



## IRAQ'S MINISTRY OF EDUCATION THREATENS SCHOOL ADMINS

(ZNDA: Baghdad) Last week, Iraq's Ministry of Education warned the people of northern Iraq against enrolling school children into any curricula taught by Assyrian and other non-Arabic administrators. These schools were then identified as "phony" and their administrators were threatened to be punished for enrolling students into a non-authorized curriculum. Baghdad's government called the act of establishing schools in northern Iraq as "an act of treason threatening the unity and sovereignty of Iraq." Currently, thousands of Assyrian children in northern Iraq, grades one through six, learn basic courses in science, mathematics, and language in Arabic and Assyrian as taught by qualified Assyrian teachers. Last year over 30,000 textbooks in the Assyrian (Syriac) language were distributed among these school children. Northern Iraq is currently the most active center of Assyrian learning for children under the age of 18.

## KRG NAMES NEW KURDISH PREMIER

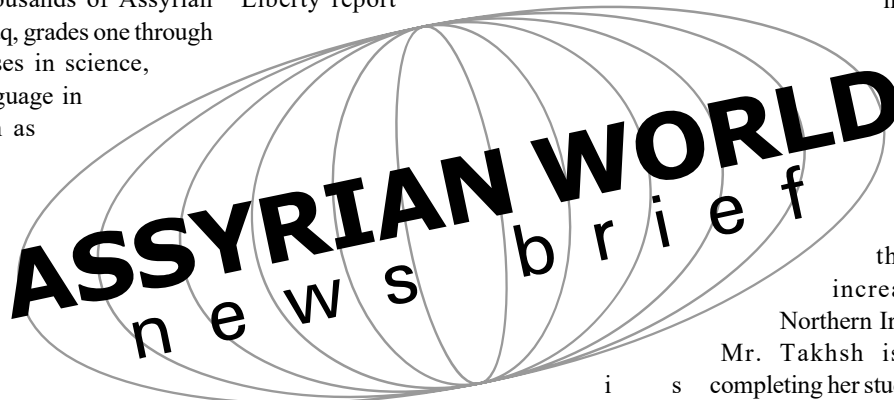
(ZNDA: Chicago) Last month, the Kurdish Parliament in Arbil, Iraq named Nechrivan Barzani as the new head of the Council of Ministers of the Iraqi Kurdistan. Mr. Barzani had previously served as KRG's Deputy Prime Minister. His new term in office began on November 27. The KRG is the dominant power in the provinces of Arbil and Dohuk where a substantial number of Assyrians live. Mr. Barzani's first assignment will be to form the Fourth Cabinet which will consist of 15 ministries. Mr. Yacoub Yosip of the Assyrian Democratic Movement of Zowaa is the Minister of Housing and Development in the Third Cabinet. Assyrian observers expect greater involvement of the ADM in the KRG's Fourth Cabinet.

## ANP LEADER SPEAKS ON FUTURE OF IRAQ

(ZNRF: London) According to a Radio-

Free Europe report, the Assyrian National Party (ANP)'s Nimrud Baytu, told London's "Al-Zaman" newspaper on 15 November that the ANP is committed to "an unbreakable link" between the Assyrians and other Iraqi nationalists in an effort to build a pluralistic Iraq. Mr. Baytu noted also that: "Arab, Kurdish, Assyrian, and Armenian sons" must "struggle with all nationalist forces". He then said that "successive governments [in Iraq] overlooked the racial and cultural multiplicity of the Iraqi people, and failed to respect and endure this multiplicity in the constitution."

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty report



published in

Prague, Czech Republic.

## JORDAN'S QUEEN NOOR ATTENDS CHALDEAN BANQUET

(ZNDN: Detroit) Queen Noor, 48, wife of the late King Hussein of Jordan, was in Metro Detroit last week to address more than 2,000 people at a humanitarian banquet in Detroit's Renaissance Center, sponsored by Arab-American and Chaldean Council. Detroit is home to more than 7,000 Jordanians. Noor was the guest speaker at the 1999 Arab American and Chaldean Council Civic and Humanitarian Awards Banquet, and spoke about humanitarian issues around the world. Proceeds from the sale of \$100 tickets will support the King Hussein Foundation, chaired by Noor, and established by royal decree this year as a national and international nonprofit, nongovernmental organization that promotes education, health, peace and children's programs. Noor married King Hussein in 1978 and has earned a bachelor's degree in architecture and urban planning from Princeton University in 1974, and has participated in international urban planning and design projects in Australia, Iran, the United States and Jordan.

