foundation Council in taking a final decision to adopt either system. The council members refused Shaykh Saad's request. He replied "Do you want to jump once and for all or do we have to develop our situation and system ". Shaykh Saad, of course, was the ruler's son, and his father taught him his beliefs which had descended to him through the ages. The question is: Was Shaykh Abdallah Al Salem against democratic rule and against people partaking ? Without a shadow of doubt the answer to this question is: "No". A proof of this is his demand for establishing a Foundation Council,

after only two months of Independence, with its one target of laying down the country's constitution.

Shaykh Saad was no doubt following the view of his father, who planned to have gradual development in every field. Democratic development is not something written on paper; it comes by practice.

Humoud Al Zeid Al Khaled replied to Shaykh Saad that one single jump would involve the Presidential system, whereas the Parliamentary system would help healthy development. Shaykh Saad stuck to his opinion and requested that the whole matter be revised by the Foundation Council. In an extraordinary session Shaykh Saad clung to the Presidential system, saying "Our target is to establish a stable system, and the Parliamentary system quite obviously leads to a great number of problems and to instability".

The late professor Othman Khalil resolved the matter by proposing a mixed Republican-Royal or Amiri system.

The above political discussions showed that, during that period, political maturity had taken place.

The 1962 Consitution was adopted and laid the foundations for Elections, in addition to specifying the limitation of the three authorities, legislative, executive and Judicial. Thus, the Constitution defined cooperation among the authorities and their duties and granted the legislative authority the right to ask for the Constitution to be amended in response to the demand of two-thirds of the members together with the Amir or a request from the Amir coupled with the Council's consent.

A new era begun after the 1962 election, the era of post independence, which witnessed the birth of the first assembly under the shadow of the constitution. The cabinet formed during that time did not gain the

assembly's confidence because of the lack of coordination between the two sides, the government and the assembly, especially as it was a government of traders and did not represent all categories of the population. Such a government should have included people from different categories. Hence Shaykh Sabah Al Salem took the initiative to reform the government on the instructions of Shaykh Abdallah Al Salem.

The political game started then, when pressing parliamentary force and pressing political force, began to appear together with political groups, even if these had begun in the fifties such as the Arab National Movement, the Islamic Brotherhood Movement, the Communist Movements and others which spread in Kuwait; these however started to practice the political game in an organized form only after independence.

If we assess all the assemblies which comprised Shiite sects, Islamic Brothers, Arab Nationalists, and others, it is clear that political groups and blocks have played an important role in elections since the elections of 1962 and 1992 elections.

As had been mentioned a number of those groups joined together in one group, in order to have a louder voice in the assembly. Meanwhile new groups have appeared because of circumstances, developments and changes that the political field has witnessed inside and outside Kuwait.

It is worthwhile noting that during 14 years of Parliamentary practice i.e. since 1962 only the 1967 election was rigged and the 1976 assembly dissolved. The dissolution is mentioned in the famous speech of Shaykh Sabah Al Salem: "We reached a stage where to practice our political life was nearly impossible".

According to His Highness' speech as delivered by Shaykh Jaber, who was then a Prime Minister, the reason the Amir took the decision to dissolve the 1976 assembly was that members of the assembly deliberately hindered the review of projects by law, unhealthily exploited democracy by using the constitution for personal gains, called assembly sessions for no purpose, accused ministers and officials of malicious behavior as well as attacking them verbally without solid grounds. There was lack of coordination between the government and the assembly; members attempted subversion, delayed progress, stirred enmities, misled people, harmed relationships with friendly nations, spread the spirit of separation and disunity and destroyed the values and beliefs of society, in a very delicate and uneasy situation which the Gulf area and the Arab world were passing through. The ruler's fears that extremist notions would be imported under the pretext of educational and intellectual expansion among enlightened Kuwaiti youths was also one of the main reasons for the interruption of parliamentary life.

After four years of suspension of the assembly, the Constitution Amendment Committee produced suggestions which were presented to the 1981 assembly; the latter however rejected them, on the grounds that they were contradictory to the aspirations of the Kuwaiti people for additional democratic and popular participation.

In 1980 Kuwait witnessed new generations whom we call the "constitutional generations" i.e. when the Constitution Amendment Committee presented its suggestions which were submitted to the National assembly, a "constitutional generation" was there. The Kuwaiti constitution clearly states that any amendment should produce more popular participation, in other words, wither the situation should remain static or the amendment should produce something better.

In 1985 the new assembly, which was dissolved in 1986, took office. Again if we were to examine the reasons behind its dissolution as given in speeches by His Highness the Amir Shaykh Jaber Al Ahmad and the Crown Prince Shaykh Saad Al Abdallah, we find that they refer to the existence of factionalism, division of opinions and the emergence of groups and parties which led to national disunity and strikes and the impossibility for the government to carry out its duties. Add to that the criminal conspiracies which Kuwait has witnessed, the delicate situation of the whole area which was surrounded by dangerous and hectic tensions, discussions within the assembly which turned out to be quarrels and disputes, the mixing of general issues with private benefits, the transforming of public discussions into old settlements amongst members, creating unnecessary enmities and the appearance of sectarianism as well as lack of confidence. A comparison between the two dissolutions of 1976 and 1986 shows us similar reasons even if the timing differs.

