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# The Structure of Tyranny in Bahrain

## A study of the Balance of power within the ruling family

16 DEC 2012



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## Introduction

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The international media usually holds the Prime Minister Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa (1935, ...) accountable for the corruption and dictatorship dominating Bahrain. He is perceived as an impediment to the assumed democratic development adopted by the King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa (1950, ...), and his eldest son the Crown Prince Salman (1969, ...).

The main discourse of the opposition (Al Wefaq and other political societies) usually focuses on the slogan “step down Khalifa”. This sentiment is also welcomed in the West as King Hamad, has instigated a number of constitutional and political procedures, including the restructuring of the ruling elite, in order to limit the powers of his uncle, Shaikh Khalifa.

In recent years the non-licensed political groups (Al Wafa, Haq and Al Ahrar) or what is known in Bahrain as the forces of “objection”, alongside active youth groups, who started the uprising of February 14, 2011, adopted the slogan “Down with Hamad” bypassing the slogan “step down Khalifa”. The political societies preferred working within the project of King Hamad that was promising, according to the various justifications for engaging in it.

The chapters of this book compare the actions of King Hamad, and those of his uncle, in an attempt to test the following hypothesis: King Hamad bears complete responsibility for the ongoing deterioration in Bahrain, and not the Prime Minister, who is a dictator.

As a journalist and observer of the political scene during the past ten years, who closely witnessed the course of events, I can state that the notorious Prime Minister is not responsible for the path taken by Bahrain in the last ten years when King Hamad took over the reins of power and the initiative<sup>(1)</sup> in the country.

This may not be known to the public, the diplomatic corps and those concerned about the Bahraini case during the early years of the reign of the new king. Over the years I encountered a lot of opposition when I advanced the hypothesis that the prime minister has no power whatsoever.

It seems likely that some parties in the opposition are aware that the Prime Minister has been outside the circle of decision making since the king first became ensconced in the royal palace. The minister of his office became Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, the strong man in the country.

However, the understanding of the opposition societies in the balance of power in government circles, and the nature of their understanding of the regional and international vision of Bahrain, in addition to the usual thinking of the official opposition which is characterized by caution<sup>(2)</sup>, prompts the opposition to demand the stepping down of the Prime Minister, rejecting the slogan of “Down with Hamad”, to avoid open confrontation with the regime.

The reader will find in the following chapters observations and analysis of the overall steps and projects carried out by the king, which he sought to implement in the first decade of his reign, ( what writers call the strategy of Hamad). It is believed that this strategy produced a massive popular revolution, essentially rejecting this monopolistic, exclusionary, Bandari strategy (relative to Al Bandar report).

The reign of Sheikh Khalifa of Bahrain was based on an iron fist between the years of 1971 and 1999.<sup>(3)</sup> During this time he skillfully manipulated the different interests of groups and strata of the people. This enabled him to neutralize the technocrats, the middle class, the traders, and the traditional families and prevent them from firmly engaging against his tyranny.

However, the “cleansing” practices of King Hamad towards the opposition and large sections society, issuing a constitution without consultation, permitting wide scale naturalization of foreigners, and targeting anyone with a different point of view, because he believed that the Shias constitute a strategic threat to the regime, contributed to a shift in public opinion from venerating the king in 2001<sup>(4)</sup> to calling for his overthrow in 2011.

The King has chosen the doctrine of “walking on the edge of the abyss,” and adopting a policy of “either me or the opposition.” He succeeded at the beginning of his reign in paralyzing his opponents when he stunned them in 2001, adopting a series of affirmative historic actions<sup>(5)</sup>, as they were described at the time. The opposition was confused as it felt it had to keep pace with the rapidly introduced concessions. But the king’s strategy was exposed when he stopped the ball he set in motion and reversed the security and political situation to that of the 1950s when the national movement called for a full democratic system<sup>(6)</sup>.

In contrast to what is believed, the slogan of “Down with Hamad” has been raised on the first day of the events of 14 February (2011). These were the words of the mother of Ali Mushaima<sup>(7)</sup>, near the Salmaniya Medical Complex SMC gate<sup>(8)</sup>, where this slogan was continually chanted.

The coming chapters will analyze the visions of the king regarding himself and the army, what he thinks of his kingdom, and the convergence of some of his speeches during the crisis, showing that he refused democracy, moderation and popular participation in the decision making process.

In the light of these complexities, the Crown Prince played different roles<sup>(9)</sup> but he always remained faithful to his father’s approach. In the

first stage of his reign his father used him to undermine his uncle, the Prime Minister, and entrusted him with managing the economic file, as well as using him during the months of February and March 2011 to absorb the anger of the protesters and explore their intentions, under the guise of dialogue.

Since the demolition of the Pearl Roundabout on 18 March 2011, the Crown Prince, , has played a role described as the “Senior Director of the Public Relations” of the ruling family, and a strong defender of the dictatorship-based approach in a liberal way due to his failure during the past ten years to establish deep and broad relationships with the tribes and traders. He only has good relations with an isolated elite.

The displacement of Sheikh Khalifa, which is imminent either by a royal process (probably in 2014) or by God’s will, will continue to be a reminder that the political system in Bahrain is hard to reform, and that the Prime Minister is its cortex.

However, the King’s goal of the declaration of the “reform project” as a ploy for re-concentrating power in his hand, away from the Prime Minister, and not for the creation of a popular partnership and a democratic life, has become clear. Given his strategy which harmed the historical experience of Bahrain in a way that no other Khalifi ruler did before, and after his failure to contain the movement of 14 February, the scenario of overthrowing King Hamad cannot be excluded. This is verified by the experience of history when the first Hamad<sup>(10)</sup> (1872-1942) replaced his father Sheikh Isa bin Ali<sup>(11)</sup> (1847-1932) in the twenties of the last century, by a British decision, after popular and bitter complaints of corruption and human rights violations, while the Saudi family -the main obstacle to a real change in Bahrain- isolated the second king of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Saud bin Abdulaziz Al Saud (1902-1969), in 1969.

Introduction footnotes

- 1- To be a governor does not mean to be in control of the political decision, as in the case of the Amir Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa, who was a “ceremonial” prince while his brother, Prime Minister Khalifa bin Salman was the actual decision maker. In the case of King Hamad -and the group that obeys his orders- he has the power to make a decision already.
- 2- In its expression of the public position and political demands, the official opposition led by Al Wefaq make sure to avoid an open war with the regime, and to maintain a good relationship with the West, unlike the “radical/objection” groups who focus their energies on the political demand, and rarely take into account the local and international contexts.
- 3- Sheikh Khalifa was appointed as prime minister in August 15, 1971, and officially ruled the country until King Hamad held his position as the prince of Bahrain in March 1999.
- 4- The (Prince) Hamad visited Sitra Island -which is a major stronghold of the opposition- in February 2001, as part of a campaign to promote his new policies then, and he was warmly welcomed by the residents there, and attempts were recorded to hold up his car as an expression of welcoming the visions of the new ruler.
- 5- Emptying the prisons, allowing those displaced from the country to return, abolishing the law and courts of the security state, allowing partisan political action, and promising of the return of the democratic life.
- 6- For more details on the events of the fifties of the last century, see: Abdul Rahman Al Baker, from Bahrain to exile.
- 7- Shot and killed by shotgun in February 14, 2011, and is seen as the first victim of regime’s violence in the last uprising.
- 8- It is not surprising that the workers in this hospital have been punished, because it has embraced the first political slogans against the king in this public manner.
- 9- Sheikh Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa was appointed as the crown prince in March 9, 1999.
- 10- Sheikh Hamad bin Isa bin Ali Al Khalifa ruled Bahrain between 1923-1942.
- 11- Shaikh Isa bin Ali bin Khalifa bin Salman bin Ahmed Al Fateh, the first ruler of the tribe of Al-Khalifa in Bahrain). He ruled Bahrain between 1869-1923.



# Chapter 1

**HYPOTHESIS: the king is the core of the crisis**

1- A study of the motives calling for the fall of the monarchy

## (1)

## A study of the motives calling for the fall of the monarchy

As the King seems to be at the center of the exclusionary policies, the most common and popular slogan has become: “Down with Hamad,” instead of “Step down Khalifa”.

In this chapter, I would like to answer a significant question: Why did large and varied elements of society mobilize and go out and protest in an unprecedented way on February 14, 2011, while the middle class, traders and the elite did not engage in a similar way in the events of the nineties (1994-1998), during which a demand was made to return to the constitution of 1973<sup>(1)</sup>?

<sup>(2)</sup>I think the biggest catalyst for vast protests is related to the fundamental difference between the rule of the late Amir Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa<sup>(3)</sup> (1933-1999), and his son the present King Hamad (62 years).

The premise upon which this chapter is built is that the reign of King Hamad, who took power in March 1999, was based on the total exclusion of large and popular sectors, the opposition, parliament, the political societies, civil societies and labor unions, and the traditional/family/tribal and religious gatherings. These elements have reacted by seeking the exclusion of King Hamad and the Al-Khalifa family from the political scene. The popular will was reflected by the two main slogans of the uprising: “Down with Hamad,” and “the people want to overthrow the regime.

There was also a demand for a Republic raised by youth groups, and by what is known in Bahrain as the forces of “objection”, which include the non-licensed wings of the Alliance of the Republic: the Al Wafa movement chaired by of Abdul Wahab Hussein, the Haq movement led by

Hassan Mushaima, and the London-based Bahrain Freedom Movement led by Saeed Al-Shihabi<sup>(4)</sup>, as well as the human rights activist Abdul Hadi Al Khawaja<sup>(5)</sup>.

The second slogan is the call for a constitutional monarchy, under which the Royal Institution turns to the margins of political action, and executive powers are withdrawn from the hand of the king. This demand is adopted by the licensed official opposition, especially the Al Wefaq Society<sup>(6)</sup>, and its five partners: Waad, Nationalist Democratic Assembly, the Unitary National Democratic Assemblage, Al Ekha National Society, as well as the Democratic Progressive Tribune.

Both slogans reduce or eliminate the powers of the ruling family. This is the very essence of the movement's demand for change and democracy. The uprisings of the nineties called for politics to be modeled on the basis of the 1973 Constitution, which can be considered a replica of the Constitution of Kuwait (1962). In the cases of Kuwait and Bahrain the Constitution gives wide powers to the head of state (the Prince), who is "The head of the state, whose self shall not be touched" and "the prince could appoint by an Amiri Order, the Chairman of the traditional Consultative Board, and remove him from office"<sup>(7)</sup>, in contrast to legislative and regulatory powers of parliament<sup>(8)</sup> that is able to paralyze the work of the government, even if it is not determining its starting course.

The events of the nineties came in response to what I call the marginalization (not exclusion) of the popular sectors and parties in the 70s, 80s and 90s. Perhaps that is why they called to break the monopoly of the ruling family on political decision making on the basis of a return to the Constitution of 1973, but the events of 2011 called for the an exclusion.

The difference may be noted between the political marginalization adopted by the Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, who

was the real ruler during the reign of his brother Sheikh Isa, and the policy of exclusion and “cleansing” followed by King Hamad, as follows:

## 1- The Constitution

The Constitution of 1973 was written by a half elected and half appointed team. It was perceived as an acceptable Constitution, still remaining positive to the late Amir and his brother Sheikh Khalifa. Unfortunately, the most important articles of the constitution were suspended, and parliament was dissolved in August 1975, after about a year and a half after its election. This practically ended the partnership in governance<sup>(9)</sup>. Yet, the brothers, Isa and Khalifa have “maintained” the Constitution of 1973, as the country’s ruling constitution, with laws issued in its name, and country ran in accordance with its provisions.

Of course Sheikh Khalifa was not applying the Constitution, but he did not dare to overturn it. Even when the appointed Shura Council was formed in the mid-nineties of last century, in the wake of the war to liberate Kuwait from Saddam Hussein’s army, and in response to protests demanding the return of the lumpy Constitution, the legal outcomes were not to abolish the constitutional provisions that established the parliament with effective legislative and control powers. The Shura Council was established without constitutional provisions. The opposition’s response was that the government can form Shura councils or advisory bodies but they are not a substitute for an elected representative institution.

However, the constitutional changes made solely by King Hamad, when he issued the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain on 14 February 2002, without consulting the opposition and all political groups, and without a referendum of the people, seriously undermined the political process. It certainly appeared that the king wanted a formula in which the people’s opinion counted for nothing. The provisions of the Con-

stitution of 2002, transformed the head of the state into an absolute ruler<sup>(10)</sup>. There was a transition from the stage of marginalization that violated the written Constitution (1975-2001), to the stage of approved exclusion in the 2002 constitution!

The difference seems clear between an authority that violates the Constitution and does not apply its provisions making decisions by itself, as the Prime Minister did during the reign of his brother Isa, and a monopolistic authority in accordance with the constitution!

## 2- The cabinet

The composition of government reflects, in general, the vision of the state's head of the government of the country and the balance of power. The Council of Ministers was not important in the government in the period from 1975 to 1999, as the Prime Minister was the decision maker. One third of the ministers were from the Al-Khalifa family, one-third were Sunnis, and one-third were Shiites<sup>(11)</sup>. (See table)

It is true that a quota system was in place but the quotas did not alter the equation of power which was monopolized by the ruling family. The quota system, as a political idea, is close to the democratic equation of democracy and is like voting.

Quotas, among other controls, may maintain the country's stability. There was a deviation from the quota system on the eve of the uprising of February 14, 2011: The Council of Ministers had 25 members: eight Sunnis, five Shias and the rest from the Al-Khalifa family who filled key government positions<sup>(12)</sup>.

This was an intelligent way of excluding the elite, the technocrats, the tribes, and powerful families and traders, who also engaged in the events

of February 14, in favor of the desire to bring about real reforms within the ruling establishment, as long as they could not benefit from them.

**Table (1): The cabinet when Prince Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, chaired the country March 1999**

#	Person	Position	Al Khalifa	Sunni	Shiite
1	Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa	Prime Minister	*		
2	Abdullah bin Khalid Al Khalifa	Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs	*		
3	Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa	Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister	*		
4	Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Khalifa	Minister of the Interior	*		
5	Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa	Minister of Transportation	*		
6	Jawad Salem Al Orayedh	Minister of State			*
7	Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa	Minister of Housing	*		
8	Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa	Minister of Defense	*		
9	Mohammed Ebrahim Al-Mutawa	Minister of Cabinet Affairs and Information		*	
10	Isa bin Ali Al Khalifa	Minister of Oil and Industry	*		
11	Ali Saleh Al Saleh	Minister of Commerce			*

12	Abdulla Juma'a	Minister of Electricity and Water		*	
13	Abdulaziz Mohammed Al Fadhel	Minister of Education		*	

Table (2): The cabinet on the eve of February 14, 2011<sup>(13)</sup>

#	Person	Position	AlKhalifa	Sunni	Shiite
1	Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa	Prime Minister	*		
2	Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa	Deputy Prime Minister	*		
3	Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa	Deputy Prime Minister	*		
4	Jawad bin Salem Al Orayedh	Deputy Prime Minister			*
5	Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa	Deputy Prime Minister	*		
6	Mohammed bin Ibrahim Al-Mutawa	Minister of State for Follow Up Affairs		*	
7	Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Khalifa	Minister of State for Defense	*		
8	Abdulaziz bin Mohammed Al Fadhel	Minister of Shura and Representatives Affairs		*	
9	Rashid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa	Minister of the Interior	*		
10	Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa	Minister of Foreign Affairs	*		

11	Hassan bin Abdullah Fakhro	Minister of Industry and Commerce		*	
12	Fahmi bin Ali Al Jowder	Minister of Electricity and Water Affairs		*	
13	Ibrahim bin Khalifa Al Khalifa	Minister of Housing	*		
14	Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa	Minister of Finance	*		
15	Majed bin Ali Al-Naimi	Minister of Education		*	
16	Majid bin Mohsin Al Alawi	Minister of Labor			*
17	Abdulhussain bin Ali Mirza	Minister of Oil and Gas Affairs			*
18	Fatima Mohammad Al Balooshi	Minister of Social Development		*	
19	Ahmed bin Attiallah Al Khalifa	Minister for Cabinet Affairs	*		

### 3- The “cleansing”

The “Bandar report”<sup>(14)</sup> prepared by the former adviser for strategic affairs at the Royal British Sudanese court Dr. Salah Al Bandar, did not leave a space for doubt about the exclusionary “strategies” of King Hamad of large segments of the population who were deprived of self-realization, based on considerations of opinion and religious differences.

The writer received a copy of the report about six weeks prior to the expulsion of the adviser Salah Al Bandar from Bahrain. It was a very scary moment. The inability of the political forces to invest that serious report was quickly clear, at the moment preceding the parliamentary elections



in 2006<sup>(15)</sup>. Therefore, the writer decided, as a journalist, to leak the report to an entity to ensure it was widely distributed.

That was history being made so I will comment on the report with reference to my meetings with the writer at his residence in Bahrain during the summer of 2006<sup>(16)</sup>.

The “Bandar report” was written after studying the Shiite experience in Bahrain. It concluded that the current strength of the opposition, and its backbone Al Wefaq and the Shiite public, can be attributed to:

1- A powerful religious reference (Ayatollah Sheikh Isa Qassem), in contrast to the dispersion of the Sunni religious leaders, who are pro-government.

2- A semi-total control by the opposition of the institutions of civil society (human rights associations, trade unions, lawyers and doctors associations etc ), and thousands of religious institutions (mosques, and matams). This made it easier for the opposition to mobilize citizens against the authorities.

3- The influence of Shiite citizenship (automatically seen by the government as opposition) in some vital sectors in the country, such as health, the media and small and medium enterprises.

The existence of a social safety network, founded on active charitable funds in every Shiite village . They were considered a danger because in addition to their welfare role they:

A- Help students complete their undergraduate and graduate studies, which is seen as an “ambitious” program for the formation of a Shiite elite (= opposition).

B- Organize collective weddings for young people who get married late due to financial difficulties. This leads to an increase in the number of Shiite citizens (opponents from the regime’s perspective).

4- The control by many Shiite commercial dealers of the grocery market which is viewed as an impending danger by the regime as it strengthens Shia traders and individuals from whom Sunni loyalists are forced to buy.

I can enumerate other plausible points. The Hamad strategy, as exposed by the Bandar report , was to regard every normal act of development of the Shiite community, as an attempt to strengthen the opposition. This included the setting up of kindergartens, universities, hospitals, medical clinics, a newspaper, or a large or small investment business. Therefore, the regime felt it had to oppose these development activities following a policy of “drying up the water springs”, “shrinking resources” and “reducing opportunities.”

This jaundiced view of community activities led to a hidden war initiated by the authorities and led by Sheikh Ahmed Attiallah Al Khalifa<sup>(17)</sup>, to stop the perceived “Shiite expansion.” This necessitated the monitoring of normal social activities and re- classifying them as acts which damage the security and safety of the state. The response to the Bandar report was an action plan which called for:

(1) Containing the growing “advancement of the Shiite” (= opposition) within a broader policy to crack down on freedom, contain Parliament, penetrate the institutions of active civil society, reduce job opportunities, promotion and commercial activities of the Shiite citizens (automatically perceived as opponents by the regime)<sup>(18)</sup>.

