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## Schiller Institute Statement

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# Demand freedom for Laith Shubeilat

*On Sept. 17, the Schiller Institute issued the following international appeal:*

A grave case of human rights violations in Jordan, perpetrated by the "secret government apparatus" of the Bush administration, must be redressed immediately, for the sake of the individual victims, and for the sake of the sovereignty of the nation of Jordan. The case involves Laith Shubeilat, a parliamentarian of the Islamic movement since 1984, who enjoys popular support in his country as well as abroad. Shubeilat was detained on Aug. 31, and has been held in prison since on hoked-up charges that his automobile was used one year ago by other persons to transport weapons. The charges stem from the alleged confessions of Islamist youths also arrested. No evidence has been presented. Neither Shubeilat's attorney nor his wife has been allowed to confer with him in private. No release on bail has been set. An international press campaign has slandered him and declared him guilty.

The arrest is a political frameup, which smells of CIA tactics, originating in Washington, D.C. There are many reasons why Shubeilat would qualify as a target:

- At the time of his arrest, he was serving as chairman of a parliamentary commission of inquiry into corruption cases lodged against a former prime minister, Zaid Rifai, known to be an associate of Henry Kissinger and an advocate of the austerity policies of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The corruption probe, unprecedented in Jordan, could have led to charges against other politicians, past and present.

- Shubeilat has been in the forefront of the campaign against the IMF, on grounds that its policies of usury are economically devastating and morally unacceptable. As a devout Muslim, Shubeilat has promoted policies which foster economic progress through technological development. In rejecting both the usurious model of the IMF and the Marxist collectivist approach, Shubeilat has endorsed the "third way" economic method associated with American political economist Lyndon LaRouche.

- Shubeilat has been an outspoken critic of the "new world order," campaigning against the anti-Iraq war of 1991 and the continuing embargo. At the time of his arrest, he was leading demonstrations in Jordan against the U.N.-imposed "no fly zone" in southern Iraq. He opposes the U.S.-sponsored "peace conference" on the Middle East on grounds that it will not fulfill the just aspirations of the Palestinian people

to sovereignty. Furthermore, he joined 45 other prominent figures in Jordan, to sign an ad published in the European press, denouncing the Anglo-American support for Serbian aggression, and calling for defense of the sovereignty of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In short, Shubeilat represents the leadership of effective opposition to the policies and outlook of the ruling elites in Washington, London, and Paris. By singling him out for repression, the United States and its allies believe they can intimidate all those political forces in the Arab and Islamic world who share his views.

The attack comes directly from the U.S. government. Just days prior to Shubeilat's arrest, the U.S. embassy in Amman refused to issue visas to two Jordanian journalists who would have attended a conference in Washington, D.C. of the LaRouche movement. Following the arrest, Adam Garfinkle, the top U.S. expert on Jordan (according to the State Department), admitted, "Shubeilat is the most prominent Islamic politician in the country and has been for years." He added that Shubeilat is "popular in Iraq," that "he hates the U.S., he hates the IMF; he thinks it's a new form of imperialism. He despises these institutions." Said Robert Sandloff of the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), "The IMF is one of the sacred cows, which is off limits to criticism."

What is at stake is not only the well-being of a principled political figure, but the fate of the nation he serves. Washington believes it is necessary to silence Shubeilat to pave the way for dramatic moves in the region. These include the partition of Iraq, and the unleashing of a Thirty Years' War along ethnic, tribal, and religious lines, so as to destroy the nation-state, but maintain imperial control over oil. A current scenario penned by geopolitical strategist Bernard Lewis identifies the destruction of Arab unity as well as of Islamic unity, as the precondition to this "Lebanonization" of the entire region. As Lewis states, "The West . . . would rather remain indifferent to . . . wars, disasters and upheavals, as long as the oil continues to flow."

In this nightmare scenario, Jordan as a nation and the monarchy as an institution are expendable. For Garfinkle, Jordan is "an artificial state and could disappear as a state." For his colleague Daniel Pipes, "the King's health is precarious; the state is in jeopardy." King Hussein was put under pressure at a White House dinner; George Bush, James Baker, and CIA chief Robert Gates reportedly told him to acquiesce to U.S. demands vis-à-vis Iraq and Israel, or else.

Shubeilat, an uncompromising critic of the new imperialism, is known for his rejection of violence, his loyalty to the monarchy, and his dedication to his nation. If Anglo-American interference into the internal affairs of Jordan is tolerated and Shubeilat is sacrificed in a CIA frameup, then the democratization process and the sovereignty of Jordan are in mortal danger. We are sure that with justice and the people on his side, he will be freed.