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POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS OF YEMEN

1948 - 1963

A PRELIMINARY STUDY

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PREFACE

Since the September 1962 Revolution, numerous attempts have been made by both the Arab and non-Arab States to settle the Yemeni dispute so that greater stability might be obtained in the Middle East. Although negotiations have lessened tensions from time to time, they have not been able to solve the existing crisis. Thus, when attempting to analyze many current Middle Eastern happenings, it is found that the attitudes of the various governments concerning this problem are often reflected in their broader inter-Arab policies.

As a resident in the Middle East for the last two years and a student at the American University, it was natural that many conversations should involve the topic of Yemen and the inability of the participants to conclude a lasting peace. As failure was followed by failure, my interest in this subject was enhanced. In an attempt to learn more about Yemen and the reasons underlying her troubles, I soon discovered that there were very few works available in western languages which dealt with the political development of this country after 1948. Such a void was understandable but regrettable.

In the following pages, I have attempted to fill this gap. My effort can only be considered a preliminary study because too many of the pertinent documents still remain sealed in the vaults of their respective governments.

In addition to the available western sources, I have utilized several Arabic works. These have been limited by three factors: (1) the difficulty in finding appropriate material, (2) the difficulties inherent in translating with a limited knowledge of Arabic, (3) the time available for

the preparation of this thesis. In this regard, I am unable to adequately express my deep gratitude to Mr. George N. Dabaghi for the countless hours he devoted to translating. Without his assistance, the inclusion of several of these works would have been impossible.

I have attempted to provide a brief historical summary of the history of Yemen during the reign of Imam Yahya (1911-1948), and to determine the major political trends in the foreign policy of Yemen from 1948 to the dissolution of the United Arab States in December 1961. This has been followed by an endeavor to recount the story of the Free Yemeni reform movement which was by far the most difficult task I faced.

There seem to be as many variations in relating the story of the Free Yemeni movement as there are authors who have undertaken the task of trying to untangle the multitude of conflicting statements and reports which engulf the movement. The demands of this group have never been in question. Indeed, their propaganda efforts have been prolific in exposing the despotic nature of the Imamate. Numerous foreign observers have verified the need for change. Unfortunately, the language barrier, the death of many participants, and the wealth of carefully conceived propaganda provide obstacles which will entail years of patient research if an exact and detailed story is to be related. In the meantime, it is essential that the information which is available be presented if the current revolution is to be seen in its proper perspective. Such a task can only be effective if the limitations are clearly understood. The succeeding pages represent such an effort.

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ABSTRACT

From a practical standpoint, Ottoman withdrawal from the Vilayat of Yemen following World War I left Yemen free to develop under the guidance of Imam Yahya. For the next thirty years, Yemen was so absolutely dominated by him that it is impossible to separate the history of the man from that of the state.

His greatest contribution to Yemen was the establishment of her independence in an Arab World which was largely subordinated to the influences of the big powers. Once achieved, the maintenance of this independence became the first principle of his foreign policy. He did nothing which he felt might lead to the sacrifice, real or imagined, of any part of it.

Toward the realization of this end, he adopted the policy of isolation. The tribal-religious nature of Yemeni society, Yemeni historical experiences, and her geographical remoteness all contributed to the effective enforcement of this concept. It is almost impossible to comprehend the thoroughness of the isolationist curtain which encircled this tiny country. Unfortunately, it was this facet of his policies coupled with his inflexibility of purpose and the rigidity of the existing governmental structures which did the most to harm the Imamate. Isolation eventually led to economic stagnation and an underdeveloped Yemen in opposition to the modernizing influences which aided her neighbors to progress.

In his quest for international recognition of Yemen's boundaries Imam Yahya clashed with the Idrisi of Asir, King Abdel Aziz, and the British. This strife lasted from 1918 until 1934. In this latter year, his northern boundary was permanently settled and he found it expedient

to negotiate a treaty with England which temporarily reduced tensions along the southern frontier. However, the Imam was an irredentist who desired to re-establish his control over the occupied territories of the south, and, although the political situation often precluded the continuance of aggressive policies, he never altered his claim to these territories. Ironically, it was the Imam's friendship with Italy (1926-1943), and his continued claims to the protected territories which caused Great Britain to consolidate her position in Aden and firmly resist his advances.

Following the war, Yemen was forced to look elsewhere for major power support to offset the position of Great Britain in the south. Her search eventually resulted in participation in the Arab League and the United Nations. The underdeveloped state of Yemen, politically, economically, and socially, coupled with her ever-increasing participation in inter-Arab affairs led to the growth of the Free Yemeni reform movement toward the end of the Imam's reign. Having failed to liberalize the country peaceably, this group executed a coup d'etat in February 1948 in which the Imam was assassinated.

The foreign policy of the new Imam, Ahmed, can be logically divided into two distinct periods. The first of these (1948-1955) was chiefly characterized by his ability to conduct an independent foreign policy based on securing moral, financial, and physical support for his border war, the granting of limited economic concessions to the western powers while carefully guarding against too much influence, establishing new international relations, and supporting the principles of the Arab League. For the time being, his anti-colonialist policy in the Protectorate was sufficient to gain the full support of the Arab League, and the last

remnants of his isolationist policies were adequate enough to keep him outside direct involvements in the international struggles of the other Arab countries.

The Egyptian Revolution, July 23, 1952, embodied concepts alien to the Imamate, but, while the leaders were busily engaged in consolidating their positions at home, there was little reason for him to fear activist policies abroad. Nevertheless, the Imam was forced to pay close attention to happenings in Egypt because the exiled Free Yemenis turned to President Nasser for support in their struggle to reform Yemen. It was this alliance, more than any other factor, combined with President Nasser's success that determined the Imam's policies during the second period (1955-1962). Henceforth, there could be no independent policy in contravention to that of Nasser's without drawing his wrath and activating his support of the liberals. A contributing factor in this regard, was the inability of the Imam to conclude favorable western agreements and establish mutually beneficial relations during the early years of his reign. Although his first endeavors had been directed toward the west, his border war with Great Britain precluded such relationships and served to force him toward Nasser's policies. Thus, he joined the Southern Tier Military Alliance of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria in April 1956, sought Soviet bloc economic, military, and technical assistance, and joined the confederation of the United Arab States in March 1958. These moves brought him the technical, financial, and moral support which he needed to sustain the border war, and, concurrently, they effectively silenced the efforts of the reformers. Ironically, his outward manifestations of allegiance to Nasser allowed him to continue his internal policies which were in opposition to the concepts exclaimd by the pro-Nasser elements: inclusive of the ideas of

Arab Unity. It was not until Nasser shifted to socialism and adopted the concept of no compromise with reactionary governments that these two divergent entities were forced apart.

In light of recent events, one of the most interesting aspects of political development concerning Yemeni history is that of the reform movement. This movement began during the late 1930's. It aimed at modernizing the political, economic, and social aspects of Yemeni society. At first, its exponents desired constitutional developments which would remove the absolute powers of the Imam while allowing him to retain a combination of his former temporal power and all his religious functions. The success of the new forces in the Arab World, typified by the Egyptian revolution, gradually led to a shift in these political concepts. By 1962, Yemeni liberal elements were calling for a republic stripped of the Imam's temporal functions.

The external nature of the movement was its greatest handicap. Neither Imam tolerated any liberalism in Yemen and their summary acts against the reformers forced them to flee. Prior to 1948, they conducted their anti-Imam campaign from Aden; however, with the advent of Nasser, they moved to Cairo. By leaving the country, they lost the ability to execute a popular movement as they no longer had effective contact with the people whom they desired to assist.

The history of the movement was characterized by strong merchant support which gradually encompassed townsmen in general; numerical weakness; continual propaganda campaigns; alliances with Imamate pretenders; unsuccessful coup attempts; inner-movement factionalism; Zaidi-Shafi'i religious differences; attempts to enlist the support of foreign powers and groups; and, an inability to successfully penetrate the religiously-

inspired, tribal-oriented society which maintained the Imamate.

Fifteen years of activity combined with the modernizing influences of foreign advisors, new commodities (particularly the radio), and foreign educations for an increasing number of young Yemenis had resulted in growing dissatisfaction among the more articulate Yemenis, but had not netted the movement any greater chances of success. The traditional strength of the Imamate (the Zaidi tribes of the north) still tipped the political scales in favor of the existing regime. Victory was only obtainable with external support.

The quick utilization of foreign troops after the 1962 revolution demonstrated that the Nasser inspired Free Yemenis had realistically evaluated this weakness. Unfortunately, by utilizing this support, this minority group sacrificed the guiding principle of Imam Yahya's foreign policy; and, today, Yemeni independence can not be re-established until her "benefactors" withdraw.

