

BAHRAIN

Issued by the "Bahrain Freedom Movement" for promoting Human and Constitutional Rights

David Jump is the forerunner in the post-Henderson era

New Faces, New Terror, the Saga Goes On

They knew they were being targeted by the international community for condemnation. They decided therefore to exploit the means of the state to counter this move. The foreign minister, together with thirteen persons including the undersecretary at the foreign ministry, the prosecutor general and several security agents were hurriedly despatched to Geneva with a clear message: to deflect the attention of the UN Human Rights Commission from the internal situation in the country. On the top of the thirteen people, the new British advisor to the interior ministry, David Jump, has been put in charge of the government's delegation to the UN Human Rights Commission 54th session (16 March-24 April).

It is now known that despite the government's announcement of Henderson's departure from his post as the head of the torture regime and the ratification of the Convention Against Torture (CAT), the human rights organisations are not satisfied with the performance of the Al Khalifa regime. They want it to do more if it is to escape continuous condemnation. Many observers believe that replacing Ian Henderson with David Jump is a ploy that cannot be allowed to influence the stands of the international community. This new recruit has come from a firm of solicitors operating in London. This company, Trowers & Hamlin, has been advising the government of Bahrain for a considerable time. Moreover, David Jump is currently engaged in his first assignment in Geneva. His main task is to white-wash the image of the tortures in the interior ministry and to defend the lack of justice in the state security courts. He leans on a huge budget ordered by the prime minister whose reputation had been sunk even with his closest Gulf allies. Mr. Jump is starting a new career for defending repression and severe human rights violations. Whether he chooses to steer a cleaner one than his predecessor or maintain the old repressive regime will determine the future of the events in the country. He must have realised by now that thirty years of repression by Henderson have not solved the problems and the old colonial hero had to leave his post in disgrace.

In his statement to the UN Human Rights Commission on 19 March, the

foreign minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa presented a package aimed at deferring international action against his government. He mentioned a strange conception for human rights when he compared the situation in Bahrain with those in Kosovo and Palestine. He implied that since there are no massacres in Bahrain and the situation has not yet reached that of Kosovo or Palestine, then human rights had been "respected". He pointed out that his government has signed the Convention Against Torture in February (just before the start of the UN session) and that the International Committee for the Red Cross has been allowed to visit the prisons.

He failed to mention why his government refused to ratify the two main human rights treaties concerning civil, political, cultural, social and economic rights? Why did his government continue abusing the international criteria as well as the Constitution of Bahrain in relation to the administration of justice? Why his government continued its attacks against freedom of association, such as the dissolving of the Bar Society? Why did his government continue attacking religious places and ransacking mosques? Why is racism rampant in the University of Bahrain and other public offices? Why is it that torture never stopped? Why is it that children, even at the age of 9, are being arbitrarily arrested and tortured even during the period of the UN session? Why is that all prison camps and cells are packed with people who had been arbitrarily arrested? Why is that even those prisoners who had completed their terms of imprisonment are still in jail? Why is the pro-democracy leader Mohammed Jaber Sabah being summoned and threatened just because he expresses his views through articles published in Al-Quds newspaper? Why does his government continue detaining the pro-democracy leaders, such as Sheikh Al-Jamri, Mr. Abdul Wahab Hussain and Hassan Mushaima'a? Why is his government forcibly exiling citizens who attempt to return home? Why is it that his government continues to import mercenaries, especially from the Syrian deserts, in an attempt to change the demography of the country? Why is that his government refused to abide by the Constitution of Bahrain in the first place????

The foreign minister will always fail to answer these questions. This is because the prime minister is adamant on pursuing a policy of confrontation with the people of Bahrain all along, and none of his recent moves indicate any improvement in his perceptions and decisions. He dissolved the elected committee of

the Bahrain's Bar Society on 28 February only to replace it with one whose members are appointed by himself. Once again he has demonstrated to the outside world his inability to coexist with anything that is of the people's choice. On the one hand, mercenaries are being brought into the country to function as lackies for the prime minister in almost every sector; whether it is in the workforce, business, trade, labour or security. On the other, the sincere people of Bahrain who do not master the art of kissing hands and noses of the royal princes are being pushed aside at best, or to be dumped in prison cells. In today's world Henderson was neither the first of the mercenaries in Bahrain nor will he be the last. There are many people like David Jump who are ready to go to any length to support dictators and tyrants as long as the financial rewards are forthcoming.

