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הרכבת

A Quarterly Journal on the Railways of the Middle East
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102:01

Bo-Bo IR 115 (EMD G12 1961) red/yellow/blue scheme departing from Nahariyyah on June 12th. 1996.

The train is formed of coaches 640 (Boris Kidric 1972 Full Generator Car) dark blue/white scheme; 606 (Boris Kidric 1964) dark blue/white scheme; 622 (Boris Kidric 1965) cream/blue scheme; 627 (Boris Kidric 1966) cream/blue scheme with red stripe; 608 (Boris Kidric 1964) dark blue/white scheme; 602 (Boris Kidric 1964) dark blue/white scheme; 76 (Carel Fouché 1961) dark blue/white scheme; and a BR 1970 Mk IIC coach in dark blue/white scheme. A modeller's dream! (Photo: E.P. Madsen.)

EDITORIAL.

This issue is perhaps a little unbalanced; the dreadful events almost all over the Middle East mean, quite simply, that news from other countries is limited, and although steady progress continues to be made on IR, with a new timetable, line openings, work on construction (and sometimes not quite in the right direction) and plans for electrification, there is less 'news' as such compared to last issue. On the other hand, there are a lot of 'Notes and Comments' as I have used this rubric to cover a variety of odds and ends that have come my way this quarter.

This Editorial is being written at the end of August, shortly before Rosh Hashanah, a time for reflection and looking back. (The magazine won't come out until September.) And I reflect... How does this magazine come together, how does it keep going? The answer depends on a surprising variety of good-hearted people... Just recently a total stranger in the Netherlands was generous enough to send me a whole lot of photographs of IR operations taken in 1996 – one looks and one is amazed at what has changed – apart from the IC3s none of the locos or carriages are in service or even existence any more..... and of course in a few years we might be saying not "Look, that's the line when it was still single track" but "Look, that's the line before it was electrified!" A friend whom I have never met, also in the Netherlands, sends links to current events in the Arab world... friends in Israel send photos of current construction or timetable changes... A friend in Innsbruck ploughs through ancient newspapers on microfilm for fun and sends me snippets relevant to railways.... I have been writing a chapter on the Military Railways in Egypt, Sinai and Palestine in the First World War for a forthcoming book by the British Overseas Railway Historical Trust and have been amazed to find what I had myself already published, and totally forgotten, in earlier issues of Harakevet! (Which reminds me, the dreadful task of updating the Index awaits...) At present the interested enthusiast can find online many items of news about Turkish or Saudi railways, but my own experience is that after a few years specific sites are "No longer available" and thus lost to the historical record – which is why, even though some items (such as those on Saudi metros in this issue) are taken from current websites, with acknowledgement, I consider this worth doing

- so that one can look back in the future through earlier issues and observe progress (or lack of). A recent Reader's Letter in a German magazine has stimulated some remarkable detailed responses which will hopefully become an article on the German Reparations railway vehicles in due course. There are of course many, many more contributors to whom I apologise for not mentioning specifically. In short, this magazine is typed by me (and laid out and printed and distributed by Steve) but it is very much a group effort of people wishing to share information that they find interesting and that they hope others will too. And I am grateful to all.

What can one wish for the coming (Jewish) new year? Fewer riots, massacres, repressions, terrorist attacks, tortures, hyperbolic threats, hypocritical responses? That would be a good start.

Enjoy,

The Editor.



102:3:

Slang Traps for the Unwary.

In August 2013 Jeremy Topaz was waiting at Tel Aviv HaHaganah for a train to Ashkelon, to try out the new line through Rishon LeZion West, when he saw this rather pathetic attempt to inform passengers. Of course we are used to railways using abbreviations such as 'Cent.' (Central) or 'Jct.' (Junction) or 'HL' (High Level) or, in German, 'Hbf.' for Hauptbahnhof, or in Hungarian 'pu' for 'Pályaudvar' (Station). But in Israel there is a tendency to abbreviate whole names, so that the main airport (in Hebrew: 'Namal Tee'ufah Ben Gurion' - becomes 'NatBaG'. For the sake of non-Hebrew readers, these photos show Rishon LeZion reduced to the initials 'RashLaZ', and the electronic display cannot in the English version cope with the name 'Moshe Dayan' (only 11 characters counting the space!). Jeremy wonders whether the night trains would say 'Moshe Night'?

NEWS FROM THE LINE.

(a). EXTRA SERVICES FOR SPORTS

The railways provided extra services for sport events as follows:

For the Youth Football championship:

On 05.06.2013: Israel against Norway at the new Netanya Stadium – disembarking at the railway station and using bus services to the site.

Also on 05.06.2013: The UK against Italy at Bloomfield Stadium of Tel-Aviv - disembarking at Savidor-Central, or HaHagana stations in Tel-Aviv, or at Holon Wolfson station and from any of these - thence a short journey by bus.

On 06.06.2013: Spain against Russia at Teddy Stadium of Jerusalem, just adjacent to Malkha station.

On 06.06.2013: Germany against the Netherlands at Petakh-Tikva Stadium, adjacent to Kiryat-Arie station.

On 13.06.2013: Final of Basketball League at the sport hall of Romema Haifa; disembarking at Hof-HaCarmel station; plus a special additional train from this station, half an hour after the game is finished.

On 18.07.2013: A huge opening ceremony of the 19th Maccabiya sport event at Teddy Stadium of Jerusalem with the participation of the President and the Prime Minister. Disembarking at Malkha station adjacent to the stadium; additional trains ran from that station to Tel-Aviv half an hour after the ceremony was over.

(b). ELECTRIFICATION MOVES A STEP CLOSER.

From a press release of 13.08.2013 by the Transport, National Infrastructures, and Roads' Safety Ministry:

"The Committee for National Infrastructures approved yesterday evening the railways' electrification programme! Both Minister Katz and the railways' General Manager Mr. Boaz Zafir said that the project approval is a milestone in the railways' history; it will enable the railways to implement their huge potential, will significantly improve punctuality, raise speed, cut journey times, reduce air pollution and road congestion, and will effectively eliminate the term "periphery".

The project, which will cost \$3.2 Billion, involves electrifying 420 km., of which the first lines [still under construction!] will be Acre - Carmiel, and Tel-Aviv - Jerusalem (the A1 line) including the branch to Modi'in; The railways are currently checking seven suggestions as part of the Pre-Qualification; this will be completed in the next month; the tender will be published in the first quarter of 2014."

(Frank Adam is concerned about this development and sent a lengthy mail – we

shall incorporate it here as being relevant, although it is Opinion and not 'News':)

"A). The Jerusalem Post of 21 June 2013 had a report from a transport conference held at Kfar Maccabiah conference centre, Ramat Gan, sponsored by the PM's office and the Transport Ministry. Laurent Troger, the head of Rolling Stock Atlantic - Services, a part of the Bombardier Group which hopes to tender competitively, suggested the electrification as soon as possible of 420 kms of Israeli track, given that electrified rail is now mature and proven technology [and does not upset tourist attractions in Europe;] given rail is 0.6% of CO2 emissions compared to roads 70%; given metro rail can carry 50,000 people an hour and light rail 22,000 v. Buses 2,100 to 9,000. Besides erecting the overhead cables, they can keep the existing [Bombardier double deck] coaches and quickly and simply replace the locomotives with fully electric or hybrid diesel-electrics.

But - This all raises further points:

B). **Caveats:** will the cables and pantographs be high enough to allow double-decker container loading? If the bridges - if any - are high enough, double-decking containers could double shuttling container capacity between Haifa and Ashdod and beyond, e.g. the (new?) intermodal yard near Petach Tiqvah, without further infrastructural work. Do we have any information whether that is not already the case?

With the new rebuilt Emek Line, ZaHaL formation rail moves quickly from the Negev to Galilee or back become worthwhile. Is Logistics Corps planning to avoid heavy convoys cutting across radial traffic in the Centre and Haifa regions? This could be done by calling up container flats for the personnel carriers and soft vehicles at 3 each, and a select reinforced (triple axle bogies???) in peacetime set of flats for the tanks. Long vehicle platforms with (30 degree?) ramp edges on the side away from track side, would need building along the track at selected points outside towns and normal stations. One risk to investigate would be for a brigade on a train of flats - with its troops in likelihood still in the vehicles; they would wish to be able to use their vehicle machine guns against ambushes - then the stanchions of the overhead line could be at risk of ricochet and other damage risk.

C). I have security reservations under my youthful hat as reservist officer cadet and my present hat as a minor politician and citizen bothered by criminality. Rail has always been easy to sabotage. As a teen I read Lawrence's "Seven Pillars..."

and heard about blowing trains in WW II France, Russia etc. On my first trip to Israel in April 1966 I travelled from Jerusalem to Haifa along the WW I "frontier line" via Lod and Binyamina passing Qalqilya and Tulkarm. There had been a fedayin campaign against the Jerusalem corridor railway the previous autumn, and it was fenced out in that winter by a special Army Engineers and Border Police operation that got into the 'Jerusalem Post'. The new barbed-wire double-apron fencing in long shallow zig-zags thirty metres [grenade range plus] from the track along the frontier side glistened in the sun from time to time and put substance on the Israeli jest about the reputed advice to rail passengers: "Do NOT lean out of the State." Currently British railways - and presumably others - are plagued by thefts of cabling. If this is for the copper in signal wiring it can be defeated by optical fibre, but if the bandits are stealing overhead power cables I do not see why Israel should make a gift of ease to the criminal fraternity - and Arab nationalists - by erecting rail electrification cables - unless the budget includes a flight of police patrol helicopters or pays for the daily diversion of existing police helicopters to take flights along the lines."

One trusts that all these factors have been taken into account by planners. Ed.

(c). PROGRESS ON THE VALLEY LINE.

From a press release of 02.06.2013 by the Transport, National Infrastructures & Roads' Safety Ministry: "The Yizrael Valley rail project does not stop! Both the Ministry and Israel Roads' Company Ltd. published today - Sunday, 02.06.2013 - the tender for building the Afula East station, to be located more or less on the midway between Haifa and Beit-Shean (near the Jordanian border).

Publication of the tender was possible after Minister Katz succeeded in preventing a "freezing" of the Valley project due to the national budget cuts. The station is planned for opening during 2015.

Minister Katz said: "Linking cities like Afula and Beit-Shean with the railways network will significantly cut travel time to the centre of Israel and raise the value of real estates located along the alignment; we speak about a real revolution which will also increase employment and living possibilities for the population". Both Minister Katz and Israel Roads' Company General Manager Mr. Shay Baras emphasized the line's importance for use for freight traffic too; it will enable shorter hauls to/from the port of Haifa and reduce air pollution as well as traffic jams on roads.

National Roads Company Ltd. tender No. 07/13: Building Afula East Station on the Valley Railway Line. The proj-

ect includes: station building, tracks of 450m long each, a control and command building on a 1200 sq.m. area, a parking area for 690 private and public transport vehicles, and access roads. The station cost is currently estimated at \$22 Million. Implementation: 24 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 15.07.2013.

(d). TERMINAL HYPOCHONDRIA.

Sybil notes: "A sudden mysterious epidemic was afflicting train drivers (ahem, yes, in August, with some of the supposedly sick drivers apparently seen in Eilat...) leading to a partial strike last Thursday 8.8.2013. They were complaining about new work rosters. Some trains ran..."

In fact an earlier article by Daniel Schmil in the 'Jerusalem Post' on 3rd. May 2013 read:- "Railway schedules were disrupted slightly yesterday when 15% of the train engineers who were scheduled to work called in sick, presumably in a strike action to protest new work arrangements at Israel Railways. Management sent doctors to some of the engineers' homes in order to verify their claims.

On Tuesday the company said train drivers' schedules would now be computerised rather than handwritten, which it said would allow for better monitoring and more equal distribution of shifts. But yesterday morning 33 drivers failed to report to work, causing minor disruptions to train services. By evening 12 of the absent engineers showed up for work. The Railway Workers' Union denied that there had been a strike. "There wasn't a strike, but rather an emotional, physical and mental collapse on the part of drivers, who work hard in any case," said Eli Ohana, head of the union's northern branch. "The new system was programmed by computer and not by train operations staff, and this has shifts that are three hours long as well as shifts that are ten hours long. Engineers are driving six hours non-stop, without breaks." Railway strikes have made major headlines in recent years, after repeated wildcat strikes paralyzed train service around the country. In previous incidents, the Labour Court has found union leaders personally responsible and held them in contempt of court."

(e). TUNNELLING THE WRONG WAY: (From Ha'aretz, 13.08.2013):

"Israel Railways has halted digging on the two longest tunnels in Israel, currently under construction for the new fast rail line from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

The tunnels were dug off-course for dozens of metres before the mistake was discovered a few days ago, when it was decided to halt further tunnelling until the railways complete an investigation into

how the mistake occurred. The tunnels are currently positioned some 60 centimetres off their planned route.

Work is expected to resume within a few days after it is decided how to correct the error. The tunnels are part of the new rail line being built to the capital, known as A1, and the off-track tunnels are between Sha'ar Hagai and the Arazim Valley.