(2) Working on the advancement of the Sunni sectors of society which

are perceived as pro-regime through imitating some of the Shiite activities and structures, by adopting certain measures including:

1- Working on the formation of a pro-Sunni religious reference in opposition to the Shiite religious reference. The “Al Bandar report” suggests the name of Dr. Abdullatif Al Mahmood to lead this reference. In order to make this happen a controversy has been created about the division of the Sunni groups, and the necessity for creating a solitary reference.

2- Establishing of government-funded NGOs and civil societies, such as the “the Bahraini Jurists Society” and “Bahrain Human Rights Watch Society,” while efforts continued to contain the active independent associations and adopt measures against them. These included the dissolution of the Teachers Society, doctors and lawyers associations, and the Bahrain Society for Human Rights as well as impeding the activities of charitable funds, and issuing laws for the division of labour unions. The government was correct in assuming they would be supportive of any democratic movements, as the uprising of February 14 (2011) revealed.

3- Encouraging the voices of the loyal groups<sup>(19)</sup>: Establishing the pro-government Al-Watan newspaper (in opposition to Al Wasat Independent newspaper), setting up electronic forums (such as the pro-Bahrain Forum<sup>(20)</sup> in opposition to Bahrain online<sup>(21)</sup>), in order to spread sectarianism, and encourage loyal groups to express their views. The main difference between Al Wasat and Al Watan newspapers for example, is that the first was founded due to the initiative of Sunni and Shiite investors and politicians, in 2002, and the second was launched and adopted, in 2005, by the Royal Court, which funds and runs it, through Sheikh Ahmed Attiallah Al Khalifa. This also applies to electronic forums and civil society organisations.

4- Increasing scholarships for Sunnis who are seen as pro-regime in the

Defence, Interior and Service ministries, in addition to the Ministry of Education<sup>(22)</sup>.

5- Supporting collective marriages for pro-regime Sunnis in imitation of Shia practices adopted for economic reasons.

6- Increasing the number of pro-regime Sunnis in the civil service, corporations, trade and economic sectors.

The Al Bandar report documented the frantic quest of the Royal Court to control the public space, over and above the control of the executive, judicial and legislative powers, as was prevalent during the reign of Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman. The report also documented the official “plan” to contain Shiite activity which the regime viewed as opposition to its rule.

Among the documents published by the “Al Bandar report”, was a study by the Iraqi researcher and former professor at the University of Bahrain Dr. Nizar al-Ani who was commissioned by the Royal Court. Al-Ani made the following recommendations<sup>(23)</sup>:

1- “Favour the influential religious leaders among the Sunnis and give them weight in decision-making.

2- “Seek to control the functions of the police, military, and the National Guard. They have to strongly support the Royal Court.

3- “Establish a special center to study and monitor the activities carried out by the Shiites”.

4- “Alter the demographic balance of the Shias so that they will not increase to more than 20 – 30% of the population and submerge them in a “Sunni sea.”

5- “Empower the Arab Sunnis, increasing their share of senior and sensitive positions and improve their economic position encouraging them to have larger families and not to migrate to neighbouring countries.”

6- “The Royal Court should support the Sunnis so the demographic balance is altered in their favour.

7- “Re-write the history of Bahrain and highlight the political, cultural and religious role of Sunni leaders, scientists and thinkers”.

8- “Reward and offer incentives to those who have switched from the Shiite sect, and take advantage of information they may be willing to provide.

During the seventies, eighties and nineties the citizens did not feel that their current position or future was threatened. Their revolt was therefore limited to demanding the restoration of the constitution of 1973, which allowed the Al-Khalifa family to remain as the rulers.

But during the reign of King Hamad they became terrified that this strategy did not envisage a better future for them or their children. Hence the slogan: “The people want to overthrow the regime”, which was not previously demanded.

#### 4- The Naturalization:

The naturalization of Pakistanis, Jordanians, Syrians, Yemenis, and Sudanese to work in the military sector, is a not new policy. It was vigorously pursued during the reign of Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman and his brother, Sheikh Isa.

Nevertheless, King Hamad considered the demographic change as part of the priorities of his “strategy”, which classifies the Shiite citizens as “a

strategic threat” to the regime, that should be eliminated from the civilian and military institutions. He put the theory of “drying up the water springs,” into practice through neglect, impoverishment and the withdrawal of influential positions.

According to available figures about 80 thousand people were naturalized<sup>(24)</sup>. The feelings of a citizen can never be described when a foreigner is favored when it comes to services, housing, and employment in the military and non-military sector. Second generation naturalized citizens are also favoured over the indigenous inhabitants.

With the entry of the “global war” pillars against the citizens, the popular feelings of exclusion reached an unprecedented level and produced an extraordinary uprising against the “Hamad Strategy”. The people crossed red lines in calling for the ousting of the regime.

While the King seems to be at the center of this unwise policy, the most widely used popular slogan has become: “Down with Hamad,” instead of “step down Khalifa” which is favored by official political opposition groups. And there is a difference between the opposition discourses in the nineties of last century, which did not direct any criticism at the head of state, Emir Isa bin Salman. Most of the time the criticism focused on the prime minister. Even though the opposition tried not to criticize King Hamad<sup>(25)</sup>, the feeling is growing day after day that he is responsible for the crisis.

This increases the challenges faced by the country and it limits the ability of the Al Khalifa family, the region and the West to respond to the legitimate aspirations of those seeking change. The king himself could solve the crisis which he caused.

This problem is not facing King Abdullah II and the movement in Jordan,

King Mohammed VI in Morocco, or Emir Sabah Al-Ahmed in Kuwait. Slogans have not been directed at the heads of the state in those countries but they are directed directly at King Hamad and he needs to ask himself why this is the case.

In 2002, when the opposition National Movement rejected the new constitution, many thought that the controversial constitutional document could be imposed by security, political, regional, and international force. This was also the sentiment of the opposition forces. It was very strong when Al Wafaq and Waad<sup>(26)</sup> oppositionist societies participated in the parliamentary elections in 2006.

In 2002 the balance of power shifted to the disadvantage of the opposition, especially if it wanted to wage open battles. It had just emerged exhausted from a political conflict which lasted 30 years<sup>(27)</sup> and intensified in 1995 and beyond when the political and security situation worsened with the launch of a popular uprising, demanding the reinstatement of the Constitution of 1973.

Taking into account the mood of the people, the state celebrated the coming of a new king who pledged that “the most beautiful days, are those that we did not live yet”. The national powers thought they were being given a new opportunity after the unexpected blow in 2002 when one party issued the constitution. The opposition participated in the elections of 2006, and 2010, only to discover that the parliamentary system and the project itself was sterile.

The participation in parliament highlighted the nature of the problem: the constitution was not popularly accepted and was unable to develop political life. After ten years of actual work based on the constitution and after two parliamentary experiences (2002-2010), and the third (2010-2011), the Constitution of 2002 failed. The ten years spent marketing a

reform political project also amounted to nothing. The historical settlement of 2001 may also have been a failure.

No one disputed the eligibility of the Al Khalifa family to rule, until the 1973 Constitution was formally dropped. King Hamad issued a new constitution unilaterally destroying all precedents and historical understandings between the Al Khalifa family and the people and between the king personally and the national movement who signed the 2001 Charter. This project of Prince Hamad was widely supported and the national movement expressed great confidence in his declared and undeclared promises, even before they were submitted to the text of the controversial Charter.

Moreover, the national movement has paid a big price because of the problems associated with returning to the 1973 constitution. King Hamad paid an even bigger price as there is now a lack of confidence in his program. It became clear that King Hamad through the two legislative councils (the appointed Shura and elected Representatives), and dual-elected municipal councils and the assigned provinces was not actually aiming to provide a balance to ensure the continuity of the democratic experiment; rather he wanted to impose a liberal monopoly of power, or what is sometimes referred to in contemporary literature as “the Liberal Dictatorship.”

Therefore, the opposition and its audience are frustrated and dissatisfied with the current king<sup>(28)</sup>, who has dealt a severe blow to his credibility especially when the army which he leads targeted the protesting citizens at Pearl Roundabout on the morning of February 17, 2011, under his direct orders. Before and after the bloody scene in Pearl Roundabout the king visited the headquarters of the military command. He did not take any action to deter the military but emphasized the role of the regime’s armed forces in protecting security.



In my estimation, the human rights violations after the imposition of the state of emergency in mid-March 2011, showed that the “Hamad strategy” endorses the security solution if the political option is unable to rein in the ambitions of the opposition to run the country.

The Constitution of the State of Kuwait (1962) provided great protection to the ruling Sabah family during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and also during the Arab Spring revolutions. When voices appear to be calling for a constitutional monarchy in Kuwait to remove the Sabah family from the political scene, the voices of the main opposition adhered to the Constitution of 1962, which gives broad powers to the head of state. This was also the case in the 1973 constitution of Bahrain.

The 1973 Bahraini Constitution does not exist, thanks to King Hamad, who chose to remove the popular legitimacy from the Constitution, and select a “strategy” depending on the balance of powers, which is necessarily subject to change. To the Al Khalifa family the following statement is sacrosanct: “Access to the islands of Bahrain was accomplished by the sword”. The Al Khalifas were not welcomed with flowers.

King Hamad made a strategic mistake in missing an exceptional opportunity to issue a compatible constitution, which granted the family an honorable position, and the people sovereign decision-making powers. It is not guaranteed that the balance of power will always favor the Al Khalifa family, as the consensual Constitution guarantees a political life with known inputs and outputs. If the regime chooses to rely on military force and regional support, it exempts the popular majority from any obligations towards it.

Item (1) footnotes

- 1- A constitution of the State of Bahrain was put by the “Constituent Assembly”, and issued by the late Amir Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa, and Bahrain has seen it as the compatible and committed Constitution.
- 2- several reasons can be pointed out, related to the media and communications revolution, and the that the Bahrainis were inspired by the Arab Spring revolutions, in addition to the presence of the official opposition on the ground, and its deep experience with the regime. As well as the youth formation, that was surprising to everyone, and the women and the middle class exceptional role, and most importantly, the influential engagement of the technocrats who I call them “the mind of the revolution”. All of these and other inputs played a remarkable role in the uprising, while the violent security option imposed an expansion of the anti-regime positions.
- 3- The first governor of the State of Bahrain after its independence in August 15, 1971. He ruled the country between the years 1961-1999.
- 4- Abdul Wahab Hussein, Mushaima and Al Khawaja are sentenced to life of imprisonment, while Al-Shihabi was sentenced in absentia to 15 years of imprisonment. They were arrested on March 17, 2011, for the charge of changing the regime; where Amnesty International considers them as prisoners of conscience.
- 5- Al Khawaja resigned from his position being in charge of the Middle East in “Frontline” human rights organization, to engage in the “Revolution” he was awaiting for many years.
- 6- Al Wefaq Islamic National society was established in 2001, and is considered the mainstream for Shiite groups in Bahrain, and is led by Sheikh Ali Salman, who owes allegiance to Ayatollah Sheikh Isa Qassem, is sees him as the spiritual father for Al Wefaq.
- 7- To review the powers of the Amir of Bahrain, see Article (33) of the Constitution of 1973.
- 8- Consists of two thirds elected and one third appointed (the Minister).
- 9- The immediate cause to solve the elected Council is the refusal of the latter the Law of the State Security, but it is believed that there are economic reasons as well, given the outbreak of the Lebanese war (April 1975), and the decision to transfer the financial sector from Beirut to Manama, that it is no coincidence that the parliament is dissolved (August 1975) after four months of the start of the outbreak of the war in Lebanon, and this means that the regional situation plays a role in the course of events, and the struggle for wealth is part of the intense rivalry between the leaders of the ruling family.
- 10- According to articles (33-43) of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain for the year 2002, the King is the Supreme Commander of the Defense Force, and the President of the Supreme Judicial Council, and appoints the prime minister, ministers, and members of the Shura, and “his self shall not be touched”.

- 11- This formula was not maintained all the time, especially after 1995.
- 12- According to a report issued by the Bahrain Center for Human Rights BCHR in 2003, under the title of: "Discrimination, the unwritten law", that of 572 senior post the Shiite citizens are running 18%, see page 10 of the report, and it can be said that this ratio has come down now to less than 10%.
- 13- The formation of this cabinet was announced in November 2, 2010.
- 14- To view the report: <http://www.bcsl.org.uk/ar/documents/472-albander-report>.
- 15- The political opposition forces thought that raising the issue may lead to damage the electoral process, which was the opposition societies' brigade then. And perhaps some of the parties believed that leaking the report was an official conspiracy.
- 16- Al Bandar had predicted an action to be taken against him, therefore forwarded his report to a number of foreign embassies, and requested advice from the author for a good lawyer, and he suggested to him Abdullah Al Shamlawi.
- 17- Appointed in April 2011 as an Advisor to follow-up Affairs in Royal Court, "and is responsible to follow up the implementation of the royal instructions and directives, as stated in the decree of his appointment (see: Al Wasat, April 8, 2011). He was the minister for the Council of Ministers since 2005, was dismissed from the cabinet on 26 February 2011, after about ten days from the start of the uprising in February 14 (2011), in a shy attempt to calm down the situation, as being one of the "aggravation" ministers in the opposition eyes. He was the managing director of "Al Bandar report". Re-appointing to be the consultant of the Royal Court after the demolition of the pearl Roundabout, reflected the official's opposite course of militancy in dealing with the protest movement.
- 18- Ghassan Al-Shihabi, the legality of the demand of a Sunni religious reference, Al Waqt newspaper, September 24, 2006.
- 19- Such as Sheikh Mohammed Khalid, and MP Jassim Al Saeedi.
- 20- <https://bahrainforums.com>.
- 21- <http://bahrainonline.org>.
- 22- On the issues of discrimination in scholarships, see for example: Al Wasat newspaper, June 12, 2008.
- 23- Bahrain Center for Human Rights, a summary of recommendations of the secret study prepared by Dr. Ani and implemented by the Bahraini authority in order to exclude the Shiite sect <http://www.bahrainrights.org/node/652>.
- 24- Naturalization threatening Bahrain, Al-Akhbar Lebanese newspaper, January 14 2010.
- 25- Usually Al Wefaq leader, Sheikh Ali Salman asks the public not to raise the slogan of "Down with Hamad", Ayatollah Isa Qassem also called in April 2011 not to raise the slogan of overthrowing as well.
- 26- The National Democratic Action Society (waad) was founded in 2001, as the first recognized political organization in Bahrain and the Gulf, chaired by the late Abdul Rahman Al-Naimi, the historical leader of the Popular Front, which waad inherited. Waad's Secretary General Ebrahim Sharif is imprisoned since March 17, 2011.
- 27- And possibly more, if we take into account that the country is in crisis since the twenties of the last century at least, and may be the period of the Constituent Assembly election (1972) and later the dissolved National Assembly in 1975, is one of the relatively calm periods, which has lasted only for three years, and the arrests against opponents continued.
- 28- See (1) a study of the motives calling for the fall of the monarchy in this book.

## Chapter 2

### The Prime Minister, the cortex of dictatorship

- 2- The king stifles the Prime Minister in his “constitutional” den
- 3- The King and the Prime Minister: the public clash
- 4- Sunni groups are not loyal to the Prime Minister
- 5- Consensus on removing the Prime Minister

(2)

## The king stifles the Prime Minister in his «constitutional» den

After January 2005, and before that at all, the question whether the Minister was on one side or another was no longer asked, since all of them have to implement the instructions issued by the Minister of Royal Court otherwise dismissed, and perhaps the «Sultan» became angry.

After January 2005, the question whether the Minister was on one side or the other was no longer asked, as everyone had to implement the instructions issued by the Minister of the Royal Court or face dismissal and risk making the sultan angry.

This chapter will focus on the “quiet” and perhaps “slow”, yet, successive and intensive steps of King Hamad to stifle the Prime Minister in his “constitutional” den<sup>(1)</sup> (Council of Ministers), through the appointment of persons loyal to the Royal Palace as council members. This happened in successive steps which were completed in 2005.

Prior to that, I would point out that King Hamad has taken a number of important decisions, in order to control the provisions of the decision making process, including:

First: the announcement of the reform project, particularly the National Action Charter, which earned him:

Massive popular support (98.4%), aimed at winning over:

1. The wing of the prime minister from inside and outside the ruling family, to advance his “strategy”, of monopoly which became evident over time.

2. The wing of the opposition, which appeared confused in front of the king presenting himself as a reformer, through positive projects, while pursuing a controversial policy in 2002. The King used the void, confusion, hesitation, and bewilderment that characterized the performance of the opposition, to advance his Bandari faith/ideology and strategy (relative to Al Bandar report).

However, it has become clear, even since 2002, and the texts of the Kingdom's new Constitution, that the goal of "the reform project" was not the establishment of democratic life, but inter family rivalry clinched by the King in his personal favor, sometimes by getting rid of opponents outright and sometimes by phasing them out in stages. In all cases that hostility was redirected towards the king by the opposition, and some parties within the ruling family.

The King made unprecedented global publicity regarding the situation in Bahrain which has been plagued by instability for a long time. Due to its fragile domestic legitimacy the royal family sees itself in need of regional support and the support of the international community. The international community may not have been convinced about the dictatorship in Bahrain until after the political outcry of February 14th, 2011.

Second: The King made constitutional changes (2002) to:

5. Install him as an absolute ruler, in contrast to the opposition, the political forces, and other parties in the ruling family, taking away the constitutional powers of the Council of Ministers' (Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman's clique)<sup>(2)</sup>.

Third: Restructuring the mechanism of decision-making:

6. Transferring the political and constitutional file to the palace.

7. Transferring the economical file to the Economic Development Board<sup>(3)</sup>.

8. Tightening the king's grip on the Council of Ministers, through the replacement of members of the Council, in stages, with figures loyal to the royal palace rather than to the Prime Minister.

### Changes in the Council of Ministers: the beginning of courtesy<sup>(4)</sup>

The King has worked hard at the beginning of his reign to talk positively about his uncle, the Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa. He was always acknowledging him, in his public speeches, as his late father (Isa bin Salman), glorifying him and extensively commending his efforts, using the words "our dear uncle". With the passage of time, this form of praise ceased almost completely and the King imitated the style of the Egyptian President Anwar Al Sadat. During his first term in office Sadat glorified his predecessor, Jamal Abdel Nasser echoing the commitment to his approach. Once his position became secure he adopted a hostile stance towards his predecessor.

Despite the tyranny of Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman on the political scene for three decades (the 70s, 80s and 90s), the succession of Prince<sup>(5)</sup> Hamad was very smooth after the death of his father Sheikh Isa. Under the leadership of Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman himself, is a proud person to maintain the "traditions" of the tribes and their habits in the inheritance of reign.

