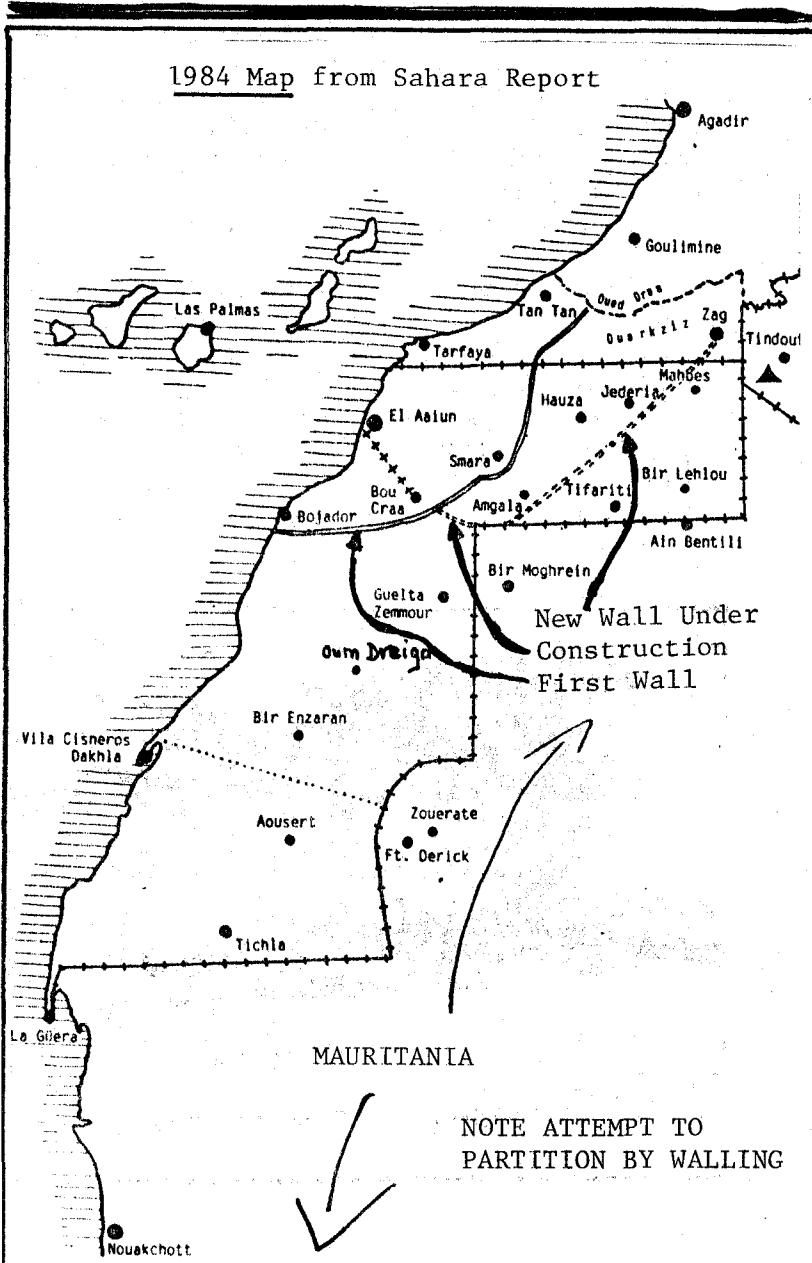




HOW MANY WALLS?? NEW CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY

Since January the Moroccan army has undertaken construction of a new "wall" in the northeast section of the Western Sahara to protect the previously walled section of the territory occupied by Moroccan forces. According to Polisario sources, about 40,000 Moroccan soldiers have been involved in the extension of the "wall" since the first of the year. The first section undertaken was the area in the region of Amgala. (See map, this page.)

1984 Map from Sahara Report



The purpose of the new construction, according to some sources, is to cut off the Saharawi army from its route to the ocean and to the south and thus oblige it to go through Mauritania, which then might be treated as a Saharawi ally and brought back into the war.

Despite the brief alliance of Morocco and Mauritania in the early years of the war, Morocco and Mauritania have long-standing differences over borders. Morocco did not recognize the State of Mauritania until 1969, nine years after Mauritania gained its independence. Morocco had claimed the whole of Mauritania as part of the "greater Morocco" since the 1960's, although some political leaders had made the claim in the late 1950's.

Some analysts believe that Morocco would not hesitate to enter Mauritanian space "in hot pursuit" where there is reluctance to do so in the more powerful Algerian nation.