A preliminary investigation showed that the mistake was most likely the result of incorrect figures for the digging angle being used for the tunnel boring machine. The huge automated machine does the tunnelling, along with putting up the tunnel's supporting walls and removing the debris behind it. The tunnel boring machine is operated by an Italian company, Pizzarotti, on behalf of the Israeli construction contractor Shapir Engineering.

The scope of the problem is still unclear, as are the solutions. Israel Railways will discuss with Shapir in the next few days whether it is possible to avoid changing the planned route for the tracks, or whether the detour from the original route will have to be compensated for, possibly by encroaching on and reducing the operating areas on the sides of the tunnel. It seems likely the mistake will not increase construction costs.

These tunnels are part of the third section of the planned route — the longest and most complex. It includes paving the route of the tracks, tunnelling and building bridges. The section includes a 1.2-kilometre tunnel, a pair of 11.6-kilometre tunnels and a 150-metre bridge over the Yitla Stream.

Work on the section had already been delayed following a series of problems. Shapir won the tender for the project five and a half years ago, along with the Austrian tunnelling company Alpine Mayreder. Under the original plan, work was supposed to be completed on the section at the end of 2013 at a cost of NIS 1.6 Billion. This part of the project is now priced at NIS 1.8 Billion and is forecast to be completed during the first quarter of 2015.

It turned out later that Israel Railways had published the tender before it had completed all the statutory requirements and before it received all the necessary permits — and faced a major public debate over the plans. As a result of the fight by environmental organizations and planning bodies against various parts of the project, and in particular the bridge over the Yitla Stream, the committee established on the matter criticized the rail company and the State Comptroller released a harsh report on the project in 2009, claiming there were serious faults in the planning of the route.

After a two-year delay, the re-
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vised plans were approved — and Shapir was forced to replace its tunnelling contractor in the meantime, as well as being forced to accept higher costs than it had expected in the original tender. In 2010 Shapir sued Israel Railways for NIS 650 Million in compensation for the delays and higher costs. After negotiations, the two sides reached a compromise on NIS 90 Million in compensation. In addition, Israel Railways paid Shapir NIS 100 Million more to cover additional work for removing the dirt from the tunnelling, which was not included in the original tender.

Israel Railways said the minor deviances were discovered in a routine check of two of the tunnels. The company said it was normal in such cases to halt digging until the investigation was completed, and the rest of the work on the rail line was continuing as planned."

But the GOOD news is:-

"On 29.08.2013, another tunnel boring was completed!

Tunnel No. 1, the most westerly one on the A1 fast rail link to Jerusalem located between the longest bridge near Latrun Trappist Monastery and Yitla river, a 3.5 km twin bored tunnel by TBM was completed 3 months ahead of schedule! The work has been carried out by the local engineering and construction company Minrav, in partnership with the Russian company METROSTROY at a cost of about \$156 million. This is the third completed tunnel on A1 out of the 5 planned, the other 2 are under way.

Both Transport Minister Katz and the railways' General Manager Mr. Zafirir, said that the A1 is a nationally important mega project, and all involved are doing more than possible to complete works on time, namely in 2017.

(f). CONSTRUCTION WORK ACCELERATED.

IR made special efforts and succeeded in cutting the time of closure of the Beer-Sheba North - Dimona line for infrastructure works; it had originally been planned to close this between Saturday Night, 10.08.2013, and Wednesday, 04.09.2013; However, traffic resumed on Saturday night, 31.08.2013. These special efforts were due to the coming holidays during which traffic is heavy; the Jewish new year festivals lie between Wednesday night, 04.09.2013, and Saturday night, 07.09.2013. Infrastructure work included the rebuilding of railway bridges and building an underground passage for road traffic beneath the railway depot currently under construction at Beer-Sheba station (near the University station). The railways provided high-frequency bus services between the stations. The railways announced operation additional trains during the holidays on all lines.



(g). FLYOVER AT LEV HAMIFRATZ.

The overhead bridge currently under construction at the junction between the Nahariyya and the (rebuilt) Valley line is a double-tracked one; there will be an elevated station connected with Lev Hamifratz to enable the passengers from Jezreel to change into trains for the Krayot, Akko, and Nahariyya; it will function both as a flyover over the existing line to Nahariyya and over the road. (Photos Aharon Gazit)





102:5.

TENDERS.

(i). Tender No. TH/SR/05/13: Frame agreement for providing weed killing and anti-mosquitoes spraying services. The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 month. Latest date for submission of proposals: 02.09.2013.

(ii). Israel Railways Ltd. tender No. TH/SR/26/12: Providing maintenance services and/or supply and installation of mini-central cooling and ventilation systems at the Railways' control and command centres. The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 13.06.2013.

POSTPONEMENTS.

The following latest dates for submission of proposals have been Postponed:

Tender No. HN/SR/02/12: Supply, Installation, Implementation, Integration and Maintenance of a Railway Infrastructure Engineering and Control System, postponed to 12.09.2013.

iii Tender No. MC/RC/01/13: Design, Manufacture and Supply of Road/Rail Shunting Vehicles for Israel Railways Ltd., postponed to 01.10.2013.

Tender No. EP/PQ/01/12: Electrification of the Israel Railways Network, Latest date: 13.06.2013.

Tender No. TK/KB01/13: Building and maintenance works of a control and operational systems at Beer-Sheba depot; latest date: 10.06.2013.

Tender No. TC/MT/03/13: Statutory design services and planning fees and levies planning services; latest date: 25.06.2013.

Tender No. TM/MT/17/12: Measuring services for the railways; latest date: 20.06.2013.

TENDER AWARDED.

The local firm Einav Ha-Khetz (1965) Ltd. won tender No. HN/KB/04/12: Infrastructure works for quadrupling the Tel-Aviv (Universita - Herzliyya section (stage A) worth \$19.00 Million.

A: JERUSALEM.

(a). LET THEM OUT FIRST!!!

From a press release of 04.06.2013 by the Jerusalem Transportation Master Plan team:

"On Wednesday 05.06.2013 a special campaign with the simple message "First Alighting, then Boarding" will start, in order to make the LRV passengers' lives easier and cut the many delays during the halts at stations; the initiative came from the Transport Ministry and the Jerusalem Municipality, assisted by the Transportation Master Plan team.

The LRV is already carrying more than 110,000 passengers daily, who use its Red Line 23 stations. The campaign has been crystallized due to special intensive surveys carried out by the team specialists, who found that the LRV halts are particularly long due to "bottlenecks" created at doors between alighting and boarding passengers. These "bottlenecks" cause a 49 minutes journey time from end to end, while it should not normally take more than 39 minutes!

The campaign will be led by special teams who will explain to the public how to behave; there will also be special signs on stations and on the LRV doors, a marking on the platforms, announcements in the printed media, and leaflets to be distributed at central transportation centres; the campaign will also be accompanied by a smiling image which will (hopefully) create a friendly atmosphere."

(b). EXTENSIONS.

On Friday 28.06.2013 the 'Jerusalem Post' reported that Transport Minister Israel Katz had agreed to a budget of 1.1 Billion NIS - over \$300M or GBP 200M in order to extend the existing tramway by 21.9km (13.6 miles) to a total of 36.2km. (22.5 miles). The main objective is the Hadassah Hospital at Ein Karem in the west, as some 30,000 people visit daily, as well as the staff commuting. Work has already started on preparing the new line and stations from Har Herzl to Hadassah. Earlier this year the municipality agreed to extend the line beyond Kiryat Moshe to Har Nof. Dozens of new tramcars to be bought for an average daily load of 260,000 passengers. Total expenditure is to reach 4 Billion NIS - over a billion dollars.

(c). PRAMS ON TRAMS.

On 17.07.2013 Sybile wrote: "Starting a couple of weeks ago, it is now permitted to take non-folded prams and pushchairs - baby carriages - free of charge on the Jerusalem Light Rail in the afternoon rush hour. Previously prams that were not folded had to be paid for (same price as an ordinary single ticket, NIS 6.60) during the rush hours, 07:00 to 10:00 and 15:00 to 19:00. Now the restriction is ONLY in the morning rush hour."

(d). MORE EXTENSION PROMISED.

This is an unconfirmed report but nevertheless significant for the mere fact that a politician thinks now he can get more votes by promising more trams! Who would have thought that three or four years ago? On 20.08.2013 in the Jerusalem Post was reported, by Daniel K. Eisenbud: "Facing new mayoral election, Barkat presents ambitious five-year plan to improve Jerusalem. Mayor Nir Barkat: I'll give the city more jobs, housing, classrooms, light-rail lines and culture to help keep 'our children' from moving away. As for transportation, the mayor said he planned to construct more light rail lines to reduce traffic, and even an aerial tram connecting numerous tourist attractions. "We are going to connect many important different locations in Jerusalem so we won't need [as much] private transportation, and the city will become more accessible," he said."

(e). PASSENGER SATISFACTION SURVEY.

A survey carried out recently (August 2013) by the Jerusalem Transportation Master Plan team, reveals that about two-thirds of the LRV users are 'satisfied' and even 'very satisfied' with the service. However, regarding crowded trains, 84% are 'not satisfied', up to 52% think that comfort level is lower than the medium; 78% on the other hand think that stations are comfortable and easy for orientation, and 89% think that trains are clean. The Jerusalem LRV is carrying about 130,000 passengers/day; equivalent to 37 million annually; In comparison, the railways carry about 42 million annually.

B. TEL AVIV.

(a). ELECTRONIC DIARIES!

From a press release of 03.06.2013 by NTA: After running-in-period of one year, NTA started officially to use the AUTODISK BIM 360 digital work diary, thus becoming the first Israeli company using this system for all works involved in building the transit system, both surface and underground.

The computerized diary documents all that is done at the work site on a certain date: works carried out, instructions from the supervisor to the sub-contractor and the response of the sub-contractor, weather data for the certain date, the number of the workers and mechanical equipment working during the certain date, the sort of work done, number of visitors at the site, problems which came up, soil condition, lab tests, work meetings, etc.

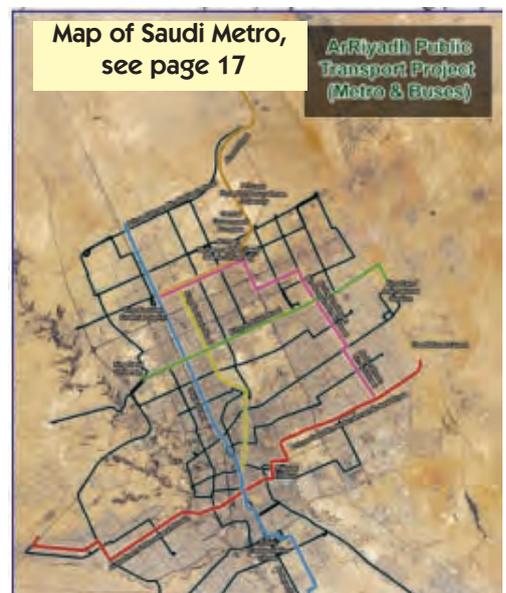
The system also enables the projects' management and responses in real time, quality control at site, a computerized data bank and accessibility for I-PAD, interactive treatment regarding planning, implementation, budget, schedule, and creating safety reports.

NTA started the project two years ago together with the US company VELA System and after adapting it to the State of Israel, the project, and the unique character of the Tel-Aviv LRV the system started the running-in-period. Now, all the supervisors and sub-contractors are committed to using the system.

(b) . NTA tenders:

Tender No. 0084/2013: Producing image films. Latest date for submission of proposals: 02.09.2013.

Tender No. 0097/2013: Providing management and inspection services on works at Shenkar, Petakh-Tikva Depot, and Depot portals. Latest date for submission of proposals: 30.09.2013.



NOTES AND COMMENTS.

(a). ANOTHER HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL WAGON FOR ISRAEL.

An item which should have appeared in the last issue and has now been a bit overtaken by events: A private initiative by an Israeli and a German – Ronny Dotan and Tatjana Ruge - have seen the contract signed (on 13.08) for a German goods van of an old Deutsche Reichsbahn type to be brought to Israel and placed on a length of track in a park in Netanya. After some €20,000 had been spent on restoration work on the roof and floor in Germany, it was planned to ship the wagon to Israel at the end of September or early October and to have it on its plinth at Yad Lebanim in Netanya by November. The sides will be repainted and restored in Israel, with advice from a Mr. Diener. (This is a park dedicated to the Holocaust victims and to those who have fallen in wars.) A major sponsor of the project is the Netanya Foundation, with its CEO Shlomi Waroner.

Anyone wishing to assist is asked to contact Tatjana at:
<ruge.berlin@web.de>

(b). LONDON, TILBURY AND SOUTH-END 'TURKISH LOCOS'.