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CHAPTER I

THE ERA OF IMAM YAHYA, 1904-1948

THE ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE, 1900-1918

From a practical standpoint, Ottoman control over the Vilayat of Yemen at the beginning of the 20th Century was nominal. A substantial force of military occupation was required to enforce the Porte's authority and provide security for the local administration.¹ This frustrating predicament was an outgrowth of successive attempts to subjugate the region throughout the previous century.² These events deeply embedded the

¹Abbas Farougy, Introducing Yemen (New York: Orientalia, 1947), 54. Speaking of the period immediately following Imam Yahya's succession to the Imamate in 1904, the author states: "The Imam's partisans now numbered more than 50,000, whereas the Ottomans had 126 battalions, eight squadrons, and fifteen batteries, or a total of some 45,000 men."

²In 1804, following 174 years of Imamate rule which had been preceded by the first Ottoman occupation (1538-1630), the Wahhabis penetrated into Yemen, captured Mocha and gained substantial support for their puritanical doctrines from the local inhabitants. As a result, Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt was dispatched to Arabia by the Ottoman government in 1811. He subsequently undertook several campaigns against Yemen. Mocha fell in 1833 and the Imam abdicated when Sana was attacked and seized in 1836-1837. Between 1840-1843, the Egyptian troops were withdrawn, Turkish troops re-occupied the area and withdrew, and Sharif Husein of Asir became the autonomous governor of Yemen when he recognized Ottoman suzerainty and agreed to pay amity to the Porte. His influence was confined to the coastal region while the Mutawakkali Imam was recognized as the ruler of Sana and the interior. Fighting ensued but neither side was able to defeat or sustain an occupation in his opponents territory. In 1849, the Ottomans attempted to reestablish their power in the Yemen but were defeated. The opening of the Suez canal enhanced the strategic value of this area, thereby signaling the final Ottoman campaign of subjugation in April 1871-1872.

This summary was compiled from Ibid., 50-52; G. Wyman Bury, Arabia Infelix or The Turks in Yemen (London: MacMillan and Co., 1915), 13-14; Harold Ingrams, The Yemen, Imams, Rulers, and Revolutions (London: John Murray, 1963), 50-57; and, Ameen Rihani, Around the Coasts of Arabia (London: Constable, 1930), 162-164.

seeds of unrelenting conflict in the inhabitants as each renewed Ottoman effort magnified the bitterness and strengthened the variant uncompromising attitudes, thereby protracting the final day of conciliation. This Ottoman imperialism was paradoxical in that while it served to widen and kindle the fierce inborn tribal and religious rivalries which had characterized the region for centuries, it also provided the stimulus for the eventual unification of the various divergent elements under the banner of the Zaidi Imam.

The final conquest was undertaken in April 1871; however, Ottoman administration wasn't established until 1872 when Sana was seized, the Imam pensioned, and a figurehead Imamate established.¹ The thirty-nine years which followed were torn by constant strife. Unpopular Ottoman policies embodied in practices which were intended to divide the people in order to insure control were amplified by power struggles within the Imamate, the Yemenite quest for recognition of both the temporal and religious functions of the Imam, and their willingness to fight for autonomy within the Empire.² The costly rebellions of 1891, 1904 (Yahya became the Imam in this year), and 1906 attested graphically to the need

¹Ingrams, op. cit., 57.

²The population of Yemen was and still is - to a somewhat lesser extent - divided along tribal-religious lines. The opposing factions have fought openly and secretly to secure supremacy. The Turks found it expedient to play upon the existing factionalism in order to prevent a united effort against them. Gradually, however, the severity of the strife increased and conciliation became mandatory for the security of the region.

There were five religious factions in the Yemen. The Sunni, who comprised about 50% of the population, were settled primarily along the coast and in the south. Traditionally, they were subservient to the power of the Zaidi Imam and the Zaidi officials who dominated the government. The Ottomans had a tendency to afford them partial treatment as they were also Sunni. This policy amplified their lack of influence in government thus aggravating their grievances against the Zaidis.

The Zaidis are a branch of the Shia sect in Islam. They controlled

for conciliation and agreement.¹ None-the-less, a fourth rebellion (1911),

Yemen politically. They inhabited the mountainous regions and were able to fight effectively to sustain their supremacy in this area. Once power was acquired, it was kept within the confines of this religious body. Other groups declared their loyalty but remained subordinate and rarely acquired access to a modicum of authority.

Due to the Zaidi belief that primogeniture was not the basis of succession and the fact that the Imam should be able to rely on his sword to uphold the faith and put forward his claim, open hostilities between rivals often resulted. Until the Turks recognized Imam Yahya in 1911, they had intrigued with these various tribal pretenders in order to assert their policies.

There were also several thousand Ismailites; however, by the turn of the century, they were not politically important within Yemen.

Several large Jewish communities existed within the strict framework of Islam. Although persecuted from time to time, they formed an extremely important element in the commercial centers and were gradually able to obtain relatively unmolested freedom within this society.

Aside from the religious inter-tribal strife, the various conquests had created tribal oriented political units which sought the acquisition of additional territory as well as positive recognition of their newly created boundaries. One of the most persistent conflicts of this type centered around the claims of the Sharif of Asir and the counter-claims of the Imam. This will be discussed in greater detail below. See H.A.R. Gibb and J.H. Kramers, Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam (Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1961), 651-653; Farougy, op. cit., 35-39; James Heyworth-Dunne, Al-Yemen. A Political and Economic Survey (Cairo: Renaissance Bookshop, 1952), 33; Harold F. Jacob, Kings of Arabia (London: Mills and Boon Ltd, 1923), 69-72; Bury, op. cit., 32-35; and, Ingrams, op. cit., 11-12, 36-45.

¹The Imams did not recognize Ottoman suzerainty over their domains nor did they want the Ottoman civil code to govern their people in place of the religious law. However, by 1906, Yahya "was willing to leave foreign affairs to the Turks" but, in addition to the above, he "insisted that the religious law and the traditional system of taxation should be restored, that pious endowments should not be used for secular purposes, and that posts of authority in the Yemen should be given to none but Moslems." Ingrams, op. cit., 61. These had been the claims of the previous Imams to which the Ottomans had turned a deaf ear and out of which discontent grew into rebellion. The negotiations conducted after the 1906 rebellion also failed but a compromise based on the above demands was reached in 1911.

coupled with Italian support of the Idrisi Sayyid of Asir¹ and the impending Italian-Turko war, was necessary before the Ottomans would agree to any rapprochement with the Imam. Their change in policy, which recognized a semi-autonomous Imamate and conceded many of the Imam's demands, was formalized by the Treaty of Da'an, May 1911.² This treaty remained in effect until the Ottoman withdrawal following World War I; however, seven troublesome years still lay ahead of the Turkish administration.

Within the Vilayat, the Imam's compromise was met with varying degrees of support as the surrender of the idea of independence was simply incomprehensible to some of his previous supporters.³ However, the internal wars had been extremely costly. The Imam hoped that Turkish recognition of his position would continue to provide a rallying point similar to his former position as a rebel leader since all the tribes hated the occupation. Nevertheless, numerous tribes were able to flus-

¹The Idrisi political movement grew out of the 19th Century when chaos and confusion prevailed during and between campaigns. The Ottomans first recognized his position in 1843 when they appointed Sherif Husein of Abu Arish the governor of Yemen. This was retracted later but from that day forward his claims of sovereignty conflicted with those of the Imam of Sana. The geographical home of the Idrisi (This is located along the Red Sea coast north of the present Saudi-Yemeni border.) was known as Asir; thus, the two names have been used interchangeably for years. See: Rihani, op. cit., Part II, Chapters III & IV for excellent discussion of Idrisi Sufism and rise to power, and Jacob, op. cit., Chapters VI, VII, and VIII passim.

²Sayyid Mustapha Salim, Takwin al-Yaman al-Hadith, al-Yaman wa al-Imam Yahya, 1904-1948 (Formation of Modern Yemen, Yemen and Imam Yahya, 1904-1948) (Cairo: International Press, 1963), 494-497.