In contrast to the shock tactics used to paralyze the opposition (2001), the King chose the style of courtesy, reverence and the policy of containment with regard to the Prime Minister, in order to marginalize him in a more quiet way than that of President Al Sadat in dealing with the "power centers".

While Al Sadat resolved the battle after nearly two years of his reign in the wake of Abdel Nasser's death, the Bahraini King gave himself until 2005, to get a grip on the Cabinet, but before that, he deprived the Council of Ministers of its powers and strength.

### The Cabinet at the time when the King came to rule

The King ruled on 6 March 1999, and the executive authority/Government/Council of Ministers was composed of 17 members/ministers (including the Prime Minister). With the exception of the Minister of Defense Marshal Khalifa bin Ahmed, the other 15 members from the Al Khalifa family were:

- Abdullah bin Khalid Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs.
- Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs.
- Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Minister of Interior.
- Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Minister of Transport.
- Jawad Salem Al Orayedh, Minister of state.
- Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, Minister of Housing.
- Mohammed Ebrahim Al Mutawa, Minister of Cabinet Affairs and Minister of Information.
- Isa bin Ali Al Khalifa, Minister of Oil and Industry.
- Ali Saleh Al Saleh, Minister of Commerce.
- Abdullah Juma'a, Minister of Electricity and Water.
- Abdulaziz Mohammed Al Fadhel, Minister of Education.
- Ebrahim Abdelkarim, Minister of Finance and National Economy
- Abdulnabi Abdulla Al Shoala, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs.
- Majed Jawad Al Jishi, Minister of Works and Agriculture.
- Faisal Radhi Al Mosawi, Minister of Health.



## The first ministerial change: a pulse check

The King procrastinated until May 1999, and made a very limited cabinet reshuffle, through the appointment of three new ministers. Only one, the Minister of Electricity and Water the late Duaij bin Khalifa Al Khalifa was affiliated to the king. He succeeded Abdullah Juma'a, who was accused of major corruption in establishing Al Hid station.

The other two new ministers affiliated with the Prime Minister were Abdullah Saif, who headed the finance and the national economy ministry, and Ali Al Mahroos, who was appointed as Minister of Works and Agriculture. He was quickly ousted due to allegations of corruption.

This pulse check was a sign that Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman was still exerting his influence, but it is also true that the King had chosen to keep up with him.

During the first cabinet reshuffle, two persons were affiliated to the king in the government: the Minister of Defense Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, and the Minister of Electricity and Water Duaij bin Khalifa Al Khalifa. Sixteen ministers were affiliated to the Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa.

**Table (3): The ministerial cabinet after the first change conducted by the (Prince) Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, in May 1999**

#	Person	Position	Affiliated with the King	Affiliated with the Prime Minister	Affiliated with the Crown Prince
1	Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa	Prime Minister			
2	Abdullah bin Khalid Al Khalifa	Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs		*	
3	Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa	Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister		*	
4	Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Khalifa	Minister of the Interior		*	
5	Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa	Minister of Transportation		*	
6	Jawad Salem Al Orayedh	Minister of State		*	
7	Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa	Minister of Housing		*	
8	Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa	Minister of Defense	*		
9	Mohammed Ebrahim Al-Mutawa	Minister of Cabinet Affairs and Information		*	
10	Isa bin Ali Al Khalifa	Minister of Oil and Industry		*	

12	Abdulla Juma'a	Minister of Electricity and Water	*		
13	Abdullah Hasan Saif	Minister of Finance and National Economy		*	
14	Abdulnabi Abdulla Al Shoala	Minister of Labor and Social Affairs		*	
15	Ali Al Mahroos	Minister of Works		*	
16	Abdulaziz Mohammed Al Fadhel	Minister of Education		*	
17	Faisal Radhi Al Mosawi	Minister of Health		*	
		Total	2	15	0
Number of ministers affiliated to the King: 2 Number of ministers affiliated to the Prime Minister: 15 Number of ministers affiliated to the Crown Prince: 0					

### The second ministerial change: an increase in the share of the King's affiliates without decreasing the share of the Prime Minister

(Prince) Hamad bin Isa conducted a second ministerial change in April 2001, where the change seemed timid. It directed the King towards increasing his affiliates in the Council of Ministers, without decreasing the number of ministers affiliated to the Prime Minister.

The most significant observations on this change:

1- The Prime Minister could keep the 15 ministers affiliated to him, namely:

Abdullah bin Khalid Al Khalifa - Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs

Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa - Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister

Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Khalifa - Minister of the Interior

Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa - Minister of Transport (the eldest son of the prime Minister)

Jawad Salem Al Orayedh - Minister of State of Municipalities and Environmental Affairs

Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa - Minister of Housing

Mohammed Ebrahim Al-Mutawa - Minister of Cabinet Affairs and Information

Isa bin Ali Al Khalifa - Minister of Oil

Ali Saleh Al Saleh - Minister of Commerce

Abdulaziz Mohammed Al Fadhel - Minister of Shura and Representatives Affairs

Abdullah Hasan Saif - Minister of Finance and National Economy

Abdulnabi Abdulla Al Shoala - Minister of Labor and Social Affairs

Mohamed Jassim Al Ghatam – Minister of Education

Faisal Radhi Al Mosawi - Minister of Health

Mohamed Hasan Kamalladin - Minister of State

2- The King increased the number of ministers affiliated to him, namely:

Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Minister of Defense.

Duaij bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Minister of Electricity and Water.

Nabil Yaqoob Al Hamar, Minister of Information.

Mohamed Abdul Ghaffar Abdullah, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs.

3- The Information Ministry was withdrawn from Mohammad Al Mutawa; instead Nabil Al Hamar the media advisor of the king was commissioned. Al Mutawa is described as the “strong man”, and the right arm of the Prime Minister, especially during the nineties uprising (1994-1999),

where decisions were made by the Prime Minister and his assistants.

Perhaps Mohammed Al Mutawa had to pay the price of his close contact with the Prime Minister reducing his powers before anyone else. That has been a bigger pulse check, and perhaps a more visible challenge to the Prime Minister. However, Al Mutawa has retained his position as Minister for Cabinet Affairs, which gives Sheikh Khalifa reassurance that the goal, as far as possible, is power-sharing.

Mohamed Abdul Ghaffar was appointed a Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, in an attempt by the King perhaps to intervene in foreign policy, which was long dominated by the “old” man Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, who later became “a solver of all problems”, and all important committees are referred to him. This may have constituted a rapprochement between the conservative ruling poles, luring bin Mubarak to be a substitute for the Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa. Bin Mubarak would be willing to take up that position if it was offered to him.

4- Ali Fahmi Al Jowder entered the ministry for the first time as Minister of Works; a figure affiliated with the Crown Prince Sheikh Salman, who at that time was a model of efficiency and an example of the new blood, which heralded the new era, without necessarily forsaking discriminatory tendencies.

### The third ministerial change: Enhancing the presence of the King

The King chose to increase the number of supporters expressing his aspirations through the cabinet change, after the holding of the parliamentary elections in 2002. His share increased to ten ministers, and the Prime Minister’s share decreased to 13. The Crown Prince retained one minister affiliated to him.

But the king also reduced the powers of the ministers affiliated to the Prime Minister. He:

1- Withdrew the Ministry of Justice from the old man Abdullah bin Khalid Al Khalifa, and assigned it to another old man Jawad Salem Al Orayedh.

2- Removed the businessman Abdulnabi Al Shoala from his post as Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, and assigned it to the former oppositionist Dr. Majeed Al Alawi, who entered the ministry for the first time.

3- Withdrew the Ministry of Industry from Sheikh Al Khalifa, and assigned it to Dr. Hasan Fakhro, who was affiliated to the reformers and has close contacts with the king and his advisor for economic affairs<sup>(6)</sup>. But Isa bin Ali retained the Ministry of Oil, and was subsequently the Minister of Oil and Industry. But, perhaps the most important point in this change was the removal of the powerful person Khalid bin Abdullah from his post as Minister of Housing, forcing him into virtual retirement. He was appointed Minister of the Court of Sheikh Khalifa due to the prime minister's intercession. It is interesting that the young Fahmi Al Jowder was assigned Minister of Housing, who was given a cabinet post nearly a year and a half ago.

4- The number of ministers increased with lack of controls determining the number, under the absolute power of the king in the formation of the ministry.

**Table (4): the cabinet after the third ministerial change conducted by King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, on November 11, 2002**

#	Person	Position	Affiliated with the King	Affiliated with the Prime Minister	Affiliated with the Crown Prince
1	Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa	Prime Minister			
2	Abdullah bin Khalid Al Khalifa	Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs		*	
3	Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa	Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister		*	
4	Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Khalifa	Minister of the Interior		*	
5	Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa	Minister of Transportation		*	
6	Jawad Salem Al Orayedh	Minister of Justice		*	
7	Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa	Minister of the Court of Prime Minister		*	
8	Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa	Minister of Defense	*		
9	Mohammed Ebrahim Al-Mutawa	Minister of Cabinet Affairs and Information		*	
10	Isa bin Ali Al Khalifa	Minister of Oil		*	
11	Ali Saleh Al Saleh	Minister of Commerce		*	

12	Duaij bin Khalifa Al Khalifa	Minister of Electricity and Water	*		
13	Abdulaziz Mohammed Al Fadhel	Minister of Shura and Representative Affairs		*	
14	Abdullah Hasan Saif	Minister of Finance and National Economy		*	
15	Abdelnabi Abdullah Al Shoala	Minister of State		*	
16	Nabil Yaqoob Al Hamar	Minister of Information	*		
17	Fahmi Ali Al Jowder	Minister of Works and Housing			*
18	Mohamed Abdel Ghaffar Abdullah	Minister of State for Foreign Affairs	*		
19	Majed Al Naimi	Minister of Education	*		
20	Khalil Hasan	Minister of Health	*		
21	Hasan Fakhro	Minister of Industry	*		
22	Mohamed Ali Al Shaikh Mansoor Al Sitri	Minister of Municipalities and Agriculture	*		
23	Majid Al Alawi	Minister of Labor and Social Affairs	*		
24	Abdulhussain Ali Mirza	Minister of State	*		
		Total	10	12	1

Number of Ministers affiliated to the King: 10

Number of Ministers affiliated to the Prime Minister: 12

Number of Ministers affiliated to the Crown Prince: 1



## May 2004: the control of the Ministry of the Interior

On 22 May 2004, a popular massive rally was held in Manama led by Ayatollah Sheikh Isa Qassim denouncing the bombings that targeted Shiite shrines in Iraq. The public was disgusted that the security forces targeted the licensed march using tear gas and shotguns<sup>(7)</sup>.

It is interesting and surprising that on the same day King Hamad issued a decree appointing Rashid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, Minister of the Interior, in place of his predecessor, Khalifa bin Mohammed Al Khalifa.

Much can be said about this but in this chapter it is important to note the displacement of the Minister of the Interior affiliated to the Prime Minister with another affiliated to the king in a manner showing the King as a reformer who stands against the use of violence against protesters. The Prime Minister's wing was portrayed as targeting defenseless people simply for expressing their opinion.

And it is even more exciting as the minister, Khalifa bin Mohammed was part of the main crew -led by Sheikh Khalifa- in the suppression of the nineties protests, who in the eyes of the opposition is accused of human rights violations, and is a hero in the eyes of the royal family. Nevertheless, that did not deter the King from overthrowing him in an "offensive" way, as long as he severed his control over the security forces. Khalifa bin Mohamed was believed to be loyal to the Prime Minister until he lost control due to the advent of the Chief of Staff Defense Force (since 2001) Rashid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, Minister of the Interior.

## The fourth ministerial change: the king pounces

The ministerial change on January 14, 2005 can be described as the moment of the King's attack on the Prime Minister, not only in terms of

increasing his share to 12 ministers in contrast to 7 affiliated with the Prime Minister (see Table ...). but also in terms of the faces emerging from the ministry, who are the fundamental pillars of Sheikh Khalifa's approach.

This time the king took the decision to remove the four characters seen as the striking arms of the Prime Minister:

- The removal of Mohamed Al Mutawa from his post as Minister of Cabinet Affairs, and his replacement by Abdul Hussain Mirza, who is a calm and professional person affiliated to the King. This has very significant implications and shows that the king can appoint and dismiss whoever he wants. It also meant that appointing Mirza as Minister of the Cabinet Affairs was the realization that his agenda is now under the eyes and control of the palace. Without a doubt, the appointment of Sheikh Ahmed Attiallah to this post later (September 2005), meant more than just the appointment of a "professional" person like Mirza, taking into account the important position occupied by Attiallah (the nephew of the Minister of the Royal Court) in making and implementing royal decisions.

- The removal of the second important person in the eyes of Sheikh Khalifa, the Minister of Finance and National Economy, Abdullah Hassan Saif, and appointing in his place, Sheikh Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, who is affiliated to the Crown Prince, assigning to him the Ministry of Finance only. This is supposed to mean that the responsibility for formulating the policy on the national economy had been confirmed to be transmitted to the Economic Development Board, chaired by the Crown Prince.

- The removal of Jawad Al Orayedh who has close contact with the Prime Minister from the cabinet.

- The removal of the minister Abdulnabi Al Shoala, in a rebuking way. The Bahrain News Agency pointed out his exemption<sup>(8)</sup>, despite a statement released two days later denying the issue of exemption and paid tribute to the man for what he has achieved on national levels<sup>(9)</sup>. Interestingly, Mohammed Al Mutawa, Abdullah Saif and Jawad Al Orayedh were appointed as the Prime Minister's advisors, but not Al Shoala. It is not known whether this reflects royal resentment, given that appointments to the status of minister must be issued by the king.

- A remarkable reduction in the powers of the minister Dr. Majeed Al Alawi. After he was the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, he became the Minister of Labour only, while the Social Affairs Ministry was assigned to Dr. Fatima Al Balooshi affiliated to the militants in the Royal Court. Preferably, this is to be discussed in another context rather than the conflict between the king and prime minister to control the composition of the government.

We can talk in another context about other issues related to increasing the number of ministers from the ruling family, reducing the presence of the Shiite ministers, and the lack of efficiency in appointments.

**Table (5): the cabinet after the fourth ministerial change conducted by King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, in January 2004**

#	Person	Position	Affiliated with the King	Affiliated with the Prime Minister	Affiliated with the Crown Prince
1	Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa	Prime Minister			
2	Abdullah bin Khalid Al Khalifa	Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs		*	
3	Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa	Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister		*	
4	Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa	Minister of the Interior	*		
5	Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa	Minister of Transportation		*	
6	Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa	Minister of the Court of Prime Minister		*	
7	Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa	Minister of Defense	*		
8	Isa bin Ali Al Khalifa	Minister of Oil		*	
9	Ali Saleh Al Saleh	Minister of Municipalities and Agriculture		*	
10	Abdullah bin Salman Al Khalifa	Minister of Electricity and Water	*		

11	Abdulaziz Mohammed Al Fadhel	Minister of Shura and Representative Affairs		*	
12	Ahmed bin Mohamed Al Khalifa	Minister of Finance and National Economy			*
13	Fatima Al Balooshi	Minister of Social Affairs	*		
14	Fahmi Ali Al Jowder	Minister of Works and Housing			*
15	Mohamed Abdel Ghaffar Abdullah	Minister of Information and Minister of state for Foreign Affairs	*		
16	Majed Al Naimi	Minister of Education	*		
17	Nada Haffadh	Minister of Health	*		
18	Hasan Fakhro	Minister of Industry and Commerce	*		
19	Mohamed Ali Al Shaikh Mansoor Al Sitri	Minister of Justice	*		
20	Majid Al Alawi	Minister of Labor	*		
21	Abdulhussain Ali Mirza	Minister of Cabinet Affairs	*		
		Total	11	6	2
<p>Number of ministers affiliated to the King: 11            Number of ministers affiliated to the Prime Minister: 6            Number of ministers affiliated to the Crown Prince: 2</p>					

The bottom line is that the King publicly started a battle against the prime minister, who gave up in the face of the storm. Yet, he did not resign as the Egyptian centers of power did during the period of Al Sadat, and he also did not accept any alternative position even if the Viceroy that was not mentioned in the Constitution, was seen as a consultant.

The continuous cabinet change dictated the presence of ministers, who were affiliated with the king, while the ministers affiliated with the Prime Minister have become aware of the balance of power, and the Prime Minister himself has become convinced that the authority and power had shifted in form and content, to the new king. After January 2005, and before the question whether the Minister was on one side or the other was no longer asked, since they all had to implement the instructions issued by the Minister of the Royal Court otherwise they could be dismissed and the sultan could become very angry.

Bahrain is usually referenced to the model of the king of Jordan, who “plays with the ministers like dolls.” This is the model that the king of Bahrain wanted to apply. Sometimes he changed ministers in a libelous way - for example, the dismissal of the former Minister of Information Jihad Bukamal after about 14 months from the date of his appointment. Bukamal was sacked in November 2008, through news carried by the Bahrain News Agency, and international agencies. The news was confirmed by the King’s media adviser Nabil Al Hamar, when the king was on a business trip to New York<sup>(10)</sup>. It was as if a catastrophe happened that necessitated sacking Bukamal quickly, and reprimanding him in public<sup>(11)</sup>.

Regardless of whether the dismissal of Bukamal came after Bahrain TV broadcasted an interview with Waad’s Secretary General Ebrahim Sharif in which he spoke of what he called the secret budget of the Royal Court and the arms deals<sup>(12)</sup> or against the background of complaints by workers in Bahrain TV<sup>(13)</sup> on the actions carried out by the former Chief Ex-

ective of Bahrain Radio and Television, Ahmed Najem (appointed by Bukamal), or for other reasons, the sacking of Bukamal could have been carried out in a more conventional way<sup>(14)</sup>.

We can also refer to the dismissal of the former Minister of Municipalities Mansoor bin Rajab, in March 2010, as a model for the controversial dismissals, where bin Rajab was accused of money laundering with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard<sup>(15)</sup>. He was defamed in the local media for weeks, in a country not used to raising corruption issues, suggesting that other targets were behind the whole process.

Item (2) footnotes

- 1- I say constitutional, given that the Council of Ministers is a constitutional body logically was not solved for example, and this is well understood by the Prime Minister.
- 2- See, item number (<<), The Sunni groups are not loyal to Sheikh Khalifa, in this book.
- 3- See, item number (<<), The king and the prime minister, a Public clash, in this book.
- 4- This chapter does not discuss ministerial changes to the point of efficiency, or sectarian dimension, and these problems are present. But the chapter discusses the formation of Ministers taking sides of either the Prime Minister or the King.
- 5- Sheikh Hamad declared himself as a king in February 14, 2002, and gave himself the title of “His Greatness”, but the media pressure made it replaces it with “His Majesty”.
- 6- Perhaps assigning Fakhro as a Minister also aims to keep him out of the palace, a policy followed by the Minister of the Royal Court Khalid bin Ahmed for the persons close to the King, as happened with the former Minister Mansoor bin Rajab.
- 7- Al Wasat newspaper, May 23, 2004.
- 8- See Bahrain News Agency link: <http://www.bna.bh/portal/news/43631>.
- 9- Al Wasat newspaper, January 17, 2005.
- 10- See Bahrain News Agency link: <http://www.bna.bh/portal/news/135720>.
- 11- ???????
- 12- To see the interview of Ebrahim Sharif, see the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4GWZVBpBuPA&feature=related>.
- 13- For background on the protests, see Al Wasat newspaper, 6 August, 2008. The protests of the television staff coincided with a visit carried out by King Hamad to Turkey, and newspapers in Ankara broadcasted it, which caused the upset of the king.
- 14- According to other sources the dismissal in this way came due to the refusal of the minister Bukamal the instructions of the Minister of the Royal Court to dismiss Ahmed Najem from his post as chief executive for Bahrain’s radio and television. Bukamal said then to the Minister of the Court that he was receiving instructions from the king.
- 15- Al Wasat Newspaper, March 23, 2010.