In 1976 the Lebanese civil war was going on, while in 1986 the Iraq-Iran war was in progress. To return to the 1975 National assembly and previous assemblies, Arab nationalism was then against close relations with Iran which put Kuwait in an embarrassing situation with its strong neighbors the Persian empire, under the rule of the Shah.

The same story repeated itself during the 1985 National assembly with Iraq-Iran war, which required the government to be very cautious in dealing with a situation that forced it to supply Iraq with subsidies. A number of the members of the assembly who had sympathies towards Iran objected to these subsidies, which in turn created a non-cooperation between the government and the assembly. The 1985 assembly also decided to stop subsidies for Syrian troupes in Lebanon, accordingly a

Kuwaiti civil aircraft which was flying from Tripoli in Libya was hijacked and made to land in Lebanon. As a member of the League of Arab States, Kuwait has to execute the decisions taken by the league regardless of differences in points of view.

Three years after the dissolution of the 1985 assembly, which took place in 1986, a number of the said assembly moved to demand with a number of academic figures the return of Parliamentary practice. During this period the Iraq-Iran war had ended, leaving behind its mark, which left people wondering how to deal with the aftermath. Again then, the government and the political forces were each waiting for the right opportunity while on the edge of conflict. This impasse lasted until the Amir issued a decree to form the National Council. The most important aspect of its specialities and the reasons behind its formation, according to its first article, were to study the negative issues which caused parliamentary practice to be discontinuous.

The dissolution of the National assemblies of 1976 and 1986 and the similarity of reasons confirm the existence of deficiency in both cases. Was this deficiency caused by the constitution itself or the practice? These two points were to be studied by the National Council, but the Iraqi invasion hindered the council in fulfilling its mission.

The real reason behind the National Assembly failure was the discrepancy between the practice of democracy in the assembly and in the constitution. We are progressing day by day like a driver who has to expect surprises and has to be cautious so he may stop sometimes to make sure of his whereabouts in order to continue driving in the right direction. Thus Kuwait's Parliamentary practice started in 1921, carried on to 1938 and up to 1967 when the election was rigged; in 1976 Parliamentary life stopped, to return in 1981, and then to stop again in 1986. 1989 witnessed demands for Parliamentary life to return,

and in 1990 the formation of the National Council took place. This was followed by the Iraqi invasion and then the liberation, in 1991. 1992 was the year of the election of the new National Assembly. During all these stages, thoughts of electoral reform, political life and democratic practice developed strongly in Kuwait.

For the 1938, only three hundred and fifty persons participated in the election from amongst several thousand Kuwaitis. The election then was not greatly concerned with popular and constitutional participation or for that matter with the formation of a constitutional council. This attitude had changed by the fifties when municipal elections took place, culminating in the 1963 National Assembly election. Elections in the eighties and nineties command more understanding and completely differ from the 1938 election. Popuiar participation has increased and present election requirements are not the same as those of previous elections. An election nowadays will demand an account of achievements from the members of the National Assembly, and the National Assembly members will ask about government achievements.

After the liberation the National council resumed its sessions, but His Highness cancelled the first article of its duties, which dealt with previous Parliamentary practice and reasons which made it impossible to continue, which was in turn the main pillar of the existence of the National Assembly.

The truth is that the National Council was a consultative council and not a committee for amendment of the constitution. This was a council two-thirds of whose members were elected and one third appointed. Its main target before the Iraqi invasion was to study the present situation in Kuwait.

After the Kuwaiti people and their political forces had engulfed the Amir with support and had clung to his leadership, whether they were inside Kuwait or abroad, and after the Amir's return following the liberation, Kuwait was not ready for an election. The National Council, was limited to four years maximum, charged with preparing its report within its limited period and presenting it to the Amir (i.e. if the National Council prepared its report in one year and presented it to the Amir, its mission would be finished as well as its existence, as a preliminary to electing a new National Assembly). The National Council continued to perform its supervisory duties and to discuss suggestions emanating from the people through popular channels, expressing its wishes as well as the people's wishes, during this transition period which lasted sixteen months after the liberation.

The formation of the National Council had angered the political groups and forces; accordingly they did not participate in its election. As for those who won the election, they represented the silent majority which had no political affiliation and were independent; they won through free election. 63% of the Kuwaiti population participated, while the appointed members were of academic caliber and men of experience.