³G. W. Bury gives five reasons for this: (1) He was now allied with constitutional authority and no longer an oppressed romantic leader. (2) He had alienated the Asir tribes by using Turkish troops against them. (3) The eastern tribesmen had spent their booty and could only remember the dead. (4) The severity of the Sharia law was beginning to be felt. (5) The Imam had to experiment in order to establish a workable balance between the Sharia law and tribal traditionalism on the one hand and the more liberal oriented Turkish authority on the other. Op. cit., 37-38.

trate the alliance for a number of years.¹ Thus, the Imam, now supported by the Turks, was left with the task of exerting his power over the recalcitrant elements by any means available. These generally included marriages, hostilities, bribes, intrigues, and hostages.²

To the Ottomans, cordial relations proved invaluable as the international situation deteriorated. The Italians declared war on September 29, 1911 as a consequence of their venture in North Africa.³ The Imam, although approached by them for support, remained loyal to his treaty, whereas the Idrisi allied himself with the Italians in return for money and arms. The Italian-Idrisi alliance did not result in any major campaigns: in fact, their combined efforts were negligible in the Red Sea area. However, this alliance added additional salt to the wounds of the existing breach between the Idrisi and the Imam.⁴ With the advent of the First Balkan War which began on September 30th, 1912, it was felt advisable to enter into negotiations with the Idrisi and these were carried out during the 1913-1914 period.⁵ No positive results were achieved as he would not accept anything short of autonomy.⁶ Throughout these negotiations, the Imam remained a cautious partner since he was fearful of losing

¹It is interesting to note that the Hashid (located NW of Sana) became a firm supporter of the Imam after harassing supply columns well into 1913. Thereafter, this tribe and the Bakil (located NE of Sana) formed the so-called "Wings of the Imamate", i.e. the strategic reserves for the Imams. See Ingrams, op. cit., 12, footnote 1.

²The hostage system is discussed in all references. In particular, see Salim, op. cit., 470-474.

³The Peace Treaty of London was concluded 20 May 1913. Libya was given to Italy.

⁴Jacob, op. cit., 125-126, 133-134.

⁵The Peace Treaty of Bucharest was concluded August 10, 1913.

⁶Bury, op. cit., 23.

control of the lowlands (Tihama)¹ if the Turks recognized the Idrisi claims.²

By the time World War I began on November 5th, 1914, the Ottoman government had considerably reduced its force in Yemen. There were only about 14,000 men organized in two divisions.³ Fortunately for the Turks, the Imam remained loyal to his treaty commitments and adopted a policy of neutrality. This advantage was offset somewhat when the Idrisi joined the allies on April 30, 1912. The English desired Idrisi support "as a precautionary measure against possible trouble from Imam Yahya".⁴ Of course, the Idrisi was pleased with this agreement because he was promised support in the settlement of rival claims following the war. Several small harassing engagements of minor significance were fought and a supplementary treaty between the same parties was concluded on January 5, 1917.⁵

In the meantime, elements of the Ottoman Army advanced on Aden and seized the Sultanate of Lahej on July 5, 1915. Major hostilities ended shortly thereafter as both sides were unable to sustain major operations for long periods. The battle lines became fixed and an unofficial, but mutually beneficial, armistice was reached which allowed trade to continue without interference. In this way, both sides remained bottled-up

¹Tihama is the name given to the Red Sea coastal plain in Yemen.

²Jacob, op. cit., 158

³For the strength, recruitment, and organization of these forces see: Supra, 168; Bury, op. cit., 177; Farougy, op. cit., 57.

⁴For text of the treaty see J. C. Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East, A Documentary Record, 1914-1956 (New York: D. Van Nostrand Company Inc, 1958), Vol II, 12-13.

⁵Supra, 12 and Jacob, op. cit., for explanation of treaty by its author.

throughout the war and the status quo was maintained.¹

The Mudros Armistice agreement was signed on October 30th, 1918. Article 16 specified, in part, the "surrender of all garrisons in Hejaz, Assir, Yemen, Syria, and Mesopotamia to the nearest allied commander...".² The British, being the only allied troops in close proximity, accepted the surrender of Ottoman troops at Aden, Hodeida, and Luhaiya, while occupying the latter two towns. No thought was given to a complete occupation of this rugged, remote, and little known country. Therefore, Imam Yahya, freed from the Turkish menace and unrestrained by new forces, immediately declared his independence.

THE UNSETTLED YEARS, 1918-1934

With the cession of hostilities, four major problems faced the Imam. He had to: (1) establish a system of government which would sustain his authority in the absence of external support, (2) subdue the opposing factions which contended his political position or laid territorial claims against him, (3) settle and achieve international acceptance of his boundaries, (4) obtain international recognition of his independence.

Although each of these was of great importance, he felt that the territorial and external problems were the greatest hinderance to the successful consolidation of his position and he concentrated on these, being ever mindful that his status among the tribes needed strengthening. Thus, in 1918, with the aid of former Turkish administrators, he inaugurated an administration which embraced the outward manifestations

¹Jacob, op. cit., 167-169.

²For text, see, Hurewitz, op. cit., 36-37.

of a monarchy for foreign consumption while actually being regulated by the strict religious tenets of Zaidi Islam.¹ In addition, he had learned much from the Turkish system of taxation and the maintenance of a standing army and these were quickly incorporated and adapted to his purposes.

When the last bullet had been fired, the Imam found himself physically surrounded. The British were occupying the Red Sea coast and Aden while their former allies, the Idrisi and King Saud, sat astride the unsettled northern frontier alert to the possibility of extending (in the case of the Idrisi) or, at least, retaining (in the case of Saud) those territories which they held.² Politically, his claims were not reconcilable with those of his enemies.

The Anglo-Idrisi alliance, the Imam's wartime neutrality, and the failure of Anglo-Yemeni negotiations³ for the settlement of outstanding problems resulted in the English presenting Luhaiya (1919) and the port of Hodeida (1921) to the Idrisi upon their withdrawal.⁴ By 1925, the Idrisi administration had become so oppressive that the people of Hodeida

¹Ingrams, op. cit., 63.

²Yemen is bounded by the foreboding Rub el-Khali desert on the east.

³In order to discuss the future of Yemen following the Turkish surrender, Lt. Col. Harold F. Jacob, the British Government's Representative in Aden, went to Yemen on 18 August 1919. He and his mission were captured by the Kuhra Shieks at Bajil and detained from August 20th to December 12th, 1919. He returned to Aden without seeing the Imam. This incident graphically demonstrated the Imam's internal tribal difficulties. See Jacob, op. cit., 202-225. Later, in 1923, Col. Jacob returned and negotiated with the Imam; however no understanding was reached as the Imam wouldn't compromise. See Farouhy, op. cit., 59-60. It should be remembered that, at this time, the Imam was also attempting to reach agreement with Turkey. This undoubtedly concerned England.

⁴The Idrisi armed forces had moved into Hodeida in Jan 1921 following English attempts to conduct a plebiscite. Unfortunately, the populace preferred Turks or Egyptians to the Idrisi so the plebiscite was postponed and not attempted again in the Peninsula. Rihani, op. cit., 127-128.

revolted.¹ The Imam seized this opportunity to settle accounts with the house of his old enemy. His forces quickly captured Hodeida, Luhaiya, and Maldi and it appeared that he would annex Asir. In an attempt to preclude this, Sayyid Hasan bin Ali, the new Idrisi head of state, surrendered his external sovereignty to Ibn Saud on October 21, 1926 in return for protection.² After this, the Imam was obliged to enter into negotiations with Abdal Aziz in order to adjust opposing claims and decide the fate of Asir. These began in June 1927³ but no progress was made until 1930 when both monarchs wavered some of their respective claims and negotiated the Treaty of Friendship and Bon Voisinage which was signed on December 15, 1931.⁴ The Imam retained Hodeida, Luhaiya, and Maldi;⁵ however, by giving refuge to Idrisi rebels, he did not live up to all the extradition terms of this agreement. Further, he wanted to acquire the unruly province of Najran which acted as a buffer between the two states. During the winter of 1931-1932, his forces attacked and

¹Sayyid Muhammad bin Ali, the Imam's tormentor, died on March 20, 1923. A power struggle ensued which weakened Asir. Following his victories the Imam attempted to annex Asir in 1926. See Hurewitz, op. cit., 148.

²Asir became a part of Saudi domain on November 20, 1930. Britain didn't interfere with the annexation for two reasons: (1) "She didn't want involvement in tribal wars." (2) "She was more interested in establishing workable relations with Imam Yahya to counter the growth of Italian influence in Yemen." Macon W. Wells, "International Rivalries in the Red Sea Area, 1918-1939" (unpublished Master's dissertation, American University, Beirut, Lebanon, 1964), 51. For text see Hurewitz, op. cit., 148-149.