## TAKHSH SPEAKS AT GERMAN ORIENTAL INSTITUTE

(ZNDA: Germany) Ms. Adrin Takhsh of Berlin, Germany, last week spoke at the Deutsch Orient Institut's Sixth Annual Congress held in Blankenese-Hamburg. This was the first time that an Assyrian scholar was representing the contemporary issues of the Assyrian communities. Ms. Takhsh spoke about "Assyrian Women between Traditional and Modern life" during a December 3rd working group meeting. Ms. Helga Anschutz of the Oriental Institute chaired the panel. In her discussion of the role of the Assyrian woman in the different Assyrian communities Ms. Takhsh gave an overview of the Assyrian society in the western countries. At the end of her speech she noted the Assyrian women's increasing involvement in Northern Iraq's politics and culture.

Mr. Takhsh is a Ph.D. candidate, completing her studies at the Free University of Berlin.

## POPE'S TRIP TO IRAQ OFFICIALLY POSTPONED

(ZNRU: Chicago) John Paul II has once again postponed his trip to Iraq again- this time indefinitely. Assyrian-Chaldean Patriarch Mar Raphael I Bidawid said the decision was made for security reasons: "We are very saddened by this new delay in the visit, but here in Iraq the situation changes every day. In spite of this, the Pope's trip is only postponed: the Jubilee Year is long and we are only at the beginning of the millennium." The Vatican Press Office has noted that: "Iraqi authorities have communicated to the Secretariat of State that the abnormal conditions in which the country is living because of the embargo and the no-fly zone, as well as the situation the region is experiencing, do not make it possible to adequately organize the Holy Father's visit to Ur of the Chaldeans, in Iraq."

Mar Raphael Bidawid explained that this decision has nothing to do with the criticisms of the Pope by some Iraqi intellectuals, who accused him of scarcely mentioning the Muslims in a letter written to the Christians of the country

# THE FUTURE, AND BEYOND 2000

To my understanding, and through the last few years, the world should have ended a few times over. But all the set dates came, and went, and the world was still there with all its beauty, and ugliness.

But what will this new century hold for us?

I have always believed that the good in people will surface. Wherever good has been oppressed, or persecuted, it will stand up for its rights, and pursue its own path to completion.

Consciousness is a fairly new concept to our existence. Humans have existed on earth for millions of years, but they have only become conscious of themselves, and others for about 500 000 years, and it is still in early development. I see in the future a new

form of humanity, one that has greater awareness of other living beings that surround it. I believe that our minds will evolve, and reach levels that we never thought we could.

What about us, the Assyrians?

Well, I think we will still be around struggling to maintain our identity. But we might settle some of the problems that have been nagging us since our move to western countries.

All in all, I see a bright future for humanity. A future that differs greatly from that depicted in science fiction movies.

I hope we will all enjoy the celebrations, and on behalf of the staff of Nakosha, I wish you a very merry Christmas, and a happy new century. ■

Sennacherib Warda

## Assyrian Business-woman wins



### 1999 National Australia Bank's Ethnic Business Awards

The "1999 National Australia Bank's Ethnic Business Awards" recognise and reward the contribution of migrants to Australian business and economic development. Finalists in the two categories, small and big business, came together at a gala dinner and presentation night at the National Australia Bank headquarters on Thursday the 2nd of December.

In the "Businesses with a turnover of \$5 million and below" category Sue Ismiel an Assyrian businesswoman who migrated from Syria was awarded first prize in the category. The award night was replayed on SBS national Australian television at 2:30PM on Sunday the 5<sup>th</sup> of December.

Sue Ismiel is the director of NAD'S Pty Ltd that was formed in 1992 to manufacture and market NAD'S Natural Hair Removal Gel through an innovative direct marketing system. Sue Ismiel's daughter Natalie was the inspiration for the product.

Older daughter Nadine provided the product name and youngest daughter- Naomi has featured in promotional activities.

Since the initial formulation and success of the NAD'S Natural Hair Removal Gel a tight targeted marketing strategy was established using the media multiplier approach of television and print media. The successful combination of selective television programming and mass-market colour magazines will continue to be at the forefront of NAD'S comprehensive sales promotion support for national retail distributors. In addition extensive ongoing editorial support for NAD'S product range ensures retail distributors a maximum sales result. Sue's achievement, is a testament to her ability to persevere against all odds, and make a success of her life. This is rare as the male-dominated Assyrian society usually acts as a barrier to female accomplishments.