Despite the fact that the National Council was a consultative one and that the Amir charged it with supervising the executive authority and the budget, and gave it the right of voting, it achieved constructive proposals which were presented in a very short period. Its discussions were constructive and fruitful within the council itself and in the committees. The reason for such achievement was the non-existence of political groups with disharmonious and inconsistent tendencies which would be applied in the Assembly. Thus the bringing to an end of the National Council was not due to members exceeding their limits or falling short in performing their

duties, as was the case with the National Assembly of 1967 and its brother of 1986.

The sole reason was to go back to Parliamentary practice in accordance with the constitution. It is quite obvious that I am not against political movements and organizations inside Kuwait, but the political powers which exist in the country and which have crystallized in our time into six or seven groups, all have affiliation with political parties outside Kuwait. Examples are the two parties, Communist and Baathist, created of Leninism and Marxism. As for the Muslim brotherhood party, and the Shiite, they are established members of the international organization of Muslim Brotherhood, and associated religiously and intellectually with the International Shiites. He who respectively holds such views even though he is a member of the National Assembly with undoubted Kuwaiti feeling, will always be connected with his party and committed to headquarters outside Kuwait. Such attitudes lead to disunity and alienation amongst the assembly members.

I repeat that the non-affiliation of members of the National Council to political forces, does not mean that the establishment of political parties in Kuwait shall not be permitted. The major problem Kuwait is facing is that Kuwaitis do not practise political life correctly, for two main reasons.

First : The political powers, since the emergence of the constitution in 1962, have never dealt with the subject of the organization of parties by law, in spite of constitutional permission to do so.

Second : The state has not wished to take the initiative in this respect in case it should be blamed for the failure of the project.

This negative position of both the government and the political powers towards the project is the main reason for there being as yet no legal system for the control of the organization of political parties in Kuwait. Articles 36, 43, 44 of the constitution regulate freedom of speech, freedom to form societies and unions and freedom of assembly.

*** Article 36 of the constitution states :**

"Freedom of opinion and of scientific research is guaranteed. Every person has the right to express his opinion, and to publish it in speech or in writing or by any other means according to the rules and regulations explained by law.

*** Article 43 of the constitution states :**

"Freedom to form societies and unions on a national basis and by peaceful means is guaranteed according to the conditions and regulations explained by law. No one is to be forced to join any society or union".

*** Article 44 of the constitution states :**

"Persons have the right to gather without any permission or previous request. No one of the security forces is to attend their private meetings. "Public meetings, parades and gatherings are permitted according to the conditions and regulations explained by law; provided that the purpose of meetings and their means are peaceful and do not violate good behavior".

The present situation of such groups make it easy for a member to withdraw whenever he sees fit, as long as this group had not been made public or its system of foundation and organization has not been made public, in accordance with the published law.

Not to implement a law of foundation for the formation of parties in Kuwait is inappropriate to our Parliamentary and Constitutional life. I strongly believe that a law should be implemented to organize parties in Kuwait. Then, as a citizen one can evaluate any party before joining. If the party's program differs in goals and aims from what one believes in, one will not think of joining such party or even of voting for its candidates. When a party's existence and its program are well known, an elector has previous awareness and full knowledge of those whom he deals with as well as choosing the right path.

A factor in our voting system which influences our Parliamentary practice is that voters choose out of pure tribalism or sectarianism. As an example, the Muslim Brotherhood depend largely on tribal trends; accordingly a candidate is chosen from a certain tribe to guarantee his success by becoming an assembly member. There is no doubt that his tribe will vote for him to be its representative in the assembly, but in actual fact he represents the Muslim Brotherhood. For example, the assembly member Mufarej Nahar Al Mutairi, who claims that he is a fundamentalist (Al Anba Newspaper issue no. 6719 dated 21/1/1995) is successful because of his tribe and not because of his fundamentalism. Hence, he does not represent his tribe, which made him an assembly member, but he represents a fundamentalist group. He was chosen as a candidate in a by-election by his tribe, which in turn made him win the election, yet his political thoughts may be incongruous with those who voted for him.

Another example is the assembly member Ahmad Al Nassar who represents Al Jahra area. His tendencies are towards the Democratic Platform, yet he reached the assembly through his tribe (Al Zufair tribe), which does not necessarily believe in ideas like those of the Democratic Platform. The voters elected him because he

is a maternal or paternal cousin and, after all, he is a member of their tribe.

The same story applies to the assembly member Juman Al Azmi, who represents the Muslim Brotherhood, yet he won the election because of his tribe (Al Awazem). All these examples affirm that the non-existence of public parties drives voters towards non-awareness of the candidates' tendencies.

Even though all the groups declare - as is mentioned in the second chapter of this study - that they support party life, which requires issuing a law to organize party practice in Kuwait, none of these political powers, as we observe, at any time demands, through their representatives in the National assembly, the issuing of legislation to permit the foundation of political parties. The reason is that, with the existence of political parties, voters would be driven away from the existing tribal and sectarian tendencies which in turn tend to drive these groups away from political life. Therefore they cling to the present situation which is the best means of making them represented in the assembly.