³"News on Yemen from an Interview with the Director of Communications", Oriente Moderno, October 1927, No. 10, 508. By the Treaty of Jeddah, May 20, 1927, England had recognized the territorial claims of Saud as well as his independence. For text see Hurewitz, op. cit., 149-150.

⁴M. V. Seton-Williams, Britain and the Arab States (London: Luzac and Company Ltd, 1948), 199-200. For text, see, Salim, op. cit., 517-518.

⁵Farouhy, op. cit., 61.

seized this province. King Abdal Aziz retaliated with a large army which forced a Yemenite withdrawal and settled this issue for good. Negotiations were again opened, continuing into 1934, with no accord. Finally, Abdal Aziz issued an ultimatum to which the Imam didn't comply. On April 5th, 1934, a two pronged attack was launched and three weeks later Prince Feisal occupied Hodeida; the Imam, who was unable to count on foreign support, had sued for peace; and, the war was over. British, French, and Italian warships stood off Hodeida to urge moderation as they were fearful Abdal Aziz had visions of conquering all the peninsula and upsetting the precious status quo.¹ On May 20th, 1934, the Treaty of Taif was signed and the Yemeni-Saudi boundary was established by a joint commission in 1935. From that day forward, relations between the two monarchs continually improved, cohesion and cooperation became the by-words of the time, and peace reigned on the northern borders.²

Such was not the case in the south. England had occupied Aden by force in 1839 and gradually extended her influence inland. The Anglo-Turkish boundary commission (1902-1905) succeeded in establishing a mutually accepted line³ and, at the request of the Amir of Dala, English forces had occupied Dala from 1904-1907 against Turko-Imam inspired aggressions. This occupation helped in creating a buffer between the opposing forces and, in conjunction with the English presence in the

¹H. St. J. B. Philby, Arabian Jubilee (London: Robert Hale Limited, 1952), 184-185 and Robert L. Baker, "Arab King Invades Yemen", Current History, Vol. 40, No. 3, June 1934, 375-377.

²Ibid., 186-189. For text see Helen Miller Davis, Constitutions Electoral Laws, Treaties of States in the Near and Middle East (North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1953), 393-399.

³This was ratified by convention in 1914.

south, indirectly undermined turkish policy in Yemen.¹ The withdrawal also had the effect of convincing the Arabs that England had no interest in the hinterland.

During World War I, the Imam made several approaches (his envoy sat in Aden two years) to the English for a treaty but the English were not interested in allying themselves against the Idrisi. On the other hand, following the Turkish surrender, there was no choice but to negotiate with him. A third series of negotiations began in 1926 when Sir Gilbert Clayton's mission went to Sana in order to settle the boundary dispute and conclude a treaty of friendship. This was caused primarily by the Imam's recent seizure of Idrisi territory and the southern Yemeni border incursions. The failure of the mission was followed by Yemeni advances into the Aden hinterland and the seizure of hostages in 1928. These thrusts were met by R.A.F. counterattacks which caused the withdrawal of the Yemeni forward elements, the formation of a confederation of southern tribes, and the resumption of negotiations in 1931. The British attitude had hardened as a result of these events and the Italian penetration.

The deteriorating situation on the northern border aided in stabilizing the situation through December 1933 and the Reilly Mission arrived in that month to negotiate a treaty.² The Treaty of Sana, signed on February 11th, 1934, can be considered only as a tactical expedient.³ It recognized Yemeni independence but failed to settle the boundary dispute

¹Jacob, op. cit., chapter 5 and 166.

²Lord Belhaven, The Uneven Road (London: John Murry, 1955), 71, 93-94.

³For text, see, Hurewitz, op. cit., 196-197.

which was deferred to a future date. This question remained in abeyance for fifteen years and gradually more cordial relations were temporarily established between the two countries.

The Imam's quest for recognition of the independence of Yemen remained unsatisfied until September 2, 1926 when he successfully negotiated a treaty with Italy.¹ The Imam had courted the Italians in order to annoy England and gain support from a major power. Thus, Italy became the first country to recognize his independence and to negotiate a treaty with him. Henceforth, "the Imam was able to play the Italian desires off against the English fears".² His success at this attests highly to his diplomatic skills. He was able to achieve his ends without becoming overly committed to either side.

Since the opening of the Suez canal in 1869, the Red Sea had become extremely important as a short cut between Europe and the East. "As a main artery of world trade, a rapid means of communication, as well as a strategically important water course for the mobility of the big powers, it was absolutely essential that it remain open. British interests were primarily defensive in nature, i.e. the maintenance of her strategic air, naval, and communications center in Aden, the Bab el-Mandeb, and the neutralization of Yemen. With Yemen controlling the coast, control of the sea was no longer adequate."³ At the same time, she had no desire to occupy it, so she was relegated to playing a diplomatic "cat-and-mouse"

¹For text, see, Hurewitz, op. cit., 146-147.

²Wells, op. cit., 60. I am particularly indebted to Mr. Wells for his presentation of the Anglo-Italian rivalry in the Red Sea prior to World War II. I have made liberal use of his analysis throughout this discussion.

³Ibid., iii, 57-58, 61.

game with Italy. On the other hand, her presence served to deter the overly aggressive Italians, thereby indirectly protecting the Imam's interests and placing him in a very advantageous position in the conduct of foreign affairs.

Aside from his traditional economic interest, "Mussolini embarked on a long range policy aimed at the eventual political penetration of south-west Arabia as a corollary to his colonization of Ethiopia.¹ He was therefore willing to be courted by the Imam; at the same time using him as a wedge in his attacks on England. The 1926 treaty provided the initial thrust but it was quickly followed by a supplementary agreement on June 1, 1927² and the dispatch of a Yemeni delegation to Rome in order to conclude, in accordance with its provisions, and arms agreement.³ In the meantime, Italy set about to increase her influence through medical missions and commercial agreements. By 1934, she had gained such a privileged position that King Abdal Aziz "insisted on a halt being called to the growth of Italian influence", and the establishment of a united front against foreign aggression.⁴ Actually, Abdal Aziz had little to be

¹Wells, op. cit., 58.

²By September 1, 1927, this "secret" supplementary agreement had been compromised by publication in the Al-Ahram newspaper. For a denial of the agreements existence and a discussion of its contents, see "False Rumors of a Secret Supplementary Agreement Between Italy and Yemen", Oriente Moderno, October 1927, No. 10, 507. Both of these treaties were renewed on September 4, 1937 for a period of twenty-five years.

³According to one source, these swift Italian successes caused England to open discussions with Italy in 1927 concerning the new situation created in the Red Sea area since World War I and the subsequent understanding which they reached helped to regulate Anglo-Italian affairs in the area for a number of years. See, Tomaso Sillani, "The New Balance of Power in the Levant", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 17, No. 2, (January 1939), 344-346. This appears to be the only source on this matter.

⁴Hugh Scott, In the High Yemen (London: John Murry, 1947), 231.

concerned about because the Imam was the master of the situation--short of open hostilities - and the Italian influence seemed greater than it really was.

Aside from the above, Yemen only concluded formal relations with three other powers prior to 1934. The first treaty was concluded on November 1, 1928 with the USSR.¹ This was followed by the Iraqi-Yemeni Treaty of 1931² and the Holland-Yemeni Treaty of March 12, 1933.³

A quick glance at these treaties and the ones which followed help to clarify the Imam's aims in dealing with foreign powers. His interests were twofold: (1) recognition, (2) the regulation of commerce and economic benefits within the limits of his specifications. He was not prepared to go further and he was successful in precluding any attempts of foreign penetration beyond his desires.⁴

In conjunction with this, it must be remembered that the Imam's foreign policy was characterized, throughout his lifetime, by two phenomenon. First, he was an irredentist who never gave up his claim to the "southern

¹This treaty was renewed in 1938 for another 10 year period which terminated on June 24, 1949. For the most detailed discussion of these relations and their results, see, Farougy, op. cit., 65-68. For text, see, Hurewitz, op. cit., 177-178.

²For text, see, IRAQ, Waqayi' al 'Iraqiya, No. 1060, (November 30, 1931), "Law for the Ratification of the Treaty of Friendship between Iraq and Yemen, No. 93 of 1931". This was the first treaty concluded by the Imam with an Arab country. The preamble is interesting as it states that the treaty is concluded "... as a preliminary step towards the realization of the aspirations of the Moslem World's leaders design for Arab Unity..." This is the same idea later expressed in the Saudi Arabian-Iraqi Pact of April 2, 1936 and helps explain the Imam's adherence to that treaty in May 1938. The 1931 treaty only contained three short articles dealing with mutual recognition, permanent peace and friendship, and the exchange of ratifications.