Chen asks about the following:- In 1898 the London, Tilbury and South-end Railway purchased two 0-6-0 tender locos, which had been originally built by Sharp, Stewart & Co. of Glasgow for the Ottoman Railway but were not delivered to Turkey. (These were incidentally the only tender locos the company ever possessed – otherwise it used 4-4-2T's and 0-6-2T's and towards the end of its independent existence 4-6-4T's.) They were relatively typical British engines for their time, two inside cylinders, driving wheels were of 4ft. diameter, they weighed 38.2 long tons, boiler pressure was 150 p.s.i., cylinders 18 x 24mm, Stephenson valve gear, etc. The LTSR numbered them 49 and 50; after the Midland Railway took over in 1912 they became Nos. 2898 and 2899, power classification 2F. The Midland in turn was merged into the new London, Midland & Scottish Railway in 1923 and these two locos, non-standard, were withdrawn and scrapped in 1933 and 1936 respectively.

So the question is: Why did the Ottoman Railway not take delivery at that time? It occurred several times in British railway history that engines built for export were suddenly left on the manufacturer's hands when a customer defaulted on payment – some freight locos built for Sweden ended up in South Wales, for example.

Paul Scheller, quoting Benno Bickel, 'Die Türkischen Eisenbahnen und ihre Dampflokomotiven', says that the ORC was indeed in dire financial straits in 1898 - and so this could be the banal answer.

(c). PALESTINIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY.

The website <http://www.decolonizing.ps/site/return-to-mobility/> is very interesting as someone concerned with the history of 'Palestine' (as a Mandated Territory? As a State?) has clearly given a lot of thought to issues of railway history, construction, reconstruction and mobility in the region. However the entries suffer in some cases from a lack of historical and technical knowledge. There are pages on the stations at Massoudieh, Battir etc., some of which I reproduce here though they are worth clicking for maps and illustrations:

Here for Battir Station:-

'Alternative path of the Israel Wall: a border interwoven with the infrastructure.

Within the conflictual geography of Israel-Palestine, infrastructure plays an important role and often is used as a pretext for a further shrinking and fragmentation of the occupied territories of Palestine. One extreme case is the village of Battir, today part of the West Bank. While the village's strategic location—in the valley stretching between Jaffa and Jerusalem—initially afforded connection to the greater territory, its position subsequently attracted the Green Line, causing gradual disconnection. After several surveys for the possible route were made, the valley where Battir lies was chosen for as the corridor to connect the coastal flatlands to the central highlands where Jerusalem is located. Initially built to support religious tourism, the railway gave the village and others along the route a considerable degree of mobility.

Although passenger service on the former Jaffa-Jerusalem line restarted after the 1948 war, the Battir station remained closed. The 1949 Armistice Agreement gave Israel full control over the railway, which it sought to secure. In order then to create a wide security corridor along the railway, Israel negotiated the shifting of the Green Line from the actual ceasefire line, pushing it into Battir land. Coming to the agreement that the village inhabitants would protect passing trains, Israel in return allowed the farmers of Battir to cultivate their land on the Israeli side of the Green Line.

The construction of the Israeli Wall is planned to follow the railway, posing a serious threat to the inhabitants of Battir who would lose more of the lands as a result. However, the Wall could follow paradoxically an alternative path: rather than following the railway, adhering instead to the legal contours of the village

lands, the Wall would undermine the very separation it is designed to create. In this alternative configuration, the border line between Israel and the West Bank would intersect with the railway, paradoxically interweaving the territory and making explicit the unequal connectivity.'

For 'Reactivating the Network':-

The right of return, although generally envisioned as the return to a specific place, could essentially be seen as a right to mobility. After sixty years of exile, Palestinians have built their lives in the camps and elsewhere. A return should therefore not mean the migration from the camp to the ancestral village, but the possibility of being able to travel between the two and throughout the whole region. Such a freedom of movement would allow for interaction on a scale which is impossible in the current situation. One could start imagining a reconnection of the territory and a return to mobility from the traces of the railway, both as they exist today and as they were captured in historical photographs and maps.

The railway network was a part of the Ottoman colonial infrastructure, but at the same time it provided a degree of mobility that allowed for exchange between all inhabitants, playing an important role on political, economical, but also cultural levels. This memory is still embedded in the disconnected remains. No longer in function of the colonial power, in its current dismantled state a potential for new uses of the network emerges. By turning the stations again into sites for exchange and collectivity, they could regain importance and start creating new connections. Related to each other thanks to their similar materiality and place in the collective memory, they could together form a new network within a future reopened geography.'

For 'Ottoman Railway'

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Ottoman railway network connected the Middle East to an extent that is unthinkable today. Although found mostly dismantled across the region, the traces of this former network are embedded with both the memory and possibility of connection.

Traces of the railway tracks near Massoudieh, 2012

Mobility in the region was initially provided by colonial powers that sought to facilitate transport for diverse purposes. The first railway route, constructed by a French firm, was inaugurated in 1892, connecting Jaffa and Jerusalem. This approximately ninety-kilometer stretch opened Jerusalem to European visitors arriving in Jaffa. Shortly thereafter, the Ottomans began building a series of routes that extended train service into the north of Palestine. This railway, named after the Hedjaz

Route of the railway near Massoudieh'



region, aimed to connect Damascus with Medina and Mecca, facilitating pilgrimage to the holy cities. Later it was also military-related transport demands during WWI that accelerated the construction of railways in Palestine. Both the Ottomans and the British created new routes while they simultaneously disconnected others, relocating the raw materials, the rails' wood and iron, to the most strategic sites on different occasions. After defeating the Ottomans, the British took over the network and founded Palestine Railways, which reestablished civilian train service and intensified commercial and recreational use of the railway.

Geopolitical developments in the region have greatly influenced the network, such that the former lines and stations have become part of radically different contexts. With the creation of distinct, sometimes antagonistic nation states across the Arab world and the establishment of the Israel in 1948, the network was broken into isolated circuits that were soon dismantled. These remaining fragments situated within different countries only sporadically cross national borders. In Palestine, the sections of the tracks now within the State of Israel were partly reestablished under the Israeli public railway system. However, in what was once the core of the network—today the West Bank and Gaza—the lines are in ruin and out of service. The sites of the remains of this infrastructure tell the story of transformation resulting from the Nakba and ongoing occupation.'

Now, these entries are tendentious which is why I, as Editor, decided to place them under 'Notes and Comments' rather than 'News.' I would not call the lines in the West Bank – presumably meaning the Afule – Massoudieh – Nablus – Tulkarm route) the 'core of the network' – the lines were little used and often closed and were reactivated for military purposes in 1936 and again in the early 1940s but then allowed to lapse again. The line in Gaza is cut off from the Egyptian network just as much as it is from the Israeli one. So I do not accept that the 'Nakba' is to blame. (This is the Palestinian term meaning 'Catastrophe' that is used to refer to the partition of the Mandated Territory of 'Palestine', created in 1920 by the League of Nations, by the United Nations in November 1947 and

the subsequent occupation of the lands allocated to the Arab Palestinians and to the International Community (Jerusalem and Bethlehem) by Transjordan, Syria, Iraq and Egypt in May 1948. However, they rarely refer to this and instead prefer to focus instead on the creation of an adjacent Jewish State. Due to the armed conflict the eventual boundaries between Israel and its adjacent territories were not exactly where the UN had decided, and this ad-hoc Cease-Fire line which cut through settlements and old trading routes is now referred to as the 'Green Line' and given the status of a holy and long-standing border.)

The site is interestingly run by foreigners:- 'This is a project by DAAR@ Berlage in collaboration with Lieven De Caeter. Participants: Sanne Van Den Bremer, Patricia Fernandes, Gabriel A. Cuellar, Zhongqi Ren, Sai Shu, Rizki M. Supratman.

This study is our contribution to the return to Jaffa-Tel Aviv project, commissioned by Badil, the Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights and Zochrot, a non-profit organization that aims to promote awareness of the Palestinian Nakba. The projects presented here seeks thus to chart out and intervene within a wider field of possible political, social and cultural practices of return.....'

On the whole, 'Harakevet' strives to remain, if not totally apolitical, then at least not too partisan; but here is an example of the way in which railway history is used in a partisan manner and it is worth being aware of the danger. Even though these texts refer to geopolitical factors they over-simplify the various conflicting interests that led to the construction of lines of different gauges for different reasons. (Editor).

(d). FROM THE JERUSALEM POST ARCHIVES.

Sybil has done some rummaging in the 'Jerusalem Post' archives and has found several intriguing nuggets of information.

- Binyamina station did not have an actual platform until 1983.

- In an article dated 31st. August 1967, moaning about delays on the 'inland line' – "the stop at Tayibe, which serves the Little Triangle and its Jewish neighbourhood, often takes up as much as ten minutes", and

- the 11.00 departure from Dimona was to stop at the Huzeil tribal encampment from April 29th. 1970.

These two stopping places were previously unknown or at least unrecorded!

(e). MEMORIALS TO PAUL COTTERELL.

Paul Cotterell was a person who found inaccuracies very irritating. On oc-

casional this propelled him to writing 'Letters to the Editor' to put the record straight, and the following are in the 'Jerusalem Post' archives. They reveal very much his personal style:-

On August 1st. 1975: "Sir – I am researching into the history of the railways of Israel for the purpose of writing a book on the subject. However, I am having difficulty uncovering information and photographs for the Turkish period and early Mandate times, i.e. up to 1930. Also particularly troublesome are the years from the end of the Second World War to about 1950. I would like to appeal to any Post readers who may be able to help me. Just about any material on these periods would be of great help, no matter how trivial it may seem, and I am certain there must be some interesting photos and items of information of various sorts in numerous homes throughout the country, half forgotten perhaps at the back of cupboards.

PAUL COTTERELL,
Kibbutz Beit Haemek, July 23."

On January 5th. 1978:-
"Sir. - As one of 'those who love trains' ('Postscripts, December 21) I think it only fair, in the name of historical accuracy, to clear up one or two misconceptions.

Alexander Zvielli will be a most fortunate man if he ever hears the sound of a whistle once again on any Cairo-bound train. Israel Railways have been fully converted to diesels since early in 1959, and as far as I am aware, the Egyptian State Railways do not operate steam engines any longer.

There was never a direct Beirut – Cairo public railway service. The line through Rosh Hanikra to Beirut was opened in 1942 as a wartime measure, and the few passenger trains run were for military personnel only. The railway itself became a casualty of the intensified strife preceding the establishment of Israel and was cut at the Lebanese border.

Previous to the building of this line, the passenger to Cairo had the choice of a road contract service from Beirut to Haifa, where he changed to the Cairo 'express' (courtesy title only); or he could go the long way round by train to Damascus and thence to Haifa, before continuing his journey to Egypt.

Either way, he needed a great deal of patience and fortitude and would certainly not be impressed by either the standards of maintenance or punctuality. The Cairo run and the Trans-Siberian route definitely had one thing in common, both being about as exciting as an endurance test. Interminable stretches of desert or steppes and forests can be very wearying.

It is to be hoped that those 'hundreds of thousands' of war veterans will provide fewer headaches for the present

administration, should they ever 'relive the thrill' of travelling together, than they did for the Palestine Railways. Presumably the management of the Israel Railways would be as ecstatic as the P.R. General Manager over the conduct of an admittedly small minority of Second World War soldiers.

Writing in 1946, he complained that 'nearly ever kind of fitting, ranging from electric light bulbs and lamp fittings, to door handles and seat leather could command high prices on the black market. Switches were torn out, whole seat coverings cut away and dynamos filched. Vandalism was rife. Often a coach only a few weeks from general overhaul would present an appearance as if it had been neglected for years.' Smuggling was also a widespread vice.

Somehow the rather starry-eyed portrayal of army camaraderie and jollity-in-adversity presented in Postscripts just doesn't ring true. Soldiers are often a very cynical lot. And not without reason.

Following this bit of nit-picking, let me say that I wholeheartedly agree with your sentiments concerning a revival of train services to Egypt when peace comes. Perhaps then, at long last, the railways of this country will be taken seriously."

(To which Alexander Zvielli commented:-

"Although I travelled at least once a month for two years between Tel Aviv and Cairo, I somehow never paid much attention to the details given by Mr. Cotterell. I once travelled on a goods train for three weeks from Suez to Beirut and a two-day stop at Rosh Hanikra did not disturb me. Perhaps after my prolonged railway trips in Russia, I got used to the idea that anything moving ahead and reaching its destination was good enough.")

On July 11th. 1978: "Sir. - Robert Nobel is quite correct in saying that the Sinai railway has a colourful history (June 30). Perhaps I can clear up some of that history, taking each point in the order in which it is presented in Mr. Nobel's article.

The power or haulage capacity of a steam engines, unlike that of diesels, is not usually rated in terms of horsepower but in pounds. That of the American Baldwin 4-6-0's which first handled the Haifa - Kantara trains was 24,449 lbs. at 85 per cent of the maximum boiler pressure.

According to the first Palestine Railways timetable (November 1920), the train left Kantara at 01.00 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and at 04.45 on the other three days of the week [sic] arriving at Haifa, not at 10a.m. but at 12.55 and 17.05 respectively.

The Jaffa - Jerusalem line was not 75 kms. in length but 87 kms.