Mr. Sulaiman Al-Makames stated in my interview with him about political groups, that he believes that if an elector wants to choose a candidate, he should choose him according to his political program and not because of his sectarian or tribal affiliation. Consequently the voting would be for a party and not for the person himself. The elector would question the assembly member on these grounds.

I personally agree with Mr. Makames that the elector should be fully aware of the political trends of each candidate in order to have freedom of choosing between a candidate affiliated to a certain party and another candidate who is independent. Nowadays even tribal members have the political awareness to choose the

candidate who represents them; if parties were to exist the voters would be aware of the political affiliation of each candidate, who would be chosen on these grounds, even if a by-election is taking place. People's tendencies then, would be towards electing a particular party.

After the liberation all political powers agreed, with foresight, to work closely together in order to be represented in Parliament. Accordingly they agreed to vote for each other, taking into consideration the candidate's popularity in his constituency, but not all of them agreed on fixed programs. For the first time in the history of Kuwait, the 1992 assembly represented all political powers with a kind of balance between them, which facilitated the government's cooperation with the assembly.

Political powers have refrained from forming parties for the reasons that I have mentioned, and the government has refused to take the initiative. In other words, both sides, political powers and government, are following a rejection policy regarding the formation of political parties. The government, on its side, prefers to deal with such political powers as lobby to make secret deals; it finds it more appropriate to deal with such powers than with parties. Clearly, any party would be more attached and more committed to its program, and the government would have to make political deals in accordance with the party's program. This procedure is a lawful right for both sides, the government and the political powers.

As long as political powers do not deal with the subject of parties, the government prefers a static situation rather than issue a law which organizes the function parties. This was proven by His Highness the Crown Prince's speech delivered in Ramadan 1412H, in which he clearly stated: "We shall not permit Kuwait to become a place of party disputes". The previous government represented Islamic trends within the assembly. The second

government represented traders, a democratic platform and independents in the assembly.

Again His Highness the Crown Prince stated in an interview with Al Watan Newspaper dated 17/1/95 issue no. 6803/1249 "It is not the time to discuss permission to form political parties, but when the people of Kuwait sees fit and believes that it will not divide them or tear down their National unity, then this touchy subject will be free for discussion".

Without doubt this situation occurred because of the non-existence of a fixed program for the parties, which enabled the government not to stick to any specified program. Both sides I believe, play a political game for their own benefit; it suits them not to legislate for the existence of parties. On the other hand there is a number of political powers which approve of the existence of parties. One is National Unity Groupings, which is represented by its general secretary, Mr. Sulaiman Al-Makames. This congregation which has no representative in the National Assembly, would demand legislation for the existence of parties. (personal interview with Mr. Sulaiman Al-Makames on 11/12/1994).

Also amongst the members of the Kuwaiti ruling family there is a number in the favor of the existence of parties in Kuwait, as my interview with Shaykh Salem Sabah Al Salem proves. He is one of the governmental pillars in the country, who supports the formation of political parties in Kuwait. It is, in his opinion, a sort of stability for the regime and a step forwards for cooperation between both sides, the government and the assembly. There would be a clearer insight for the people to chose their representatives in the assembly. These parties might differ from governmental tendencies, but the future would hold more coordination between the government and their majority party, which would represent the majority of Kuwaiti people. During the time of my

interviewing him he was not a member of the government, but he is one of the pillars of the ruling family in Kuwait.

In conclusion, will the status quo last for a long time? In my opinion, after this assembly's term finishes and that of the coming assembly as well, there are bound to be obstacles to attain a stage where political groups are reorganized in a better and more refined shape. Then whoever wants to be a candidate for the new assembly will have to declare his political tendency by announcing either that he is an independent candidate or that he belongs to a certain party; then and only then may he first be chosen first and secondly give an account of the implementation of his program.

The question is: are we in Kuwait on the edge of development towards democratic practice and the pursuit of developed countries? For instance Kuwait, as we note, practices legislative and political life just as the British do; also we have a government similar to that of Britain. When the conservative party wins an election it forms the government from its members who represent the majority in the House of Parliament; the same case applies to Kuwait. In practice, we in Kuwait follow the British system in an unofficial way. The proof of this is the results of the 1992 election and the composition of the government in that year.

We repeat that the 1992 National assembly is the only one in the history of Kuwait politics which comprises all political powers in Kuwait, and, in particular, those political powers which were formed before the Iraqi invasion. A number of members of the National Council who were elected before the Iraqi invasion succeeded in representing their constituencies in the 1992 National Assembly; the same applies to all those political groups which existed before 1990. As for groups that have appeared since the liberation and did not have any political power before the invasion, they are not

represented in the 1992 National Assembly, like the National Unity Grouping, which does not have a single representative in the said assembly.