In the midst of all this, however, the people of Bahrain have declared their disapproval of the way the country is being run by the prime minister and his stooges. Last month, for example, uprising areas proved their independence of the regime when they decided to commemorate the annual anniversary of two of the martyrs on 26 March. People switched off all sources of lights in their areas and plunged many parts of the country into a situation that greatly embarrassed the prime minister. Only three days earlier, he had declared, probably for the thousandth time, that his terror forces had crushed the pro-democracy movement. Every time he uttered such hollow statements the people succeeded in proving him wrong.

It is clear that the country is going from bad to worse under such dictatorship. The total failure of the recent seminar on the Euro-Arab Media has proved beyond any doubt that the message of the Bahraini people is reaching ever more people and is getting listening ears everywhere. In Geneva, for example, numerous Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's) are championing the cause of the Bahraini people, whilst the official Al Khalifa delegation is adopting dirty tactics by trying to buy off some people with money and gifts. The hope is that one day a limited degree of wisdom will prevail within the ranks of the ruling family to put an end to this miserable state of mistrust and war with the people of Bahrain. People have one common question: Have the Al Khalifas run out of men and courage?

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March 1998: Crackdown on lawyers society;

1 March: The talk of the day in Bahrain is the dissolution of the Bar Society and its replacement with an appointed committee of handpicked individuals. On 28 January, the Labour Minister summoned a group of lawyers and informed them about the Prime Minister's decision to dissolve the elected executive committee and to replace it with an appointed one. Several lawyers refused to be dragged into this dictatorial action. However, some of the individuals were appointed as replacements. These were condemned by the honourable Bar members. The appointed individuals include, Mohammed Al-Say (was also appointed as a member of the Consultative Shura Council) and Samir Rajab (member of the Shura Council). The next election that was scheduled for 16 March had been cancelled.

3 March: Amnesty International issued an urgent action on 3 March regarding Muhammad 'Ali Muhammad al 'Ikri, aged 17 saying he "is being held incommunicado and is at risk of torture or ill-treatment. He was reportedly arrested on 24 February 1998 at his mother's home in al-Qadam village in Jidd Haf. His precise whereabouts are unknown. The reasons for his arrest are unclear, but it is believed to be connected with a previous arrest and conviction. Muhammad 'Ali Muhammad al 'Ikri had previously been arrested on 10 April 1995 on charges of throwing a petrol bomb at police personnel. He was convicted on 9 July 1995 and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment by the Juveniles Court. However, his sentence was overturned on appeal and he was released in September 1995. Several weeks after his release the Bahraini authorities tried to rearrest him. Muhammad 'Ali Muhammad al 'Ikri managed to escape and was able to hide. Whilst visiting his mother on 24 February 1998 the authorities arrested him again".

4 March: The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) started its fifty-second session in Geneva, 2-20 March 1998. The government of Bahrain signed the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in 1990. However, it refused to submit any of the mandatory reports for assessing its practices in relation to racial policies. CERD considered the communications submitted by non-governmental and human rights organizations regarding the racist policies of the Bahraini government as practiced in the University of Bahrain and in appointments to public offices or organizations controlled by the government. These reports provided documented evidence of the semi-official racial discrimination policies which are contradictory to the obligation of the government as per the UN convention it signed in 1990. The representative of the government of Bahrain requested to be given a "final chance" to respond and to report on the situation in Bahrain. CERD agreed to wait for government's response until next August.

9 March: The Kuwaiti newspaper "Al Watan" stated that the president of the General Union of Kuwaiti Workers, Mr. Ibrahim Al Haroon, had confirmed that the "Arab Labour Union" has submitted a complaint to the "International Labour Organisation" against the government of Bahrain for banning trade unions in

the country. Amongst the persons who have taken the initiative to submit the complaint were: the Egyptian Labour Minister Mr. Ahmed Al Amawi and the Syrian Labour Minister Mr. Ali Khalil. A special committee has been formed to follow the Bahraini case.

9 March: A teenager Mohammed Abdul Jabar Ibrahim Salih, 16, was arrested and it is feared that he is being mercilessly tortured in prison. The teenager has been arrested once a week ago among other eight teenagers. The eight teenagers have been identified as: Musa Hassan Al Sudani, Ali Abdula Marhoon, 16, Hussain Ali Al Mushakhs, 16, Salah Mirza Musa, 15, Seyed Murtada Mahdi Al Musawi, 12, Jabir Seyed Ibrahim Al Musawi, 14, Hassan Abdul Jabar Mirza Ali, 15, Hussain Abas Al Safar, 14.