The 105cm. gauge line from Haifa to Dera'a was built as part of the Hedjaz Railway and not merely as a separate link,

as Mr. Nobel seems to imply. The narrow gauge railway between Haifa and Acre was built in 1913 and not in 1905.

It would appear that work on the railway from Kantara was certainly not 'carried out hastily'. General Wavell in his book 'The Palestine Campaigns' wrote of the line that it was 'a typically British piece of work - slow, very expensive, immensely solid.'

The Sinai Military Railway was disbanded and Palestine Railways were formed in 1920, not in 1930 as stated in the article.

Finally, it was not only Egyptians who indulged in the rather meaningless game of wrecking railways. When the Israelis withdrew from the Sinai, following Operation Kadesh, they also took good care to annoy the enemy by tearing up a lengthy stretch of rails east of Romani. I believe that the Egyptians caused quite a surprise among the Israeli observers by relaying the line in an untypically swift and businesslike manner. Paul Cotterell. Kibbutz Beit Ha'Emek."

The debate continued: On July 23rd. 1978: "Sir. - In a previous letter, I took Robert Nobel to task for certain items in his article of June 30, 'Rail Across the desert.' I think it only fair now to pick up the cudgel on his behalf.

Mr. Henry B. Stern (letters, July 12), while no doubt being a most competent stamp collector, is way off the beam when it comes to the earlier locomotives which worked in Palestine and Israel. A Baldwin 4-6-0, of the type which hauled the Haifa - Kantara trains, is most definitely not shown in one of the four commemorative stamps honouring railways in the Holy Land. The engine from the set that Mr. Stern has in mind is one of the P class 4-6-0s built in 1935 by the North British Locomotive Company of Glasgow. These engines, six in number, were Palestine Railways' premier motive power and largely supplanted the Baldwins on the Kantara run. There were 50 of the Baldwins built for Palestine, all in 1918.

Incidentally, another of the locomotives depicted in one of the stamps, a Krauss built 0-6-0 tank of the Hedjaz Railway can still be seen 'in the flesh', as No. 10 of this class is preserved in the Museum of Science and Technology at Ramat Aviv."

(f). MODEL RAILWAY AT JERUSALEM STATION.

Simon Futerman is acting as advisor and coordinator for a large exhibition as a part of the new developments at the refurbished old Jerusalem station - although it remains unclear exactly when and for how long this will run. See:

<http://www.trainsworld.co.il/>

On 17th. July Sybil wrote: "Today it was

announced that the opening of the exhibition has been postponed for a second time. It was originally supposed to open on July 1, then July 17, and now they are saying August 1. This means it will be open for only one month - I assume they will have to vacate the site as planned on September 2 to make way for the next tenant. This announcement came after the exhibition, with at least one train in motion, was shown on Channel 2 news last night in a report on places to take kids to in the summer holidays.

This is really bad news of course. Many families are away in August, and could mean they will probably not even cover the cost of mounting the exhibition."

On 31st. July she added: "The model railway exhibition is now due to open on August 4 and to run until "after the Chagim"[festivals]. I went last week with Uri Ben-Rehav and about half of it was actually working then." Clearly it is not just full-size railway projects that can run into construction time overruns!! The price of tickets has apparently been set at NIS 75, which is rather high, especially for families.

(g). "JÜDISCHE KORRESPONDENZ" - FIRST WORLD WAR SNIPPETS.

Thanks to Peter Kraus of Innsbruck for several items from old newspapers.

(i). The 'Jüdische Korrespondenz' of Wien (Vienna) No. 5, of 9th. Sept. 1915, p.4:

(i) 'Eisenbahn Jerusalem - Damaskus.' "Mitten im Kriegsgetümmel ist die direkte Bahnverbindung Jerusalem - Damaskus eröffnet worden. Die Fahrzeit beträgt 18 Stunden, der Fahrpreis zweiter Klasse 30 Franken. Es ist zu erwarten, daß nach Friedensschluß ein lebhafter Verkehr auf dieser Strecke einsetzen wird."

Translation: 'In the middle of the tumults of war the direct rail route Jerusalem - Damascus has been inaugurated. The journey lasts 18 hours, the fare for second class is 30 Francs. It is to be expected that when peace comes there will be a substantial traffic on this route.'

This must refer to the linking of the Turkish 105cm. gauge line from Afula via Messudiyeh and its military extension via Tulkarm and to Lydda - thus providing at last a through link between the hitherto-isolated Jaffa-Jerusalem Railway and the Hedjaz network.

(h). NEW NARROW GAUGE RAILWAY AT REHOVOT

Sybil Ehrlich wrote on 17th. July 2013 on the new 60cm. gauge railway which is a part of the 'Minkov Museum':

"I went to the museum originally, to write about it for the Jerusalem Post, in Sep-

tember 2011. The museum director told me that the railway was being built at Kibbutz Ein Shemer and would be ready in six months. So a couple of weeks before Pesach I phoned to ask if it was ready. No, not yet... and this went on for another year. It would be ready for Shavuot, for Hanukka, for Tu BiShvat... just waiting for final approval from this or that authority... A few weeks ago I phoned the museum again and yes, it's now up and running! It runs when there is a pre-booked party of children. I offered a few dates when I was available to go, and a group had booked for Sunday July 14. So off I trotted to Rehovot. I got to the museum and saw a school bus parked outside – a good sign! The back door to the museum grounds was open so I sneaked in there. I walked along the path leading from the back door to the level crossing, and saw the train approaching! I waved as it passed, and followed it along the track. Unfortunately I forgot to ask how long the track is, but it's about 200 metres, based on the measurement of the platform, which is according to the notation 12 metres long. The train stopped at the station, and the driver asked me if I wanted a ride. Did I?! I hopped aboard for the return journey. There are two identical locomotives, one at each end of the train, called Eshkolit ("Grapefruit") and Tapuz ("Orange").

It was built at Kibbutz Ein Shemer by Ran Hedvati of Rakevet Ha'alanim fame."



Here comes the train!
Photographed from
the level crossing.



Tapuz" loco



In the engine shed

(ii). **THE BAGHDADBAHN.** 20th. June 1919. 'Palästina und die neue Bagdadbahn. Wie 'Der Neue Orient' mitteilt, dürfte die Bagdadlinie innerhalb zweier Jahre den Persischen Golf erreichen. In den Kreisen der Entente scheint die Absicht zu bestehen, den Ausgangspunkt der Bahn von Haidar Pascha am Bosphorus nach Alexandrette am Mittelmeer, dem Haupthafen des neuen 'Arabischen Staates' zu verlegen. Das an dieser Linie liegende Aleppo, 130 Kilometer von Damaskus entfernt, wird den Mittelpunkt für alle Reisenden und Waren bilden, die nach dem Euphrattal gehen und ebenso für die Reisen nach dem Persischen Golf. Bei Beginn des Waffenstillstandes war die Linie bis auf eine Entfernung von 100 Meilen westlich von Mossul fertiggestellt, 200 Meilen Schienen sind noch zwischen Mossul und Bagdad zu legen, südlich von Bagdad soll dann die Bahn abwechselnd am Flußlauf des Tigris und dem des Euphrat folgen. Für die wirtschaftliche Zukunft Palästinas ist der Anschluss Aleppos an die Bagdadbahn von ausschlaggebender Bedeutung."

1 Translation: "Palestine and the new Baghdad Bahn: As reported in the 'New Orient', the Baghdad line could reach the Persian Gulf within two years. It would appear that in certain circles in the Entente the idea is forming to move the starting point for this line from Haidarpasha (i.e. Istanbul) to Alexandretta on the Mediterranean, the main harbour of what would be the new 'Arab State.' Aleppo, which lies on this line, some 130km. from Damascus, would become the central point for all passengers and goods which are destined for the Euphrates Valley and also for those who are travelling to the Persian Gulf."

2 At the commencement of the Cease-Fire the line was largely completed to a point some 100 miles west of Mosul, and 200 miles of track materials were still necessary between Mosul and Baghdad; southwards from Baghdad the line should then alternate between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. For the economic development of Palestine the link of Aleppo with the Bagdadbahn is of enormous significance."

iii **On the Hedjaz Railway Post-War.** From the 'Jüdische Korrespondenz' of 24th. October 1919: "Besonderes Interesse verdient der Bericht des 'Mukatabs' vom 30. Juli über die Hedschasbahn: "Es ist kein Zweifel", schreibt das arabische Blatt, "daß die Hedschasbahn die größte in Syrien ist und daß, abgesehen von ihrem ökonomischen Nutzen, ihr religiös-sittlicher Einfluß von hoher Bedeutung ist, indem sie den Hedschas mit Syrien verbindet. Die türkische Regierung hat den Bau der Eisenbahn begonnen, um die Pilgerfahrten zum Grabe des Propheten in Mekka zu erleichtern. Nach siebenjähriger

energischer Arbeit ist die Bahnstrecke im Jahre 1907 bis Medina fertiggestellt worden. Die Unkosten, die sich auf etwa sechs Millionen türkische Pfund beliefen, wurden von den Mohammedanern in allen Weltteilen gesammelt. Die Eisenbahn ist als eine ausgesprochene mohammedanische, die für ein religiöses Ziel erbaut wurde, [sic. - there seems to be a word missing here] und jeder Mohammedaner, hat daher die Pflicht, an ihr wieder aufzubauen, was während des Krieges zerstört worden ist. Die Kosten der Reparaturen werden sich nach Meinung von Fachleuten auf eine Million Pfund belaufen. Die Leitung der Eisenbahn hat bisher weder einen Kostenvoranschlag noch einen Reparaturplan vorbereitet. Der neue Generaldirektor des Eisenbahn, Mr. Holmods [sic. - actually Holmes, an Englishman] beabsichtigt jedoch, einen ausführlichen Wiederherstellungsplan auszuarbeiten. Auch der Emir Faisul interessiert sich lebhaft für den Stand der Eisenbahn und hat bereits eine Kommission zu deren Instandsetzung ernannt. An der Spitze dieser Kommission steht Saad Pascha-Schafir, der Leiter der Finanzalgelegenheiten in Syrien."

'Mukatabs' meint, daß zur Deckung der Unkosten für die Reparatur der Eisenbahn der Friedenskonferenz eine Ausstellung aller durch den Krieg entstandenen Schäden einzureichen ist., Um auf diese Weise die erforderliche Gelder zu bekommen. Von besonderem Interesse für uns ist folgender Passus in diesem Bericht der Zeitung:-

".... Die Ausgaben der Eisenbahn übersteigen deren Einnahmen bei weitem. Die türkische Regierung zahlte den Leitern der Bahn nur 300 Pfund pro Jahr, hat ihnen aber zugleich die Erlaubnis gegeben, den Hafen in Haifa zu bauen und ihnen Konzession erteilt, die warmen Bäder in Tiberias zu übernehmen und die Bodenflächen am Kinnerethsee zu exploitiieren."

Der Bericht schließt: "Werden die Leiter der Eisenbahn weitgehend genug sein, um ihre rechte zu wahren und werden sie verstehen, alle Schätze, die in dem Boden an der ganzen Bahnstrecke entlang ruhen, auszunutzen, so wird diese Bahn in der nächsten Zukunft eine der einträglichsten in der Welt sein."

Translation: "Especially interesting is the report in the 'Mukatabs' of 30th. July [1919], regarding the Hedjaz Railway:

"There is no doubt," writes the Arabic newspaper, "that the Hedjaz Railway is the greatest in Syria and that, apart from its economic value, it has enormous significance for religious and moral influence, since it links the Hedjaz with Syria. The Turkish Government commenced the construction of the railway, in order to ease the pilgrimage to the Grave of the Prophet in Mecca. After seven years of intensive work the railway line was ready as far as

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Medina in 1907. The costs, which amounted to some six million Turkish Pounds, were gathered together by Mohammedans all over the world. The railway is to be seen as a purely Mohammedan [project], which was built for a religious purpose, and every Mohammedan has therefore the duty to be involved in the reconstruction of every part of it that was destroyed during the war. The costs of such repairs has been put, by several experts, at one Million Pounds. The leadership of the railway has until now prepared neither an estimate of costs nor a plan of repair. The new General Director of the Railways, Mr. Holmods [meant is here R.B.W. Holmes of the then-Palestine Military Railway] does however envisage preparing a programme for extensive repair works. The Emir Faisul is also keenly interested in the state of the railway and has already nominated a Commission to be responsible for its restoration. At the head of this Commission is Saad Pasha-Shafir, who is in charge of Financial Affairs in Syria."