When the 1992 National assembly came to practise its role, His Highness Shaykh Saad Al Abdallah began to form his coalition government, which differed from any other government Kuwait has known. The new government consisted of members of the ruling family and six members of the National assembly who represented different movements and in particular the various religious movements. It included Dr. Ahmad Al Rubai from the Democratic Platform, Mr. Jassim Al Oun from the Fundamentalists, Dr. Abdel Rahman Al Hajiri and Mr. Juman Al Azimi from the Muslim Brotherhood and Mr. Ali Al Baghli, shiite who is supported by the Educational Society.

This fact clearly shows that after the government had practised the political game, it was convinced that there was a group in the assembly with which it could cooperate for the remaining two years in a more committed way than with the first group. Why would the government cling to a group which has no fixed party program. Subsequently the Crown Prince, Prime Minister Shaykh Saad Al Abdallah attracted to his government, traders, democratic platform members and independents, disregarding the Islamic group, in order to keep them out of his government. My belief is that the Kuwaiti government from now on will be chosen from the Parliamentary majority in the National Assembly.

To sum up, Kuwait is a democratic country. Its people have been brought up on democracy since the day it was established and during its political development through all phases. However, if the situation remains stagnant, without the political powers moving towards doing justice to the people of Kuwait by issuing a law for forming parties, then successful candidacy for membership of the

National Assembly will still depend on the person himself and not on a party program. Again Kuwait will face obstacles in the future similar to those in the past. In saying that political powers in the country played their roles from the day it was established, starting with the power of the traders, and ideologies which were imported into Kuwait and had the opportunity of freedom of speech (which disappeared for a while only to reappear, and sometimes to take secret refuge), we repeat the argument that this is a natural situation which existed with authority's knowledge and will continue to exist even with public knowledge. What we are looking for is that both the government and the political powers give up the idea of status quo, it is the duty of the political organizations to take the initiative and present a project by law to form and organize parties in Kuwait.

REFERENCES

1. **Tareekh Al Kuwait by Abdel Aziz Al-Rashid**
2. **Safahat min Tareekh Al Kuwait by Yussef bin Issa Al Qinaï**
3. **Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi by Hussein Khalaf Al-Shaykh Khazaal**
4. **Kuwait Abra Al Tareekh by Yussef Shehab**
5. **Al Kuwait wa jaratiha - first edition**
6. **Al Kuwait fi Al Watha'eq Al Baritania by Ali Hamdi Al-Aazami**
7. **Tareekh Al Hukum Al Mutaq fi al Kuwait by Prof. Khaldoon Al Naqeeb**
8. **Nusf Aam lil Hukum al niyabi fi al Kuwait 1947, Muhawalat insha'a Diwan Amiri by Khaled Salman al-Adassani**
9. **Muthakarat Sulaiman al-Adassani**
10. **Al Watan Newspaper - July 6, 1995 - Kayfa bada'at al dimoucratiah fi al Kuwait by dr. Najat Abdel Qader Al Jassem**
11. **Majallat Assiyassah Aldoualiyah - October 1993 - Dirasat al tajammouat assiyassiyah fi al Kuwait - Marhalat ma baada al tahree by Dr. Falah Al-Mudeiris**
12. **Al Qabas Newspaper - Vol. 7770, Feb 5, 1995 - interview with Abdel Wahab Al Wazzan**
13. **Al Anba Newspaper - Vol. 6728, Jan 30, 1995 - interview with MP Abdel Mohsen Jamal**
14. **Al Anba Newspaper - Vol. 6736, Feb 7, 1995 - interview with Dr. Seif Abbas**
15. **Al Watan Newspaper - Vol. 6803/1249, Jan 1, 1995 - interview with H.H. the Crown Prince**
16. **Al Anba Newspaper - Vol. 6719, Jan 1, 1995 - interview with MP Mufarej Nahar Al Mutairi**