³For text, see, Oriente Moderno, Vol. 14, May 5, 1934, 194-196. This treaty was renewed April 12, 1939. For text, see, United Nations Treaty Series (New York), Vol. 79, 1951, 262-266.

⁴Salim, op. cit., 416.

occupied territories". Secondly, he was an isolationist who feared all forms of foreign intervention.¹

Briefly, the reasons for his isolation may be summarized as follows:

(1) The Imam felt that the currents of modernization, if allowed to penetrate, would undermine the system of government he had established. (2) Past experience with foreigners had been unpleasant, i.e. the Ottoman occupation, the border wars with England, the lack of neighboring Arab support, and Italy's attempts to exert pressure without giving the Imam everything he desired. (3) Yemen was the last refuge of the Zaidi doctrine in the Arab world. (4) The tribes needed pacification. (5) The nature of the traditional tribal society lent itself to isolation. (6) The Imam's age precluded his initiating and carrying through new policies.² Thus, no permanent diplomatic missions were established, no concessions were granted to foreign companies, and each foreigner who entered Yemen was subject to a continual watch along with constant suspicion.

Unfortunately, although initially leading to independence and internal security, isolation in opposition to the currents of modernization, eventually led to stagnation and backwardness which endangered the very objectives underlying it. The form and policies of this traditional government were not flexible enough to resist or adapt to the ever-present thrust of modernizing currents. His assassination in 1948 bares tragically dramatic testimony to this fact.

¹Salim, op. cit., 418-422. Mr. Salim presents an excellent summary of these policies.

²Ibid., 424-428.

With the temporary settlement of her boundaries and the recognition of her independence established, the history of Yemen entered a new phase in which internal and external stability prevailed. Within the Kingdom, the Imam had the opportunity to finalize, strengthen, and solidify his system of government. At the same time, the international situation was rapidly deteriorating as World War II approached. To the major powers - Italy and England - Yemen occupied a relatively key geographical position in the Red Sea. Both moved cautiously to the defense and enhancement of their positions. In this struggle, the aggressive Il Duce had two advantages: (1) his influence was greater in Yemen, (2) England had distastefully embarked upon her appeasement policy. The Imam, who contributed to the enhancement of these inter-power tensions, moved shrewdly between the two powers. He was able to ward off the overly aggressive advances and maintain his country's mediaeval isolation without nullifying his own position.

By the time the Abyssinian War (October 5, 1935 - July 15, 1936)¹ had ended both England and Italy realized that they "had common interests in the Red Sea, that each could interfere with the other in certain areas, and that war would present incalculable dangers."² In effect, the old collective security system which had grown out of World War I was no longer adequate. New measures had to be instituted. The first agreement was concluded on January 2, 1937 (Anglo-Italian Gentlemen's Agreement).³ Both

¹Hostilities actually ended with the Abyssinian defeat at Lake Ashangi, May 5, 1936.

²Tomaso Sillani, "The Balance of Power in the Levant", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (January 1939), 336-350.

³For discussion see Wells, *op. cit.*, 103.

sides pledged - in general terms - to maintain the status quo.¹ However, "British opposition to Italian involvement in the Spanish Civil War, British failure to recognize the Italian Ethiopian conquests", the increase in Italian military strength throughout the area, the reestablishment of Italian propaganda broadcasts from Bari, and "Italian fear of British hegemony in the Red Sea rapidly served to nullify this agreement".² In order to conclude a more comprehensive understanding which would "define the spheres of influence and distract the Italian populace from the German 'Anschluss' into Austria", Mussolini again opened negotiations with England.³ Annex 3 of the Anglo-Italian Treaty (April 16, 1938) dealt with the Arabian Peninsula.⁴ In reference to Yemen, each power would maintain the status quo by respecting her independence, avoiding political advantages, and aiding to deter outside interference.

The Imam declared his absolute neutrality on November 18, 1935 and he carefully adhered to this policy. As a consequence, when Italian troops landed on the island of Sheikh Said to test the Imam's reaction, he immediately protested and the troops were withdrawn.⁵ Shortly after,

¹Italy began broadcasting propaganda in Arabic from radio Bari in September 1935. The program effectively challenged British activities in the Middle East - particularly over the Palestine question. Her desire to silence these attacks undoubtedly contributed to her willingness to negotiate.

²Wells, op. cit., 108. Various estimates have been made concerning Italian naval capabilities in the Red Sea prior to the war. See Supra, footnote 55, page 134 and Ladislav Farago, Yemen, The Riddle of Arabia (London: R. Hale Ltd., 1939), 21.

³Wells, op. cit., 104.

⁴For text, see, Hurewitz, op. cit., 216-218.

⁵There is some reason to believe that the Imam wasn't as neutral as he openly professed. Farago states that he resold Italian arms to the Ethiopians (op. cit., 162) and Farouhy says that "he refused to permit Italy to recruit workers for the construction of military roads" and "Askari contingents". "The sympathy of the Imam could not help but lie with the Ethiopians, victims of Italian imperialism". op. cit., 74-75.

an Italian envoy appeared in Sana to appease the flustered Imam and later, an impressive delegation was sent to renegotiate the 1926 treaty. Upon completion (September 4, 1937), it contained a de jure recognition of Italian sovereignty over Abyssinia.¹ There is little doubt that Italian influence had reached its pinnacle at this point. However, Italian involvement in Ethiopia seemed to stifle her capabilities to make additional gains in Yemen. Henceforth, she concentrated on maintaining the influence which she had acquired.²

Meanwhile, England was in the process of organizing the Protectorate. In February 1938, Captain Seager was sent to Sana to negotiate the question of sovereignty of the Shabwa border tribe which had requested negotiations with Aden (1937) and to obtain permission to build emergency landing fields in Yemen.³ Neither country would compromise. Captain Seager returned empty handed and Yemeni irregulars crossed the border in November 1938 to be defeated by the British forces. Shabwa joined the Protectorate. In hope of reaching agreement, meetings were held with the Yemeni representative to the London Conference on Palestine in 1939 and, later, in April 1940. The Imam reaffirmed his position, claiming sovereignty over large portions of the Protectorate. And the Italian press, in conjunction with the terms of the Anglo-Italian treaty, issued statements supporting England.⁴ Paradoxically, it was Italian influence in

¹For discussion, see, Heyworth-Dunne, op. cit., 36.

²See, in particular, Wells, op. cit., footnote 53 page 132 and Farouhy, op. cit., 260.

³Farago, op. cit., 262. This is the only reference made to air-fields.

⁴Salim, op. cit., 436-437.

Yemen which had forced the English to become more resolute in their actions concerning the Protectorate and Yemen.

The Palestine problem, by its very nature, presented an unreconcilable situation which further strained Anglo-Yemeni relations. The Imam was outspoken in his belief that the creation of a Jewish state was unjust. In conjunction with this, he warned England that such a policy "would not only injure the rights of the Arabs, but would also create uncertainties in the Mediterranean which would threaten British interests in the Middle East".¹ His representatives attended the Muslim Congress for the Defense of Palestine in Cairo in 1938 and the London Conference in 1939.² Following the publication of the White Paper on Palestine May 17, 1939, the Imam showed his displeasure by condemning British policy in the Arab press.³

As a counter-move to the Anglo-Italian pressures, the Imam adhered to the Saudi Arabian-Iraqi Pact (April 2, 1936) in May 1938.⁴ This pact was designed to systematize the foreign relations, defensive arrangements, and inter-governmental dealings between the signatories. It was opened to any Arab state which desired to join it. The immediate results of this treaty were seen when King Abdal Aziz protested the Anglo-Italian Treaty of 1938 in the name of both countries and an Iraqi military mission arrived in

¹Farougy, op. cit., 82.

²"It should also be remembered that the officials of the Yemen were said to be suffering cuts in their salaries to support the Arab activities in Palestine". Scott, op. cit., 90.

³Mr. Farougy has extracted portions of the Imam's comments to the Arab press. op. cit., 83-84.

⁴For text of document, see Salim, op. cit., 554-559.

Yemen (1940) to organize and train the Yemeni army.¹ In addition, Treaties of Friendship and Commerce were concluded with Ethiopia (March 22, 1935),² France (April 25, 1936),³ and Belgium (December 7, 1936).⁴ All of these were modeled on previous agreements which recognized the sovereign status of Yemen, the Imam's position as ruler, and established the basis for economic cooperation.