(See the discussion of Moroccan claims in Tony Hodges' book, reviewed this issue and in Maurice Barbier's book reviewed in an earlier issue. The point made by the two authors is that this claim was reviewed by the I.C.J. and found to be unsubstantiated.)

In linking the U.S. to current Moroccan activity (failure to negotiate with Polisario; failure to have a referendum by December, 1983; building a new wall and starting a new military offensive), reporters from abroad note that Westinghouse has supplied the Moroccan government with the surveillance system mounted along the "walls." Reports are also appearing in the press abroad that Moroccan officials have stated that the U.S. is providing the Moroccan Armed Forces with technical assistance (U.S. satellite and army plane data) in the surveillance of Polisario troop movements and Saharawi bases in the Western Sahara. It has also been reported that U.S. advisers are now serving with the Moroccans in the Western Sahara proper and are involved in the direction of the "new wall offensive."

EDITORIAL

As this newsletter is going to press, rumor of a Middle East Institute-organized, State Department-sponsored closed meeting for analysts, State Department personnel and academics on U.S. policy directions in the Western Sahara has reached this desk. It is appropriate that the U.S. government examine very closely the role it has played and is playing in the conflict in Western Sahara. Due to real or perceived U.S. support/intervention, Morocco is saddled with an enormously expensive war, the result of which is destabilization of the Moroccan economy and the King's government as well as that part of northwest Africa.

Certainly the decision of King Hassan not to negotiate with Polisario, as called for by the O.A.U. and the U.N. General Assembly by the end of 1983, stems in some part from his perception of assurances of continued U.S. support of Morocco's war, or at least from U.S. failure to suggest that direct negotiations and a referendum are a means of ending the conflict.

In December 1983 Vice President George Bush said in Algiers that the U.S. government supports "the principle of a referendum to be organized in Western Sahara." He noted that "as to knowing who is speaking to whom or who is in conflict with whom, that is within the jurisdiction of the African nations."

It would appear that the "African nations" have spoken in a number of resolutions, the last, at Addis Ababa. The African nations, for Mr. Bush's information, believe that the warring parties are Morocco and the Polisario Front and that a cease-fire and referendum supervised by the U.N. is a resolution to the conflict. Certainly the African nations believe that in the process of decolonization, self-determination by the colonized party is an inalienable right.

It is possible, of course, that U.S. policy on Western Sahara is as neutral and disinterested as Mr. Bush's words indicate, but it is obvious to some observers of the situation that U.S. words are being understood quite differently in Morocco, and, the current project of the Moroccans, aided by U.S. technology, to expand "the wall" from Bu Craa to Amgala to Morocco itself, represents an active U.S. partisanship.

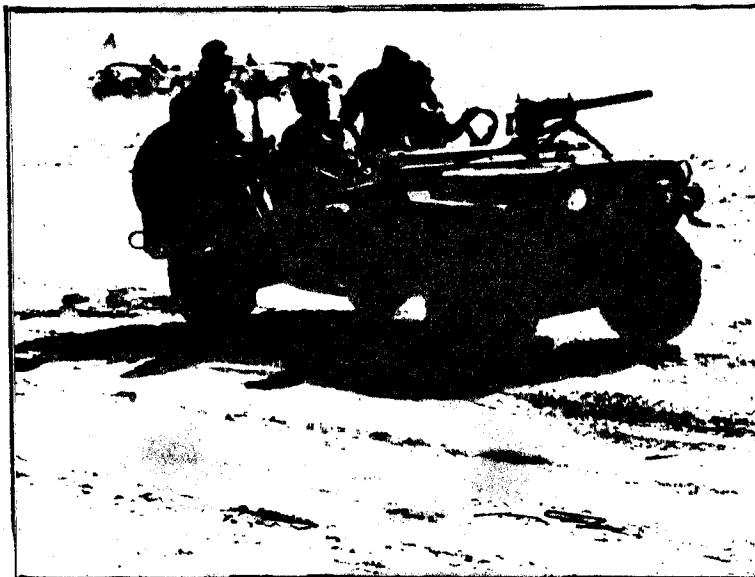
The U.S. has been guilty of "double speak" on the question of Western Sahara since 1975.

Granted that it is finally 1984, are long-range U.S. interests to be sacrificed interminably for short-range goals that are really unattainable?