'Mukatabs' is of the opinion that in order to arrange for the costs of the repair of the railway to be met, a full listing of all the damage caused during the war should be presented at the Peace Conference, in order through these means to raise the necessary funds. Of especial interest for us is the following section:-

"....The expenditure of the railway has always greatly exceeded its income. The Turkish Government paid the leadership of the railway only 300 Pounds per year, but did however grant them the permission to build a harbour in Haifa and gave them the concessions to take over and operate the warm baths in Tiberias and to exploit the mineral resources along the land around the Kinneret Sea." The report concludes: "If the administrators of the Railway were only far-seeing enough to exploit their rights and if they could understand how to gain benefit from all the treasures that are lying in the earth along the entire railway line, this railway could in the near future become one of the most profitable in the world."

iv **THE HAIFA - BAGHDAD RAILWAY PLAN.**

From 'Reichspost' (Wien) 12th. February 1934: "DER PLAN DER EISENBAHN HAIFA - BAGDAD. 'Von unserem Korrespondentem Dr. M., Jerusalem. 7. Februar.) Die Arabische Presse kommt in zahlreiche Aufsätzen auf den alten Plan einer Eisenbahn zurück, die Haifa mit Bagdad verbinden soll. Anlaß dazu ist die Nachricht, daß sich die englische Regierung entschlossen hat, eine Verbesserung des alten Projektes ausarbeiten zu lassen. Die zukünftige Eisenbahn soll einen anderen Weg nehmen, als es vor einigen Jahren vorgeschlagen wurde, und zwar durch das Tal Wadi el Zarka. Oberst Robertson soll

sich im Auftrag der englischen Regierung nach Haifa begeben, um von dort an Ort und Stelle die Arbeiten zu leiten. Die Ausführung dieses Planes scheint dringend, da die kommerziellen Beziehungen zwischen der Mittelmeerküste Palästinas und Mesopotamien nach der Eröffnung des Hafens von Haifa sehr gewachsen sind."

Translation:- "From our correspondent, Dr. M., Jerusalem. The Arabic press has devoted several articles to the old plan of a railway that should link Haifa with Baghdad. This is the result of news that the English Government has decided to improve upon the former project. The future railway should take a different route to the one originally recommended, in fact through the valley of the Wadi el Zarka. Colonel Robertson is meant to have come to Haifa at the behest of the English Government, in order to supervise the works personally. It appears an urgent matter to implement these plans, for the commercial links between the coast of Palestine and Mesopotamia have grown significantly following the opening of the harbour at Haifa."

(i). THE OLD JERUSALEM STATION.

We have reported briefly on this restoration and change-of-use from a scene of dereliction to a new historical/cultural/consumption centre. Walter Zanger went along soon after opening and later and was only partially impressed. From his newsletter 'In Jerusalem' Vo. 15 No. 8, July 2013, p.3:

"The old railway station here, at the corner of Hebron Road on the way to the German Colony, now unused, was empty and deserted for a dozen years and looked like hell. Now they have fixed up the building and landscaped the area (very nicely!), which is a net gain for the city. And have reopened it in much the same style as the 'Tahanah', the old railway station on the border between Tel Aviv and Jaffa; a collection of shops and restaurants, bars and cafés, a place to sit and hang out, shop and eat. OK, but not earth-shattering.

The Jerusalem station we found back then (in May) on our first visit had one coffee house/dairy restaurant open, one shop, and a tourist office. Total. There was a room with no chairs and a lot of incomprehensible flags standing there, where an (actually very interesting) short film (in Hebrew) on the history of the railroad was playing on a television screen. And there were a few signs (in Hebrew) posted around giving some history and details of the place. Also interesting.

We went back last Saturday to see what has changed. The answer, alas! is fairly little. There is now a large tent over the duck-boards that cover the whole area where people sit with kiddies and eat ice cream. Nice enough, if you don't mind sit-

ting on the floor as if it were grass. A few kiosks and a small bar were open, and a good (we hope) meat restaurant too, and that is all a definite improvement. A young lady was demonstrating making pottery on an electric wheel, which the little kids sitting around were fascinated by. Good idea! And another girl was making huge soap bubbles with two short poles, joined by two cords of unequal length between them, dipped into a bucket of soapy water... The kids liked that too.

The architects and designers have set out a dozen large merchandise carts of the sort one sees in European fairs, which is a neat idea, but they were all empty when we first came, and still are. Maybe – just maybe – that was because we came on a Shabbat, although I doubt it. Same with emptying trash cans. They were all overflowing from days of not being tended to. I might make the same caveat about it being Shabbat, even though I don't believe that excuse either.

There are still no seats in the movie room and not one word of English on the film, or the signs outside, which is a fatal flaw in my opinion. I suppose someone someday will realize that tourists are not going to go to a place that makes you stand through a 15 minute film, and makes no allowance for the people who don't know Hebrew.

Bottom line, so far: The First Station is sort-of a waste of time. But I'll go periodically during the summer and see how they're getting on, and report back when I can recommend it."

(j). 'PALÄSTINA REISEHANDBUCH' -

(Thanks to Klaus Matzka for a copy of two relevant pages.) This is probably the earliest Jewish Handbook for travellers to Palestine. Full title is 'PALÄSTINA und Südsyrien Reisehandbuch, Im Auftrag der Palestine Expreß Comp., verfaßt von Jesaias Press, Jerusalem. Verlag: Benjamin Harz, Jerusalem – Berlin – Wien, 1921.' i.e. This was written and published very soon after the League of Nations had organised the division of the region into different Mandates, a time of optimism following the end of the War and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

[What I find particularly interesting is the historical overview – something sadly lacking in the modern journalistic world which is based on the assumption that the Here and Now is the Always Here and Always Was. There were always population drifts and changes and invasions and cultural influences, and not just in the Middle East. Because of the appearance of some names which I have not come across elsewhere I shall here translate into English but leave a couple of references in German. W.L.R.]

p.94f. "Routes. 1. From Cairo to Ludd. (Distance 518 km. Kairo – Kantara 204 km. Kantara – Ludd 314 km. Journey time 15 Hours.)

The railway goes from Cairo initially north to Zagazig, then turns eastwards and runs through the sandy desert to Ismailia on the west bank of the Suez Canal, turns again to the north along the west west bank of the Canal to Kantara, which lies on the east bank. Here one enters the train of the Egypt-Palestine railway, which traverses in an easterly direction the northern edge of the Tih sand desert of the Sinai Peninsula. The railway line approaches within 4km. of the Lake Sirbon (Sirbonischen See) and then the beach of the Mediterranean, which it follows until el-Arisch (162 km.). This place, a fortified small town on the Wadi-el-Arisch (The River of Mitzrayim, Num. 34:5, Isa. 27:12), not far from its mouth into the sea, lies in a palm grove on the historic boundary between Egypt and Palestine.

(The town is meant to have been founded by an Ethiopian-Egyptian king as a place of exile and was originally called Rhinocolura. Next to the cistern in the courtyard of the fortress an Egyptian granite coffin serves as a trough. Napoleon captured the border fortress of el-Arisch in 1799 and in the following year signed here the treaty whereby the French army of occupation was compelled to leave Egypt. Until 1895 el-Arisch remained the border between Egypt and Palestine, the border was then however by Treaty moved forward to the line Raphia – Aqaba.)

From here the line continues for 46km. along the coast and at Raphia (Rafiah, Tel Rifáh) the new political southern border of Palestine. In ancient times this is where the armies of the northern kingdoms which were advancing against Egypt often met with the Egyptian forces. Alexander Jannai conquered the spot, which from now on counted as the southern boundary of Palestine (Josephus, Bell. Jud. I. 8,4.) Pompeius took once again from the Jews and Gabinius rebuilt it again (Bell. Jid. IV. 11,5.)

Chân Júnis is a small market village, where the caravan trade with Egypt is run. 4 km. south-east of the station Dêr-el-Balah lies on the right bank of the Sêl esch-Schallâl stream, near its confluence with the Sêl esch-Scharia, the ruins of Gerar (Chirbet Umm Dscharrâr), that in the time of Abraham was the residence of the Philistine King Abimelech (Gen. 20:2.) From Dêr el-Balah one travels with the railway a quarter hour to the southernmost town of Palestine:-

Gaza. (Azza, Razze.)

(To its History: Gaza is one of the oldest cities that is mentioned in the Bible (Gen. 10:19). In one part of the Tel-el-Amarna Tablets it is mentioned under the

name Azati, as the strongest city on the Canaanite coast. Following the conquest of the land by Joshua the Kaphtorim (Philistines) destroyed the Awwim, who lived in Gaza and its dependencies, and settled here. (Deut. 3:23.) Gaza then became one of the five covenant cities of the Philistines. When the land was divided under Joshua, Gaza and its surroundings came into the area of the tribe of Juda (Josh. 15:47), who however could not occupy the city as "the inhabitants of the plain had iron war chariots" (Judges 1:9). It is known to us through the last action of the national hero Samson, who had been blinded by the Palestinians, who through his enormous strength brought the Temple of Dagon to collapse and buried under its ruins himself and the whole party of celebrants. Situated as it is on the trade and military route between Babylon and Syria on one side and Egypt on the other, and forming the key access point to both countries, the city had frequently been fought over, from ancient times until the most recent war. It has been repeatedly destroyed and then rebuilt by its new occupiers. Assyrians, Babylonians and Persians have taken it in turn into their possession. It remained however always able to retain its own independence, until Alexander the Great brought an end to this (332). He destroyed the city, liquidated its population and settled Greeks here, who made Gaza into an important centre of Hellenistic culture. Antiochus the Great defeated the Ptolemaer here and captured Palestine (212). The Hasmonean Jonathan besieged and captured the city. During the reign of the Hasmonean Simon it freed itself once more from Jewish domination. In consequence it was destroyed by Alexander Jannai in 96 BCE (Josephus, Ant. XIII.13.3.) Pompeius allowed it to be rebuilt again. Augustus made of it a gift to Herod; following his death however it fell to the Roman province of Syria. In the Roman wars it was destroyed by the Jews (Bell. Jud. II. 18,1.) Later however it became once again a flourishing Greek colony and possessed a great Archive and many Temples. At the head of the city stood a Senate with 500 members. Even at the time of Constantine the Great Gaza was a bulwark for Heathenism. At the beginning of the Middle Ages it was already a trade centre to which the caravans came from Arabia. It was on a trading visit here that Haschim, the uncle of Mohammed, died, and he was buried here. Since the Arab invasion (634) Gaza has been an Arab city. The Crusaders, who found only a city of ruins here, rebuilt it and fortified it again, and since then it has grown into a large city, whose population are involved in trade. From the 14th.-17th. Centuries there were here great Jewish, Karaite and Samaritan communities. In the 17th. Century Gaza was the capital of the Arab province of Falastin. In the 18th. Century it sank into insignificance due the Beduin and Fellachen wars. Napoleon occupied it during his campaign to Akko (1799). In the past century it had risen again in importance due to the caravan trade with Egypt and trade with the Beduin. During the last war it was besieged by the British Army for eleven months, and on 2nd. November 1917 they finally broke through the Turkish defences."

102:09

BY RAIL FROM ALEXANDRIA TO ALEPPO.

By 'R.L.B.' In 'The Locomotive' Vol. XXV, No. 327. November 15, 1919. pp. 186-190.

A trip by rail from Alexandria to Aleppo is full of interest to a traveller. On leaving Alexandria we notice a few 2-8-0 tank engines, built by Baldwins, and gathering speed, pass through well-cultivated land until we arrive at Ismailia where there is a small engine shed. Some 0-6-0 tender goods and possibly a 2-4-0 or a 4-4-0 may also be seen. Characteristic features of the Egyptian State Rys. locos are the copper rimmed chimneys, brass domes and safety valve covers, inside cylinders and outside bearings. They are painted green and bear a very marked resemblance to the earlier Armstrong locos of the G.W.Ry. From Ismailia we go on to Kantara, which was, quite recently, a 'City of Tents'; it is situated on the desert and the Suez Canal runs quite close to the railway. Kantara was a large base camp for the E.E.F. Crossing the Suez Canal by a swing bridge we leave Kantara East and start crossing the Sinai desert by the Palestine Military Ry.

For miles around nothing much but sand is visible; we approach the shores of the Mediterranean through very uninteresting country from a scenic point of view, but nevertheless the seat of much hard fighting. We pass through Romani, Katea (an oasis in the desert), and El Arish (on the sea-shore), where there was a large R.A.M.C. Hospital, to Gaza, and then north-eastward through Esdud, and Tiluil until we arrive at Ludd. Like Kantara, Ludd was an important base camp for the E.E.F. Troops going up or coming down from the line. Immense quantities of rations, stores, shells, etc. were handled here while the war was in progress. The track is double from Kantara for several miles, but then becomes single. Trains are worked on the 'Control' System, somewhat similar to that used in Canada and some parts of the U.S.A. Crossing places are arranged at most stations. Needless to say, trains stop at every station, either to or from Kantara. The line from Kantara to Ludd was laid down by the 'Railway Troops' Royal Engineer; about 1 ¼ miles per day was the usual construction, but the greatest progress in any day at one railhead was two miles. This, under scorching hot sun with none too much drinking water, was an accomplishment of which they may be justly proud and a great credit to all concerned.