(3)

### The King and the Prime Minister: the public clash

The King publicly rebuked the Prime Minister, and invited him to “obey” the orders of the Crown Prince, who is mandated by the economic policy-making of the country. Ministers were also threatened with dismissal if they disrupted the decisions of the Crown Prince, and the monopolistic economic decisions.

In the face of the insistence of the opposition on the dismissal of the government (its president and members), the Bahraini authorities find themselves facing a challenging demand as the ruling mentality is committed to keeping the dean of the tribe Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa (77 years) in office as prime minister, out of respect for the tribal traditions. The main powers of the Prime Minister were withdrawn and political, constitutional, and parliamentary affairs were referred to the royal palace, while issues with economic dimensions were referred to the Economic Development Board<sup>(1)</sup>, chaired by Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa (43 years).

This situation has created dispersion in decisions, the emergence of more than one council of ministers, and perhaps the creation of centers of power, necessitated in some cases by interference from the top of the hierarchy to set its pace, as was the case when the King of Bahrain publicly rebuked his uncle, the Prime Minister, due to a complaint made by Crown Prince Salman of lack of cooperation by some ministers and government agencies with the Economic Development Board.

Here is a complaint of the Crown Prince, which was broadcasted via the Bahrain News Agency in January 14, 2008. The king responded to this complaint.



## The context of the Crown Prince's complaint of the Prime Minister:

His Majesty my dear father, King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the beloved King of the country, may God protect him.

Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah

His Majesty my dear father, King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the beloved King of the country, may God protect him.

Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah

I am pleased your Majesty to extend my sincere greetings and best wishes for good health and happiness to you, expressing at the same time my pride and my gratitude to your Majesty for the support and assistance in various tasks and responsibilities that were precluded to us in the Economic Development Board, which is always trying to implement your kind guidance for the further development, progress and prosperity of the Kingdom of Bahrain and its people in your blessed reign.

This message comes in the context of our permanent need of wise guidance and the valuable advice of Your Majesty as well as our desire to inform you on the ongoing progress made by the Board of responsibilities and tasks that are assigned to us. Besides, the constraints and difficulties facing the Board's work, we have decided to present to Your Majesty, God bless you, with the following issues about which we need your wise guidance as well as to your indispensable support.

Your Majesty,

Your national vision and comprehensive reform project of the Kingdom of Bahrain have raised a lot of hopes with your people, and motivated the faithful ones to achieve the noble visions and aspirations of Your Majesty. It was also honoring us

to take part in this integrated reform project, I mean the economic reform project that we sought in the Economic Development Board in order to develop the foundation, and economic plans based on study and research as well as learning from the experiences of those who preceded us, bearing always in mind the noble aspirations of Your Majesty's, which aims to achieve progress and prosperity for our country, wealth and well-being of our honorable people. In spite of the sincere efforts and those good intentions our work in the Economic Development Board did not find an interest among some government officials and that has led to great difficulties in implementing the project which is an essential part of Your Majesty reformist project, God bless you.

Your Majesty,

The efforts of your fellow citizens in the Economic Development Board, and the efforts of everyone involved in the national dialogue have resulted in a lot of achievements which we are proud of. And it was possible for these achievements to expand and grow, if harmony was found between your vision, and the policies pursued by some of our government officials. As we are presenting the matter to your Majesty in order for you to decide what you see as suitable, we would like to express our readiness to implement all your guidance, which has become for us very necessary and important.

In conclusion, please accept our sincere wishes and lasting pride in your continuing support to us, and asking God to bless you and grant you good health and wellness.

Your sincere son

Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa

Crown Prince and Deputy Supreme Commander

## The king's letter in response to the complaint of the Crown Prince about the lack of cooperation by the prime minister:

Dear son, your Highness Sheikh Salman bin Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander of the Bahrain Defense Force, and the President of the Economic Development Board, May God bless and protect you.

Peace is upon you and God's mercy and blessings be upon you.

We have examined your sincere and candid letter, about your desire to remove any obstacles from the aspirations of the administration and the resolutions of the Economic Development Board under your leadership, and your willingness to overcome the absence of cooperation between the Council and some government agencies.

As we emphasize trust in your competence and your integrity that you have become known and even known at the national and international level, and cherished by everyone in this beloved country, we see that it is incumbent on the government agencies concerned to exceed the delay and slowdown in implementation, and comply with the guidance in implementation as stated in the decree establishing and organizing the Council, and the decrees amending some provisions, as stated in the text to be «the Council's decisions are binding on ministries, institutions and administrative bodies in the State and shall take the necessary measures for its implementation», as well as loyal and committed to the aspirations of the Economic Development Board, which is already the aspirations of our loyal people to the progress and prosperity for a decent life.

As stated in the decree amended No. 5 of 2002, as you are free to choose members of ministers and experts, and see in this situation that anyone who is not playing a significant role and doing their work in the Council, then it would negatively affect their position in the cabinet or even in the reshuffle, and at the same time if they prove an efficiency and provide quality work, then they could be considered in assigning greater responsibilities. Since our comprehensive reform may ensure that, thanks to God, the various dimensions of political, economic and social development, then we want to have an input to the administrative reform of the state, to be the economic decision of the Council of Economic Development, where it became the policies of the national economy of competence, and no longer in the custody of any ministry, We are determined to find a tool to consider the appropriate legal and necessary means to achieve this goal, namely, the unity of the country's economic decision to proceed with the projects aimed to achieve the prosperity of the citizens, without any delay. We wish you to continue success, and appreciate your sincere efforts to serve the nation.

God bless you and, and help you to serve people, be safe.  
Hamad bin Isa, king of Bahrain.

This was the first time that the Prime Minister got publicly reprimanded, and his call explicitly to “obey” the orders of the Crown Prince, which is mandated by the policy-making not related to the economy of the country, as he was threatened in the event of Minister of being firing if the decisions of the Crown Prince were not followed.

It is likely that this issue arose as the King was terminally ill in the second half of 2007, and his departure for medical treatment brought to the fore the prime minister's attempts to regain some influence, but they have been met harshly by the King, who interfered by:

1. The appointment of the Crown Prince " His Highness Sheikh Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Deputy Supreme Commander, to oversee the implementation of public policy and military plans, administrative, economic and financial, Bahrain Defense Force and National Guard, and exercise any other powers conferred upon it by the Supreme Commander." This was in early January 2008<sup>(2)</sup>.

2. Expanding the powers of the Economic Development Board which is headed by the Crown Prince, at the same time as marginalizing the largest of the Council of Ministers. The Crown Prince has appointed ten ministers as members of the EDB on January 30. The EDB has become the actual alternative to the Council of Ministers in the resolution service and the country's economic development. It is made up of "the Deputy Prime Minister Jawad Al Salem, the Minister of Education, the Minister of Works, the Minister of Labor, the Minister of Social Development, the Minister of Cabinet Affairs, the Minister of Justice and Islamic Affairs, the Minister of Municipalities and Agricultural Affairs, the Minister of Information, the Minister of Health and the Minister of Housing"<sup>(3)</sup>.

3. Taking more stringent steps to remove the prime minister's son Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa from the civil aviation sector, which was supervised by him. The Crown Prince was to be responsible for taking the necessary legal and administrative procedures to transform Bahrain International Airport from a subsidiary to a company property, to be part of the private sector, in accordance with the laws adopted in the Kingdom under the direct supervision of the civil aviation authority and a maximum of transparency and disclosure<sup>(4)</sup>.

On 17 January 2008, it was announced that Bahrain Holdings<sup>(5)</sup> (the investment arm of the government in the non-oil sectors) announced the appointment of Sheikh Duaij bin Salman Al Khalifa, as the chairman of the Board of Directors of Bahrain International Airport.

It could be argued with regard to the status of Ali bin Khalifa, the eldest son of his father, the Prime Minister, that the expression is evident from the place of the marginalized of Sheikh Khalifa, who was unable to secure the portfolio of the Ministry of Interior for his son Ali, who is running for the post of Deputy Prime Minister, without any real power. He was the Minister of Transport for 18 years (since 1993), until the last change. He then became deputy prime minister without portfolio of the transport ministry, which has been assigned in March 2011 to Kamal Ahmed, a very close associate of the Crown Prince.

The status of Ali bin Khalifa Ali is just like his father, and remained in the last ten years without any authority after that was removed from the presidency of the telecommunications company named Batelco (the government owns the majority of its shares), and the withdrawal of the telecommunications sector from under his hand after it was opened for private investment, and removed from the Department of Gulf Air, The Bahrain International Airport. It is clear that the process of restructuring power lasted several years, to make the King axis up (power) instead of the Prime Minister, and will not allow for any changes.

Despite the friendliness lost between the king and prime minister, the issue of the dismissal of Sheikh Khalifa from his post had grave implications and may have been the straw that broke the camel's back given the attitude of the authorities to reject his dismissal and the insistence of the opposition on the appointment as a step to forward in the term of a government that reflects the popular will.

The change of the prime minister will not solve all the problems, but it could remove the biggest obstacle to the launch of a formal dialogue between the opposition and the regime. But the difference might be deeper in the authorities' refusal to give written guarantees to establish a constitutional monarchy.

The agreement to dismiss the prime minister will remain the biggest problem. The other is the insistence of the opposition on the election of a constituent assembly to write a new constitution, and determine the pattern of the next government, or resort to a referendum on the constitution.

However, the central dimension in the opposition's insistence on removing Sheikh Khalifa, is the appreciation that such a move could have profound consequences on the structure of the formal decision. If this happened one of the scenarios could be something like what happened in Egypt and Tunisia, when Zine El Abidine and Hosni Mubarak were removed. Subsequent events led to a remarkable change in the structure of the two systems. But there is a difference worth noting here: Sheikh Khalifa is not the first man, nor even the second or third in Bahrain.

The structure of the constitutional order in Bahrain, combines broad powers in the hands of the king<sup>(6)</sup>, who can keep a grip on the situation without dramatic consequences, as happened in Tunis and Cairo.

This is perhaps why the opposition wants to redraw the powers of the head of state in an attempt to shrink them. This is part of a wider attempt to reduce the powers of the royal family. The opposition wants to change the royal family into a constitutional rather than a governing monarchy. If this does not happen the situation will become complicated and blood will be shed.

Item (3) footnotes

1- Crown Prince Sheikh Salman bin Hamad was appointed as the Chairman of the Economic Development Board in March 3, 2002. The Council was responsible for formulating and overseeing the economic development strategy of Bahrain, and attracting foreign investment to it. In fact, the pluralist institutions that were established, especially those led by the Crown Prince, such as “Mumtalakat” aimed to pull more power from the prime minister, with the latter retaining his formal position.

2- Al Wasat newspaper, 7 January 2008.

3- Al Wasat newspaper, 31 January 2008.

4- Al Wasat newspaper, 18 January 2008.

5- “Mumtalakat is the investment company for the Kingdom of Bahrain, and was established in June 2006 by Royal Decree as an independent holding company for the government of Bahrain’s strategic non-oil and gas related assets. Mumtalakat was created to align and implement the execution of the government’s initiatives to pursue value-enhancing opportunities, improve transparency and help achieve operational excellence for its state-owned non-oil and gas related assets. Mumtalakat holds stakes in over 35 commercial enterprises, representing a portfolio value of approximately BD 3.3 billion (U.S.\$8.8 billion) as of June 30, 2011 and spanning a variety of sectors, including aluminum production, financial services, telecommunications, real estate, tourism, transportation, and food production”. <http://www.bmhc.bh/en/4/media-centre.aspx>.

6- See articles (33-43) of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain 14 February 2002.



(4)

### Sunni groups are not loyal to the Prime Minister

The Prime minister was not able to penetrate the Sunni political groups, and societies: (Muslim Brotherhood) and “Salafists” who are faithful to the Palace and the strong man Sheikh Khalid bin Ahmed, and his nephew Shaikh Ahmed.

Considered “Hamad Strategies” in the political system of Bahrain include the “presidential strategy”, similar to the system in America: The King, or President makes a decision, and departments of the Executive Council of Ministers apply it, unlike in the existing system in the 1973 Constitution, which can be considered “mixed”, and gives the Council of Ministers wide powers.

The 1973 constitution allowed the Council of Ministers to dominate the affairs of state, according to Article 85/A, which states that “ the Council of Ministers and the Ministers dominate in matters related to the interests of the state, and formulate the general policy of the government to pursue its execution, and oversee the functioning of the government.” In the Constitution of 2002 promulgated by King Hamad the word ‘dominate’ was replaced with the word ‘sponsor’ (Article 47/A), and referred all powers to the king, who is exercising his powers directly, and through his ministers, while the head of state in the 1973 Constitution handles his powers through his Ministers.

In light of the “Hamad Strategies”<sup>(1)</sup>, this was the point of turning Sheikh Khalifa Bahrain’s Prime Minister into the Minister for the affairs of Muharraq city<sup>(2)</sup>, or the Minister of citizens’ affairs. It became clear since the parliamentary elections in 2002, when Sheikh Khalifa began his subsequent visits to Al Muharraq, that decision making powers had been taken away from the Prime Minister who is the chairman of the Gov-

ernment of His Majesty the King, and is committed to the instructions of the head of state. The decision-making mechanism was transferred from the Council of Ministers to the palace. The council of ministers was relegated to implementing policies drawn up by overseas consultants the implementation of those who works in the palace<sup>(3)</sup>, and in contrast to the previous prince or ruler of Bahrain, Sheikh Khalifa authority was unlimited during the rule of his brother Sheikh Isa (from 1963 to 1999).

Since 2001 the Prime Minister appeared aware of the concerns of the Sunnis. It was well known among Sunni groups that the King was creating a broad alliance with Shiite groups<sup>(4)</sup> and the opposition, which was endorsed in the Charter (2001), as it was not for the Sunni groups loyal to the role in his release (the Charter).

What got more attention back then was that some Sunni groups could play the role of the opposition to Al-Khalifa. The Sunnis felt they should vote on the charter as the king made the Shiite partners to govern: he released prisoners, deportees returned and the laws of the State Security were negated. There was an agreement to open a newspaper, and a civil project for homes in the North (where the vast majority are Shiite). There was also an agreement to establish a political society (Al Wefaq), heralding the election of parliament, and the activation of the 1973 constitution was not insisted on.

It is “the next catastrophe,” in the eyes of some Sunni groups who are loyal to the royal family, which was and still is the biggest beneficiary for the governance, since the emergence of the modern state. This was more pronounced in the last ten years. Discrimination was not part of the official policy. The abuse of the Shia citizens occurred behind closed doors.

Despite the shortness of some parties in the palace of Sheikh Khalifa’s

activities in Muharraq, the palace looks at these activities as the space allowed to the Prime Minister who is inactivated, and which are in a proper space. They are in the activation and strengthening of the Sunni sectors which is a critical objective of the palace. The palace was also aware of the modest size of the capital built by Sheikh Khalifa in this sensitive area.

When endowed with the events of February 14, 2011, the reaction of Sheikh Khalifa was offensive, and moved in a manner that recognizes the complexities of the situation, trying to reap what he has sown ten years ago, in Qalali and Muharraq city<sup>(5)</sup>.

Sheikh Khalifa was not the one who issued any strategic decision on how to deal with sit-ins at the Pearl Roundabout (February and March 2011). It is true that he was in favor of curbing the demonstrators, but he was never a decision-maker in the use of violence, and the decision-maker in a call to the Saudi forces. He did not mind being portrayed as “the bad guy”, and he presented himself as the one who ordered the army to fire on unarmed demonstrators, declared a state of emergency in mid-March 2011, and was behind the demolition of the rotor, and the occupation by the military of Salmaniya hospital. He gave the impression he was behind the formation of national unity headed by Dr. Abdullatif Al Mahmood. The truth of the matter was that King Hamad and his crew led by the Minister of the Royal Court Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa was the main contributor in the formulation of a “Hamad strategy” or Hamad policies” and their application.

Sheikh Khalifa was not behind any of the important decisions in the process of suppression of advocates of reform, but he wanted to appear like a “bad” man who was against the demands of the opposition, in favor of punishment and restraint, as he did not have anything to lose and the signs that he would be overthrown kept increasing.

However, Sheikh Khalifa faced a man of decision, not just guidance and words: the commander of the army, Field Marshal Khalifa bin Ahmed (brother of the Minister of the Royal council)<sup>(6)</sup>, who pulled the rug out from the Prime Minister. He was proud of memories of “conquest and invasion”<sup>(7)</sup> against the Bahraini people and wanted to ingratiate the loyalists to the King and his crew, not the Prime Minister.

However, after ten years of King Hamad taking over, it became clear that he lost the support of the Shiites. They were opposed to his promises of reform, and may have destroyed much of what is positive in relations between the ruling family and Shiite groups. He didn’t even get the loyalty of the Sunnis who saw his treatment of the Shiites as hypocritical and the amnesty for prisoners of conscience as derisory<sup>(8)</sup>. One of the students at the sit-ins said we do not want King Hamad, we want Sheikh Khalifa.

Nevertheless, Sheikh Khalifa was not able to penetrate the Sunni political groups, and Societies (Muslim Brotherhood) and “Salafists” who have been faithful to the Palace and the strong man Sheikh Khalid bin Ahmed, and his nephew Ahmed bin Atiyat Allah.

The message of Dr. Abdullatif Al Mahmood published in the “Washington Times”<sup>(9)</sup> was clear; to approve the removal of Sheikh Khalifa and put forward a theory saying that the crisis is over, thanks to Sheikh Khalifa and his extraordinary work and achievements. And this does not change the probability of Sheikh among Sunni masses in Muharraaq, which can be tuned, by adjusting some of the popular representatives.

Sheikh Khalifa has failed in the formation of a political rally which gives him allegiance despite desperate attempts. The palace stopped his early attempts to initiate a political movement. The prime minister knows that the decision was taken in the palace, not in Government House. The army and security forces are under the command of the palace, which

means the presence of the actual Sheikh Khalifa is fragile indeed.