It appears that the U.S. wants to use Morocco in its new cold war (continued cold war) against the Russians. Morocco is supposed to be supportive of U.S. policy in the Middle East (not very successful in Lebanon) and elsewhere in Africa. Yet the short-sighted stance of U.S. policy makers fails to recognize that the rapprochement between Morocco and Libya and Libya's claimed annexation of part of Chad are closely tied to the Moroccan argument about Western Sahara, even though the facts are much different.

The weakness of U.S. foreign policy is that there is only one policy apparently: the world is to be divided between Soviet supporters and U.S. supporters. Any situation that exists is distorted to fit this framework no matter the reality. Surely the U.S. is not so far removed from its own origins that it cannot recall the nationalistic feelings that brought about our own independence. Surely the U.S. does not want to be classified as a repressive regime, allowing a measure of freedom for its own citizens, but urging repression of other peoples in the name of its own "self-interest."

Our bankrupt policy on Western Sahara should cease in the interests of our nation and in support of the right of a people to determine its future. Instead of the idea of resolution by the O.A.U., we should cease aiding Morocco to escalate the conflict and urge them to the negotiating table and to implementation of O.A.U. and U.N. resolutions.



PUBLICATIONS UP-DATE: BOOKS, ARTICLES, ETC.

WESTERN SAHARA: THE ROOTS OF A DESERT WAR

Tony Hodges, Westport, Connecticut, Lawrence Hill & Co., 1983, \$14.95 (paper), \$19.95 (hard-back), 416 pages.

The most important work in English to date on the Western Sahara conflict is Tony Hodges' Western Sahara. Hodges, who is also the author of the Historical Dictionary of the Western Sahara (Scarecrow Press), spent over six years researching and writing this study of the origins of the conflict in Western Sahara and the development of the Polisario state. His travels and research in Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania and the Western Sahara and his study of documents from Spain, the United States, Great Britain, France and elsewhere demonstrate the seriousness of Hodges' determination to be the dispassionate chronicler of current events (the present war dates from 1975) as well as a careful analyst of the conflict and the historical and political past of the region.

According to Hodges, one thesis of this book is "that profound economic and social changes, spurred by the development of Western Sahara's important phosphate industry, laid the basis, along with changes in the political climate at home and abroad, for the rise of a modern nationalist movement, setting its sights on the creation of an independent nation-state." He dates the manifestation of the modern nationalist movement with Mohammed Bassiri, whose urban Liberation Organization was crushed by the Spanish in 1970.

What Hodges does very well in the 416 pages of eminently readable text and notes is to describe the region, recount its history from the time of its recorded history, describe the peoples who have inhabited the territory and their social organization prior to the war in 1975, trace the efforts of all parties (European and Arabic) to colonize the territory, detail the political and military maneuverings of many parties from the 1950's on to annex or retain the territory. A special value of the text is the amount of detail on the war, the efforts by Polisario leaders to negotiate their independence, Moroccan, Mauritanian, French, Spanish and U.S. roles in the development of the conflict. No other work on the conflict to date has the amount of information that Hodges has compiled.

If there is any weakness in the book it stems from the fact that the conflict in Western Sahara has not been resolved. The book seems

to end abruptly after a discussion of the role of world powers in the conflict. Hodges seems to hold out the hope that despite U.S. assistance to Morocco to continue and widen the war, Morocco is ill-placed to hold out forever given the cost of the war to that nation and the determination of Polisario. The book, of course, does not contain material on the recent additions to "the wall" since it ends in 1983. It also, of course, does not discuss recognition of the SADR by Mauritania and Upper Volta and more recent discussions of possible OAU repercussions since no referendum was held in the territory by the close of 1983.

Any book on an on-going struggle has this limitation. It must end at a date prior to resolution of the struggle. Hodges' very thorough work, however, is most certainly the most up-to-date account of the struggle and contains information unavailable elsewhere. An appendix discusses the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice. A selected bibliography and an index complete the book.

WESTERN SAHARA

The Roots of a Desert War



TONY
HODGES

PUBLICATIONS UP-DATE, CONT.

"THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE CONFLICT IN WESTERN SAHARA," THE MIDDLE EAST ANNUAL, ISSUES AND EVENTS, VOLUME 2, 1982, Boston, G.H. Hall. Robert A. Mortimer

Mortimer's article focuses on the global political forces that affect Polisario's efforts to gain independence. Of particular interest is a discussion of U.S. efforts to establish the Rapid Deployment Force accord with Morocco and the resultant increase in military aid to that nation to achieve this goal. The U.S. has worked to enhance the "client state" relationship with Morocco, using that nation in its broader geographical aims (supporting Hissen Habré in Chad, keeping Khaddafi from becoming head of the OAU (ed...)), establishing a strategic base for U.S. interests in the Persian Gulf.) There is an interesting discussion of why the SADR was admitted to the OAU in February 1982 and Polisario's strategy to be an equal partner in a resolution of the conflict.