The Germans and the Japanese also tried to penetrate the Yemen just prior to the outbreak of hostilities. They were unable to achieve concrete results but their efforts alarmed the allies.⁵ As a result, France sent a mission to Yemen in 1939 which "tried to obtain a promise of neutrality from the Imam in the war that seemed inevitable..."⁶

NEW ALIGNMENTS, 1940-1948⁷

Historically, the Second World War played an important role in altering the internal and external problems of Yemen as it did those of

¹The Imam had already sent a military mission to Iraq in 1936 as well as a group of students to attend the teacher training school. These missions ended when World War II started and travel was difficult. Ibid., 447-448.

The military mission was withdrawn in 1943. In 1937, the Imam issued a decree calling for compulsory military training. It was believed that he could muster 100,000 men. In 1938, he also issued a decree prohibiting service in foreign armies. Both of these hindered Italian recruitment. Farouhy, op. cit., 33, 13.

²For text, see, Salim, op. cit., 541-543.

³Ibid., 544-547.

⁴Ibid., 548-551.

⁵Mr. Farouhy presents the only summary of these events. Op. cit., 80-81.

⁶The extent of allied pressures exerted on the Imam before and during the war is unknown. Farouhy refers to Miss Stark's visit in 1940 as a British political mission. Ibid., 84-86.

⁷For internal developments see chapter III below.

the great powers. Simply stated the new international policies which the Imam adopted, during and immediately following the War, initiated the dramatic chain of events which resulted in Yemen's gradual emergence from the Imam's self-imposed political isolation.

The war placed the Imam in an awkward position. For a number of years he had used Italian "presence" to counterbalance the British "occupation" in the south. From the stand-point of Yemen, this policy had worked advantageously throughout the pre-war period. Both sides acted to hinder the intrusion of the other and the Imam pragmatically directed his policy between the two forces.¹ When war was declared, he announced his neutrality;² however, the war left him without an interested second party to offset Britain. His initial uncertainty as to the outcome was undoubtedly one of the chief reasons why he refrained from taking action against the Italians and Germans residing in his country until February 26, 1943.³ By then, Mussolini's plan of a large double envelopment of Egypt and the Sudan from Ethiopia and Libya had crumbled, as had those of his allies, in the holocaust of war. These events coupled with

¹Stating the opinion of several earlier writers, Mr. Salem says, "It was felt before the start of World War II that these Italian preparations (referring to stockpiled seaport of "Al-Asab") were considered as paving the way for an invasion of Yemen". op. cit., 441.

Italy declared war on June 10, 1940. According to Freya Stark, East is West (London: John Murry, 1945), 46, by July 1940, "the Fascists appeared to have relinquished any idea of eastward invasion".

²Yemen never declared war on the axis powers.

³The Imam's "lets-wait-and-see" attitude undoubtedly resulted from such ideas as those which Miss Stark quoted Rageb Bey, the Yemeni Foreign Minister in 1940 as saying, "Britain has always won wars because she held the sea and had useful friends on dry land. It is a pity; she must lose". op. cit., 28.

"...the Imam ordered the arrest of forty Italians and two Germans, thus silencing two pro-axis radio stations operating in his territory. This action was accompanied by the severance of diplomatic relations with the axis powers". George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs (New York: Cornell University Press, 1962), 577.

the knowledge that Britain had no territorial desires but was in a position to influence events in Yemen, his own isolationist tendencies, the influence of Abdal Aziz, and the discussions initiated by Nahas Pasha concerning the Arab League, gradually led him to a pro-ally stand toward the end of the war.¹

The bilateral discussions on the Arab League initiated by Prime Minister Nahas Pasha of Egypt in 1943 were of great interest to the Imam.² His adherence to the Iraqi-Saudi Arabian Pact in 1938 had marked him as a pioneer in the practical application of this idea. His decision to engage in the common cause of the League was enhanced by his stand on the Palestine question, his unrelenting fight of imperialism on his southern borders, his recent loss of great power support during the war, and his desire to be a recognized leader within the Arab World. However, his attitude and actions throughout the developing stages of the League were those of a cautious ruler. There were basically four reasons for this: (1) Fear of League interference in the internal affairs of Yemen, (2) King Abdal Aziz's restraining influence³, (3) suspected ulterior motives

¹Ibn Saud broke diplomatic relations with Italy and Germany in December 1941. It is interesting to note that when Iraq declared war on Britain, she used the Arab Alliance of 1936 to gain Ibn Saud's support, "But Ibn Saud refused all aid, and Imam Yahya was not even consulted". Farouhy, op. cit., 89.

²These were conducted between June 31, 1943 and February 10, 1944. Yemen was the last country to hold talks with Egypt. See The Times (London), February 4, 1944, February 3 and 11, 1944, 3.

³This was demonstrated by the unified stand of the Saudi and Yemeni delegates when they insisted that "a Palestine Arab Representative should sit in the conference". The Time, October 5, 1944, 3 and by the wait-and-see attitude of both reference to the power with greatest influence. Ibn Saud was not going to do anything which would enhance the position of the Hashimites, his bitter enemy. He was largely responsible for Articles 2 and 8 of the Pact.

of England¹, and a corollary to this, (4) the motives of his Arab neighbors - in particular, which one would exercise the predominant influence. As a result, his representative, Mr. Husein al-Kabsi, the Minister of Pious Foundations and Education, attended the first session of the Preparatory Conference (September 25 - October 7, 1944) as an observer. This precluded unnecessary commitments. Then too, the Saudi Arabian and Yemeni delegates were not permitted to sign the Protocol of Alexandria (October 8, 1944) until it had been submitted to their respective monarchs. Thus, one of the reasons for the delay between the first and second sessions of the Preparatory Conference (March 17-22, 1945) was "due to negotiations with Ibn Saud and the Imam Yahya in order to obtain their signatures to the Protocol".² This was obtained on January 7, 1945 but, even then, the Yemeni delegate did not sign the charter of the Arab League until May 10, 1945.³ The instrument of ratification was deposited with the League on February 9, 1946 and it entered into force on February 24, 1946.⁴

The time-lag involved between the signing and the ratification of the charter is interesting because it illustrates the Imam's hesitancy in committing himself before he was absolutely certain of the degree of influence the two major Arab powers - Egypt and Iraq - were going to exercise. Thus, he reaffirmed and regulated his relations with these countries before committing himself to this international body.

¹Undoubtedly the Imam felt that England was attempting to develop another method of exercising her influence over the Arab world. Mr. Eden, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, had repeatedly made statements in support of the Arab unity idea. Seton-Williams, op. cit., 221-222 and Lenczowski, op. cit., 636.

²Seton-Williams, op. cit., footnote 14 page 235.

³The charter was signed by all delegates except Yemen on 22 March 1945. The Yemeni delegate had not, as yet, arrived in Cairo.

⁴The charter came into effect on 10 May 1945 following ratification by Transjordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq. Yemen was the last Arab state to deposit its instrument of ratification.

A separate Treaty of Friendship was concluded with Egypt on September 27, 1945 in Alexandria.¹ This treaty did not go into effect until the Imam had joined the League, implying that this was a prerequisite. An Extradition and Trade Agreement was signed on April 1, 1946 with Iraq.² Here again, the agreement was reached immediately following Yemeni adherence to the League. Procedures such as these were definitely in accord with the Imam's earlier isolationist policies.

In his search for new political and economic relations, the Imam also turned to the United States.³ He was interested in obtaining both recognition and aid for his country. By 1946, the United States also felt that a treaty was desirable and President Truman dispatched Colonel William A. Eddy, the Minister to Saudi Arabia to Yemen, with a letter of recognition.⁴ Following its presentation the two parties opened negotiations on April 14th in order to conclude a Friendship and Commercial Agreement. This was signed on May 4, 1946 after several unnecessary delays.⁵ And, Mr. J. Rives Childs, the first U. S. Minister to Yemen

¹For text, see, United Nations Treaty Series, Vol. 70, 1950, 248-262.

²The Times, April 3, 1946, 3. Article states agreement was concluded April 1st and that the last avenue of escape for Rashid Ali of Iraq is closed if Saudi Arabia deports him. As a result of this agreement and the Arab League, Iraq sent a scientific, cultural, and economic mission to Sana in early 1947.

³Mr. Richard Sanger presents an excellent summary of American contracts with the Yemen and the Eddy Mission of 1946, in which he participated. The Arabian Peninsula, (New York: Cornell University Press, 1954), 235-271.

It should be remembered that Mr. Charles Crane of the King Crane Commission had taken a draft treaty back to the United States in 1927 after visiting with the Imam. But, the United States did not desire formal relations at that time. According to Oriente Moderno, Vol 16, No. 4, 222 (April 1936) Mr. Crane was also interested in obtaining mineral concessions.