So, the displacement of Sheikh Khalifa only needs a decision by the King, to automatically find in favor of the “Coalition of the Conqueror” and other political groupings. The palace and its official media and local press will portray the decision as inevitable as will The Country, and Gulf News – newspapers which are close to the Prime Minister.

Options are narrow for the King, as he chooses to throw the load of his office onto the Minister Khalid bin Ahmed and his brother, the commander of the army. This group is still awaiting the right opportunity to keep Sheikh Khalifa away from the scene.

The situation is quiet and contrary to what is believed there is a local initiative to remove the prime minister. Sheikh Khalifa has already been given the message that the game is over. It is true that Saudi Arabia will remain an obstacle. But it should be remembered that the Al-Saud family made a decision to sack King Saud bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saud (1902-1969), in 1963<sup>(10)</sup>, and that King Hamad passed a package of reform measures that were disturbing to Riyadh in 2001. But Saudi Arabia’s desire to fight any aspirations for the advancement of the Bahraini people may again be softened if King Hamad forces the resignation of Sheikh Khalifa and starts a new era in Bahrain.

The dilemma faced by the King here is not Saudi Arabia, or the pro-regime groups but the preoccupation with what happens next. What is the benefit of offsetting Sheikh Khalifa? The opposition adheres to the restructuring of power, and demands that the powers of Parliament and the Government fully reflect the opinion of the people.

The displacement of Sheikh Khalifa is imminent and will ensure that the political system in Bahrain sticks to reform; Sheikh Khalifa is only a shell.

Item (4) footnotes

- 1- See also number (3) of this book: The king stifle the Prime Minister in his “constitutional” den.
- 2- The second city after the capital Manama, Bahrain, and it was the place of the governor in the first half of the twentieth century.
- 3- Most notably the Royal Court Minister Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa.
- 4- Abbas Busafwan, Bahrain Mirror: the dialogue is embraced in Al Fateh, 28 June 2012.
- 5- A village located north of the city of Muharraq, and inhabited by the families of the Sunni sect.
- 6- Born in 1946, professional soldier, he was promoted to the rank of Marshal on 9 February 2011, a few days before the start of the uprising of February 14. He was appointed Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of Bahrain Defense in January (January) 1974, and he served as Commander in Chief of the Bahrain Defense Force in March / March 1988.
- 7- Perhaps one of the major challenges facing the ruling family is to forget that it has by force entered Bahrain in 1783, and the Baharna/Shiite (indigenous people of the island) usually hates the word “conquest” used by the official date of entry of the first rulers of Al-Khalifa of Bahrain, also do not like the name of Al Fateh Mosque, the main mosque/official in the capital, Manama. Bahrain being a Muslim country the word conquest is an Islamic term used to express the takeover of the Muslim army on a foreign State.
- 8- The king issued an amnesty for about 12 prisoners of conscience.
- 9- Ben Birnbaum, The Washington Times, Top Sunni: P.M. should mull quitting after crisis, 18 August 2011.
- 10- see: [http://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/سعود\\_بن\\_عبد\\_العزیز\\_آل\\_سعود](http://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/سعود_بن_عبد_العزیز_آل_سعود).

(5)

### Consensus on removing the Prime Minister

The option of an unstable state or a historic settlement by instituting a real constitutional monarchy may not be acceptable to the king. But the decision to displace his uncle is affordable, to provide an accepted settlement, claiming that the obstacle to reform (Sheikh Khalifa) has been eliminated.

The Prime Minister Khalifa bin Salman was not at all comfortable with the formation of the Bassiouni Commission of Inquiry on violations of human rights, as he was afraid he would be forced to resign.

Sheikh Khalifa is getting his revenge by employing a global company, called Mackenzie<sup>(1)</sup>, for the preparation of reports on the economic situation, and status of Bahrain, if Sheikh Khalifa remains in his position, as Bahrain faces huge challenges in terms of unemployment and poor ability to attract investment, because of corruption and mismanagement which are his legacy<sup>(2)</sup>. This file has been managed since 2002, by the Economic Development Board, chaired by Crown Prince, as part of the campaign waged by King Hamad against his uncle.

So, in practice, Sheikh Khalifa is no longer a target for the opposition, announcing only that he was and still is the target of powerful forces in the Royal Council. This is clear as he has been marginalized by the forces in the system such as the Crown Council. Sheikh Khalifa has been removed from the scene, an indispensable condition, to restructuring the course of settlement in Bahrain, from the standpoint of its strategic ally (the USA), and the patrons of the historic ruling family Al-Khalifa (Britain), and some countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (Oman, and Qatar).

In fact, the complexities of completion of a historic compromise between the people and the family of Al-Khalifa, led to increasing pressure to bear on Sheikh Khalifa as a scapegoat. The opposition does not object to this but supports his departure in an honourable way. This is less ambitious than the goals of the opposition, which is now in the position of having to conform to the system to gain legitimacy and political stability.

If a historic settlement is intended it must be based on consensus for a real constitutional monarchy, where the role of the king is marginal and political decisions have to be made by the elected parliament and government. This is very difficult. It is a challenge not faced 60 years ago, during the demands of the National Union of the mid-fifties. This was the time when Jamal Abdel Nasser overthrew King Farouk of Egypt.

In fact, the Al Khalifa family does not comprehend that a constitutional monarchy is one where the people have the final say in the rule set. The Al Khalifa have faced the movements that demand the rights of people and responded by the use of excessive force which caused the loss of blood and the murder of innocent people.

When confronting the opposition groups, even when they are considering reducing the losses, the system was left with no choice but to continue using excessive force. Great sacrifices were made and now there is no trust at all between the people the royal family, and the king himself. This is considered a disaster.

History will record later that King Hamad was the most aggressive king who caused the most damage to Bahrain, and its people. The confrontation between the Al Khalifa family and opposition groups during the last ten years resulted in an uprising on February 14. The 30-year, undemocratic rule of Sheikh Isa / Sheikh Khalifa did not do as much damage as that of King Hamad.



It is true that the Arab Spring was the spark that ignited protests in Pearl Roundabout in a peaceful explosion, but it is also true that the situation in Bahrain has been waiting for a shot of gunpowder to explode.

In September 2001, when terrorists attacked the World Trade Center in New York, and left the U.S. President George W. Bush, stressing the Arab rulers that need to adopt the option of democracy, King Hamad was in a comfortable position, because he had already taken some steps towards democracy. About seven months prior to the terrorist attack of 11 September, a number of bold decisions, were taken which showed that the king favored democracy<sup>(3)</sup>.

The King followed policies which are unprecedented in the history of the state: discrimination and naturalization. The tenth anniversary of the Charter, like all festive occasions, was transformed from a happy time to an occasion which revealed the tragedy of the system. This was also the case with National Holiday celebrations. National Day (16 December) coincides with the start of the nineties uprising. Due to the history of fallen martyrs the official day is greeted with mixed feelings and is usually accompanied by demonstrations and casualties<sup>(4)</sup>.

The king himself suspended the Constitution of the State of Bahrain (1973), a consensus between the people and the ruling family, which came from abroad (Zubara in Qatar). The king bears a great responsibility for the damages suffered by the country, and for the damage to the reputation of the ruling family which should be in a better situation.

The policies of King Hamad have tarnished the image of the Al Khali-fa family abroad, even among their allies in the Gulf. The procedures the family developed whether to hand over more powers to the Sunni groups who are loyal to the family, or influenced by Saudi Arabia, or to give Parliament wider powers, are less effective.

Most likely, the West will stand in support of the family and try to play a role in the succession if an offered settlement refers to parliament and the government to be more representative of the people, so that The Americans and the British are interested in the settlement as long as their interests are secured and these interests cannot be secured if the ruling family monopolises decision-making. But the West also believes that its interests may be superseded or reduced if the rule of Bahrain is transferred to a national, independent movement as decided by the people.

So the West is interested in a comprehensive settlement and has declared its interest in a deal which secures stability to ensure the continued flow of oil. Bahrain is surrounded by Iran, and faced with the military superiority of Israel. The West thinks that its interests will be assured by the present king and it will not find better patrons than the ruling tribes in all of the Gulf States.

The position of the Sunni supporters<sup>(5)</sup> of the continuation of the symbol of Sheikh Khalifa and his plan is more than its continuation by him in person. It is likely that the system can accommodate their reaction in one way or another, by ministering some people from the societies of “Islamic Menbar” and “Al Asalah” and “the Coalition of National Unity” or through persuading Sheikh Khalifa to retire honorably.

The West also believes that the challenges of the regional balance of power do not permit one of the citizens to be in charge of political decision-making i.e the prime minister. Current information suggests that the Saudis will be an obstacle to radical changes in the way Bahrain is governed.

However, the biggest dilemma is that the overthrow of Sheikh Khalifa will not turn into a fragile historic settlement, even if the opposition con-

sidered it as an important victory. This is what makes King Hamad more reluctant to dispense with Sheikh Khalifa and the king will be haunted by a reduction of his powers.

So, the risk to civil peace will remain along with the excessive use of violence by the military which has ruled the country, under the direction of the king and not Sheikh Khalifa. Some hardliners in the ruling family could destroy the foundations of coexistence, as they did during the period of the emergency between mid-March and the end of May 2011, if they see that their interests are threatened.

The opposition know that, and are also aware that the forces of compromise in the system remain fragile. However King Hamad himself, even as he adopts the security policies to manage the challenges of the uprising of February 14, 2011, and takes decisions contrary to international law, knows better than anyone else what to do to protect “the secretariat of the chair.”

In this case the king may chose the “military decision” to impose incompatible constitutional amendments<sup>(6)</sup>. He may repeat the policies which have been followed since 2002, and applied in a terrible manner after the uprising of February 14, 2011. Undoubtedly this threatens to turn Bahrain into an unstable state and the royal family without legitimacy, using force illegally.

Between the unstable state option, and the historic settlement, ( submission to a real constitutional monarchy), King Hamad may find that the displacement of his uncle to safe guard the settlement is acceptable and claim that the obstacle to reform is (Sheikh Khalifa) who has been ousted.

The king will have to honour many commitments whether he announces the sacking of the prime minister or whenever he announces new re-

forms. The king has lost the confidence of the Shiites and Sunnis as well. The Sunnis prefer the prime minister 'Khalifa bin Salman'. The king has missed many chances and opportunities which caused him to lose the confidence of the Bahraini people. This is an obstacle which cannot be easily overcome.

The king will have to ensure the safety of his family and his people. That can be achieved if the people were in the position of decision-making, which is not the case at present, where the ruling family thinks that people are a strategic threat. Everyone involved: the ruling family and the people of Bahrain, are the losers in this no win situation.

Item (5) footnotes \_\_\_\_\_

1- A global consulting firm, formed an alliance with the Crown Prince, and has put the overall economic plans adopted by the Economic Development Board.

2- A study published by McKinsey at a large conference sponsored by the Crown Prince, on December 22 (December 2003), that unemployment in Bahrain will be 100,000 in 2013, if it continues the current administration of the economy (under the authority of the Prime Minister).

3- The charter was voted on to the king who united the Bahrainis, in the February 14, 2011, about seven months before the attack on the Twin Towers in New York, the King highlighted as a model for the ruler seeking democracy.

4- Hani Al Wasti and Hani Khamis died due to bullets shots by Security on December 16, and that was seen as a spark to start an uprising nineties.

5- To understand the position of the "Al Fateh Gathering" of rejecting the demands of the reform, see Abbas Busafwan, Bahrain Mirror: the dialogue is embraced in Al Fateh, June 28 2011.

6- See: Abbas Busafwan, Bahrain: "fragile" constitutional amendments, boosting up the crisis and not resonate locally and internationally, May 29, 2012.

## Chapter 3

### The Crown Prince, the advocate of his father's approach

- 6- What is said about the exclusion of the Crown Prince
- 7- The king's fears about the crown prince

## (6)

## What is said about the exclusion of the Crown Prince

What is said about the exclusion of the Crown Prince “In the Kingdom of Bahrain, my role as Crown Prince is to support his majesty the King my father and I am proud to be in that role. The King appointed me as head of the Economic Development Board, and as his deputy of the armed forces. These are my most important roles<sup>(1)</sup>. The term “Crown Prince” is mentioned in the 2002 constitution of Bahrain three times, in article 74, which gives the King the right to appoint the Crown Prince or an alternative to open the session of the National Council ( Parliament).

As for the subject of the Crown Prince, Item B from Article 1 of the constitution states that the rule will “pass to his [the King’s] eldest son, one generation after another, unless the King in his lifetime appoints a son other than his eldest son as successor, in accordance with the provisions of the Decree on inheritance stated in the following clause.”

With the exception of being deputy to the King in the King’s absence and being appointed as the delegate to open Parliament, the constitution does not give the Crown Prince any authority outside what is ordered by the King.

Currently, the Crown Prince is not involved in the daily general affairs of Bahrain. He is not the King’s accomplice, and this is in line with the role that King Hamad played when he was Crown Prince.

When King Hamad was Crown Prince (1964 – 1999), he was appointed as head of the Ministry of Defense, which remains under his command to this day. He built the Ministry of Defense on a basis that completely excluded any Shiite citizens, or potential opposition figures<sup>(2)</sup>. Within the armed forces, he imbedded the culture of “protecting the Royal Fam-

ily”, from external threats and especially internal threats. From what we know about the King, he always thought, and to this day thinks, that “the Shiite are a strategic threat to the regime”. The King views the revolution of 14 February 2011 as an event that vindicates his beliefs in relation to the Shiite, despite the fact that the revolution is proving to be a complete failure of the strategy Hamad has pursued during the past ten years.

A central principles of the king’s policy was the exclusion of the Shiite from the regime. The citizens reacted by excluding the royal family from the political field.

When the current King was Crown Prince, he actively wanted to engage in political roles. However, his father would repeatedly tell him to “wait your turn”.

At the time, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa was the strongman of the nation. This may have been the reason why the current King, upon his ascension, reduced the executive role of his uncle. In other words, the limitation of the role of Sheikh Khalifa was an act of revenge by the current King in response to being excluded from the political process for nearly three decades during Sheikh Khalifa’s rule.

Despite the conflict, the King is adamant to retain his uncle in the role of Prime Minister, even as a token gesture. The King even offered him the position of Deputy to the King. However, Sheikh Khalifa refused to accept the offer knowing that the Prime Ministership remains a central role in ruling and in the constitution, and it is difficult to be ignored, whereas the constitution does not refer to the position of the Deputy to the King.

Despite the attempts made by the King that the crown prince should

not be out of the equation of governance, as he was during his term of the Covenant, such attempts were not successful and the Crown Prince is not in a better position now than his father when he was the crown prince.

In fact, Sheikh Salman does not exercise a key role in the Ministry of Defence. To a large extent it can be said that in his position as Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces he is not authorized to take military or administrative decisions in this sector: his commission is clearly from the supreme commander of these forces (the king).

The Commander in Chief of the Defense Force, Field Marshal, Sheikh Khalifa bin Ahmed (brother of the Minister of the Royal Council) remains as the strong man in the military sector, who was with the king from the beginning during the formation of the army. Al-Khalifa, found it necessary to defend the army and if necessary even use force against the people, as was evident during the declaration of a state of emergency (March 15, May 30, 2011). This is in line with the belief of the ruling family of Bahrain, that it took over by force as the official discourse in 1783 revealed.

Before that (2005), the McKinsey company for the Advancement of studies confirmed that the country is in a disastrous state with regard to unemployment and impeding business growth due to the corrupt policy of Sheikh Khalifa. The establishment of the Labor Market Regulatory Authority<sup>(3)</sup> and the Labor Fund (Tamkeen)<sup>(4)</sup>, expanded the powers of the Economic Development Board (2008), and the formation of company property, in order to marginalize the Council of Ministers, and its president, Sheikh Salman and enable the implementation of his economic program.

Those who work in the Royal council led by the Minister of the Royal



Court, Sheikh Salman, don't trust the crown prince and see him as a "Western fancy, who would prefer to speak English, and not write poetry. He likes to watch cars races (such as Formula One), and does promote horses races " as the tribes usually do. He has been besieged on some of his institutions run by the staff close to those influential in the royal palace<sup>(5)</sup>.

Although he did not show his disagreement , Sheikh Salman didn't play the rule as an opposition figure in a public manner to remove him from political decision-making and his commitment to help his father to focus on the economic file (within the instructions of minors, of course). Although it is impossible to separate the two files, the senior officials of the royal palace still look at the crown prince as a rival, and the rival is always deprived of the political file, and thrown into a war of wills with Sheikh Khalifa, who is an expert in the management of the battles<sup>(6)</sup>.

Sheikh Salman, did not win over the business sectors<sup>(7)</sup>, or the opposition where he is seen as the best of the worst after his experience which was characterized by weakness and unilaterality in the management of the Economic Development Board, which is not subject to the accountability of parliament. He is also likely to be involved in corruption with regard to land (such as the land of the island), and the priorities of the Formula One, project. The building of a track for the Bahrain Formula One, at a cost of \$150 million, has come under scrutiny and questions were asked whether this project was selected only because it was favoured by the crown prince who wanted to see his dream come true.

King Hamad managed to establish the nucleus of his mission, which was built by the army and not by expanding ties to Sheikh Salman who is not connected to certain parties. He is also isolated from the new business elite. None of the advocacy groups were pro Sheikh Salman. They criticized his economic and political activities in public. I was a witness dur-

ing his file management dialogue between mid-February and mid March (March 2011), when it was said that “the commander of the march had to make concessions to the opposition.”

And records show the failure of Sheikh Salman in the formation of a network of relations with traditional families, whether Shiites or Sunnis. He failed like his father. Under Sheikh Khalifa the administration of the country was less turbulent, the opposite of what is believed. But he was removed from decision making during the new millennium.

So, it was not strange the king did not assign the Crown prince to be the chairman of the national dialogue<sup>(8)</sup>. The mission was assigned instead to the head of parliament, led by Mr. Khalifa Dhahran. Assigning the mission to the crown prince while preparing to attack the pearl roundabout and the protestors there would show the crown prince as a failure who cannot lead the country and carry on his job. As crown prince he has a famous history of failure, such as his failure in the labor market and the management of the properties of Bahrain, Gulf Air, which has lost 500 million Bahraini dinars in the year while the accumulated losses since 2001 to 2009 are estimated at pme billion and 240 million Bahraini dinars<sup>(9)</sup>.