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"THE WESTERN SAHARA CONFLICT: DEVELOPMENT AND PERSPECTIVE," PAPER GIVEN AT THE AFRICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION MEETING, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, DECEMBER 7-10, 1983. Teresa K. Smith.

Smith's paper contains excerpts of conversations she held with Saharawis living in El Ayoun in 1983. If the excerpts are an indication of the sentiments of the Saharawis, it is quite clear why no referendum was held in 1983 nor will be held with the participation of Morocco. Most Saharawis with whom the writer spoke (she speaks Spanish and Arabic) were strong supporters of independence for the S.A.D.R.

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LA VIE D'UN PEUPLE EN EXIL, LES SAHARAOUTIS, Belgian Support Committee, C.S.P.S., Rue De La Tulipe 34, 1050 Bruxelles.

The brochure is in French. It discusses life in the refugee camps in particular. A number of pictures show different stages of life in the camps.

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"THE WESTERN SAHARA FILE," THIRD WORLD QUARTERLY, JANUARY, 1984. TONY HODGES

An historical overview of the Western Sahara, its people and the current war for independence.

TOTAL SUPPORT OF ALGERIA TO LIBERATION STRUGLES, SAYS ALGERIAN POLITICAL BUREAU

April 10, 1984, the Algerian Political Bureau published a bulletin outlining Algeria's position on the numerous conflicts throughout the world. Of specific interest to readers of this newsletter were the sections on the Western Sahara.

"Concerning the problem of the Western Sahara, the Political Bureau emphasizes that Algerian policy has been developed in respect to the following principles:

1. Recognition of the Saharawi national fact and its international reality.

2. The necessity of full application of the resolutions (on Western Sahara, ed.) of the 19th Summit Meeting of the O.A.U. which defined the framework and means for putting into effect a solution to the problem of Western Sahara.

3. Algerian unreserved support of the struggle the people of the Western Sahara are waging under the direction of the Polisario Front, its unique and legitimate representative, for the effective exercise of their right to self-determination.

4. The availability (readiness) of Algeria to work (in full respect of the above principles) to bring together the fraternal peoples of Morocco and Western Sahara, and thus to encourage a negotiated settlement."

Other struggles to which the document makes reference are those of the people of Namibia and of South Africa. It goes on to say:

"The conflict of the Sahara provokes worries of another nature through the obstinacy of Morocco to try to escape by subterfuge from the O.A.U. resolutions and to form new alliances capable of coming to its aid at the approach of the O.A.U. Summit. Algeria has reaffirmed its support of the Saharawi people and the necessity to apply the resolution of the 19th Summit of the O.A.U. in order to resolve the conflict which sets the Saharawis against Morocco, while reiterating its willingness to work within the above-stated principles to bring together the fraternal peoples of Morocco and of the Western Sahara, and thus to favor a negotiated settlement."

The General Assembly,

Having considered in depth the question of Western Sahara,

Taking account of decision AHG/Res.103 (XVIII) on the question of Western Sahara, adopted unanimously by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its eighteenth ordinary session in Nairobi, Kenya, from 20 to 27 June 1981, as well as all the relevant resolutions of the Organization of African Unity, and reaffirming all the relevant resolutions of the United Nations on the question of Western Sahara,

1. Takes note of resolution AHG/Res. 104 (XIX) on Western Sahara, adopted unanimously by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the organization of African Unity at its nineteenth ordinary session, held in Addis Ababa from 6 to 12 June 1983, as follows:

"The Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, meeting in its nineteenth ordinary session in Addis Ababa from 6 to 12 June 1983,

"Having examined the report of the Implementation Committee of Heads of State on Western Sahara,

"Recalling the solemn commitment made by His Majesty King Hassan II during the 18th Summit to accept the holding of a referendum in the Western Sahara to enable the people to that territory to exercise their right to self-determination,

"Recalling with appreciation His Majesty King Hassan's acceptance of the recommendation of the Sixth Session of the Ad Hoc Committee of Heads of State on Western Sahara contained in document AHG/103 (XVIII) B, annex I, as well as his pledge to co-operate with the Ad Hoc Committee in the search for a just, peaceful and lasting solution,

"Reaffirming its previous resolutions and decisions on the question of Western Sahara, and in particular AHG/Res.103 (XVIII) of 27 June 1981,