10 March: Four people were stopped and beaten by security forces in an arbitrary way. They were visiting a person in Duraz who had been released on 10 March. The four persons are Samih Saleh Mohammed Taqi, 22, his brother Mohammed, 25, Mohammed Ali Ahmad Haider, 18, and Maher Abbas, 17. A 15-year old boy, Seyyed Sadiq Qasim Ahmad, from Duraz, was beaten and arrested. The security forces also raided the house of Seyyed Ahmad Mahfoudh (in Sar) on 10 March and started beating him and his wife as well as their two sons Ali, 19, and Fadhlil 17. The sons were then taken to the torture cells, where they received further beating for one whole day, before being released. Haji Ali Abdul Karim, 56, was picked up in Sanabis, beaten severely, and let go on 10 March. He had just had a heart operation and could not survive the beating. He is now in hospital suffering from a deteriorated condition. Not one knows why the security forces are behaving in this manner.

12 March: Discontent is spreading amongst Bahraini intellectuals following the dissolution of the Bahraini Bar Society. The Arab Lawyers Union (ALU) issued a statement in Cairo, dated 12 March, condemning the dissolution of the Bar Society and the appointment of a member of the ruling family, together with some discredited individuals, for the confiscation of the society. The ALU stated that it does not recognize the appointed individuals, and that it decided to freeze the membership of the Bahraini Bar Society, until the restoration of its elected executive committee.

13 March: Mohammed Ali Haidar Sanqur, arrived to Bahrain from Saudi Arabia (via King's Fahd causeway), where he disappeared. No one knows his whereabouts. On the other hand, a lady has been detained in the airport for the past three days, she is being denied proper food and a place to sleep and have been treated with cruelty. The lady is the wife of a person by the name Yaser who lives abroad, and who the authorities want to detain.

Another person was prevented from entering his homeland. Salman Ali Al-Obeidan, from Shakhora, 31, was forcibly deported to Saudi Arabia.

14 March: 14 March, Isa Abdul Nabi Al Jamri, was transferred to Salmayya Hospital at 4pm local time, as result of the worsening of his health condition in jail. It is worth mentioning that the prisoners in "Jaw - 2" prison went on a

hunger strike two weeks ago protesting about the ill treatment of Mr. Isa Al Jamri.

On 14 March, two Mosques: Al Zahra Mosque (Shahrakan) and Imam Ali Mosque (Dar Kulaib) were raided by security forces and ransacked. They wrecked the mosques' furniture, smashed their windows and doors and looted BD 500 (\$1335) from the donations collection box.

16 March: Abbas Farhod, one of the detained citizens, had been transferred to the hospital suffering from a mental breakdown as a result of the torture he suffered in detention. Mr. Farhod had his fingers' nails pulled out and his teeth broken. Another prisoner in Qarin Prison, Isa Abdul Nabi Mahfoudh Al-Jamri, is suffering from mental breakdown as a result of the torture and solitary confinement he had suffered. The authorities are exacerbating his condition by placing him in a solitary cell.

Mr. Hassan Mushaima'a, one of the leading pro-democracy campaigners, is still suffering from ill-treatment and solitary confinement with his health continuing to deteriorate under the harsh conditions.

16 March: An unholly deal has been struck between the ruling families in Bahrain and Kuwait to sacrifice the dispossessed Bahrainis working in Kuwait. After cancellations and adjournment of trials for several times, a Kuwaiti court sentenced six Bahrainis on 16 March. Hussain Jassim Al-Hayki and Mohammed Mirza Ashor were sentenced to three years prison and hard labour as well as deportation after completion of sentence. Mohammed Habib Mansoor was sentenced to three years in absentia. Three other Bahrainis were sentenced to three months prison sentences. The six were also ordered to pay fines ranging from 200 to 2000 Kuwaiti dinars. The Bahrainis were accused of distributing pamphlets and video tapes critical of the Bahraini regime.