At Ludd may be seen 0-6-0 E.S. Ry., 0-6-0 L.& S.W. Ry. and some 4-4-0 and 4-6-0 (Nos. 871 – 880 superheaters) built by Baldwins in 1916-1917 (See July 'Locomotive'). The 4-6-0's are fitted with double-bogie tenders and have all modern improvements; they can haul fifty loaded 12-ton wagons. A metre-gauge line used to run from here to Jerusalem, via 'Junction', but apparently the locos then in use, 4-4-0 tender and 2-6-2 (Baldwin) were not powerful enough to haul the trains up the long and severe inclines to Jerusalem, so the 4 ft. 8 1/2in. was laid down in its place; there are a few stations with crossing places en route. Before entering 'Junction', as it was called in military parlance, a fine bridge is crossed. Under the bridge flows a river (or 'wadi'). The remains of the old bridge, which had been blown up by the Germans and Turks were lying in the river bed at the time we there, early in 1918, and a L.& N. W. Ry. 0-6-0 tender goods was at work in the yard near by.

Between Artuf and Jerusalem for twenty-five miles there are severe inclines of one in eighty with sharp curves and no length of straight. In the early morning with the rails greasy from the heavy dew, it was quite a common occurrence for trains to stick here, on account of the engines slipping. This was especially the case when the British Red Cross Hospital train was brought empty to Jerusalem for conveying hospital patients to places down the line. This train consisted of six 8-wheeled L. & S. W. Ry. coaches and was nearly always worked by a L.& S.W. Ry. 0-6-0 tender goods engine. On alternate days, a Turkish Red Crescent Hospital train was used for conveyance of Indian troops. This consisted of seven six-wheel coaches; both these trains were fitted with air-brakes. The load for the locos was about 165 tons; all goods and ration trains were banked in the rear. If a train did stick on this bank, the yard engine had to come out and couple on to the leading engine. For some time the yard loco was No. 90, a 0-6-0 saddle tank inside cylinders and bearings, built by Manning Wardle & Co., in 1891. Later on this was sent away and a Baldwin 2-6-0 with an E.S. Ry. tender took its place. The writer has seen freight trains come into Jerusalem drawn by an E.S. Ry. 0-6-0, piloted by a Baldwin 2-6-0, and banked by an L.& S.W. Ry. 0-6-0. After the enemy had been driven out of Jerusalem (the fight took place at 'Nebi Samwil' a few miles out and situated in the hills), a narrow-gauge line was laid from Jerusalem to Ramallah and Bireh, where a large supply dump was situated. The narrow-gauge yard at Jerusalem was just

below the broad gauge one. The line to Ramallah took a circuitous route, leaving the yard the train for a short distance travelled in the opposite direction to its destination, then traversed a sharp curve and started climbing the hills. A few miles out at Shafat, the line crossed the road to Ramallah and then followed the contour of the hillside until coming round a long curve it entered Ramallah yard; there was no turntable and a triangle was used for turning engines. The narrow-gauge engines were 4-6-0 side tanks with long 'stove pipe' chimneys and large domes with safety valves and chime whistles, Walschaerts gear was used and also central couplings; these locos were built by Baldwins. After the 'stunt' had taken place, the locos and rolling stock were taken away and only the track remained, although at that time it seemed highly probably this would also be removed.

Returning to Ludd and journeying toward Damascus, we pass a few small stations, until Tul Keram is reached. For some miles before arriving at Tul-Keram a small narrow gauge line runs more or less parallel. This was a Turkish railway and has been destroyed in several places. Large quantities of the rails have been taken up and stacked in 'dumps' for removal when required. Close to the station at Tul-Keram a large number of ammunition wagons, limbers and gun-carriages were collected. They all had the familiar 'crescent and star' painted on them. These belonged to the Turks and were captured by the Allies, when Tul-Keram was taken. We next proceed through Ahudeira and reach Haifa, where we have a fine view of the sea, with Acre opposite; the station is a fairly substantial stone structure with low platforms. The broad gauge ends at Haifa, the line to Damascus being of narrower gauge (1.05 metres – 3ft. 5 ½ in.) There are loco repair shops and running sheds with a great variety of locos. In the standard gauge shed were 0-6-0 Egyptian State Rys., 0-6-0 L.& N.W. Ry, 0-6-0 L.& S.W.Ry., 2-4-0 Egyptian State Rys., 2-6-0, 4-4-0, 4-6-0 Baldwin superheaters.

In the narrow gauge shed were seen some 0-6-0, 2-6-2 and 2-8-0 side tanks, with Belpaire fireboxes, built in Germany. Some 2-8-0 tender engines built by A. Borsig of Berlin and 0-8-0 built by the Saxon Locomotive Works of Chemnitz are used for working the trains.

From Haifa, en route for Damascus, our loco is a 2-8-0 built by Borsig in 1916. It has a superheater, mechanical lubricator, a peculiar chimney about 12 in. high, a powerful hooter and a very small 4-wheel tender. As we leave Haifa we see some fine houses built on the side of a hill, the scenery is pretty and the land well cultivated; we stop at Shamman, Afeule and Beisan before the line from Haifa to Damascus was completed, a branch line ran from Tul Keram to Afeule, but appar-

ently it is not used now. Further on, we see the 'Sea of Galilee', now noted for mosquitoes and malaria, and cross a steel girder bridge. Shortly after, the commencement of the River Jordan is seen, and while running along the Jordan valley we endure great heat; two more bridges, one of steel and the other of timber, are crossed. The bridges were destroyed during the war, but have been rebuilt, one by the Australians and the other by our Royal Engineers. Near one bridge are some sulphur springs and one could enjoy a hot open air bath, if so inclined. Now we see the River Yarmuk and keep fairly close to it for some distance. The scenery is very pretty, hills on both sides and wild flowers and rushes growing in great profusion on the banks of the river. Sammach is the next stop and after leaving that place we climb gradually and pass round a severe curve, still climbing. After about a mile, we look down and see the track we have just passed over. The line still keeps to the side of the hill, on the up grade, and it is now several hundred feet higher than when the train entered the curve; on our left are some fine waterfalls. Later, we stop at a small station, where the tender is replenished with water, and whilst stopping here, a goods train passes in the opposite direction. Leaving the station, we are still climbing and when level ground is once more reached, cross a very fine steel bridge, with stone piers, and after stopping at a few small stations Deraa is reached. The train runs down one side of a triangle and then backs into the station, where there is a fairly large engine shed. Here may be seen some 2-8-2 tender engines built by the Saxon Locomotive Works in 1918, they are superheaters and are fitted with Walschaerts gear and double bogie tenders. These engines were captured by the Australian Light Horse when they took the town. Other locos seen were 0-8-0 tender engines and 0-6-0 and 0-8-0 tanks, all built by German firms. Leaving Deraa behind a 2-8-2 tender engine we traverse rather uninteresting country until we arrive at Damascus. Just before entering the station we pass the fine loco shops and shed, where, a few months ago, a large number of engines were outside awaiting repair.

The station is a fine imposing structure built of stone; it has a large circulating area and apparently some of the rooms were intended for administrative offices. We leave Damascus for Rayak, behind a small tank locomotive, either a 2-6-0 or a Mallet 0-4-4-2. After traversing very pretty and thickly wooded country, we reach Rayak. Here the narrow gauge line goes to Beyreuth and the standard gauge line (1.44 metres) from Aleppo comes in. There are some well-equipped repair shops, although just before the enemy was driven out, considerable wilful damage had been done to the machinery. Several large standards and foundation plates had

been smashed by sledge hammers, thus rendering them useless. The extensive running sheds were also wrecked, When we were at this place, en route to Homs, we noticed vast quantities of material left by the Germans and Turks – innumerable shells and millions of rounds of rifle ammunition, destroyed motor lorries, rifles and other articles incidental to warfare. Outside the remains of the shed were some 0-4-4-2 Mallet tanks and 2-6-0 side tanks. The yard engine was a small 2-6-0 tank called 'Hermon'. It had outside cylinders and bearings and was built at Winterthur. Some quaint 0-6-0 with four-wheel tenders were also there; the connecting rods were oval in section. These early 0-6-0 French locos were for the standard gauge.

We leave Rayak and duly arrive at Baalbek, said by some to be the ancient Babylon. The ruins are seen from the train, although trees rather obliterate the view. The land is well cultivated, apricots, olives, pomegranates and vines growing in profusion. From Baalbek there is a climb through very uninteresting and sparsely populated country, until we arrive at Homs, which is a big centre for silk manufactures. The River Orontes, which is the principal river in Syria flows near Homs and on to Aleppo. Near Homs, a fine Mohammedan mosque is seen and for about two miles the line runs parallel with the high road. The mountains of Akkar – snow capped all the year round – are seen quite plainly and look very fine against a cloudless deep blue sky. The next station is Tel-Bisse and then follows Hama, where a very fine 2-8-0 tender engine built by Maffei of Munich in 1916 was seen. The country is now very fertile, apricots and figs being largely grown. The track next passes for some distance through very uninteresting country, until we arrive at Aleppo, where there are two stations, one belonging to the French Company and the other to the Baghdad Ry; we run into the former: near the station is the engine shed with a 0-8-0 engine outside. The loco which brought us up from Rayak was a small 0-8-0, with outside cylinders; the slide valves work at an angle and the eccentrics are keyed to the driving crank pin. The locomotives here have long 'stove pipe' chimneys and the number plates are at the bases of the chimneys. The sandboxes are on the top of the boilers. A steam brake operates on the tenders, but not on the engines. The writer has seen the following engines of this type Nos. 21, 24, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32. They were built in 1891 and 1894 by Cail. Near the engine shed a Turkish Red Crescent train was standing in a side track; it consisted of six four-wheelers and three six-wheel coaches, all built in Germany. Both rails and sleepers are of steel of Belgian make. The locos and rolling stock all have the initials D.H.P., signifying the Chemin de Fer de Damas-Hama-Prolongements; the crescent and star are noticeable. No

high speed is attained by trains anywhere and uphill the speed is very low, probably on account of the condition of the locos, which have been out of repair for some time. There is a scarcity of water, as in many cases water tanks were destroyed by the enemy.

The Baghdad station at Aleppo is of quite recent construction and near to it are several large buildings which were to have been administrative offices, near the station are the remains of a large warehouse; a terrible fire must have taken place here; huge steel girders have been twisted like pieces of copper wire and large quantities of glass were melted into one large mass. A quarter of a mile further down the line is the engine shed, similar in construction to an American round house and having from 30-35 pits. When the Allies entered Aleppo, the water tank had been destroyed, but it has now been replaced by the Royal Engineers. There are repair shops here, as evidently Aleppo was to have been an important railway centre. We spent some time there and frequently went over the round house and shops; one large shop was not finished, only the steel girders being erected. Several crates of machinery, fish-plates, nuts and bolts are lying unpacked. The engines and rolling stock used on the Baghdad line are all German made. There were two fine 2-6-0's built by Borsig in 1916 (numbers 616 and 620). On these locos, the sand-box is fitted close to the steam dome and one casing covers both. These locos have the Westinghouse brake and the tender runs on six wheels. The latter followed a standard German practice in having the middle and trailing pairs of tender wheels equalized, but not the leading and middle pairs, Two 0-8-0 engines worked the trains sometimes, su-

perheated, with single slide bars and have Walschaerts gear. In all cases, the number plate is just below the chimney with the name of the station underneath.

We noticed No. 4839 Halle and No. 4852 Hannover at Aleppo. The yard loco was a small 0-6-0 with 4-wheeled tender, built by the Hannover Loco Works in 1916. A loco often used in the yard is a 0-6-0 tender goods with outside cylinders and bearings, built by Emil Kessler in 1891. Several of them have come to Aleppo for general overhauling. Outside the shops some quaint locos may be observed, a 2-4-2 Belgian State Rys No. 2140, with a Belpaire firebox, square chimney and four-wheel tender, built in 1891. Some neat 0-6-0 side tanks built by Kerr Stuart & Co. are also there. 'Adana' and 'Tarsus' were there. These have inside cylinders and bearings and long side tanks, stove pipe chimney and brass dome and safety valve covers. The safety valves are on the firebox. When we saw 'Tarsus' it was minus a pair of trailing wheels.

Having described a journey from Alexandria to Aleppo by rail, we will leave readers there, and hope they have not been tired with the long journey. Obviously, no dining, sleeping or corridor coaches are now run and when we made the trip in the reverse direction from Aleppo to Alexandria we travelled most of the way from Aleppo to Ismailia in a cattle truck. No doubt when things are more settled, a through service will probably be run. Our chief regret is that we did not have a our camera with us, as several interesting photos could have been taken, and should any mis-statements or inaccuracies appear, we trust we may be pardoned, as this article has been written from memory.'

Translated by: Shounaz Mekky;
Reported by: Mohammed Al Yousy; Voice:
Mustapha Ajbaili. By: Ikram Al Yacoub. Al
Arabiya.'