Abadan	عبدان
Abass Menawer	عباس مناور
Abdallah	عبدالله
Abdallah Agha	عبدالله آغا
Abdallah Al Nibari	عبدالله النيباري
Abdallah Al-Anjari	عبدالله العنجري
Abdallah Al-Saud	عبدالله آل سعود
Abdallah Hamad Al Saqer	عبدالله حمد الصقر
Abdel Aziz	عبد العزيز
Abdel Aziz Al Mezeini	عبد العزيز المزيبي
Abdel Aziz Al Rashid	عبد العزيز الرشيد
Abdel Aziz Al Saqer	عبد العزيز الصقر
Abdel Aziz Ali Al-Mutawa	عبد العزيز علي المطوع
Abdel Aziz bin Saud	عبد العزيز بن سعود
Abdel Aziz Hamad Al Saqer	عبد العزيز حمد الصقر
Abdel Aziz Hussein	عبد العزيز حسين
Abdel Hamid Al Sane	عبد الحميد الصانع
Abdel latif Al Moslem	عبد اللطيف المسلم
Abdel Latif Mohammad Thunayan Al Ghanim	عبد اللطيف محمد ثنيان الغانم
Abdel Latif Saleh Othman	عبد اللطيف صالح عثمان
Abdel Latif Thunayan Al Ghanim	عبد اللطيف ثنيان الغانم
Abdel Mohsen Al Khurafi	عبد المحسن الخرافي
Abdel Mohsen Jamal	عبد المحسن جمال
Abdel Rahman Al-Naqeeb	عبد الرحمن النقيب
Abdel Rahman bin Mohammad Al Bahar	عبد الرحمن بن محمد البحر
Abdel Razzak Khaled Al Zeid	عبد الرزاق خالد الزيد
Abdel Wahab Al Wazzan	عبد الوهاب الوزان
Abdel Wahab Al-Kaiali	عبد الوهاب الكيالي
Abdel Wahab Mohammad Al Wazzan	عبد الوهاب محمد الوزان
Ahli	أهلي
Ahmad	أحمد
Ahmad Abdel Aziz Al Saadoun	أحمد عبد العزيز السعدون
Ahmad Al Ghanim	أحمد الغانم
Ahmad Al Nafisi	أحمد النفيسي
Ahmad Al Nassar	أحمد النصار
Ahmad Al Rubei	أحمد الربيعي
Ahmad Al Saadoun	أحمد السعدون

Ahmad Al Shihabi	أحمد الشهابي
Ahmad Al Shreian	أحمد الشريعان
Ahmad Al Zeid Al Sharhan	أحمد عبد العزيز الشرهان
Ahmad Al-Humaidi	أحمد الحميضي
Ahmad Bicher Al Roumi	أحمد بشر الرومي
Ahmad Fahed Al Khaled	أحمد فهد الخالد
Ahmad Saharto	أحمد سهارتو
Ajman	عجمان
Al Anba Newspaper	جريدة الأنباء
Al Awazem	العوازم
Al Hamra cinema	سينما الحمرا
Al Kuwait fi Al Watha'eq Al Baritaniya	الكويت في الوثائق البريطانية
Al Kuwait wa Jaratiha	الكويت وجاراتها
Al Rashaied	الرشايد
Al Sayed Al Galaf	السيد القلاف
Al Siyassah Newspaper	جريدة السياسة
Al Turabi	الترايبي
Al Watan newspaper	جريدة الوطن
Al Zaman	الزمان
Al Zufair	الظفير
Al- Muntafek	المنتفق
Al-Aflage	الأفلاج
Al-Ahmadiyah	الأحمدية
Al-Ahram newspaper	جريدة الأهرام
Al-Ajman	العجمان
Al-Ammar	الأعمار
Al-Areef	العريف
Al-Awazem	العوازم
Al-Baath	البعث
Al-Banna	البنّا
Al-Dowasser	الدواسر
Al-Fajer	الفجر
Al-Hadar	الهدار
Al-Hudaibi	الهدبي
Al-Ihsaa	الإحساء
Al-Iman	الإيمان
Al-Irshad	الإرشاد
Al-Jahra	الجهراء

Al-Jezira	الجزيرة
Al-Khatib	الخطيب
Al-Manbar	المنبر
Al-Menayes	المنيس
Al-Mubarakiah	المباركية
Al-Muntafak	المنتفق
Al-Murah	المراح
Al-Muslim	المسلم
Al-Mutairi	المطيري
Al-Nibari	النيباري
Al-Qabas Newspaper	جريدة القبس
Al-Qassim	القصيم
Al-Raed	الرائد
Al-Sa'ikah	الصاعقة
Al-Sabah	الصباح
Al-Sabia	الصبية
Al-Salim	آل سليم
Al-Shaab	الشعب
Al-Shaheen	الشاهين
Al-Shummar	الشممر
Al-Taoun	التعاون
Al-Thufair	الظفير
Al-Wasmi	الوسمي
Al-Yaqza	اليقظة
Ali Al Radouan	علي الرضوان
Ali Al-Sabti	علي السبتي
Ali Hamdi Al-Aazami	علي حمدي العازمي
Ali Sulaiman Al Rifai	علي سليمان الرفاعي
Amir	أمير
Amiri Decree	أمر أميري
Anbar	عنبر
Anza	عنزة
Arab Ar	عرب عر
Arab Maghreb	المغرب العربي
Athbi	عذبي
Bani Hajer	بني هاجر
Bani Kaab	بني كعب
Bani Khaled	بني خالد