David Chibo

For further information readers can go to the Nad's web-site. <http://www.nads.com.au>

## Error

In the November issue of Nakosha, there appeared in the article titled 'Dr. Abdul Maseeh Sadi on Assyrian Genocides' some errors:

- The correct date of the lecture was 26th September.
- The correct spelling of the Dr.'s name is Dr. Abdul Massih Saadi.

The RSPCA is an organisation that looks into the welfare of animals, and has led many campaigns that asked for animal rights. To my understanding it is a voluntary based organisation, which depends on financial support from the government, and donors.

Why am I writing about the RSPCA?

Well, as I was driving the other day, I passed the head office. I was amazed at the size of the organisation. A group of humans have devoted their lives to speak on behalf of Dogs that are left in cars on hot days, Cats that are abandoned, Rabbits that are used in experiments by cosmetics manufacturers, and many other animals that experience the cruelty of humans.

What intrigues me about this concept is how some of us (*us* as in humans), have become aware of other living beings around us. We have grown up with a mentality that 'We are the centre of the universe', and it all rotates around us. The roots of this idea are not important, what is important is that it has blinded us from seeing the life that manifests every other being that shares this planet of ours.

Kahlil Gibran, in his book *The Garden of the Prophet*, argues that everything that surrounds us is alive. Even the Stones are alive, but at a much slower pace, and with a fainter heart beat. There is a big movement in Western Society, which is bringing people closer to nature, and all of its living beings. People are turning to alternative religions, they are becoming vegetarians, they are moving away from the big cities, and in many other ways people are turning away from a traditional life style.

There is nothing that proves their opinions, or beliefs wrong. I, personally, am not so fond of eating meats, or having some birds locked up in a cage, or fish in a aquarium, just so the children would have something to show their friends.

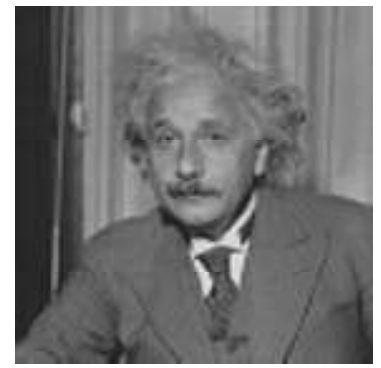
We have something within that is called Life. This Life manifests every single entity on this planet, and we all need to appreciate that. It was a fine chance in the process of evolution that put us on the outside, and the monkeys on the inside of the cage.

To sum up all these thoughts, what I believe is that at the beginning, something started a power that we call Life. This force, power, or what ever you want to call it, has been rejuvenating, and maintaining itself since the first being existed. Today we are here, developed to a point that is so distant from our roots, and we wonder why things seem to be falling apart around us. ■

Sennacherib Warda

editor's note

# the 20<sup>th</sup> century



Well here we are ladies and gentleman, the much-heralded 'New Millenium' has dawned upon us and we find ourselves knocking at the gates of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. What is one to say? And where is one to begin?

The twentieth century has certainly been a century of contrast. While for the most part it has been a time where humanity has been at war with itself, the latter part of the century saw the world grow more at peace with itself and more accepting of itself. Let us elaborate further.

Humanity engaged in a First World War, and such was the barbarity and disgusting nature of war displayed, that millions upon millions met their end in a most cruel and ferocious of ways. It left humanity labeling the war, the 'War to end all Wars'; hence vowing never to repeat such self inflicted apocalypses again. But again, humanity was to prove, for later generations, that it had not learnt from its mistakes. It belied its earlier solemn promise, and engaged in a second World War, where again the ferocious machination of the

human mind, subjected millions to the most indescribable and unspeakable of deaths.

It was a century where racism flourished, and where the psychology and drive of whole nations was to exterminate and annihilate, all that which is different. The Assyrian nation among many small nations was to be subjected to countless massacres and oppression. Such ideologies, however, came to be considered by late twentieth century man as futile, and beneath that which is human, in a rising wave of 'Democracy'.

Many a nation rose to the defense of the weak and oppressed, to preserve the 20<sup>th</sup> century coined adage of 'human rights'. We find an example in many small states, such as East Timor, where late twentieth century man attempted to redeem himself and clear his conscience by rising up in defense of the weak and the downtrodden.

One must mention that WWII was to be ended with the killing of the innocent, where the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima was to forever change the face of human history. But humanity came to hold itself hostage by the inception of the nuclear age.

