

returned or fled to Jordan, boosting unemployment to over one-quarter of the work force. Moreover, the continuing blockade on Jordan's only outlet to the sea on the Gulf of Aqaba, allegedly to prevent neighboring Iraq from evading the United Nations embargo, is destroying the Jordanian economy. Iraq had been Jordan's largest trading partner by far, prior to the war.

### The Israeli role

The Shubeilat trial also takes place against the backdrop of continuing U.S.-orchestrated talks between Israel and represented Arab nations. On Oct. 26, the Israelis underscored their recalcitrance with a series of heavy attacks into southern Lebanon. With one tank column moving north of the Israeli so-called security zone, the Air Force carried out repeated air strikes against Palestinian villages and camps in Lebanon. The attacks were in retaliation for attacks on the Temple of the Patriarchs, allegedly by Islamic fundamentalist terrorists. It is said that the Israelis have repeatedly threatened to launch hot pursuit strikes against Jordan.

On Oct. 29, Jordanian negotiators at the "peace talks" in Washington announced a "breakthrough" in their negotiations with the Israelis, one day after King Hassan met with King Hussein.

Reportedly, a common statement on the agenda required to achieve a Jordanian-Israeli peace has been accepted. The document states that the aim of the negotiation is to reach a formal peace treaty with Israel, as Egypt had done in 1978. Although the document calls for a comprehensive Arab-Israeli settlement, it does not mention the issue of Israeli-annexed East Jerusalem, nor does it explicitly require the Israelis to withdraw from the Occupied Territories before a settlement is reached.

Predictably, 10 Palestinian factions based in Damascus, Syria, led by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and Hamas, denounced the breakthrough as "destructive," and called on popular forces in the Arab and Islamic world to "hold the Jordanian regime responsible." By discrediting itself through such deals, Jordan is being set up for an Israeli-linked destabilization further down the line. Israel asserts that Jordan, not the West Bank, is the proper location for a Palestinian homeland.

"The entire Israeli intelligence pack" is behind the operations against Jordan signaled by the trial of Shubeilat, said LaRouche in his Oct. 26 memorandum. "This has essentially made the Kingdom of Jordan, at least for the moment, virtually an Israeli strategic pawn, together with the Saudi Arabian royal family, which is very much a part of this operation, whether on its own, or because of its relationship with the Israelis." From the United States side, said LaRouche, the operation against Jordan "also has to do with the fact that a Clinton administration is more Zionist in this respect than is Tel Aviv or the Israeli government in Jerusalem."

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## Interview: Maître Claude Pernet

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### 'Shubeilat trial is a travesty of justice'

Maître Claude Pernet, a prominent Paris trial lawyer and professor of international law, traveled to Amman, Jordan on Oct. 5, accompanied by Mrs. Muriel Mirak-Weissbach of the Schiller Institute. As observers, they watched several days of proceedings in the trial of Laith Shubeilat, the Jordanian parliamentarian who was arrested on Aug. 31 and charged with conspiring against the state (see previous article).

On Oct. 31, the State Security Court prosecutor Maj. Mohammed Hijazi wrapped up the case, reviewing evidence produced by state witnesses, and calling for a guilty verdict against all four defendants. Major Hijazi pointed out that some of the charges carry the death penalty, but said he would leave the sentence up to the court, i.e., the three military judges.

Hijazi surprised the court by omitting reference in his summation to the "secret" witness who purported to be the bag man bringing \$200,000 from Iran to Shubeilat. It was in protest against this Syrian witness that the attorneys for Shubeilat and defendant Yacoub Qarrash, also a member of Parliament, had walked out. Both rejected their court-appointed lawyers, and began a hunger strike on Oct. 17. Hijazi refused to comment on his omission of such an important witness. He tried to prove that Shubeilat is the leader of the secret insurrectionary organization, by referring to a policy paper of the group, in the handwriting of defendant Ahmad Ramzi Al Ayoubi. Ayoubi had testified that Qarrash had dictated it to him, but he believed Laith to be the author, "because the sheikh is not so smart."

Lawyers for defendants Ayoubi and Hamid Sadeq Dkedik said their clients were guilty of belonging to the group, but intended to fight in the *Intifada* (uprising) in the Occupied Territories, "which is legitimate." Shubeilat had no legal summation in his defense, as he had rejected the court-appointed lawyer, who asked to be excused from the case as a result. The prosecutor instead ordered him to present a summation when the court reconvened for its final session on Nov. 3. Then the court recessed; a verdict is expected on Nov. 10.