(ii). Interesting is also <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3sZ8KKHjN4> - a nine and a half minute publicity film by the Saudi Railways Organisation, on the Haramain high-speed rail system. After initial shots of the usual clones, all with the same moustaches, spectacles and head-gear, inspecting the plans, we come to a computer-generated map of the proposed line and then a quaint scene as a bad actor says he is going to the station in Riyadh and will meet a contact in Jeddah in two hours. Then the scene switches to Saudi landscape and townscape and the trains, formed of a streamlined power car and eight double-deck carriages, (or maybe a power car at each end), white with a broad blue stripe below and a thin yellow stripe above, speed over the line which appears to be entirely on viaduct. Trains travel on the right here, whereas in the video above, on the existing line, they seem to travel on the left. Another actor explains to a friend that Makkah is now only half an hour from Jeddah and so the friend can come to the evening meal to break the fast. Thanks be to Allah.

(iii). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QaTaMR3OKaQ> leads to a one-and-a-half minute film report on construction work on new railway lines in the desert, with a yellow and blue GM Co-Co on a construction train with bogie ballast hoppers, and a track-laying machine that lays the concrete sleepers, then the rails onto them.

(iv). The website: http://flbtrain.smugmug.com/Railroads/IVE-BEEN-WORKING-ON-THE/SRO/24003666_4fpQWq/1959529568_wPpWZjB#li=2109729059&k=3b5bRD7

leads to a set of slides of the SRO in the 1980's. The accompanying text: "In Fall 1981 I was contracted by U. S. DOT to be an advisor to the Saudi Railways Organization - SRO - Dammam, Saudi Arabia. SRO was in the middle of final design of a new locomotive shop and needed some assistance from a person with a railroad mechanical background. They also were looking for a person who had computerization and train operations experience. I was able to fill their requirements. Before moving to Saudi we attended a 2-week training seminar at the State Department in DC in September. By October we were in Saudi. I was initially on a 2-year contract and extended when SRO requested that I stay another year.

SRO's locomotive fleet appeared very much American. Besides EMD's

102:10.

OTHER MIDDLE EAST RAILWAYS.

A. SAUDI ARABIA.

On the internet is a short (not quite 2 minutes – but plus advert) video clip on 'Al Arabiya' – 'The Saudi Arabia: The Desert Railway.'

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7tFAt2kcsSM>

The script is listed as: 'As we entered the Riyadh railway station, in Saudi Arabia; our starting point is the front box office. This is where passengers may buy their tickets for their journey.

A list of ticket prices and destinations are made available for passengers to choose from. Depending on the class, ticket prices vary. A first class ticket costs one hundred and twenty riyals, equivalent to 32 USD while an economic ticket may cost as low as sixty riyals, 16 USD.

The trains operate on a fixed schedule providing five daily trips between "Riyadh" to "Al Hofuf" and from "Abqaiq" to "Dammam." The journey between each station consists of a four hundred and forty-nine kilometers ride. The twenty-five year old train takes around three hours to travel from Riyadh to Hofuf.

The train consists of three classes separated according to price and feature. The top seating class is "Al Rehab", which offers private seating but lacks entertainment service. The second seating class is called "Al Talla'ea," has smaller seats. The third class seating is the "Qafela", seats passengers at the end of the train.

there were only 6 French-built FrancoRail CSE26-21s in service while I was there. Other than the extra air filters on the top of the engine's hood, the EMDs looked like typical GPs & SDs."

(v). RIYADH METRO SYSTEM.

The Dutch construction firm Strukton has landed a prestigious contract worth 1 Billion Euros, as part of the creation of a new Metro system in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The total value of the turnkey project is 6 Billion Euros and the project is to be carried out by the FAST consortium, including Strukton, FCC - Spain (consortium leader), Freyssinet - Saudi Arabia, Alstom - France, Samsung CT - Korea, Setec - France and Tyspa - Spain. The six lines comprising the driverless Riyadh metro project will span more than 176 kilometres, and include 87 stations, making it the largest subway under development in the world at present. It is scheduled to enter commercial service in 2018. Construction will require 600,000 tonnes of steel (80 times the amount used to build the Eiffel Tower), 4.3 million cubic metres of concrete (11 times the amount used for BurjKhalifa, the world's tallest skyscraper) The project is to be executed over five years, and will employ over 30,000 people. Prequalifiers selected for Riyadh metro works Sep 2012

Peter Kenyon, Tunnel Talk

Preliminary designs for the US\$8 billion Riyadh metro in Saudi Arabia call for 35.2km of twin-tube bored running tunnels and a further 13.7km of cut-and-cover work for a total subsurface length of nearly 49km. Preliminary designs of the 180km metro system have been carried out by consultants dar-al-hanasah of Lebanon and Egis Rail of France, and until now the precise breakdown of the underground elements of the network has been unspecified by the client, the High Commission for the Development of Arriyadh (HCDA). Research by TunnelTalk has uncovered the scope of the underground works involved on the six-line project (Table 1). Lines 1 and 2, and possibly Line 3, will be built as Phase 1 of the project, with the remaining lines under a later Phase 2 of design-build procurement. Four consortia comprising 33 companies from 15 countries have been prequalified for five design-build lots with Lines 1 and 2 offered as a single construction package. The four prequalified consortia are:

- Consortium 1: Vinci Construction (France, consortium leader)/ Siemens (Germany)/ Almbani General Contractors (Saudi Arabia)/ Consolidated Contractors Company (Saudi Arabia)/ AECOM (USA)

Table 1. Riyadh metro alignment lengths

Line No.	Colour	Total length (km)	Bored tunnel (km)	Cut and cover (km)
1	Blue	44	16.2	-
2	Green	22.5	2.9	-
3	Red	45	6.3	-
4	Orange	32	-	2.1
5	Yellow	26	9.8	3.2
6	Pink	12	-	8.4

- Consortium 2: Bombardier (Canada, consortium leader)/ Al Rajhi Holding Group (Saudi Arabia)/ YAPI Merkezi Insaat (Turkey)/ Obrascon Huarte Lain (Spain)/ Al Arrab Contracting Co (Saudi Arabia)/ Shihb AL jazira Contracting Co (Saudi Arabia)/ GS Engineering and Construction (Korea)/ Freyssinet Saudi Arabia (Saudi Arabia)/ Serco Group (UK)/ Mott MacDonald (UK)/ Parsons Brinckerhoff Arabia (Saudi Arabia)
- Consortium 3: FCC Construcción SA (Spain, consortium leader)/ Alstom Transport SA (France)/ Samsung C&T Corporation (Korea)/ Alpine (Austria)/ Strukton Civiel Projecten BV (The Netherlands)/ SETEC (France)/ Tecnica Y Proyectos (Spain)
- Consortium 4: Strabag Group (Austria, consortium leader)/ Ansaldo STS (Italy)/ AnsaldoBreda (Italy)/ Staedtler (Switzerland)/ BESIX SA (Belgium)/ Ali Al Swailem Group-MASCO (Saudi Arabia)/ Larsen & Toubro (India)/ Hyder Consulting (UK)/ Worley Parsons (USA)/ IDOM (Spain).

Fig 1. Riyadh metro comprises 6 lines
The four groups are to make their technical and financial bids by December 1, according to a statement by HCDA. Design-build construction of Phase 2 elements will be awarded from the same list of prequalifiers.
"The consortia include some of the biggest names in the rail construction industry, companies who have carried out rail and metro projects in cities including Paris, London, Washington, San Francisco, Singapore, Hong Kong, Sydney, Vancouver, Toronto and Barcelona," said Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz, HCDA Chairman and head of the higher supervisory committee overseeing the implementation of

public transport systems in Riyadh. As Riyadh approaches construction of its metro, the Middle East region, is experiencing a tunnelling boom. This is buoyed especially by the selection of Qatar as the host country of the 2022 soccer World Cup and by a number of key transport and wastewater projects moving towards advanced planning and construction.

Included among these are:
The Doha metro (Qatar). Project management and enabling works contracts for the first three lines of an eventual 300km metro system were awarded last month. Eighteen prequalified consortia are competing for the award of five underground and station packages each worth up to US\$1.5 billion. Announcements of the first contracts are expected by December (2012). Up to 55km of twin-running tunnels are included in the preliminary designs.

Fig 2. Concept alignment for Doha Bay Crossing

The Doha Bay Crossing (Fig 2), which was originally designed by Danish consultancy COWI as a 10km immersed tube crossing, and now preferred as a link of three bridges and two immersed tubes. Prequalifiers for the management contract for implementation of the estimated US\$1.5 Billion project are being evaluated by the public works authority Ashghal, and a contract is due to be awarded soon.

The Jeddah metro, for which a project study of a 108km three-line system was completed last year (2011), with signals from Saudi Arabia that a long-awaited tender process could begin soon. Extensions are also planned to the 18.1km Mecca metro, the first phase of which was completed by China Railways Construction Corporation as an elevated system in 2010.

References

Doha progresses towards metro construction - TunnelTalk, August 2012
Final tunnel awards on giant STEP project - TunnelTalk, January 2012
Qatar drives forward with Doha metro - TunnelTalk, December 2011
Atkins scores another Qatar World Cup contract - TunnelTalk, January 2012
Prequalifiers called for 40km Riyadh metro - TunnelTalk, May 2012

B. EGYPT.

(i). V60 0-8-0D's FROM THE DDR.

In 'Lok Magazin' 07/2013 is a brief article by Mathias Hille on these standard Deutsche Reichsbahn shunting and light freight locos, built for export. 1,139 were built for internal use from 1961 to 1982, the first series (V60.10-11) by VEB Lokomotivbau 'Karl Marx' in Babelsberg (LKM), and the main improved series (V60.12-16) by VEB Lokomotivbau-Elektrotechnische Werke 'Hans Beimler' at Hennigsdorf (LEW). From 1970 these were renumbered in the new computer system

as class 106 and, after No. 106 999 was reached, as class 105. In addition several industrial concerns acquired these locos, either new or later second-hand from the Reichsbahn.

However, over 500 were exported to twelve countries. 294 went to Bulgaria as class 52; Algeria's SNCF (from 1976 SNTF) ordered 27 machines, which received class numbers 600 DA, 600 DB and 600 DC. The Egyptian National Railways also ordered 26 locos in 1974/5, where they probably got the numbers 4501 – 4526, i.e. in the continuous number series. Others went to industrial users in Belgium, Bulgaria, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and two even to Turkey. So a total of 2,086 were built. The article has a photo of a semi-derelict V60 in the typical DR orange colour stored in the goods yard at Tanta in March 2007.

(ii). DEVELOPMENT PLANS.

'C.R.J.' No. 173 (Spring 2013) p. 99 has an intriguing report:-

"In late November 2012 the Egyptian state information service announced an 'all-out' plan to develop the country's railways. Measures were under way to develop and renovate the railways and their operations over the ensuing seven months, with special attention to be paid to level crossing signage. The envisaged programme also involves renovating 14 locomotives and 116 passenger coaches, as well as the acquisition of 85 air-conditioned coaches. Completion of the work is scheduled for a possibly optimistic 30th. June 2013."

The irony of this report is that the magazine arrived on exactly this day, just as the President of Egypt, Mursi, was being deposed by the military following popular revolt against the Moslem Brotherhood government and their arrogance and incompetence!

"In mid-December 2012 Egyptian Railways announced that it had created three new companies, aimed at improving passenger and freight services. The Vice-President of the railways' Bureau for Financial and Economic Affairs said that a loan of 320 Million Egyptian Pounds had been requested from the National Investment Bank to fund new developments. One of the new entities is to oversee long-distance passenger services, the second commuter traffic. The third will be responsible for rail freight operations. It is hoped to increase the volume of freight conveyed annually to 400 million tonnes after ten years. About 27 Billion Egyptian Pounds is to be spent on rolling stock, some of which is to be air-conditioned.

A visitor... in early December 2012 found, on visits to Aswan and Luxor, a well-used railway still operating on very traditional methods. Signal box visits were

made at both stations, with all signalling still performed by semaphores and no installation of track circuiting at either place. Lovers of traditional but dieselised railways are advised to visit Egypt before too long. They should also note that no printed timetables were available at either station's booking or information office, but the welcome given by Egyptian railwaymen was warm and sincere at both cities.

(iii). POLITICS.

A German radio report on 14.08.2013, just after another recent bloodbath in Cairo in which several hundred had been killed, stated that according to an ENR spokesman trains were leaving Cairo but no trains were being allowed to enter Cairo, in the hope that this would prevent too many supporters of deposed Prime Minister Mursi of the Moslem Brotherhood from gaining access to the city during the period when police were trying to clear such demonstrators from the streets.

(iv). AND WORSE...

Egyptian soldiers discover explosives planted on railway line in Suez. From REUTERS, 09/07/2013: "Egyptian soldiers on Saturday discovered explosives planted on a railway line in Suez, the state news agency reported, another sign of an insurgency after an assassination attempt against the interior minister and attacks on security forces and a ship. Mortars were among the munitions found on the line between the cities of Suez and Ismailia, MENA news agency said, adding that the explosives were defused by experts."