Barbara	بربرة
Barrak	براك
Basra	بصرة
Battle of Hamd	معركة حمض
Bayan	بيان
Bedouin	بدو
Bedouns	بدون
Bobyann	بوبيان
Bou Shaher	بو شهر
Dirasat al tajammouat assiyassiyah fi al Kuwait	دراسات التجمعات السياسية في الكويت
Diwania	ديوانية
Dr. Adel Al-Subeih	د. عادل الرميح
Dr. Al Sanhuri	د. السنهوري
Dr. Falah Al-Mudeiris	د. فلاح المديرس
Dr. George Habash	د. جورج حبش
Dr. Hani Al Hindi	د. هاني الهندي
Dr. Jassem Al-Oun	د. جاسم العون
Dr. Mohammad Al Rumeih	د. محمد الرميح
Dr. Najat Abdel Qadder Al Jassem	د. نجاة عبد القادر الجاسم
Dr. Othman Khalil Othman	د. عثمان خليل عثمان
Dr. Seif Abbas	د. سيف عباس
Dr. Wadie Haddad	د. وديع حداد
Duaij	دعيج
Fahed Al Khaled	فهد الخالد
Fao	الفاو
Faysal Al Sane	فيصل الصانع
Fikri Abou Attieh	فكري أبو عطية
Faylaka	فيلكا
Hamad Al Jouaan	حمد الجوعان
Hamad Al Saqer	حمد الصقر
Hamad Ibrahim Abdel Rahman Al Tuwaijri	حمد عبدالرحمن ابراهيم التويجري
Hamad Saleh Al Humaidi	حمد صالح الحميضي
Hassan Al Bana	حسن البنا
Hawalli	حوالي
Humoud	همود
Humoud Al Zeid	همود الزيد
Husni Mubarak	حسني مبارك
Hussein Khalaf Al Shaykh Khazaal	حسين خلف الشيخ خزعل

Hussein Maki	حسين مكّي
Ibrahim Basha	ابراهيم باشا
Ibrahim bin Mudaf	ابراهيم بن مضاف
Imam	امام
Imam Abdel Rahman Al-Faysal Al-Saud	امام عبدالرحمن الفيصل آل سعود
Ismail Al Shatti	اسماعيل الشطي
Istiqlal	استقلال
Jaber	جابر
Jaber bin Jalahma	جابر بن جلاهمة
Jamal Abdel Nasser	جمال عبدالناصر
Jamila	جميلة
Jarrah	جراح
Jassem Al Qutami	جاسم الفطامي
Jassem Al Saqer	جاسم الصقر
Juman Al Azmi	جمعان العازمي
Kayfa Bada'at Al Dimoucratiah fi al Kuwait	كيف بدأت الديمقراطية في الكويت
Kazma	كاظمة
Khaldoon Al Naqeeb	خلدون النقيب
Khaled Al Adassani	خالد العدساني
Khaled Al Bader	خالد البدر
Khaled Al Mudaf	خالد المضاف
Khaled Al Wasmi	خالد الوسمي
Khaled Al Zeid	خالد الزيد
Khaled Al-Hamad	خالد الحمد
Khaled Salman Al Adassani	خالد سلمان العدساني
Khalifa	خليفة
Khalifa bin Ahmad	خليفة بن أحمد
Khalifa Shaheen Al Ghanim	خليفة شاهين الغانم
Kharaj	خراج
Kubar	كبر
Kut	كوت
Kuwait Abra Al Tareekh	كويت عبر التاريخ
Majallat Assiyassah Aldoualiyah	مجلة السياسة الدولية
Marhalat ma baada al tahreer	مرحلة ما بعد التحرير
Meshaan Al Khudair AL-Khaled	مشعان الخضير الخالد
Meshan Al-Khudair	مشعان الخضير
Meshari Hilal Al Mutairi	مشاري هلال المطيري
Meshref	مشرف

Meskan	مسكان
Mohammad	محمد
Mohammad Ahmad Al Ghanim	محمد أحمد الغانم
Mohammad Al Barrak	محمد البراك
Mohammad Al Masoud	محمد المسعود
Mohammad AL Rashid	محمد الرشيد
Mohammad Ali Basha	محمد علي باشا
Mohammad Jassem Al Sadah	محمد جاسم الصداح
Mohammad Laska	محمد لصكة
Mohammad Thunayan Al Ghanim	محمد ثنيان الغانم
Mubarak	مبارك
Mubarak Al Dweila	مبارك الدويلة
Mubarak Al-Kabeer	مبارك الكبير
Mufarej Nahar Al Mutairi	مفرج نهار المطيري
Muhawalat Insha'a Diwan Amiri	محاولة انشاء ديوان أميري
Murabitoun	مرابطون
Muthakarat Sulaiman Al Adassani	مذكرات سليمان العدساني
Najd	نجد
Naji Aloush	ناجي علوش
Nasser Al Bader	ناصر البدر
Nasser Al Ghanim	ناصر الغانم
Nusef Al Nusef	نصف النصف
Nusf Aam lil huum al niyabi fi al Kuwait 1947	نصف عام للحكم النيابي في الكويت ١٩٤٧
Oha	عوهة
Qaroh	قاروه
Qurain	قرين
Quran	قرآن
Ras Tanoura	راس تنورة
Rashid Al Saadoun	راشد السعدون
Region of Palm	مقاطعة النخيل
Risala	الرسالة
Saad Zaghoul	سعد زغلول
Saadoun Al-Saadoun	سعدون السعدون
Sabah bin Humoud	صباح بن حمود
Sabah bin Jaber bin Salman bin Ahmad	صباح بن جابر بن سلمان بن أحمد
Sadaa Al-Iman	صدى الايمان
Saddam Hussein	صدام حسين
Safahat min Tareekh Al Kuwait	صفحات من تاريخ الكويت