When in March last year, the Kuwaiti government arrested the youths; it was the Bahraini foreign minister that appeared to be a happy person demanding the toughest punishment. The Bahraini newspapers never hesitated to author stories about a "master plan" by this dispossessed and small number of youths for "toppling all the governments in the Gulf". The Kuwaiti authorities had collaborated with their counterparts in Bahrain for harassing and ill-treating Bahraini workers in Kuwait. The Bahraini people stood behind their fellow Kuwaitis during the occupation of Kuwait. However, after the liberation of Kuwait, the Kuwaiti authorities succumbed to the Bahraini ruling family by agreeing to intimidate the Bahraini workers; many were sacked, and others had their salaries capped. A person was handed to the torture chamber in Bahrain without any legal provisions and others were turned away at the borders. This unholly deal was a convenient one for the Kuwaitis. One day after sentencing the six Bahrainis, the Al-Khalifa government started "shouting" for the release of Kuwaiti prisoners in Iraq, while ignoring Bahraini prisoners in Kuwait.

17 March: The Ministry of Information confiscated around 200 books from bookshops exhibition. Exhibitors were banned from displaying books, which refer to democracy, freedom

UN Commission probes the situation in Bahrain

and civil society. Amongst the books banned were: "Civil Society in the Arab World", "Dynamics of Democracy & Change in the Arab World", "Democracy and Human Rights", "Democracy without Democrats", etc.

18 March: 70 lawyers filed a case in the past few days in the "Third High Civil Court" against the government's decision to dissolve the elected executive committee of the Bar Society. The Justice Minister acted swiftly by confirming his cousin "Khalifa bin Rashid Al-Khalifa" as the presiding judge for the court session that will deal with this case. Khalifa bin Rashid had sentenced hundreds of citizens in the past three years in speedy "state security" unfair trials. His appointment for presiding over the court in this case is indicative of the intentions of the ruling family to continue using the judiciary as a means of revenge against the citizens.

19 March: The 54th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights started on 16 March and will continue until 24 April. The situation in Bahrain is due for discussion in line with the resolution issued by the UN Human Rights Sub-Commission on 21 August 1997. The Bahraini governmental delegation has been increased with additional "security" staff. The foreign minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al-Khalifa, arrived at the start of the session and held a meeting with the UN Human Rights Commissioner, Ms. Mary Robinson. He also delivered an unexpected statement at the session on 19 March. The case of Bahrain has reached its highest level of international attention since the eruption of pro-democracy demonstrations in 1994. In his statement, the foreign minister attempted to defend his government by saying that human rights meant freeing human beings "from the pains of poverty, hunger and disease". He went to say that human rights are abused in other places such as Palestine under the Israelis and in Kosovo. He said that his government is protecting human rights by ensuring "a society which is economically, socially, and culturally developed, within an environment of real, sustainable development". Nowhere in his statement he ever mentioned political and constitutional rights, not single word about the banning of free association, such as the Bar Society, no word about the overcrowded prisons and no word about the abuse of human rights by means of the State Security Law, Court and organs. He did say that his government had signed the Convention Against Torture on 21 February 1998, but ignored the call by the UN Sub-Commission resolution calling on his government to ratify the two treaties for political, civil, economic and cultural rights.

The government of Bahrain sent 13 persons to the UN Commission together with the foreign minister and Mr. David Jump, the new British "advisor" to the Interior Ministry.

The case of Bahrain will continue to be a hot issue in the session. The International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH) distributed a written intervention to all delegates in the session. The FIDH statement summarized the main violations of human rights in Bahrain which include torture and ill treatment, arbitrary arrests, unfair trials and illegal sentencing of

citizens by unconstitutional courts, discrimination against the citizens, excessive force used by police, banning freedom of expression, ill treatment and torture of children, and religious intolerance. The FIDH submitted detailed evidence to corroborate these violations and called on the international community to intervene and put an end to the deteriorating human rights situation on Bahrain.

20 March: Appalling news have emerged from Al-Qarín prison during the detainees hunger strike. The strike started on 20 February and lasted for six days, during which, the detainees have been subjected to gross violations and torture. Among the cruel methods used to humiliate the prisoners were: beating, hanging the detainees from their arms and legs, randomly cutting their hair and placing them in solitary cells. Those known to have been subjected to severe torture were: Sheikh Hussain Al Akraf, Seyed Musa Seyed Mahdi, Mahdi Abas Sahwan, Ali Al Ikri, Ibrahim Jasim, and Abdul Hussain Al Mutghawi. On the other hand, similar violations have occurred in the Dry-dock prison.