Item (6) footnotes

- 1- The Crown Prince discourse of Bahrain in a meeting with Al Arabiya channel, April 10, 2010.
- 2- The King oversaw the construction of the army without the employment of Shiite citizens, even in small ranks, except in the narrow positions.
- 3- The Authority takes on all necessary duties and powers to regulate the labor market in the Kingdom and the organization of work permits of foreign workers and licensing agencies supplying workers and the employment offices and practice permits foreign employers to work in Bahrain “, see: <http://portal.lmra.bh/arabic/page/show/56>.
- 4- Tamkeen was established in August of 2006 as one of the initiatives of the national reform project and the Bahrain Economic Vision 2030. And was entrusted with the task to develop the private sector in the Kingdom of Bahrain and make it the primary engine of economic growth. “See: <http://www.lf.bh/ar/about/?p=Profile>.
- 5- Sheikh Khalifa bin Duaij Al Khalifa, is heading the Crown Prince’s Court, and is a nephew of the chairman of the Royal Court, Ahmed Atiyat Allah Al-Khalifa, and the latter is the nephew of the Minister of the Royal Court, Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa,
- 6- See Item No. 3), the king and the prime minister... the public clash, in this book.
- 7- The traders protest on a permanent basis, for example, for fees have been imposed on employers for foreign labor, as part of the “labor market reform” led by the Crown Prince, and found support from the opposition. For more information about the project see the labor market: <http://portal.lmra.bh/arabic/faq/category/2>.
- 8- The state organized a consensus of a national dialogue in July 2011, but the opposition boycotted (Unionist), or pulled out of it (Al Wefaq), or did not accept its findings (the national assembly, Waad, the Progressive platform).
- 9- See the remarks of the parliamentary commission of inquiry in Gulf Air Halim Murad, Al-Wasat, May 5 (May 2010).

## (7)

## The king's fears about the crown prince

There is concern about the Crown Prince from the extremist groups, which are within the government, and look to Sheikh Salman bin Hamad as an open-minded liberal.

Usually, King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa wakes up at midday and begins his meetings which will last until the evening surrounded by officials from the department. The first meetings are usually with the head of the National Security Service (Minister of Intelligence), which reviews two reports with the king:

The first Report is on developments of local affairs and the Arab and international levels, followed by the second report about the Royal Family.

In one of the meetings, the King focused as he usually did since the uprising began on Feb. 14 (2011) on the second report: the development of the situation of the royal family, threats to them since the revolution started, focusing on unprecedented local and regional challenges.

The king confided his concerns about his own security to his eldest son Sheikh Salman. He did not mention the word murder or attempted murder, but said he was concerned about this life and his crown<sup>(1)</sup>.

The Minister of Intelligence told the king that the crown prince was a priority for the security apparatus, the Ministry of the Interior and Army National Guard. The king was concerned about Sheikh Salman, because he is his son and that is the natural sentiment of a father towards his children which is no different to the king's concern for the general public. However, the fear of the King also comes from the fact that Sheikh

Salman served as the crown prince, who is supposed to carry the banner of the ruling family.

One of the reasons for the risk to the Crown Prince is that on 18 February 2011, he appeared on the TV screen in Bahrain, perhaps as a friend of the opposition calling for calm and dialogue and the withdrawal of the army from the vicinity of Pearl roundabout after the bloody attack on the peaceful protesters in the rotor.

At that time the king was prepared to deliver a fatal blow to the opposition, and dispense with dialogue. It was a preparation for a scenario which could plunge the country into civil violence. This coincided with a decision in the militant circles in the Royal council to form the “Coalition of National Unity,” the pro-government grouping headed by Dr. Abdulatif Al Mahmood.

While the King and loyal groups were talking about governance and security between mid-February and mid March 2011, the Crown Prince was contemplating peace.

So, the concern for the safety of the Crown Prince does not come from the opposition be it the legal or the illegal opposition. The opposition finds the Crown Prince mild compared to other hard-liners in the ruling family. This makes the King and the Minister of Intelligence more aware that the fear of attempts on the life of Sheikh Salman comes from somewhere else.

And without equivocation, concern comes for the Crown Prince from the extremist groups, and pro-government forces, which view him as a liberal open-minded person who presented ideas to the opposition, on 13 March 2011, which may change the structure of power, if they succeed.

For these extremists, the Crown Prince, as the opposition, is a potential danger to their interests, and may be violated if the opposition was able to reach an understanding with the government; it shall transform the seven points announced by the Crown Prince to reality. Under the initiative is the establishment of a national dialogue that discusses the seven major points: parliament with full powers, a government representing the will of the people, fair constituencies, naturalization, the fight against financial and administrative corruption, misappropriation of state property, and dealing with sectarian tensions.

These themes were agreed on after the Saudi intervention after long discussion of the seven points with the associations, led by the Secretary General of “Al Wefaq” Sheikh Ali Salman<sup>(2)</sup>. An announcement that he is dealing with the aspirations of the opposition in a democratic transition leading to a constitutional monarchy which will reduce the powers of the ruling family and have access to the king and the people govern through elected institutions, was made.

The ruling family and the loyalists were alarmed at the prospect of the Crown prince ascending to power suddenly before his father, who is surrounded by the military and could end the popular movement through the use of the security forces or through political rallying.

The Intelligence Minister informed King Hamad about those suspected of a possible attack against Sheikh Salman. King Hamad grabbed the list and read the names, including well-known personalities who are close to him. He sighed, shook his head, as if showing approval for the contents of the list. He was then given a new list classified according to the degree of seriousness of each character, which should include actions to be taken by the intelligence services for the protection of the Crown Prince.

The King often asked for clarification on certain matters and the Minister of Intelligence provided him with a daily report, usually in the presence of the Minister of the Royal Court, Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, and a secretary who took the minutes.

It seemed that the Intelligence Minister was hoping that the king would not be talking about these sensitive points during this meeting, but the King might have wanted to show his concern to those who are close to him.

The last special meeting was to discuss opportunities for a coup within the ruling family. The conclusion of the King, the Minister of intelligence and the Crown Prince, who attended this meeting, was that the potential of the National Guard or the Department of the Interior to carry out the coup did not seem possible.

The king is aware of that, but the scenarios must be on the table in exceptional circumstances and the unexpected has to be expected. In such a situation matters would be referred to the Supreme Defence Council, the Council of the ruling family, including any decision concerning the dislodging of the potential Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, from the position he has held for forty years to balance the competing wings of the ruling family.

Rumor says that a change of the Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa may be postponed until 2014, as a compromise between the opposition who would record a decisive victory. Alternatively the prime minister could remain for life with the conservatives around him.

The Minister of Intelligence expects that the king is considered to reduce his powers (to offset the major decisions of the Boards of the family and the Supreme Defense). This is understandable in the light of exceptional

circumstances, and the expectation that King expresses satisfaction that alternatives within the ruling family are limited and complex when the prospect for his overthrow is considered. He always remembers that the British, replaced Sheikh Isa Bin Ali Hamad with his son in the twenties of the last century, when there were complaints about the way the Kingdom treated its citizens<sup>(3)</sup>.

The King has advised his son Salman, to be closer to Riyadh, and related groups in Muharraq, and demonstrate great flexibility with the militant wing of the family and loyalists, and abide by the instructions of the conservatives in the Cabinet and the military, intelligence and security services, and even dismiss those who are involved in the protests and support violent actions to be taken against those involved in the protests.

About a thousand workers who were involved in the February and March 2011 protests from the property company (the investment arm of Bahrain in the non-oil sector which is supervised by the Crown),<sup>(4)</sup> were dismissed.

The Crown Prince is under pressure from loyalist rich traders who usually echo the views of the conservatives in the ruling family, because of the abandonment of many of the objectives of the draft reform of the labor market. This revealed the real conflict between the Crown Prince and Prime Minister and the disagreement was aired in public. The Prime Minister kept to his method of governance, while the Council adopted the economic development study prepared by McKinsey published in a major conference sponsored by the Crown Prince, in December 2003. The study suggests that unemployment in Bahrain will reach 100 thousand in 2013, if the current management of the economy continues under the chairmanship of Sheikh Khalifa<sup>(5)</sup>.

The labor market is freezing fees between April 2011 and April 2012. This may have an economic motivation, because of the repercussions of



the protest movement, but the policy motives are evident in light of the consideration for the project as a challenge between the Prime Minister and the Crown, who withdrew from the bulk of economic projects.

The CEO of the Market Regulatory Authority Ali Radhi (April 2011) has been changed, heeding the request of Sheikh Khalifa.

The king pitied his son more than anyone else. Without doubt, the King was not expected to implicate his son and crown prince but portray him in the official and international media as a liberal man in front of his opponents in the ruling family. He could be seen as a loyal ally for “enemies and traitors” (the opposition from their point of view), and that puts him on the “wanted” list of the Saudi-backed militants.

The king had hoped the seven-points would be the base line and the security solution could not abort his growing popularity if the march of events went towards regional projection systems.

This would be required as a solution to what happened since (May 2011) and the months following the re-marketing of the Crown Prince as part of the system, and to show that he is allied with Saudi Arabia, and is keen on the priority of the relationship with their loyalists. However, it miserably wounded him, and re-drew the picture of Sheikh Salman in the mind of loyalists. The king is still concerned about the crown prince.

Item (7) footnotes

1- See Crown Prince replaces the guards in his palace, Bahrain Mirror, 13 December 2011.

2- Born in 1969, and is one of the most prominent political leaders in Bahrain, leaders of the protest movement in the nineties, was deported from the country, in 1995, to the United Arab Emirates, and moved then directly to the British capital (London), and returned to Bahrain in 2001, shortly after the vote on the national Action Charter, and contributed to the establishment of Al Wefaq Society, and headed it since then.

3- Saeed Al-Shihabi, Bahrain 1920 1971, a study in the British documents, 1996.

4- Al Wasat newspaper, July 26, 2011.

5- Al Wasat newspaper, 23 December 2003.



## Chapter 4

### Chapter 4: The Rule of militancy... A review of King's speeches

- 8- Power parity produces inertia
- 9- It is not the time yet for democracy
- 10- King Hamad and the people 'face to face'

(8)

### Power parity produces inertia

In his speech on the occasion of the last ten days of Ramadan (August 28, 2011)<sup>(1)</sup>, Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa appeared to be direct and outspoken in his rejection of the demands of the protest movement, which started on 14 February 2011.

Objectively, regardless of the assessment of the king's speech, in my opinion, it was different from all the previous speeches he made. He rejected democracy and showed himself to be a supporter of the use of violence against his opponents.

In the past royal speeches were used to inject public opinion with doses of hopes. The king does not want a political prisoner in his judgment, he is against the jailing of journalists, he will review the policies of naturalization, every citizen would be given land, the pockets of the citizens would be filled with money and the northern city building and three other cities and so on.

It is true that most of the promises mentioned and many others have not and probably will not be kept. The king never said he would not keep his promises but confidence in the official discourse from opposition groups and those royal to the king is almost non-existent.

The speech was clear and honest and there were no promises of reform. The king even declared that the claims brought by the opposition for reform "will not do or help", and were rejected. Demands included the rejection of the opposition filed by the legal (Al Wafaq, and its partner associations) to set a timetable for the transition to democracy.

It was the first time that he explicitly talked about punishment for involve-

ment in the protest movement, but it was not punishment in the strict sense of the term. And we can talk a lot about the concept of “extremism,” which he referred to in the speech, and enter into a debate about the degree of tolerance. He seemed to be in favor of the arbitrary procedures taken against the workers, students and medical staff, but he did not believe that such measures were taken against everyone in these sectors.

He used the word “accelerate” in taking steps to return to work for those who have been dismissed because of their political positions. This word opens the door for interpretation to more delays.

After analyzing speeches about governance for years I believe , that the last Ramadan speech may be more of an expression of how the king sees himself. He sees himself as an absolute ruler, and sees his loyal people as a congregation. The opposition (the Shiite intellectual judgment) should be punished, and the land should be cleansed of them. This cleansing process also applies to the Council of Ministers, department heads and anti-market traders<sup>(2)</sup> who are opposed to the king’s policies.

For the regime the real problem is to stop behaving in a manner which is condemned internationally. Despite the steps taken against it the protest movement is still active and is expected to grow.

The regime is rejecting international demands. This is coupled with a green light for the punishment of protesters. It is as if the government is repeating the argument commander of the army that there is no turning back. But the regime threatens to use violence again, if it is faces real challenges. It is a difficult choice and has led to the current situation, where the regime is semi-rigid.

The system wants “to resolve” the battle militarily, but it has failed to do so. It has lost the confidence of the international community as the

system does not hesitate to suppress its opponents - even murder them - arrest women and demolish mosques. Contrary to what its supporters believe it is difficult to continue on this path because violations of human rights are unacceptable internationally under any pretext.

The strategy focused on isolating the demonstrators who looked confused when faced with an unprecedented show of strength even though violence was restricted.

The authorities again asked the question: How can the regime face the demands of peaceful reforms, as its image is tarnished in the eyes of the world.

As I first mentioned the situation in Bahrain did not reach its peak yet, and may exhibit unexpected escalations, including the move towards a kind of domestic violence, especially in view of the recorded successes of the popular movement.

However, it is important to recognize that the system still has the army and the Interior and the intelligence and thugs 'armed militia groups', and sectors of significant groups, which are pro the government. And more importantly, it receives support from the region and the West. There is a formal political opposition but it is reluctant to take a step forward against the system, and this reservation leads to the restriction in the violence of the security apparatus.

So far the people have been unable to transform the political vision and popular mobilisation in a peaceful manner.

Item (8) footnotes \_\_\_\_\_

1- See Appendix (1) for the full text of the letter of the monarchy.

2- Shops of the businessman Faisal Jawad were subjected to more than 50 attacks during the outbreak of protests.

(9)

It is not the time yet for democracy

Any revision of the official discourse since 14 February 2011, including the king's speech will clearly show references linking democracy and a civil war.

King Hamad spoke about the matter of democracy and that it is not the time for it in more than one of his speeches. When he opened Parliament on October 9, 2011<sup>(1)</sup>, King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain stated that it's not the time for democracy yet in Bahrain.

He justified his rejection of democracy, with a number of arguments:

**1- Democracy is against Bahraini privacy**

King Hamad considered that “The system stemming from the civil state and the nature of the configuration of cultural, political, social and religious factors is the suitable system or regime for our country, which is more suited to the situation in Bahrain.”

One of the royal announcements stated that the current system, with the monopoly of the ruling family regarding decisions about the national wealth is “suitable for our country”, and democracy, including the circulation of power, do not fit Bahrain and is against Bahraini privacy.

King Hamad did not use the word ‘privacy’ itself. He is referring to it in what he sees as a differentiated configuration of Bahrain which places the formation of an elected government, impartial judiciary and the security establishment to represent the people and protect them outside the framework of Bahrain’s cultural, social and religious system.

Indeed, the privacy argument has failed globally, and the concepts of equality and human rights and the right of people to govern themselves is seen as a human constant. It is an underlying principle of the United Nations and the international conventions ratified by the Kingdom of Bahrain, many of which are ratified by the King himself.

The word privacy may be used in different countries, without prejudice to the foundations of democracy, the legal frameworks and the actual applications, including the explicit rule of the people governing their country by themselves.

The culture of people and nations will continue to inform the human experience, where each model is unique and special. We see a clear difference in the American model in comparison with the British, or the Danish, Turkish or Brazilian model.

The framework that those models have in common is periodic elections to ensure a fair, transparent and peaceful transfer of power.

## 2- Democracy threatens national unity

The King said in his speech on October 9 (October 2011) the current state system “is the best that suits our country and enhances Bahrain’s national cohesion.” It’s just like saying that the mono system and dictatorship is preserving national unity.

In this sense the application of the foundations of the constitutional monarchy including parties according to parliamentary majority control, will harm national unity, deepen the national aspect, and promote sectarianism, which may later lead to a civil war.

In fact, any review of the official discourse since 14 February 2011, in-



cluding the king's speech, will clearly illustrate the linkage between democracy and a civil war.

In light of the above the ruling family is asking the opposition to choose between dictatorship or a civil war. The authorities in Bahrain have held a rehearsal of the civil conflict in February and March of 2011, when they moved the civilian militias to attack the areas inhabited by the sectors of the popular majority demanding democracy.

The dictatorship or civil war option will always be presented by the Authority whenever the people move and demand democracy. The degree to which the people manage to succeed and show other nations that their demands are very fair will determine the degree to which the authority will try to lead the country and take it into a civil conflict. It is hard to avoid it without understanding and consensus to complete the transition to democracy.

But what has not been mentioned in the royal speech is the idea of democracy has been built in Europe. It was built to avoid any civil strife, and not vice versa.

If a society has a group of disparate visions that are keen to prevail and control a country, then people have the right to choose from disparate visions. This moves the conflict from the street, the sword and the tank, into the arena of Parliament: the word and the law.

The most important aspect of the democratic peaceful transfer of power is that it enables the people to remove any political faction that holds power through a fair election.

This is contrary to what was mentioned in the royal speech: that democracy leads to the conflict. It codifies conflicts in a peaceful framework.

There are procedures for competing to win the trust of the people by a parliamentary institution.

Instead of using weapons, there are tools of conflict management in democracies in the data, speeches, sit-ins, periodic elections and parliamentary questions and interpellations of ministers and a vote of confidence in them, in addition to the pivotal role of the media and civil society institutions.

#### 4- YES to development, but NO for democracy!

The royal speech's last expression, indicates the rejection of King Hamad of the transition to democracy. He says "we will support those who work on consistently developing as it's a must for our country."

This means that the pro-democracy argument, the prevailing concept of the world, does not enjoy the support of the king, who supports development and not democracy.

Although the King refers to the years of historical development, he does not specify the meaning behind those words. Does he mean more efficient government, and the Advisory Council as more competent? Or does he mean more advanced formats? That does not seem obvious at all.

If the analogy is based on the actual experiment, the King himself signed a constitution in 2002, referred by an absolute ruler, that causes us to believe that development in the eyes of the king is a formula, which makes people marginal in political decision-making - at best "participants", as in successive models of the councils and the Constitution of 2002.

Although the formula of "partnership in the decision," pales, and bypass-

es the requirement of democracy, it has not been applied in the last ten years. There is no confidence in its application.

The Arab spring has eliminated the uncertainty and the resolution calls for a total or majority decision by the people themselves, ending the whole concept of development used in the ambiguous royal speech.

### 5- The transition to democracy means burning stages

King Hamad mentioned in one of his speeches that he supports the development “without jumping on the stage.”

The problem here is that the ruling family wants to determine the stages on its own without the involvement of the Bahraini people. For instance, if King Hamad equates development with democracy then the ruling family will decide the stages that Bahrain needs to move through without the approval or the involvement of the Bahraini people.

Since more than ten years, the opposition talked about the leader of “Waad party” a ‘detainee Ibrahim Sharif’ as “delaying” reform. The national forces or the opposition are not saying that a new prime minister should be elected tomorrow. It recognizes the difficulty and the cost of the blood that they want to reduce, talking about the importance of a dialogue to agree on a smooth transition, within a specified period of time, from a single to a multi party system.

The authority prefers to work on development as it is today, with no involvement of the people in decision making because the ruling family wants to maintain power within the family itself. Bahrain remains backward even after forty years of the emergence of the modern state.

In the last ten years which have been called reformist the state was in

breach of the constitution and the law. This culminated on 14 February 2011 in an unprecedented popular uprising in the history of Bahrain.

If Bahrain follows this mode of “development”, it may take a century to arrive at a parliamentary democracy that truly represents the will of the people.