"1. Takes note of the reports of the Implementation Committee of Heads of State on Western Sahara;

"2. Urges the parties to the conflict, the Kingdom of Morocco and the POLISARIO FRONT, to undertake direct negotiations with a view to bringing about a cease-fire to create the necessary condition for a peaceful and fair referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, a referendum without any administrative or military constraints, under the auspices of the O.A.U. and the United Nations, and calls on the Implementation Committee to ensure the observance of the cease-fire;

"3. Directs the Implementation Committee to meet as soon as possible, and in collaboration with the parties to the conflict, to continue to work out the modalities and all other details relevant to the implementation of the cease-fire and the conduct of the referendum in December 1983;

"4. Requests the United Nations in conjunction with the O.A.U. to provide a Peace-Keeping Force to be stationed in Western Sahara to ensure peace and security during the organization and conduct of the Referendum;

UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION ON WESTERN SAHARA (CONTINUED)

"5. Mandates the Implementation Committee with the participation of the United Nations to take all necessary measures to ensure the proper implementation of this resolution;

"6. Requests the Implementation Committee to report to the 20th Assembly of Heads of State and Government on the result of the Referendum with a view to enabling the 20th Summit to reach a final decision on all aspects of the question of the Western Sahara;

"7. Decides to remain seized with the question of Western Sahara;

"8. Requests the Implementation Committee in the discharge of its mandate to take account of the proceedings of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Ordinary Sessions on the question of Western Sahara and to this end invites the O.A.U. Secretary-General to make available the full records of the said proceedings to the Committee;

"9. Welcomes the constructive attitude of the Sahrawi leaders in making it possible for the 19th Summit to meet by withdrawing from it voluntarily and temporarily."

"2. Requests the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to ensure that the United Nations participates effectively in the organization and conduct of the referendum and to report to the General Assembly and the Security Council on this subject and on the measures requiring a decision by the Council;

"3. Urges the Secretary-General to co-operate closely with the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity with a view to the implementation of the pertinent decisions of the Organization of African Unity and of the present resolution;

"4. Requests the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples to continue to consider the situation in Western Sahara as a matter of priority and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session."

THE FULL TEXT OF THE O.A.U. RESOLUTION FROM THE 19TH SUMMIT IS CONTAINED IN THE U.N. TEXT.

BOTH THE O.A.U. AND THE U.N. CONTINUE TO STATE THAT DECOLONIZATION HAS NOT OCCURRED.

BOTH THE O.A.U. AND THE U.N. STATE THAT THE PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT ARE THE POLISARIO FRONT AND THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO.

(The U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. did not relay this information to George Bush?)

BOTH THE O.A.U. AND THE U.N. CALL FOR A CEASE-FIRE, A REFERENDUM SUPERVISED BY THE O.A.U. AND THE U.N., AND A U.N. PEACE-KEEPING FORCE IN PLACE AT THE TIME OF THE REFERENDUM.

NEW RECOGNITIONS OF THE S.A.D.R. IN 1983-1984

Mauritania and Upper Volta are the most recent African states to recognize the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic. Recognition occurred in early 1984. This brings the total number of African states to recognize the S.A.D.R. to 29, or 58% of the O.A.U. membership. Other African states that recognize the S.A.D.R. are Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Cape Verde, Chad, Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. S.A.D.R. ambassadors have been appointed to a number of these nations and have had their credentials received by many heads of state.

Saharawi leaders decided not to attend the 40th Session of the Council of Ministers of the O.A.U. to allow that body to deal with the question of the S.A.D.R. and to ease the work of Mengistu Haile Mariam, present head of the O.A.U., in that body. S.A.D.R. leaders have been careful to abstain from any actions that might precipitate the break-up of the O.A.U. At the same time many African leaders note, along with Mengistu, that the problem of the S.A.D.R. must be resolved because the conflict threatens the existence of the O.A.U. itself, and because they are opposed to brothers drawing each other's blood.

SPANISH POSITION ON WESTERN SAHARA RESTATED

In a letter to the President of the Ninth European Coordination Conference (See article this newsletter.), Juan a. Yanez-Barnuevo from the Spanish Foreign Office noted:

In the name of the President of the government I am answering the letter you sent him last November 6 (1983) in your position as president of the Ninth European Coordination Conference of Support Committees of the Saharawi People.

As you know, on February 26, 1976, Spain ended the responsibilities she had as administrative power of the Western Sahara by so notifying the Organization of the United Nations.