Salafists	السلفيون
Salam Palace	قصر السلام
Salem Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah	سالم صباح السالم الصباح
Sami Al Menayes	سامي المنيس
Saud Al Abdel Razzak	سعود العبدالرزاق
Saud bin Abdel Aziz Al-Saud	سعود بن عبدالعزيز آل سعود
Sawt Al-Shaab	صوت الشعب
Sayed bin Ali Sayed Sulaiman	سيد بن علي سيد سليمان
Shamlan Al-Mutairi	شملان المطيري
Shat Al Arab	شط العرب
Shaykh Hamad bin Gharir	شيخ حمد بن غرير
Shaykh	شيخ
Shaykh Abdallah	شيخ عبد الله
Shaykh Abdallah Al Salem Al Sabah	شيخ عبد الله السالم الصباح
Shaykh Abdallah bin Sabah	شيخ عبد الله بن صباح
Shaykh Abdallah the Second Al Sabah	شيخ عبد الله الثاني الصباح
Shaykh Ahmad Al Jaber	شيخ أحمد الجابر
Shaykh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah	شيخ أحمد الجابر المبارك الصباح
Shaykh Ali	شيخ علي
Shaykh Barakat	شيخ بركات
Shaykh Duaij	شيخ دعيج
Shaykh Duaij Al Jaber	شيخ دعيج الجابر
Shaykh Fahed	شيخ فهد
Shaykh Faysal Al Doweish	شيخ فيصل الدويش
Shaykh Hamad Al Mubarak	شيخ حمد المبارك
Shaykh Jaber Al Ahmad	شيخ جابر الأحمد
Shaykh Jaber the first bin Abdallah Al-Sabah	شيخ جابر الأول بن عبد الله الصباح
Shaykh Jaber the second bin Mubarak Al Sabah	شيخ جابر الثاني بن مبارك الصباح
Shaykh Jarrah	شيخ جراح
Shaykh Kazaal	شيخ خزعل
Shaykh Khalifa bin Mohammad	شيخ خليفة بن محمد
Shaykh Mehalhal Al Yasseen	شيخ مهلهل الياسين
Shaykh Mohammad Al Sabah the first bin Sabah	شيخ محمد الصباح الأول بن صباح
Shaykh Mohammad bin Khalifa	شيخ محمد بن خليفة
Shaykh Saad Al Abdallah Al Salem	شيخ سعد العبدالله السالم
Shaykh Saadoun bin Arar	شيخ سعدون بن عرعر
Shaykh Sabah	شيخ صباح
Shaykh Sabah the second bin Jaber Al Sabah	شيخ صباح الثاني بن جابر الصباح

Shaykh Salem bin Mubarak	شيخ سالم بن مبارك
Shaykh Yussef Al Ibrahim	شيخ يوسف الابراهيم
Shaykh Yussef Bin Issa Al-Qinai	شيخ يوسف بن عيسى القناعي
Shaykha Mariam	شيخة مريم
Shiite	شيعة
Shura	شورى
Shuwaikh	الشويخ
Sofia	صوفية
Sualiman Al Adassani	سليمان العدساني
Sulaiman Al Makames	سليمان المقامس
Sulaiman Khaled Al Adassani	سليمان خالد العدساني
Sultan Ibrahim Al Kulaib	سلطان ابراهيم الكليب
Sunna	سنة
Swar Al Dahab	سوار الذهب
Talia	الطليعة
Tareekh al hukum al mutlaq fi al Kuwait	تاريخ الحكم المطلق في الكويت
Tareekh Al Kuwait	تاريخ الكويت
Tareekh Al Kuwait Al Siyassi	تاريخ الكويت السياسي
Tarfiah	الطرفية
Thufair	ظفير
Thul Al-Mekhrak	ظل المخراق
Ulema	العلماء
Um Al Maradem	أم المرادم
Um NameI	أم نمل
Um Qasser	أم قصر
Warba	وربة
Yacoub Al Humaidi	يعقوب الحميضي
Yussef Al Fuleij	يوسف الفليج
Yussef Al Marzouk	يوسف المرزوق
Yussef Al Tarrah	يوسف الطراح
Yussef bin Issa Al Qinai	يوسف بن عيسى القناعي
Yussef Saleh Al Humaidi	يوسف صالح الحميضي
Yussef Shehab	يوسف شهاب
Zuheir	زهير
Zuheir Mohsen	زهير محسن