C. UNITED ARAB EMIRATES.

On 27.6.2013 a Deutsche Presse Agentur report stated that the Deutsche Bahn wants to offer to operate goods trains in the United Arab Emirates. The State-owned company will form a joint company with the system operator Etihad Rail. The Bahn's subsidiary Schenker Rail will seek to employ 200 staff and build up the freight traffic organisation and relevant maintenance capability in stages. The first freight trains should roll this October. According to DB the Arabs will have the majority of the Etihad Rail DB Operations LLC halten. The Emirate is currently linking the economic centres and the harbour with a 1,200km. long railway network at a cost of 80 Billion Euros.

D TURKEY.

(i). Harakevet's webmaster was tickled to receive this:

"Dear Editor,
My name is Bobiya Thomas and I am in Marketing Communications for Noppen Co. Ltd., a leader in organizing business information conferences across Asia, East Europe and Africa. We are hosting an

event in 2013 that may interest you. Here is some information:

Turkey Railway Infrastructure & Rolling Stock Summit. 24th-25th October 2013, Istanbul, Turkey

Noppen's Turkey Railway Infrastructure & Rolling Stock Summit will feature the most prominent industry leaders and government officials from across the region providing informative and inspiring discussions pertaining to region's current needs and their ambitious future as well as the international community to join this forum to discover new strategies and technologies that can assist in building a state-of-the-art railway infrastructure and modernization of the rolling stock fleet.

With the passing of Liberalization of the Turkish Railway Transportation Law, the General Directorate of Turkish Railways plan to make huge investments over the coming years for high speed lines, conventional lines, electrification and signalization, rolling stock and track renovations until 2023.

For more information, please check our website:

<http://www.noppen.com.cn/upcoming/P1308/index.asp>

I would like to enquire if HaRakevet would like to cooperate with us as media partner. With support from you, we expect this event will be both insightful and attract more attendance to achieve a more resounding industry response.

As a media partner we can offer you:

- 1 Delegate and speaker list - including full name, company name and job title
- 2 Advertising space - to display promotional materials
- 3 Brand exposure - during the marketing period and at the event onsite
- 4 Event materials - including speaker PowerPoint presentations
- 5 Press passes & Pre arranged Interviews

Please do not hesitate to contact me at anytime by email or on phone with any queries you have or for more information on this event. As the event is approaching quickly, I hope to confirm a partnership in a week's time.

We do understand you are busy and we thank you in advance for reading this proposal. I look forward to hearing from you. Kind regards, Bobiya Thomas Media Communications +91 8043334014."

Very nicely meant, but Harakevet is unfortunately not really in this league.

(ii). MARMARAY TUNNEL PROGRESS.

From Reuters, 08.05.2013:

"ISTANBUL - Turkey has successfully completed a trial run of a rail tunnel under the Bosphorus connecting Istanbul's European and Asian sides, the first of several planned mega projects in the country's largest city

to see the light of day. The 13.6 km (8.5 mile) tunnel, including a 1.4 km immersed tube tunnel - the deepest of its kind in the world at 56 metres - passes under Turkey's Bosphorus Strait, the busy shipping channel linking the Marmara Sea to the Black Sea. Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan, who on Sunday boarded the first train to pass through the tunnel, said the project had been 150 years in the making, and by connecting "London to Beijing", served not only those in Istanbul and Turkey. The tunnel is part of a larger \$5 billion "Marmaray" project which also includes an upgrade of existing suburban rail lines to create a 76 km line that according to the government will carry 1.5 million people a day across the city's two sides."

iii TCDD ORDERS VELAROS.

(From NVBS 'Op de Rails' magazine 201308, p. 392): "TCDD ordered 7 Siemens Velaro trains, including seven years maintenance, for the Istanbul - Ankara - Konya high-speed line. Order value € 285 million. Each Velaro consists of 8 coaches. Vmax 300 km/h. TCDD has already 12 high speed trains type HT65000 since 2009."

(iv).BURSA TRAMS.

'Op de Rails' p.395: In July, Rotterdam Electric Tram transport company (RET) sold some more type T metro trains to Bursa in Turkey, which were transported via Zeebrugge harbour: Nos. 5209, 5211, 5247, 5241, 5244, 5256, 5257; all in running condition.

E. LIBYA.

In 'Eisenbahn Revue' 5/2013 p.240 is an intriguing item. A Danish TV crew went to Libya to look for the 'missing' extra IC4 unit that Berlusconi gave as a present to President Muammar Ghaddafi for the 40th. Anniversary of the glorious Libyan Revolution in 2009 (which seems a long time ago now.) They found the three-car multiple unit, which was rebuilt as a luxury train, unaffected by the conflict; it stands in Tripoli surrounded by a fence and guarded, at the end of a three-kilometre test track. As the DSB registry number and the various Danish signs indicate, it was indeed taken from the running production line for the Danish delivery - although AnsaldoBreda had denied that to DSB! The manufacturer is now attempting to get the diesel unit returned to Italy in order to be able to rebuild it there for the Danish customer. Whether the Libyans will agree to the removal of this 'gift' remains to be seen.

The Ghaddafi régime had planned with Russian and Chinese help to build a 2,000km. network, with a double-track main line along the coast from Ras Ejdeer via Tripolis to Benghazi, part of which was

already under construction when works stopped due to the civil war.

F: AFGHANISTAN.

The Editor was sent some links to items on Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty websites.

(From http://www.rferl.org/content/Afghanistans_First_New_Railroad_On_Track/2190489.html)

"From the northern Afghan city of Mazar-e Sharif to the Uzbek border, the land runs flat with barely a hillock to block the way. It is perfect terrain for building a railway. So, since Afghanistan inaugurated construction of its northern rail line in May, progress has been fast. Now, the Uzbek company contracted to lay the track has completed almost all of the 75.km. line. According to the schedule, the construction should be finished by the end of this year. If so, Afghanistan will get its first railroad in more than 100 years. That is when a former monarch, Amir Abdurrahman, banned rail lines as potential invasion routes.

Officials say the railroad will speed up freight deliveries across the Uzbek border dramatically. The delivery time will decrease by 50% because the speed of rail transport is faster, since the wagons don't have to stop," says Ahmad Wali Sangar, an economic adviser to the government of Balkh province, where Mazar-e Sharif is located. "When the cargo is loaded on the train wagons the trader's products will be transported straight to Afghanistan." Currently, the stops can be endless. Everything headed by rail for Afghanistan has to stop at the Uzbek border and be offloaded to trucks. The offloading and resulting back-ups and customs checks can mean weeks of delay before the cargo continues on its way. The railroad will solve that problem by allowing containers, which are sealed at their point of origin - to move across the border without interruption to a major new freight terminal near Mazar-e Sharif's airport. From the terminal, the cargo can be forwarded by truck or air, making Mazar-e Sharif a major distribution hub for the country.

The Asian Development Bank, which is funding the construction with some \$165M, hopes the railway line will help revitalize the Afghan economy by bringing in goods faster and cheaper than is now possible. Among the key imports are grain, fuel and foodstuffs from Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and, farther afield, from Russia.

But the rail from the border will also enable Washington and NATO to bring in more supplies for troops, reducing the coalition's dependence on routes through Pakistan where militants routinely attack trucks. And that might make the railroad a tempting target for the Taliban. Currently,

the railroad is guarded by a force of 500 police. The headquarters of the force is a small, windswept outpost halfway between Mazar-e Sharif and the Afghan border crossing of Hairaton, where the new rail line starts. General Asghar Asghary, the head of the force, receives visitors in the post's single small concrete building. He says there are other posts scattered along the length of the track and that the force is strong enough to protect the line when it becomes operational. "We won't need more police than we have now. The structure we have is entirely capable," Asghary says. "And even during the past three to four months, the company's trains have been coming and going a lot with workers and they are being protected."

Still, there is increasing cause to worry. The Taliban have grown powerful over the past two years in several of the northern provinces, particularly in the neighbouring province of Konduz. Already the militia regularly attacks fuel trucks travelling from the Tajik border through Konduz and Baghlan provinces to the coalition's base at Bagram airport near Kabul.

Asghary says that U.S. officers initially visited his headquarters and promised help, including with constructing fortified perimeters around the posts. But they have not returned since and he does not know whether the aid will ever arrive. His own budget is not enough to do more than the minimum needed to fortify and winterize the outposts. For now, guarding the railroad is light work and construction goes on unimpeded.

Each day the police escort the Uzbek workers building the railroad to their construction site and then escort them home again to their camp at Hairaton. The entirely Uzbek team is doing the work because Afghanistan long ago lost the equipment and technical skills needed for the job. But once the railway is built, some of the Uzbek technical staff will stay on to train Afghan personnel and create the basis for Afghans to extend the track further themselves in the future.

Sangar says the country today has nowhere near the money needed to build a railway network connecting its different regions. But the track which will soon be finished in Mazar-e Sharif, plus another track currently being built in Iran towards the Afghan border, create the starting points for a wider system.

Iran has reportedly completed two-thirds of a 190km. rail bed from its town of Khaf to link with Herat. If Herat were one day connected by rail to Mazar-e Sharif, some 700km. away, northern Afghanistan would not only acquire a major rail line but also become a transit country for the shortest rail link between the Central Asian countries and the Gulf or Indian Ocean ports. Whether that rail line is built

depends upon outside funding. The Asian Development Bank is funding technical surveys for such a track across northern Afghanistan but has made no commitments.”

One sees here concerns of a repetition of the problems the Hedjaz Railway faced from those fanatical British! And there is no mention of the problem that the Iranian line is presumably standard gauge and the Uzbek line presumably broad gauge!

A further item dated 31st. July 2013 is headed: ‘Afghan Province Upset at being left Out of Touted Rail Network.’

“Residents of a remote north-eastern Afghan region are adamant that they won’t let go of their chance of becoming a future economic hub. For the past week, dozens of officials and tribal leaders of the northeastern Konduz province have been in the Afghan capital, Kabul. They have one plea for the central government,; not to modify the planned route of a long-awaited railroad meant to link northern Afghan provinces with Turkmenistan and Tajikistan. Construction of the railway was inaugurated in June by the presidents of Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. At the time, the 400km Afghan portion of the route envisioned the railroad heading east through the city of Mazar-e Sharif towards Konduz province. There, it would bend gently northeast, joining Tajikistan via the Afghan river port of Shir Khan Bandar.

But a new, shorter route given tentative approval this month by the Afghan Public Works Ministry would bypass Konduz by linking the neighbouring Afghan province of Balkh to Tajikistan at a

point further west along the two countries’ common border. Konduz Governor Moham-med Abwar Jagdalak [said] that the bypass will undermine the status of his province’s Amu Darya River port, Shir Khan Badar, as a hub for linking Tajikistan and, beyond that, China and South Asia. “This new proposed link will prove disastrous for Shir Khan Bandar,” he said. “We are petitioning our president to plead that the move violates the principle of balanced regional development [across the country.] Konduz’s demands are backed by officials and notables from the neighbouring north-eastern Afghan provinces of Badakhshan, Takhar and Baghlan.

Senior Afghan officials in Kabul, however, say the government is not planning to fundamentally alter the proposed project. Public Works Minister Najibullah Ojan maintains that the cost and time needed for completing the momentous project have forced authorities to consider building a temporary rail link along the shorter route, He told RFL/RL that this temporary link will be dismantled once the longer section via Konduz is completed in about four years. “Overall, the government’s policy and plans have not changed,” he said. “Our ultimate aim is to link with Tajikistan through Shir Khan Bandar. But in the meanwhile we want to generate some revenues and link with Tajikistan through a shorter railroad [from Balkh province]. You need to understand that this proposed new link is only 50 or 60 km. long and the permanent railroad is more than 300km.”

This view is supported in Tajikistan. Juma Khan Zuhurov, the first deputy transportation minister, says that a direct link between Balkh and the Tajik rail network will cut the distance by hundreds of kilometres. But he told RFE/RL’s Tajik Service that Kabul has the power to pursue one of any number of options. “It is their soil and ultimately they can decide what they want to do,” he said. The entire railway is meant first to connect Atamyrat with Ymamnazar in Turkmenistan, before heading east to Akina-Andkhoy in the northern Afghan province of Faryab and onward to Mazar-e Sharif. The Asian Development Bank has indicated its willingness to fund the Afghan portion of the track with construction set to begin this summer. The project is considered a revolutionary leap for Afghanistan, which has seen little railway development since a 7km. track was built in the 1920’s and later dismantled. The AFB has already provided \$160M for a 75km. railway line connecting the northern city of Mazar-e Sharif to Uzbekistan. That project was completed in 2011..” [sic!!!]

G. LEBANON.

The website www.afacliban.org links to a society seeking to encourage interest in rail-ways, and French-language set of topics on the hoped-for revitalization of the Lebanese railways. One page discusses and reports on a scheme in 2007 and September 2008 to rebuild the 35km. line between the port of Tripoli-El Mina and the Syrian border at a cost of \$33M. One assumes that the current melt-down in Syria would have made this scheme unworkable or the line impossible to operate in any case. Another shows photos of derelict steam locos at Beirut and Tripoli.



**ANOTHER HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL
WAGON FOR ISRAEL**
see 102:8a