21 March: Haj Abdullah Fakhro, and elderly person, had been reassessed last week, three hours after being freed by a court. Interior Ministry officers raided his house in the middle of a reception held for his release from his latest one-month detention period and rearrested him in accordance with the provisions of the State Security Law. Haj Abdulla was arrested earlier in February after attending a lecture in Al-Fateh Mosque during which he asked questions relating to the political situation in Bahrain, in the presence of the Justice Minister.

22 March: More than 5000 citizens signed a petition that was submitted to the Amir calling on him to order a halt to attacks carried out by the security forces against mosques and sacred places. The latest mosque to be attacked and ransacked was Al-Sadiq Mosque in Nabih Saleh, whose contents, books and copies of Quran were smashed on 22 March.

24 March: The government is persisting with its decision to evict an entire family from its residence. Haj Abdullah Jasim Ahmad (home address: 810 Road 1614, Hamad Town 1216) has been summoned several times by the officer, Sheikh Khalifa bin Sultan Al-Khalifa, a member of the ruling. He is due for another session of interrogation and threats sessions on 24 March with the same officer. This is a dangerous form of collective punishment. Haj Abdullah had purchased the house from the government's Housing Bank with a loan, and he had not defaulted on any of his mortgage or bills' payments. The officer told the family that they must evacuate the house because they are not a "deserving" family whose son is in jail for political reasons. It is believed that the Al-Khalifa want to institutionalize this form of collective punishment to set a precedent and stage a wave of confiscations.

25 March: The security forces attacked the students in Sheikh Abdul Aziz Secondary School and arrested Ahmad Makki, Saeed Jaffer Al-Unaisi, Ali Ahmad Al-Motawwa, Ali Hassan Al-Qallaf, Najib Abdulla Omran, Ali Ibrahim Ahmad. Uprising areas across the country declared their peaceful protest by turning off lighting and closing shops on 25 March starting at

7.30 pm. Many areas plunged into total darkness including Dair, Arad, Samahij, Sanabis, Daih, Mussalla, Bilad al-Qadim, Sehla, Duraz, Bani Jamra, Karzakkkan, Demestan, Malkeya, Dar Kulaib, Sitra, Ekr, Nuweidrat, and other places. The people are marking the second anniversary of the murder by the government of Isa Qambar (26 March 96) and Hamid Qasim (26 March 95). Loud sounds of exploding gas cylinders were heard across the country.

On 25 March, at dawn, the security forces raided the house of one of the girls (in Sitra) that are to appear before the State Security Court due on 28 March. Haji Abdul Nabi Abdul Wahab Rabea, 50 years old, was intimidated in front of his family. The security forces smashed the contents of his house, beaten him and arrested him. One of the daughters, Rabab, attempted to protect her father, but she was also beaten and taken prisoner. Mar. Rabea's other daughter, Layla, 17, is due to appear before the State Security Court on 28 March. Mr. Rabea's son, Ali, 18, is in detention for a year without trial or charges. The arrest of father and sister is an arbitrary action aimed at intimidating the citizens. The opposition calls on the international community to intervene and put an end to the continuing abuse of human rights.

28 March: The residents of Sitra denounced the atrocities of the security forces and the savage treatment of the women of Sitra, four of whom were brought before the State Security Court on Saturday 28 March. The girls are Layla Abdul Nabi Rabea, 17, Amal Ahmad Rabea, 20, Maryam Ahmad Ali Balwayye, 21, and Ahlam Seyyed Mahdi Hassan Al-Setri, 20. The trial second "quickie" session will be on Saturday 4 April. These girls had been snatched from a house in Sitra-Qeryya last year (26 March 1997). They were held in incommunicado detention for 20 days and were then released after payment of 100 dinar (\$267) each.

The father of the first person, Haji Abdul Nabi Rabea, 50 years old, together with her sister Rabab, had been arrested on 25 March after a dawn raid that ended with the destruction of their house's contents, torture in the house and arrest of the father and the sister. Rabab, is a mother of two children Mohammed, 8, and Abdulla, 18 months. She is now being held in Isa Town Detention (Torture) Centre. She was brought with her father for interrogation and torture on 28 March in Nabih Saleh Police Station. The notorious torturer Naser Al-Messallam, is torturing the entire family. This torturer also summoned the husband of Rabab, who is a handicapped person, and interrogated him in front of his detained wife and father-in-law.