Extraordinary security measures were introduced at the

Oct. 31 session, preventing all but lawyers, press, and family from reaching the court, to prevent pro-Shubeilat demonstrations.

In the defense summation—submitted against Shubeilat's will—the court-appointed lawyer essentially rejected the prosecution's charges. He said the prosecution had failed to prove the existence of the illegal group, and had insufficient evidence to support any of the charges. The other parliamentarian was expelled from the court after trying to present his own defense, as was his wife, for shouting in the courtroom. Heavy security was again visible.

The farce of a trial has now ended. Laith Shubeilat is continuing his hunger strike.

Maitre Pernet gave the following interview to EIR Nachrichtenagentur (EIRNA).

**EIRNA:** Could you tell us a little about yourself and how you became involved in the Shubeilat affair?

**Pernet:** I'm a practicing lawyer in the Paris Appeal Courts, and I also teach international law at university. The association of which I am vice president, "Law of Nations versus Law of Force," denounced the western states' behavior in the Gulf war, the U.N. embargo against Libya, and the genocide which Serbia is perpetrating against Croatia and Bosnia. I was invited to Amman by the Committee to Support Laith Shubeilat, where I took part, as an observer, in several of the decisive hearings in the trial of the MPs Shubeilat and Yacoub Qarrash before the State Security Court. This was from Oct. 5-11.

This trial is a travesty of justice; it defies all law, and for Jordan, it is nothing but a political farce.

It's a travesty of justice for several basic reasons, all of which add up to the fact that basic principles of law, in general, have been violated, and in particular, that the rights of man have been violated, those intangible rules which are respected by all nations and entrenched in international treaties.

**EIRNA:** What do you think of the charges against the accused?

**Pernet:** First, although the doctrine of parliamentary immunity is precisely intended to protect members of parliament during their term in office, Messrs. Shubeilat and Qarrash were charged, arrested, and thrown into jail with utter contempt for that rule.

Second, the State Security Court where the case is being heard, is a military court with extraordinary jurisdiction. This raises the question as to whether such a court can legitimately and lawfully, under the Jordanian Constitution, try a parliamentarian during his mandate.

Third, the parliamentarians were denied the right to speak to their lawyers without there being third parties present; this is a breach of the most basic rules of international penal law.

**EIRNA:** Is the trial proceeding in conformity with recognized standards?

**Pernet:** An attempt is being made to have things look orderly. The sessions are held in public, the defense is allowed to speak; but behind this formal facade of correctness, the actual content of the law is being violated, e.g.:

- At every hearing, witnesses and incriminatory evidence were produced by Maj. Mohammed Hijazi, the prosecutor, under conditions where the defense could not realistically examine said witnesses and evidence. Thus were the rights of the defense trampled upon.

- The depositions by prosecution witnesses were jumbled and extremely vague.

- One of the main prosecution witnesses, Mohammed Moghrabi, jailed for spying for Israel, actually withdrew his deposition during the hearing; he stated that he had been offered a reduced sentence if he agreed to lie, and claim that Shubeilat was a member of the Islamic Liberation Front!

- The expert witnesses were scarcely credible, for two reasons:

- a) these so-called experts were in fact men from the intelligence services, who lacked any real professional status;

- b) in the case of the alleged arms caches, the incriminating evidence was never produced, and other prosecution evidence was only shown to the defense at the very last minute.

At every hearing, the prosecutor would turn up with fresh evidence, which the defense could not properly examine.

For the first time in the Kingdom of Jordan, the court admitted tape recordings as evidence, including telephone conversations recorded without a warrant, in spite of the fact that Jordanian law forbids such tape recordings.

This trial is a political farce for the Kingdom.

In my view, the object of the whole exercise is to destroy a man who is the only political leader respected by both Christians and Muslims, and who represents an efficient, *legal* opposition force.

Mr. Shubeilat is widely known as a man of integrity, who, in the context of a parliamentary investigation, has exposed corrupt dealings for public contracts.

He speaks out for what he believes in: He defends the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, he opposed the Gulf War, the embargo against Iraq and the present plan to carve it up; he rejects the IMF's [International Monetary Fund] draconian policies.

Mr. Shubeilat did indeed call for reform, but always under the rule of law of the Constitution.

He loves his country and respects its King. It would be most unwise for Jordan to make a martyr of Laith Shubeilat. This is the man of the future for a brave country which must stand united as a democratic state around her King, given the perils which now threaten to engulf the region.