These categories of ownership are no longer acceptable or even palatable. The privacy argument no longer convinces anyone: it is non-sensical and no one wants to hear this old argument.

It is possible for the authority to drag the country into civil conflicts, but this is neither in the benefit of Bahrain or the ruling family itself. Past experience of civil wars in the region and other areas testifies to this.

On the issue of burning stages, it became clear after forty years of the emergence of the modern state that this is not the right way to resolve problems in Bahrain. The burning states are just an excuse not to make the transition to democracy.

I am aware there is a crisis in Bahrain and realize how limited the options are but it seems the best option is the transition to a democratic system.

Item (9) footnotes

1- See Appendix (2) for the full text of the letter of the monarchy.

(10)

King Hamad and the people ‘face to face’

King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa already talked to people with the “sword in his hand”, (August 28, 2011 speech)<sup>(1)</sup> He has previously said that the time is not yet right for democracy in Bahrain (the opening of parliament speech: October 9, 2011)<sup>(2)</sup>. There is a valuable letter dated January 15, 2012<sup>(3)</sup>, from the King about his assessment of the political situation in the country. He believes that the protest movement is not in a position to engage in the dispute for power, as in February and March 2011, it was forced to make meaningful concessions.

The king has a tendency towards dictatorship but as a politician as well, he could make a gift of a thousand dinars to the citizens (February 2011), or go to the stronghold of protest movements on the island of Sitra (February 2001), in order to get the support of the citizens living there to vote on the Charter. He would not hesitate to publicly apologize for killing the innocent protestors who have been murdered (February 15, 2011), or to apologise for the Crown Prince’s initiative. (March 13, 2011).

By nature the King is not a reformer or a consensual person. He is inclined to adopt a policy of “cleansing”, as can be seen clearly from the composition of the military establishment.

The King may have ignored in his speech the demands of the national forces of the opposition but it is clear that the protest movement has not subsided and is still troublesome, causes harm politically, militarily and economically, and embarrasses the ruling family and its government at the international level. But the King managed to successfully abort the uprising of Pearl Square in March and February, 2011.

In his view at the end of May 2011, the uprising was unable to shake the

authority, which may in time act as it did in the nineties of last century. The protesters may be trapped in the villages and the outskirts of residential areas, disturbing power and causing harm to the economy and to the prestige of government but they will not be able to take down the government.

The protesters may make their demands known to Western countries and regional organizations, which can contribute to the pressure on the government to correct certain situations. But this may not be done as a matter of urgency.

It seems that the idea of easing the demonstrations may have crept into the media sector, including news agencies such as Reuters and the French and German agencies whose reports are usually neutral. They reported that the mass sit-ins and protests at Pearl Roundabout in the middle of March 2011 were suppressed through the use of force.

Returning to the analysis of the king's speech it is clear that he sets out to antagonise.

In the mentalities of rationality, the authorities try to correct as far as possible the negative aspects in order to avoid aggravation. But the behavior of King Hamad in the past ten years, has been more abusive to the people of Bahrain than that of any other member of the royal family. That is why the unprecedented uprising started a year ago and is still continuing.

Many advised the king not to act in this way but he believe he could contain the situation inside the country. Without real reform the King will not be able to control large areas. If the King himself or his crown or his prime minister, were to pass away, more difficulties would ensue. This would also be the case if Prince Nayef Al-Saud, or Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah passed away.

The events of February (2011) were not expected several weeks after the fall of Presidents Ben Ali of Tunisia and Hosni Mubarak of Egypt.

Perhaps the King was deluding himself in view of the sit-ins. He attended the pro-regime Al-faith gathering on February 21, 2011 travelling in his own airplane and witnessed by those who also attended the gathering and saw him.

So, according to the reading of the King's speeches, the whole situation is under the iron grip of violence and this requires further security options including repressive measures, "purges" and collective punishment. It is hoped the problems will be resolved in 2012 when the protest movement has been depleted and new elections held without the appointment of the current Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman.

Even if the state had to go to the table of dialogue, it has the seven points of the crown prince. Dialogue will be preceded and followed by threats and proofs of violence and bully tactics especially in the points of contact (Bani Jamra / Budaiya, Dar klaib / Hamad Town, Muharraq, Samaheej and Al Dair, Qalali and Al Busaiteen).

It seems that the situation will escalate, because nothing will force people to return to their homes. The King is being challenged to deal with the reality of the situation.

Item (10) footnotes \_\_\_\_\_

1- See Appendix (1), and look at item No. (9) of this book.

2- See Appendix (2), and look at item No. (9): It's not the time yet for democracy, in this book.

3- See Appendix (3) for the full text of the letter of the monarchy.

## Chapter 5

### Bassiouni's Report and the Dismantling of the infrastructure of tyranny

11- Bassiouni 's recommendations: the recipe to bring down the regime



(11)

Bassiouni 's recommendations: the recipe to bring down the regime

Bassiouni and the recommendations of the recipe to bring down the system, include a bold bid to rebuild the state according to the guidelines of the public interest - not the benefit of the tribe.

The Report of Bassiouni<sup>(1)</sup> held the King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa responsible for implementing the recommendations made on November 23, 2011, in a public ceremony.

The report states that “the King of Bahrain and the Government will develop a mechanism to implement the recommendations of the Committee”, within a period of time<sup>(2)</sup>.

In a speech before a large gathering at his palace in Sakhir, the king pledged his commitment to the terms of the report and its recommendations, even though the King criticized some of the conclusions especially the lack of evidence of Tehran's relations with the protest movement which overthrew the most important pillars of the revolution led anti-militant wing in the system.

To accept the results of the investigation is a done deal. The Bahraini independent fact-finding committee was formed after nearly three months of the official campaign of violence against the calls for democracy. It was formed as the King said in a June 29, 2011, “ after doing a lot of consultation, including the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner<sup>(3)</sup>.

This forces the head of the state's obligations to not only the people of Bahrain, but to the international community and the United Nations, to be implemented.

## Peaceful Spring of Bahrain:

The Committee's report lists the Bahraini independent fact-finding accounts of the government at face value in the "Current Events", and lists the point of view of the opposition<sup>(4)</sup>.

Bassiouni may argue that he cites the allegations of each party, but more important in the report is the conclusion and findings and recommendations which are contained at the end of each chapter. The conclusion contains the words of the opposition and international human rights groups.

The report concludes in Chapter II that "Bahrain impressed by what became known as a general Arab, spring although each state and Arab society was affected differently by these events and developments. The Arab spring encouraged the people of the Arab world, including Bahrain, to express their grievances and demands for reform which were repressed for long periods"<sup>(5)</sup>.

The report records that the rallies and large marches in the rotor Pearl, between February and March 2011, despite the high ceiling of the demands of the demonstrators showed that the protesters were good natured<sup>(6)</sup>- they used to carry flowers.

Much of the narrative is not reliable in the report, which is based on the account of the government which is fabricated and inaccurate, and does not necessarily reflect the view of members of the Committee. Not all of what is contained in the report reflects the opinion of the Committee, although it bears responsibility for the report.

The report documents the situation according to international law where the issue of Bahrain is raised. It assumes that the government has taken

some action and concludes with a summary and recommendations. The recommendations reflect the viewpoint of the committee more than other sections of the report.

In many cases I disagree with the commission's conclusions, but my disagreement increases in the provision of recommendations, which seemed the most conservative of cautious abstracts.

### The dismantling of the state structure of dictatorship

I will try to read the recommendations of the report, in light of the fundamental premise that the real implementation of the recommendations of the Bassiouni report necessarily lead to the collapse of the pillars of the single state which is monopolized the by Al Khalifa family in terms of politics and national wealth.

I see that the recommendations of the Fact-Finding Commission call for the restructuring of the legislative structure, and security and intelligence system, the judiciary and the media.

It carries with it the recommendations of the dimensions of humanity and a deep commitment to political and human rights, including, in essence, I think, a bold call for rebuilding the state according to the guidelines of the public interest, not for the benefit of the tribe. In their entirety the recommendations call for the dismantling of the police state that protects the current rule and the establishment of an alternative system which adopts the deeper concepts of human rights.

### Restructuring of the security system

Bassiouni's report makes it clear that the security services violate the security of Bahrain and international law through the:

- Use of excessive force leading to killing.
- Use of shotguns against civilians, although there is no need for that, and without caution to minimize serious injury.
- Use of tear gas in a way that is appropriate to disperse the protesters, and to target homes at random.
- Use of excessive force at checkpoints.
- Breaking into cars and private property without authorization.

The recommendations call for an end to the above-mentioned acts because they are criminal. There is a need for legislative and institutional changes to ensure no recurrence of these offences. The report condemns the arbitrary arrests by the security forces and the military, intelligence and the National Guard.

The recommendations call on the interior minister, intelligence chief, officers, and security personnel to account for the above-mentioned violations and others. The Chairman of the Commission of Inquiry Mahmood Bassiouni says that responsibility for the systematic torture of detainees lies with the Minister of the Interior Sheikh Rashid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa<sup>(7)</sup>, who is still in office, in addition to the President of the National Security Service (NSA)<sup>(8)</sup>, which was appointed, shortly after the release of the report.

The report recommends that “the security forces receive training on the dimensions of human rights, and in particular the need to refuse to participate in any actions that may be marred by torture or any form of ill-treatment”<sup>(9)</sup>.

Accounting for these acts to the Minister of the Interior will not necessarily lead to “destabilizing” the Ministry of the Interior. Neither will it confuse the security establishment-based abuse, especially if we take into consideration the other recommendations adopted by the com-

mission which include making the security establishment incorporate all denominations. The current security system is based on foreigners, designated in scientific literature as “mercenaries.”

Feasibly, and without exaggeration, it seems to me that these recommendations respond in part to the opposition’s demand for security for all. Bassiouni recommends that all sections of society are involved in ensuring security, and that this institution is a defender of human rights and refuses arbitrary arrest and torture. Those arrested should be treated kindly and criminal law must be properly applied. Security personnel must be held accountable, in the event of infringement of the law. These recommendations mean cutting off the right hand of the state of dictatorship, which has been responsible for many violations over the past years.

The report is theoretical and it is difficult to see how its recommendations will be applied. Even after the Bassiouni report it will be a surprise to see a settlement in Bahrain<sup>(10)</sup>. Reading the report is one thing and applying its recommendations is quite another.

### The fall of intelligence

Bassiouni calls in the report to prosecute the former head of the National Security Service Khalifa bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, and all officers in the intelligence and those involved in arbitrary arrests and tortures, coupled with the restructuring of the intelligence service to be involved in gathering information without law enforcement. It has to be ensured that this work shall be compatible with the demands of international law<sup>(11)</sup>.

Although the king issued a decree limiting the work of the device in the collection of information<sup>(12)</sup>, it does not change the fact that intelligence with sharp teeth and long claws is taken out of context.

The application of the recommendation of a “humanized” the intelligence service, means the fall of the other arm of the arms of the system of dictatorship, which was built 40 years ago. It violated the attempts of the legitimate reformer during the past ten years to build democratic frameworks (parliament and municipal councils) which represent the will of the people.

The presence of the former officer Fleifel<sup>(13)</sup> in the political arena and its celebration of the Prime Minister, is sufficient to say that the ruling family is not honest when it claims it is applying these recommendations.

### A severe blow to the judicial system

Bassiouni report directs a mortal blow at the judiciary, while wondering “whether the judicial system may carry more of its energy during the events of February and March 2011, or that it failed as a result of weakness in dealing with the challenges imposed by the situation”<sup>(14)</sup>.

The report finds that violations occurred already in pre-trials and during the trial, which deprived the accused of the most basic guarantees for fair trials<sup>(15)</sup>. Other parts of the report are scathing about the failure of prosecutors and judges in their roles in the investigation of complaints of torture<sup>(16)</sup>. The report calls for accountability for the perpetrators of the torture. It is also assumed that army commander, Field Marshal Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa (brother of the Minister of the Royal council), will not be brought to trial for his application of measures of national safety (emergency), and the notorious conduct of emergency courts.

Military justice was applied during the period of national safety (emergency) and beyond, so “that the decree applied by the National Safety military prosecutor has exceeded the national judicial system.”

The military justice law controls must be contained as well as restructuring of the public civil justice, to provide guarantees for the accused. The judiciary has to be independent from the executive branch, and the ruling family and narrow objectives. This means separate courts for prosecution. The independence of the judiciary must be maintained and the judges must not receive instructions from leaders or commanders of the army. Civilians have to determine trends in governance, and ensure fair, independent and transparent trials for the defendants. Again, the impartiality of the judiciary and its independence, is a means of protecting people from the oppression of power.

### The case of the illegality of the state of National Safety (Emergency)

Bassiouni's report says that there is a gap in the legislative declaration of a state of national safety, and in its implementation, so that "the constitution did not clarify the circumstances in which the government may resort to in the declaration"<sup>(17)</sup>.

It is believed by the report that many of the actions that took place during that time have a lack of a legal legitimacy, or are in a hazy legal area. Indeed, the report finds that some applications of National Safety were arbitrary to a certain degree.

It calls to pass legislation that regulates the status of national pacifism restricted by the international obligations of Bahrain. This provision is sufficient if it contributes to the reduction of infringements in various fields of human rights that have been violated a few months ago, under the pretext of national safety (emergency).

### The status of the military

The Bassiouni report may conclude there is a major effort by those who wrote it, and by the State, to keep the army away from the Department

of Accountability, in the hope that remains protected from the throne and that it keeps the royal family away from the legal framework.

However, these attempts did not succeed completely; the army is still accountable according to the report for the use of lethal force against Abdulredha Buhumaid, who fell dead on February 18 (February 2011) shot directly by the army.

The responsibility for the killing of citizens, such as Bahia Al Aradi and two others was not placed on the army. The report concluded that there is no evidence that the military used excessive force to kill them, with proof that the bullets that killed them were fired by military personnel. This may mean that the killing of these three is “killed by mistake,” but this word is not contained in the report.

In addition to involvement in the killings, the military was involved in the arrest of more than 100 people<sup>(18)</sup> and the demolition or participation in the demolition of nine of the mosques of the Shiite community<sup>(19)</sup>. Without a doubt, there has to be a call for the army to assume legal and political accountability.

There also must be some accountability of the army officials for serious violations and physical and psychological torture suffered by detainees in the prison of the peer-run Bahraini Defense Force; the report says that the violations stopped in June 10, 2011; i.e. they lasted from March 17, 2011 for a period of three months.

Given what was mentioned in the report that torture is systematic behind bars, the army leadership is a party to any accountability. The officials of the army and the military prosecutor, prosecutors and judges in the courts of national safety (emergency) are responsible for gross violations and the absence of justice in these courts.



It seems the army commander responsible for legal and political violations during the validity of national safety (emergency), is responsible for the implementation of its measures<sup>(20)</sup>.

This requires a team of lawyers to decide on, and I find myself in line with the Bassiouni Commission that the army did not use live ammunition on a large scale. The allegation that the hands of the army were tied and that F-16 planes were used to wipe out villages and regions engaged in the rebellion are nonsense.

### Atrophy of the official media

Bassiouni condemns the official media and accuses them of “humiliating” the opponents. He says this should not happen again and calls for open television and radio broadcasting for the opposition, and for the national media as a whole.

Despite the promises of the authorities to open the media for all, this provision was not enforced. State television continued unchanged in its distasteful mode. One of the arms of the police state will be cut off if the nation ceases to be fed biased information.

### Inadmissibility of the punishment of protesters

Those dismissed from their jobs must be allowed to return to work. Students have to go back to their universities, and prisoners, including the leaders of the opposition have to be released because these groups did not break the law, as the report acknowledges, making the authorities lose the popular equation.

As and when they return to the positions from which they were expelled, the morale of those who are calling for change will be raised as they will

be able to demonstrate without being dismissed from their jobs.

The recommendations explicitly state that thousands can join rallies such as those during the months of February and March 2011. They can raise slogans demanding the state of democracy, including the slogans calling for the fall of the regime, and can strike and address the media. The vast majority of the measures taken by the Authority are considered illegal by the Bassiouni commission and those responsible must be held accountable.

The system will be thrown into confusion because the advocates of reform are protected from abuse, because the system is committed to the security of international law, and cannot spread terror, as it did during the past months.

The workers were reinstated after a long time, and after international intervention by the International Labor Organization. Hundreds have not been redeployed and opportunities of new employment for people who are against the regime (the Shiites from the view point of the regime) have been withdrawn.

## Summary

The implementation of the recommendations of the Secretary Bassiouni will not take place. They are almost the same as the recommendations that have repeatedly been made by the Human Rights Council, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the report of the U.S. State Department. They are the same as those in the Constitution of Bahrain, issued by the King without consulting the people but these recommendations are not implemented.

It is worth noting that if the recommendations are not implemented the

credibility of King Hamad will be lost. He lost the trust of the people; Sunnis and Shiite for various reasons, and he lost the confidence of the region (Kuwait, Qatar, Oman), and of the Americans and the EU because, during the past ten years, he failed to keep his promises to the people, and to the West.

Following this approach to the recommendations of Bassiouni I see that its implementation will change the course of Bahrain. It would be surprising if the recommendations of this report became a reality to overthrow the dictatorship of the system.

Item (11) footnotes

- 1- See <http://www.bcsl.org.uk/en/documents/471-bassiouni-report>.
- 2- Report of the Bahraini independent Commission of Inquiry, paragraph 1643.
- 3- Al Wasat newspaper, June 30, 2011.
- 4- Report of the Bahraini independent Commission of Inquiry, paragraphs: 186 and 639.
- 5- Report of the Bahraini independent Commission of Inquiry, paragraph 641.
- 6- Report of the Bahraini independent Commission of Inquiry, paragraph 650.
- 7- Bassiouni said that the officials involved in torture are the interior minister and head of national security, see Al-Wasat, November 25, 2012.
- 8- Headed by the King, the Supreme Commander of the Bahrain Defense Force, and includes the leaders of the ruling family, and security officials and the military. Khalifa bin Abdullah was appointed in two mentioned positions on November 28, 2011, after nearly four days of the issuance of Bassiouni report.
- 9- Report of the Bahraini independent Commission of Inquiry, paragraph 1254.
- 10- Bahrain Mirror, November 15, 2011.
- 11- Report of the Bahraini independent Commission of Inquiry, paragraph 1718.
- 12- Al Wasat newspaper, Nove 29, 2011.
- 13- Charges against him of violating human rights during the validity of the security of the state, especially during the uprising nineties.
- 14- Report of the Bahraini independent Commission of Inquiry, paragraph 1702.
- 15- Report of the Bahraini independent Commission of Inquiry, paragraph 1702.
- 16- Report of the Bahraini independent Commission of Inquiry, paragraph 1241.
- 17- Report of the Bahraini independent Commission of Inquiry, paragraph 164.
- 18- Report of the Bahraini independent Commission of Inquiry, paragraph 1125.
- 19- Report of the Bahraini independent Commission of Inquiry, paragraph (A) 1317.
- 20- Abbas Busafwan, Bahrain Mirror, Marshal may be charged twice in the human rights violations, July 13, 2011.