28 March: The pro-democracy leader, Mr. Mohammed Jabir Sabah, had been summoned again by Abdul Aziz Atteyat-Allah Al-Khalifa (so-called Governor of Manama) on 28 March. Mr. Sabah, is being questioned about a new article he wishes to send to Al-Quds newspaper in London. The torturer, Abdul Aziz Atteyat-Allah Al-Khalifa is threatening the pro-democracy leader and has warned of grave consequences if Mr. Sabah continues to express his views. Mr. Sabah, is undergoing a critical kidney problem, and the people blame any deterioration of his health on the government.

SAS trains National Guard

* Lord Avebury asked Her Majesty's Government: "Whether they have undertaken any police or military training in Bahrain, under the Foreign and Commonwealth Military Training Assistance Scheme, or otherwise"

* HM Government answered in the House of Lords on 2 March 1998. Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean said: "Her Majesty's Government has undertaken no police or military training in Bahrain under the Foreign and Commonwealth Military Training Assistance Scheme. No police training in Bahrain has been provided under any other scheme."

The Ministry of Defence has provided military training in Bahrain. In the last year, the Bahrain Defence Force has received drill training and the Bahraini National Guard has been trained in the protection of key installations".

* **"AMAZING GAFFE AS SAS ACUSED OF LINKS TO BAHRAIN TORTURE"** The Big Issue in Scotland, Issue No. 159 (26 Feb - 4 Mar 1998)

"It looks like Ian Henderson won't be the only Briton accused of having Bahraini blood on his hands. The Big Issue can reveal that SAS have been accused of training the Bahrain National Guard. The Bahrain Freedom Movement (BFM) claims to have intelligence, which shows that the guards, whose only purpose is to control civil disturbances, will be equipped and trained by Britain, with security experts provided by the UK. It is thought the Guard, set up to quell 'internal security problems', will be trained by SAS officers, who will use their experience in fighting the IRA as a model for Bahraini troops to deal with their own dissidents. If our special forces train the National Guard then Britain will be directly linked to the repression of a people fighting for democracy."

Both the Ministry of Defence and the Foreign Office refused to comment on the claims, saying any matter relating to British special forces was classified and not open for discussion. In a badly-timed gaffe, a MoD spokesman said: "We can't say anything about the SAS, so they could be training the Hitler Youth or the Girl Guides for all we care."

Human rights campaigner Lord Avebury condemned the MoD for its "flippancy", saying: "People are dying in Bahrain and this development leaves a black smear on Britain's conscience. The Government doesn't seem to care that people's lives are at stakes."

The Bahraini ambassador to Britain, Abdulaziz Mubarak al-Khalifa, confirmed British forces were training the National Guard but refused to say which regiment was involved".

* **Al-Quds (London-based Arabic daily)** said on 2 January 1998: "Bahrain has around 12,000 military personnel equipped and trained by the US. Additionally, Bahrain has 9,000 security men. The NG will firstly contain 500-600 soldiers to be trained on individual and light equipment. These forces will be used as a commandos unit against internal insurgencies and to undertake responsibility for sensitive operations, such as the protection of the ruling family, guarding airport, critical locations, etc."

The NG will be increased to 1500 people and will borrow equipment from the regular army as may be needed. Contrary to the policy adopted for the army, the NG will be equipped and trained by Britain.

Henderson's replacement

Henderson's replacement has become an important issue for the British media in the past month. The top officials in the Bahraini interior ministry are about thirty British officers who had been working with Ian Henderson. Henderson is now a security advisor for the Amir. Amongst those running the ministry's affairs is Mr. Bryan, Henderson's deputy and Mr. David Jump, who plays an instrumental role in public relations, legal matters and security consultancy. The Big Issue in Scotland (4 March) published an article by Neil McKay about the downfall of Henderson, saying "With rumours now circulating of Henderson's plans to retire to the UK or America, there are calls for his prosecution. In his interview with The Big Issue Henderson said he dreamed of retiring to Scotland. And he poured scorn on calls for his arrest, saying: 'That would be a very big mistake. They wouldn't have a legal let to stand on. But a US Government source said: 'Henderson sounds like a very bad character. The Government wouldn't want him to set foot on US soil.' Henderson's escape routes from Bahrain seem cut off. His past is catching up with him."