Humanity was to engage in a countless succession of wars. At the conclusion of each, all parties emerged in agreement that there were no victors and all had lost, and each time vowed to never repeat the same mistake again, but did so time and time again.

Paradoxically, the 20<sup>th</sup> century was a century of invention. Man became more mobile, with the car and the plane, and interplanetary travel. Over ten million humans have now traveled more than three million miles around the earth, in contrast to 30,000

miles per lifetime averaged by all humanity prior to the year 1900.

Inventions alone have increased the numbers enjoying an advanced standard of living - one now superior to the best known sovereign before 1900 - from 1 per cent in 1900 to forty per cent of all humanity in 1966. All that came from 20<sup>th</sup> century inventions. Take away all the inventions from humanity and within 6 months, half of humanity would die from starvation and disease.

The average lifespan expectancy for people before 1895, was forty-two years. Through the advance of medical science in the 20<sup>th</sup> century that increased to the seventy plus range.

In the late twentieth century humanity was to experience the side effects of and the problems that progress inevitably brings. One saw global over population, which forced some governments to implement drastic birth control policies, such as the 'one child policy in China'.

Twentieth century man became more aware, that he who wants progress must pay a heavy price. Mankind has had to contend with the problems that progress brings. Environmental pollution, in particular, that instilled in man that his progress comes at the cost of his ultimate demise. For example, nuclear waste, global warming, acid rain, ozone depletion and the like. Man came to realise that this planet is not an endless reservoir of resources and everything has a limit.

Late twentieth century man became more aware of his surroundings and his environment. He became more appreciative and understanding, because he placed himself hostage with his planet's extinction, with the progress of such things as



# 25 YEARS OF THE



given permission to randomly select students from the several classes that we met, and got their varied opinions on the 'Assyrian school'.

We began with Eilseen Nabilech, who is 13 years old. She told us, "I like learning the Assyrian language, as it is very interesting. It is also more enjoyable to be amongst other Assyrians, rather than just learning Assyrian, as I have made friends from all classes".

Anita Aziz, a 14 year old made the following comments, "The teachers are all right, but I really enjoy the friends and socialising, as well as the end-of-year activities, that include singing and dancing".

A 12 year old, Ranya Shimshon, who had incidentally received 1st prize in the Assyrian Ethnic schools minister awards, provided us with the following remarks, "I have fun here, as I get to, not only read and write in Assyrian, but I also get to see some of my friends. My teacher is also very nice, as I can ask her questions".

A 11 year old, Phillip Sarmast, provided us with the following, "My parents don't force me to attend. I attend because I get to learn Assyrian, which is very interesting. I also like participating in Assyrian drama".

A 9 year old Monica Agassi, had this to say, "At Assyrian school they teach

us Assyrian and it's fun because our teachers aren't annoying".

Danielle Sarmast, aged 10, boldly told us, "I enjoy reading and writing the Assyrian language, as it is very easy for me. I am not forced to come to school, by my parents, and I also enjoy meeting my friends".



Then suddenly the bell rang, to mark the end of the school day, and hundreds of Assyrian students, who had been learning the Assyrian language, flooded out of their classrooms and onto the playground where they talked and played in the company of their Assyrian friends. It dawned on me, that we were witnessing an entire school, from pre-school classes to year 7, an entire generation of Assyrian children, many raised in the Diaspora, being professionally taught a language that our ancestors had started using over 2700 years ago.

Mr. Miraziz had much to be proud of, "We teach history, faith education, identity and, how they came to be in Australia. The school books and curriculum have all been created by the teachers".

As for his future aspirations Mr. Miraziz had this revelation to share with us, "After teaching for 20 years, I am happy



to say that soon we will have our own Assyrian private school, with the help of the Church of the East. This school which is to be named the 'St. Hormiz Assyrian primary school' is scheduled for opening in 2001. It shall be the first Assyrian school, within Australia, built, owned, operated and funded by Assyrians".

In November, after years of dedicated and professional service, the 'Assyrian School' celebrated its 25th anniversary. As we were leaving I could not help but contemplate on the fact that an entire generation of Assyrian students had passed through its doors, every Saturday, helping to preserve the Assyrian language. It was at that point that I recalled my favourite quote, which was etched on the entrance of Ashurbanipal's library in Nineveh, "For the sake of distant days".■

*David Chibo*



# ASSYRIAN SCHOOL