## Conclusion:

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With regard to the political situation in Bahrain, the report is a rich model to study the structure of tribal government in the Gulf, which has been away from the absorption of the principle of sovereignty of the people. In addition, for historical reasons and geopolitics<sup>(1)</sup>, the conditions in Bahrain appear set to continue with instability and heightened tensions for the same reasons. The report can provide a model of democracy, co-existence and economic prosperity.

With the bitter memory of the experiences of tyranny it is difficult to say whether the demand for democratic transformation, in the form of a “constitutional monarchy”, reflects the wishes of the people.

The royal families management has often exacerbated the political situation. There was an elected parliament in 1975, passing through a constitutional change in 2002. There was a negative experience of co-existence with the royal family during the past ten years. This was followed by the transformation of the country into a Kingdom, as per the ‘strategy of King Hamad’ and the government is responsible for it.

So, the biggest dilemma facing Bahrain is the failure to avoid a direct conflict between the head of the State (the King) and the popular sectors. They see one another as opponents who should be excluded from the political process.

The main opposition strives to direct its violence against the Prime Minister instead of the king, to avoid an open war with the system, and to open a space (system) to search for a settlement. This will be more complicated if the target is the king himself.

Whether King Hamad calls for change or not, he seems very angry at the

protest movement, which he considers his personal challenge. It appears that the man may be convinced that the chances of popular consensus, without him making concessions are limited. That is why his policies are coercive and violent, instead of bending to the storm, or making a wise call and looking for a settlement.

In particular, the King has adopted very enthusiastically, and amazingly, the suggestion of integration in the confederation with Saudi Arabia, with all this entails. This will be a negative development for the Shiite majority, and for the other Gulf states.

The authoritarian structure of the system has limited ability to deal with these issues. A different response is required for a new era. Frankly, the settlement in Bahrain is awaiting a royal concession to the people, partners in decision-making, which can be reached through productive dialogue. Any unclear formulas or those imposed by the government, even if accepted by the parties in opposition, can hardly be expected to ensure success in a sustainable manner.

Constitutional amendments cannot be approved by the King on 3 May 2012<sup>(2)</sup>, to be a gateway for reform. Some form of unity with Saudi Arabia could be an escape route but fears of a deepening desire for power of ruling without the involvement of the people is likely.

The understanding locally (with the support of regional and international actors) is to hand over decision-making to the people. That means a reduction of the absolute powers of the royal family, which seems the most effective solution to the issue of Bahrain. If the bloodshed continues regional tensions will escalate. The proposed the idea of a constitutional monarchy means that there is no abolition of the monarchy, or the absolute ruling pattern which seems to be able to maintain stability in the country.

The King issued the 2002 constitution unilaterally as his mind was focused on the interests of Bahrain and he did not want the monarchy to be prejudiced.

It should be impossible to overthrow the king which seems unrealistic and contrary to historical experience<sup>(3)</sup>. A scapegoat is required to ease tensions.

I'm not sure that the displacement of Sheikh Khalifa would solve the problem unless the king provides initiatives such as reshaping the structure of governance and its mechanisms towards greater democratization. The success of any settlement will be subject to a decision of King Hamad. It would be a mistake from him to remain hostile to his opponents and large sections of the people. The continuation of the current ruling elite, especially the Minister of his bureau Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, will not be easy even if the main political groups avoid conflict with him. He seems more dangerous to the country than the King's uncle Khalifa bin Salman.

In my estimation a change in Bahrain must mean a change in the leadership necessitating the overthrow of the king and/or the Prime Minister and/or the Minister of the royal council (or both together: Sheikh Khalifa and Sheikh Khalid bin Ahmad), and to seek to address the imbalances in the power structure, through restructuring in the interest of people. It is a solution between the traditional form of government and those who are marginalized.

The methods of "cleansing", "dry springs," excluding the opposition, and "Walking on the edge of the abyss, led to regime to monopolizing full power all the wealth of the country. The King lost the support of the people within ten years.

Without doubt, adhering to the same “policies” is the worst option. It signals a return to the “Hamad policies” prevailing in an attempt to ensure the safety of Bahrain, but these policies have failed in the past.

Conclusion footnotes

1 Abbas Busafwan, geopolitics and democracy in Bahrain, Al-Akhbar Lebanese newspaper, December 20, 2011.

2- See: Abbas Busafwan, Bahrain: “fragile” constitutional amendments, boosting up the crisis and not resonate locally and internationally, May 29, 2012.

3- the Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh was removed and his position was taken over by the Vice President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi, and such scenario may take place in the Syrian case by creating an alternative compatible to replace President Bashar al-Assad.

## Appendix

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(1)

### Summary of the royal speech on the occasion of the last ten days of Ramadan dated August 29, 2011.

Unity, justice and forgiveness were pledged last night by His Majesty King Hamad. In a major speech to the nation, the King said his government's aspiration is "for tolerance and shunning violence, and not for excessive punishment that affects our unity, cohesion and national co-existence".

In the address broadcast on Bahrain Television, and relayed on other television and radio stations, His Majesty spoke of reconciliation.

"When we see workers at their places of work and students at their learning institutions, while some other workers are not working and some other students are not studying, we are prompted to look into their situation in order to help them join their colleagues and classmates.

"Such an accomplishment will benefit the workers, the students, their families and the whole nation," he said. "These are our orders to the concerned institutions and they should implement them more quickly."

The King's remarks on the occasion of the last 10 days of Ramadan, came as more than 400 Bahraini students, who were suspended during the unrest earlier this year, were this week reinstated.

Referring to those who were charged with crimes in the past, His Majesty said that "even though we do not wish to interfere in the process of justice and the application of the law, we stress that all civil cases will have their final ruling issued in civil courts".



“We would like to emphasise that we do not anticipate putting everyone on trial,” the King said. “There are those who were charged with abusing us and senior officials in Bahrain, and we today announce that we forgive them as we hope that they understand that abusing us and others in fact offends everyone and achieves nothing.”

The King also noted that the Supreme Judicial Council will oversee compensation for those killed or injured during the unrest.

His Majesty stressed that the past months of this year have been painful for all Bahrainis, but he said Ramadan has contributed to the restoration of cohesion and “made us all recall our traditional interactions, compassion and fraternity.”

The King said the decision to set up the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry was “the best indication of our full commitments to knowing the whole truth and to giving people their rights”.

He also commended on the outcome of the National Dialogue. “Your agreements on further reforms are highly appreciated, deeply welcomed and greatly supported.”

Congratulating Bahrainis on Eid Al Fitr, His Majesty said he hoped Bahrain now “will witness a new stage of outstanding productivity, cohesion and stability as our reforms move forward.”

(2)

The text of the royal speech at the opening of Parliament, 9 October  
(October) 2011

In the name of God, the Most Compassionate, Most merciful

Dear brothers and sisters, members of the August National Assembly

Peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you

We would like first to congratulate the new representatives on their victory in the parliamentary by-elections and to congratulate all of you on the start of the second session of the third legislative term.

We were, like the rest of the nation, very pleased with the national spirit that prevailed in the National Dialogue and our happiness was increased thanks to the success of the parliamentary by-elections and the full membership of the Council of Representatives. The successes were a powerful indication that Bahrain, a strong country by the will of God, is well capable, thanks to the collective consciousness of its people, of protecting its gains and record and of overcoming all challenges.

On this auspicious occasion, we wish to congratulate the Bahraini women who have proven their aptitudes to compete for, and win, the honour of serving this nation and participating in the nation building process and in the reforms.

We praise God for His great blessings. Bahrain has always been a good and blessed country and its history tells the story of the hard-working and tenacious Bahraini who adores his country and loves his wider family, the people of Bahrain.

Brothers and Sisters,

Our gathering today is held in the Isa Cultural Centre, the same place that hosted the national dialogue under the leadership of the Speaker of the Council of Representatives and under the care of the legislative branch in cooperation with the government. It was a consolidation of our firm and unlimited commitment to supporting the state of laws and to reinforcing the role of constitutional institutions and the principle of cooperation between the branches.

The outcome was the visions of the National Dialogue, which we supported and endorsed. They reflect and embody the depth of the civilized affiliation of the nation and its generous people. Dialogue is the language of civilizations and the means for success and goodness.

Brothers and Sisters,

Economic growth and job creation are currently the main challenges in several regions in the world. We are proud of our policy of economic openness that has been Bahrain's choice over time. Preserving positive growth rates and continuing to create adequate job opportunities will remain the main challenges. Our economic policy should also remain all-inclusive and integrate everybody as the Government focuses on encouraging investments and on providing all facilities to investors.

In this regard, we commend, with great pride and appreciation, His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the Prime Minister, in leading the government and in tirelessly serving national interests.

We also laud His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, for his determination in boosting achievements and preparing for a brighter future for future generations.

Brothers and Sisters,

The Bahrain Defence Force is the shield that protects the homeland and protects its gains. That is the only priority for the personnel of the BDF, officers and soldiers. They are the impregnable fortress of the nation.

On this occasion, we praise their honourable training, equipment and organizational standards.

We also thank the personnel of the Ministry of the Interior and the National Guard for their loyal services. They assumed their responsibilities fully in preserving law and order and in ensuring the security, tranquillity and serenity of the citizens and residents.

We are also pleased to express our appreciation to the units of the Peninsula Shield as a force of goodness, security and peace. They were a model of the full cooperation between the countries and peoples of the Gulf Cooperation Council and a natural extension and an integral part of the forces of each of the GCC member countries.

In this regard, the Kingdom of Bahrain is proud of the political and defensive support from our brothers in the GCC countries which reflects the status of the countries within the Council.

We stress that the Kingdom of Bahrain will exert all its efforts to develop and reinforce the outstanding fraternal relations between the GCC countries. The premise is that in the world of force, there is room only for the strong.

The strength of the GCC stems from the faith of its leaders and the stress of its peoples on the need for cohesion, unity and the development of its institutions. We will strive towards further coordination, integration and interdependence among the GCC countries in all areas in order to achieve unity.

Based on our pride in the standing that Bahrain enjoys within the international community and in its full support to the goals and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, we have personally participated in the 66th General Assembly of the United Nations in New York City. We talked in our address to the heads of states about the progress of our nation and conveyed the aspirations and ambitions of our people as well as their democratic progress. We stressed that the civil state system stemming from our cultural, political, social and religious nature is the most suitable for our country and enhances national cohesion.

In conclusion, I wish you all success. Do move forward under God's blessings, filled with faith and determination to deepen the culture of dialogue and democracy and promote its practice. Our eyes, minds and hearts will remain open to all those who wish to join the united nation with its Arab identity and Arab and Gulf dimensions. We will support all those who endeavour to boost steady and positive progress without jumping stages or reversing course or stalling advances.

May God protect Bahrain and all its people and grant them health, wealth and happiness.

Peace and God's mercy and blessing be upon you

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Letter from the Monarchy, January 15, 2012.

In the name of the Almighty God the most Merciful the most Gracious Dear citizens, Peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you. We are pleased to address you today, as we move forward on the path of development to enable Bahrain to build further gains. This will be for the benefit of our beloved country, and in the interests of its honorable children, with the aid of Almighty God, in adherence to the values of tolerance and coexistence in the light of God's law, and Arab traditions. These are the values upon which we have all been brought up; and they have protected us against the dangers of intolerance and sectarianism.

Our loyal people have demonstrated that their will, despite all events, is devoted to continuing the reform project, to preserving the achievements of the Charter and the Constitution, and to accelerating progress and momentum through constitutional institutions. Today, we will continue this march with anyone who has genuine patriotic desire for further progress and reform in all its forms, whether it is political, economic or social, on the basis of our common convictions that reflect the spirit of the times and meet the legitimate aspirations of all citizens to achieve further development consistent with the principles of a peaceful democracy.

Brothers and sisters, It is beyond doubt that the National Consensus Dialogue recommendations have outlined the shape of the reform that we are aiming to achieve, and emanate from the solid base of our national experience, laid down by the historical consensus on the National Action Charter. We have instructed the Executive and Legislative Branches to implement without preconditions these recommendations, for which many parts of society resolutely participated so as to move forward through comprehension and belief in the principle of national action en-

compassing everyone.

Accordingly, and in line with our mandate to propose constitutional amendments and to honor our promise, we will later issue a Royal Decree to refer to the Council of Representatives and the Shura Council, requesting the constitutional amendments as stated in the recommendations of the National Consensus Dialogue. The philosophy and motivation behind this request is to open new horizons for our democracy, based on the National Consensus Dialogue recommendations, and to reflect our commitment to the stability of the nation, the unity of its people, and the realization of their aspirations, taking into consideration the best interests of the homeland, and the interests of present and future generations of citizens to develop our democracy and our political programs.

Brothers and sisters, These proposed amendments bring greater harmony in the relationship between the Executive and Legislative Branches in order to achieve greater balance among them.

The amendments add new guarantees to be applied when exercising the right to dissolve the Council of Representatives. They require and entail consultation with the Chairman of the Shura Council, the Chairman of the Council of Representatives, and the President of the Constitutional Court, while previously it required only the consent of the King and the Prime Minister. Further, in respect of the appointment of members of the Shura Council, the amendments call for a Royal Decree to be issued by the King prior to the order of appointment setting out the method, procedures, and guidance that govern the selection process.

To empower the Councils concerning preparation of the state budget and legislation, the proposed amendments extend the scheduled sessions of the National Council in its both Chambers, the Shura Council

and the Council of Representatives, when necessary to pass draft laws regulating economic issues urgently requested by the government.

In addition, the amendments set out the competent authority for drafting bills, raising constitutional amendment proposals, proposing laws or draft Constitutional amendments, and determining the necessary period of time to refer such bills to the Council where the proposal was originated. These amendments allow both Councils to more easily set the state budget, in a way that helps to effectuate the new budget at the beginning of the fiscal year, and preclude the announcement of a budget of more than two fiscal years.

In line with the conclusions of the National Consensus Dialogue, these constitutional amendments aim to reflect the popular will in the formation of the government based on its program. The Council of Representatives will discuss the government program after it swears the constitutional oath. Moreover, it has the right to approve or reject the government program, and if the program is approved, the government has secured the confidence of the Council.

In addition, the proposed recommendation consolidates the oversight role of the Council of Representatives as a sole monitoring Power. Thus, the recommendations grant the Council the right to end cooperation with government, and to initiate discussions on any public theme. The amendments add additional guarantees to ensure the participation of the Council of Representatives collectively during the discussions of the questions addressed to Ministers, and to set a timeframe for the government to justify any rejection of the demands of the Council.

Alongside this, the Council has been vested with the constitutional right to question and withdraw confidence from Ministers, as well as to set up Committees to conduct such questioning.



While the Constitution had previously given jurisdiction to the Chairman of the Shura Council to refer the bills approved by the two Chambers to the Prime Minister to pass them, and given him priority to preside over the meetings of the National Council, the amendments have vested these jurisdictions and this priority to the Chairman of the Council of Representatives.

Brothers and sisters,

We are confident that the Legislative Power will resume its constitutional responsibilities to make these amendments, responsive to the recommendations of the National Consensus Dialogue. However, the historic step we make today will open doors wide to democracy and develop its exercise, enabling future generations to build on it to reach new heights.

We cannot fail at this point to emphasize that democracy is not just literature, or constitutional and legislative provisions. Democracy is a culture and practice, commitment to the rule of law, respect for the international principles of human rights, coupled with serious national political action that represents all spectrums of society without exclusion or quotas. In parallel with this crucial step that we take today, we call for other important steps to be made to reinforce the democratic culture and practice on the land of our beloved country. Furthermore, we call upon all segments of society – the community and the family – to work together to ensure that our young people respect the law. This is a responsibility that must be shouldered by all, especially when respect for the law is linked to the principles of coexistence, tolerance, harmony and love.

Today, we are passing an important era in the history of Bahrain. Constitutional and political reform cannot be attained, or continue to exist, in a vacuum, but it is in parallel and closely related to economic reform,

development efforts and to the social reform that takes into account the interests of all citizens of this country.

We will march together at this period of time to attain all these achievements with determination and resolve, praying to Almighty Allah to protect our country, our security, our stability and to bless our steps and sustain the unity of our voice, as he who listens to our supplication.

God save Bahrain and its citizens and give us His help, support and guidance, for He is the Lord and the Patron.

May peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you.



Abbas Busafwan is a Bahraini -based in London-journalist and writer who specialize in political and parliamentary affairs. He was the former Chief Editor of Aswaq Economical Newspaper, the former Deputy Chief Editor in Al-Ayam Newspaper, and former Head of local news in Al-Wasat Newspaper. He has participated in dozens of meetings and seminars, and has published several working papers and studies on the situation in Bahrain.

# The Structure of Tyranny in Bahrain

## A study of the Balance of power within the ruling family

16 DEC 2012

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## About BCSL

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There has been an increasing talk about the Kingdom of Bahrain and the political trends and challenges the country is facing since the increase of the political crisis started on February 14th 2011 when Bahrain emerged as a part of the so called “Arab Spring Revolts” that roiled Arab world in 2011.

This has raised fundamental questions about Bahrain’s sophisticated ever political issues, despite, that Bahrain is located and surrounded by, as described as, conservative and stabilized countries.

The international interest about Bahrain, and at the same time the lack of insightful readily available information, are behind the drive to establish, on the 3rd of May 2012, “The Bahrain Center for Studies in London (BCSL)”, as an independent research centre, aims to, study the case and status of the uprising in Bahrain, its influential factors and expected future affairs.

BCSL will prepare and publish researches and studies and will also organize debating sessions evolving around the domestic affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain and its strategic aspects related to political, economic and security policies and including its relation at regional and international levels.

BCSL encourages discussions and dialogues in respect of Bahrain, and seeks to increase the interest of researchers, decision-makers, and actors in public opinion and motivate them to address the different aspects of the issues of Bahrain.

BCSL wishes that this will contribute to a sound understanding and insightful of Bahrain case.

BCSL interests:

BCSL is mainly concerned with all issues related to Bahrain within the context of its regional and the international relations and politics in particular that relates to the Gulf Corporation Council (GCC) states.

Research interests programs include, but not limited to, the followings:

1. Political Issues.
2. Political Association & Parties, Trade Unions and Civil Society Institutions.
3. Human Rights Issues.
4. Legal and Constitutional Affairs.
5. The issues of Security, Defense and armed equipment
6. Media
7. The links and entanglements between Bahrain issues and other GCC States, in a regional and international context.
8. Economic and Oil

BCSL also pays particular attention to the political/ democratic development of the GCC states and other Arab countries.

For ideas of research, and if interested to write about one of the above listed topics, please communicate with the Head of BCSL through the following e-mail address: [director@bcsl.org.uk](mailto:director@bcsl.org.uk)

For general inquiries, you may please contact BCSL on the following email address: [info@bcsl.org.uk](mailto:info@bcsl.org.uk)