⁴This letter was dated March 4, 1956.

⁵Sanger, op. cit., 266-271. For a discussion of Prince Hussein's interference.

presented his credentials to the Imam on September 30, 1946.

Shortly thereafter, May 24, 1947, Prince Abdullah negotiated a one million dollar loan for the purchase of surplus equipment from the Foreign Liquidation Commission before January 1, 1948 and visited the United States where he conferred with President Truman on July 16, 1947. That same year, September 30, 1947, with American and Arab support, Yemen was admitted to the United Nations as its 56th member.¹

Within a matter of two years, then, Yemen had moved from a relatively obscure position in international affairs to one which continually subjected her to the disruptive currents of modernization and the pressures of 20th Century inter-power politics. It is true that her role in these various organizations was negligible but, at the same time, her mere presence and willingness to cooperate provided the stimulus for advancement.

THE PRICE OF PROGRESS, 1948²

With the gradual emergence of Yemen from isolation new modernizing forces were set into motion which favored the removal of the despotic monarchy and the introduction of a more constitutional form of government. However, Imam Yahya was unwilling to placate these forces and perhaps even unable to cope with them. As a consequence, he, who had almost single handedly created the Yemen of today, forfeited his life on February 17, 1948 to those same forces.

¹United Nations Weekly Bulletin, July-December 1947, Vol. 3, 284-285, and 447.

²This section is designed to present a brief chronological summary of the 1948 Coup. The movement itself will be discussed in some detail in chapter 3 below.

Initially, the constitutional faction of Abdullah al-Wazir and Prince Ibrahim had planned on securing power following the aged Imam's death. Over a period of years they had gained considerable support among various Yemeni elements and drawn up a Sacred Pact (A draft of a Constitutional Monarchy) which was to be promulgated once they were in power. However, the premature announcement of the Imam's death led certain of their more anxious supporters to proclaim the constitutional government before the reports were confirmed.¹ This, in turn, forced the leaders to take immediate action in order to save their lives. The Imam was assassinated and a constitutional monarchy declared the following day.

At first the announcement was greeted with enthusiasm; however, it soon became known that the Imam had been assassinated and that the Crown Prince Ahmed, who had proclaimed himself Imam on February 27, 1948, was collecting tribal support in preparation for avenging his father's death. Gradually, support was withdrawn from al-Wazir and a period of confusion and disturbances ensued.

In the meantime, Al-Wazir sought Arab League recognition and support for his new government. But, the information received from Yemen was confusing and the League, fearing the result of premature action, dispatched a two man investigating committee on February 22nd to determine the actual situation. This was followed on March 1st by a seven member Commission of Inquiry under Azzem Pasha, the Secretary of the Arab League, as requested by al-Wazir. Upon arrival in Jedda, this commission accepted

¹The Times, January 16, 1948, 4. This is a report from Cairo dated the 15th of January which stated that Imam Yahya had died and announced that al-Wazir had formed a constitutional government. This report was premature by one month and no doubt greatly endangered the entire movement.

an invitation of Ibn Saud's to proceed to Riyadh for talks concerning the Yemeni situation.

From the outset, Abdal Aziz was against al-Wazir as he feared recognition, following the assassination, would set a bad precedent throughout the Arab world. By sidetracking the commission, he undoubtedly aided Prince Ahmed as he thus had more time to mobilize his forces and begin the march on Sana. Since the situation remained uncertain there, the commission requested both factions to send representatives to Riyadh, so that they might arbitrate the dispute. Al-Wazir complied; however, Ahmed's forces had begun to advance. They entered Sana on March 14, 1948 and captured all the rebel leaders. The Azzem mission returned to Cairo and Ahmed was soon recognized by the foreign powers.

CHAPTER II

NEW GENERATION: OLD WAYS, 1948-1961

Ahmed's success in subduing the rebels and regaining the Imamate temporarily ended the effectiveness of the Free Yemeni reform movement. As before, these elements sought asylum in Egypt and Aden where they regrouped and, from where, they eventually gained the strength and foreign support necessary to effectively execute a coup d'etat. But, for the time being, it was quite evident that Ahmed's achievements would insure the continuation of his father's internal policies even though he was quick in promising reforms designed to bring the country out of its backwardness.

Conflicting political, economic, and social currents throughout the Arab World during Ahmed's reign exerted great influence in determining the various aspects of the Imam's policies. The psychological and emotional attitudes typified by the house-hold vocabulary of the time, such as "Nasserism", "Nationalism", "Unity", "Colonialism", "Reaction", and "Imperialism" engulfed every village and hamlet throughout the Arab World and provoked those inter-Arab tensions which tore and twisted the idea of Arab "Brotherhood" into unrecognizable and grotesque forms.

Ahmed was compelled to move, sometimes cautiously, sometimes dramatically, to placate these new forces in such a way as to insure his internal supremacy and preclude overt attacks from abroad. His initial success proved to be temporary. At home, the seeds of rebellion manifested themselves on several occasions as discontent and disaffection became more

widespread. And, by the end of his reign, his meager achievements in pacifying his deadliest tormentors abroad were forgotten in the wave of ruthless propaganda attacks which clawed at the very foundations of his authority.

It is necessary to review and analyse the international and inter-Arab events which played dominant roles in shaping Yemeni policies and which set the stage for the success of the eager but numerically weak Yemeni liberals before discussing the internal problems and the challenge which the reformers presented.

THE DISPUTE WITH BRITAIN¹

As the voices of Arab Nationalism gained in strength throughout the Arab lands, verbal attacks were made against the "imperialists" and "colonial" western powers who retained remnants of the policies of by-gone days or attached "strings" to their offers of assistance. From time to time these extremely successful propaganda ventures subsided as the wheel of fortune spun from crisis to crisis and the campaign theorists selected more lucrative targets. But, they were never left completely unattended and with the passing of time the Arab people became well indoctrinated concerning the menace of the imperialist. In his blind

¹It is beyond the scope of this discussion to present a detailed chronological analysis of the Anglo-Yemeni dispute. Rather, it is my intent to analyze, in general, the reasons and major events which underlined Yemeni policy in light of British refusal to withdraw from the Protectorate, the new forces at work in the Arab world, and the fears inherent in the position of the Imamate.

Recently, English policy concerning the South Arabian Federation has come under sharp criticism. For counter-proposals to the present government policies, see, Arnold Toynbee, "Britain and the Arabs, the Need for a New Start", International Affairs, London, Vol. 40, No. 4 (October 1964), 638-646 and Gillian King, Imperial Outpost-Aden (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 93 pages.

haste to condemn and attack the imperialism of the past, the Arab often overlooked, in his ignorance and innocence, the expansionist and imperialistic tendencies of those very groups to whom he turned for assistance. From the moment the proffered hand was grasped in friendship, the grip became tighter and tighter until the ability for independent action succumbed to the realities which surrounded the state. To date in the Middle East, only violent action has proven effective in relaxing these subtle but effective holds.

The Anglo-Yemeni dispute which had its origins in the Ottoman defeat during World War I provided an excellent target for the attacks of the "nationalist" elements within the Arab states. But, more important for the "reactionary" Imam, it provided the one continuous and unalterable facet of his foreign policy throughout his reign. It served to align him with the new breed of nationalists while, at the same time, indirectly distracting, delaying, and minimizing much more dangerous aggressions against the Imamate. There is little doubt that this was one of the most important reasons for Ahmed's intensifying his campaigns against England. However, once committed to such a policy, there could be no retreat as the active and aggressive forces around him virtually precluded such a decision. Naturally, there were other aspects of this policy which were just as important--if not more so--in the eyes of the Imam, but in the view of the Arab World--particularly the Free Yemenis, the Adenis, and nationalists in every country--alteration of this policy would have been tantamount to treason and would have hastened the collapse of the Imamate.¹

¹It must be remembered that when speaking of nationalist or reform movements and their influence on Yemen, we are speaking primarily of external groups organized from among emigrant Yemenis. The Imam did not tolerate such liberal activities within the state of Yemen and he was quick to obliterate any such threats. At the same time, secret groups did exist in Yemen which expressed the ideas of liberal reforms; however, their ability to initiate attacks on the Imamate was virtually non-existent. Thus,

The problem confronting the two countries can be summarized briefly. Today, Yemen claims sovereignty over the territory now known as the South Arabian Federation while the British control it. The historical analysis utilized by each side in substantiating its position often conceals pertinent facts. Unwillingness to compromise coupled with an ever-decreasing ability to do so lies at the very core of the dispute and has prevented any lasting conciliation. The situation has been exacerbated by the new forces of change which support the neophyte nationalists and drive them towards uncompromising ends. And, as one observer accurately and realistically observed not long ago:

"The 'theory' of Arab nationalism has always been clear, and nowadays the 'struggle for national liberation' finds its authority historically in the pre-colonial independence of the people concerned, and morally in the 'popular will' of the would-be nations. This theory is now widely regarded as superior to strictly legal authority maintained in the last resort by force."¹

Needless to say, the "Imam's will" would have to be substituted for the "popular will" during the first forty-four years of the dispute. But, the "popular will" expressed through the external liberal groups, located primarily in Cairo and Aden, became so pronounced during Ahmed's era that he was forced to recognize and submit to them. Thus, it is fair to say that this divergence from rationality was one of the cardinal factors underlying the continuous failure of all negotiations. As can be seen, the problem is closely linked to the clash of the very ideas which motivate and sustain the disputing parties.