In addition, the Spanish government continues to consider that the process of decolonization of the Western Sahara will not be completed until a referendum on self-determination under the control and guarantees of the U.N. and the O.A.U. takes place.

DID HE OR DIDN'T HE SAY THAT ????????????????

Révolution Africaine (April 20-26, 1984) reports that Colonel Diara Traoré, new head of state in Guinea, said that "the S.A.D.R. will be invited to the 20th Summit Meeting of the O.A.U., if it is held in Conakry." He is also reported to have said: "The new military government of Guinea wishes the 20th Summit of the O.A.U. to take place as planned in Guinea, but anticipates its being held in November rather than in May as originally planned."

During Traoré's visit to Dakar, the magazine reports, the Colonel also declared that his country approves the resolution of the O.A.U. on the organization of a referendum in Western Sahara and direct negotiations between the Polisario Front and Morocco.

(Africa News (April 23, 1984) notes that Traoré has denied reports that he said Guinea would invite the S.A.D.R. to the Summit.)

Also reported in that issue of Révolution Africaine are quotes from two Nigerian newspapers, The Guardian and the New-Nigerian. The Guardian recently called for Nigeria's full recognition of the S.A.D.R. The New-Nigerian suggested calling Morocco's bluff, that is, its threat to leave the O.A.U. if the S.A.D.R. takes part in meetings.



A PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO
EXIST IN SIGHT?

SUPPORT COMMITTEES UNITE IN RESOLUTIONS

The following is the text of the final resolution of the Ninth European Coordinating Conference held in Brussels November 4 - 6, 1983:

The Ninth European Coordinating Conference of Support Committees for the Saharawi People was held in Brussels with the participation of delegates from the following countries: West Germany, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and Japan.

The delegates attending were informed of the situation prevailing currently in the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic by Nema Jumani, Saharawi Minister of Health and Ahmed Boukhamri, Polisario representative in Europe.

The delegates applied themselves to analyzing international circumstances and new claims of solidarity with the S.A.D.R.

The Conference congratulates the 19th Summit Meeting of the O.A.U. for its unanimous adoption of a just and honorable peace plan in the question of the Western Sahara. To this end, the Conference congratulates the Saharawi leaders whose constructive attitude made possible the adoption of that resolution. Furthermore, it condemns Morocco's refusal to respect the decisions of the African Meeting in Addis Ababa by refusing to open negotiations.

The Conference invites those states participating in the 38th Session of the United Nations to adopt a resolution in conformity with the will of Africa as expressed at the 19th Summit Meeting of the O.A.U.

The Conference Condemns the military and diplomatic intervention of the Reagan Administration against the Saharawi people and denounces the attitudes of those Western countries, which, like France, provide Morocco with arms.

The Conference invites the Spanish government of Senor F. Gonzalez to honor the promises of the P.S.O.E. with regard to the Saharawi people and the S.A.D.R. So long as Moroccan aggression continues, the Conference asks the Spanish government to sign no agreement for special cooperation with the Moroccan invader.

The Conference has adopted a program of action for 1983-84 with the view of intensifying its efforts to inform European public

opinion on the struggle of the Saharawi people to achieve total liberation of its national territory.

The Conference congratulates the Saharawi people on the exceptional progress they have made in the areas of public health, social organization, education of the people and agricultural and cooperative development. It has examined the requests for assistance presented by the Saharawi Red Crescent and has decided to put into action programs destined to continue the development of the Saharawi population and state.

It has decided that the Tenth Meeting of the European Coordinating Conference of Support Committees will be held in Austria in October 1984.

FOOTNOTE: THE 38TH SESSION OF THE U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ENDORSED THE O.A.U. PEACE PLAN, INCLUDING CALLING FOR DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN MOROCCO AND THE POLISARIO FRONT.

PAUL BALTA IN LE MONDE, DECEMBER 10, 1983 NOTES THAT:

For the first time since the conflict in Western Sahara broke out in 1975, the General Assembly of the U.N., adopted Wednesday, December 7, by consensus, the resolution approved previously, according to the same procedure, by the Committee on Decolonization (which) entirely reproduced the resolution of the 19th Summit of the O.A.U. at Addis Ababa last June, which exhorted Morocco and the Polisario Front to undertake direct negotiations.

NOTE ARTICLES IN VOLUME IV, No. 2, dealing with Morocco's refusal to negotiate with Polisario and to sit down with Polisario in Addis Ababa as agreed with the Implementation Committee.

Stonewalling to see if the U.S. will enter the war?

THE S.P.S.C. LETTER

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