On 8 March, the "Sunday Mail" published an exclusive article by Marion Scott, entitled "Jail threat to Scot terror boss, No hiding place for Bahrain Barbarian", in which she quoted the honourable MP George Galloway as saying "Henderson must face justice. We have a duty to take action against a man whose offices have overseen the most hideous tortures". It also quoted Lord Avebury as saying "Since Britain signed the UN Convention Against Torture, it means we must prosecute alleged offenders, our own citizens or not, and whether or not the offences were outwith our jurisdiction, he is liable for prosecution". The Sunday Mail quoted Dr. Saeed Shehabeli as saying "No one will be safe until all his henchmen are gone. He may have stepped down from his position, but he leaves behind a regime which continues to torture, maim and imprison innocent men, women and children".

Home Thought: The Sun Rise

Out of the suburbs of Bahrain emerged as an amazing cypoleyan of our -bursts of wavelike crowds of people gushing out of the alleys and corners in roaring sounds that were traveling through the air in a speed that have broken the silence barrier which was unwillingly superimposed on them through successive periods of colossal repression. These were decades of a mixture of sometimes uncalculated and mostly calculated repressive schemes to subdue the growing revolt for the emancipation of human feelings and rights. An overwhelming human feeling has set off its journey through the valley of horror and abuse which the regime has masterminded. Tones of tormented voices have echoed throughout the world arena delivering an unabated message to the world community of the astounding reality of the misery that foamed over the surface of the society.

A foggy atmosphere composed of the smoke of tear gas has taken over the sea breeze of the island. Hundreds of foreign security men breathing heavily with extraordinary attacked the people flexing their muscles.

The mask of an ugly regime has been uncovered. It is time for the sun to shine.

British torture chief moved

The Independent, 5 March 98, Robert Fisk "Officially, Ian Henderson has lost his job. According to the Bahrainis, the former British Special Branch officer and 'hero' of the Mau Mau war in Kenya has been replaced as head of the island's Special Intelligence Service by Sheikh Khaled bin-Mohamed bin-Salman al-Khalifa, a member of the emirate's ruling family. But opposition groups, whose members have torture in the cells of Mr Henderson's SIS headquarters in Bahrain, have their doubts about the announcement. For almost 10 years, Bahraini dissidents, especially Shia opposition members demanding a return to parliamentary rule, have claimed Mr Henderson, a Scot largely credited with breaking the Mau Mau's intelligence service, has been in charge of the island torture chambers. Their allegation is true. His interpreter - after three decades in Bahrain he cannot speak Arabic - is a Jordanian army officer who has personally whipped interrogation victims."

The New York-based human Rights Watch has reported that the toe-nails of prisoners have been torn out. Electricity has also been used on Shia protesters brought to Mr Henderson's offices, although witnesses say the Briton has himself never inflicted torture.

In Britain, Bahraini opponents of the regime have been demanding Mr Henderson be brought to trial in London for rights abuses, a call supported by a number of Labour MPs. British foreign secretaries have disclaimed any responsibility for his activities - Mr Henderson's victims have sometimes been deported to London and forbidden from returning to their country of birth, even though they hold full Bahraini passports. There are rumours in Bahrain that Mr Henderson has cancer and has been given a golden handshake by the al-Khalifa family to buy property for his retirement in the US. But Bahraini opposition still wonder if the announcement is true. Asking for anonymity, one Bahraini critic said yesterday that even if Mr Henderson has been fired his job as SIS head, he may still hold a position within the al-Khalifa's personal security service. "We are told he is being replaced by Khaled Mohammed-but the sheikh is not an intelligence man, just a traffic official," the Bahraini said. "I suspect this is just a blind to ease the criticism from London." His suspicions can only be reinforced by a statement from the Bahraini government that Mr Henderson will be kept on as an "adviser" to the interior ministry.

Britain appointed him to his post in Bahrain prior to the emirate's independence in 1971. The US has never uttered a word of protest about his presence on the island-not least because of Bahrain's role as headquarters to the US 5th Fleet in the Gulf.

Mansour al-Jamri, a spokesman for the "Bahrain Freedom Movement" in London, said it made little difference whether Mr Henderson or Sheikh Khaled ran the security services so long as Bahrainis continued to be imprisoned and tortured. "If we see the number of victims decrease...that will be a positive sign". Mr al-Jamri's father, Sheikh Abdul-Amir al-Jamri, has been in jail on the island since January of 1996. Violent protests have decreased in recent months - a reason, perhaps, for Mr Henderson's departure from the SIS.