From the legal standpoint, only three international agreements have

Ahmed responded to the "will" of the external groups in the same fashion as a ruler might respond to internal parties in another country with the added advantage of being able to effectively block those internal aspects of their reforms which he dreaded.

¹Ingrams, op. cit., 87.

been concluded dealing with this problem. The first of these was incorporated in the Anglo-Turkish Convention signed on March 9, 1914 in London.¹ It was the result of a series of protocols signed between the two countries from 1902 through 1905 which served to demarcate the boundary between the Ottoman Vilayat of Yemen and the protected regions in the south from the Red Sea coast just opposite the Bab al-Mandeb eastward to the Wadi Bana. From this point, an undemarcated line continued straight north-east at an angle of forty-five degrees into the Rub al-Khali. Inasmuch as the Imam Yahya was not a party to this agreement and the Ottomans concluded it contrary to his wishes while occupying his country, he refused--once Yemen had declared her independence--to recognize any part of it as binding on the new state.

Shortly after the Ottoman defeat, hostilities were opened by the Imam on the southern frontier (1919) and he was extremely successful in his initial thrusts which resulted in the subjugation of several protected areas.² British military intervention finally stopped his advances and forced the withdrawal of his forward elements. At the same time, the situation on his northern border was rapidly deteriorating as the Saudi-Yemeni War (April-May, 1934) approached. These events formed the backdrop to the fourth series of negotiations. They resulted in the Anglo-Yemeni Treaty of Sana, February 11, 1934.

This treaty, which was to last until 1974, did little more than recognize the independence of Yemen and temporarily suspend the conflict.

¹Great Britain, His Majesty's Public Record Office, The Anglo-Turkish Convention of March 9, 1914, London.

²Great Britain, Central Office of Information, The Yemen (London: R. 4870, December 1960), 7.

It failed to demarcate the border by providing that "the high contracting parties agree to maintain the situation existing in regard to the frontier on the date of the signature of this treaty..."¹ It is significant however, that the status quo line agreed upon by the two contracting parties did not entirely follow that outlined by the Convention of 1914. Thus, implicit in the negotiations was the qualification that the Convention was not unalterable and that without Yemeni acquiescence, the rights of England to the Protectorate could not be maintained without continued difficulties. At the same time, these changes lent credence to the theory of "force" in the attainment of the opposing objectives. And, it might be mentioned here, that although the Yemenis decry such practices, they have resorted to the same tactics throughout the conflict: even gaining by the Treaty of Sana whereby a salient between the Wadi Bana and the Beihan al-Kasab, which included the districts of Rubaiatan and Baidha, was ceded to them.²

But the real fallacy of the treaty is its susceptibility to misinterpretation. This controversy is centered on an arabic word--Hudud. The British claim that this should be translated as frontier while the

¹Muhammad Khalil, The Arab States and the Arab League: A Documentary Record (Beirut: Khayats, 1962), Vol. II, 885-887.

²It must be remembered that during the initial Yemeni advances there were no British military forces in the area to oppose the Imam. The Protectorate levies in combination with the tribal armies were considered sufficient to deter the Imam's aggressions. Too late, it was discovered that such was not the case and the R.A.F. went into action. This negligence coupled with the fact that the Sheikh of the Imam's newly annexed territories had not entered into a Protectorate agreement with Aden resulted in a change to the border. If the Imam had not been troubled by affairs on the northern border, his successes would have undoubtedly been greater in the south.

Yemenis contend that it has the plural meaning of frontiers.¹ Therefore, when interpreting the treaty, the status quo area can be thought of as the area immediately adjacent to the old demarcated southern frontier or the areas bounded by all the various tribal frontiers to which the British pledged their protection. In regard to this it is necessary to make five important points: (1) the arabic word Hudud literally connotes the plural meaning translated in English as borders, frontiers, edges, limits, and areas but is often used colloquially to refer to one border, (2) the treaty specified that should any doubt arise as to the interpretation, the arabic text would be utilized,² (3) any interpretation other than that of the Imam's would have constituted a de facto repudiation of his claims to these territories, (4) from the standpoint of England, which at that time had but two officials in the entire "buffer" area, the Yemeni interpretation was not out of line with their Protectorate policy³ (it was not until Italian influence resulted in a tougher policy that interpretations began to clash), (5) finally, it should be pointed out that the Yemeni interpretation of this treaty has been applied since the conclusion of negotiations and is not simply a new innovation for the satisfaction of the new forces.

The sixteen years between the treaty and the exchange of notes which culminated in the Anglo-Yemeni Agreement of 1951 gradually resulted in a lessening of tensions along the border even though incidents were not uncommon prior to 1940. During and immediately following the war,

¹Hans Wehr, A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic (New York: Cornell University Press, 1961), 159.

²Khalil, op. cit., 866. This part of the treaty was not reproduced in Hurewitz, op. cit., 196-197.

³Lenczowski, op. cit., 579.

participation in inter-Arab affairs, the search for new alignments, and internal discontent served to channel the Imam's efforts away from this dispute. Concurrently, the war demanded the undivided attention of Great Britain. Maintenance of the status quo became the key to her policy in southwest Arabia and she carefully observed its requirements.

But, in 1949, a new situation presented itself. Ahmed had ascended the throne in Yemen, the Arab League had voiced its approval of Yemeni aspirations,¹ Kamaran Island had been annexed to the United Kingdom, and England was well on her way to tightening her control on the Protectorates.² In addition, the Imam held the English indirectly responsible for the events which led to the death of his father, as Aden had given refuge to the "Free Yemenis" who executed the coup; and, as a result of the revolt, he was in need of some action which would serve to draw the focus of attention away from the internal scene. By creating a border incident, he was able to test his position throughout the Arab World, avenge himself on the colonialists, and shift his peoples attention away from home.

In accordance with standard British policy, the R.A.F. quickly intervened and forced a Yemeni withdrawal. These events were followed by a Yemeni appeal to the Arab League for support. This body resolved on April 1, 1950 that the two governments should bilaterally settle their differences while at the same time approving the Yemeni position.³ Thus, negotiations were conducted in London between August 29th and October 12th, 1950. They resulted in the successful conclusion of the so-called Modus

¹See, Khalil, op. cit., 179 for text of resolution dated June 11, 1946.

²Responsibility for the Protectorate and Aden was eventually transferred to the Colonial Office just prior to the war. Following the war, this facilitated her activist policies in the Protectorate.

³Ibid., Document 109, 179.

Vivendi Agreement of January 20, 1951.¹

It included the following main provisions: (1) the exchange of diplomatic representatives before the end of 1951, (2) British cooperation in economic development, culture, education, hygiene, and other matters, as well as technical assistance: upon the request of the Yemeni government, (3) the establishment of a joint commission for settling certain incidents or disputes in the "limitrophe" areas, (4) that pending the successful conclusion of the commissions work, the status quo would be maintained in the disputed areas, (5) that the commissions findings "shall not prejudice the claims of either government based on that governments interpretation of the de jure position, nor any claims in connection with the final settlement which is provided for in Article 3 of the 1934 Treaty", (6) that the two parties should "check any propoganda, which by its seditious or subversive character tends to impair the friendly relations between the two countries or which tends to defame their sovereigns or Royal families".

Unlike its predecessor, this agreement was destined to be scrapped before the significant provisions could be applied and the situation soon returned to its former state. There were several reasons for this, but perhaps the most important was the fact that no basis actually existed for its conclusion as neither party had any desire to compromise. The truly unfortunate aspect of this failure is that it proved to be the last chance

¹For text, see, Great Britain, Her Majesty's Stationary Office, Exchange of Notes Regarding Relations Between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the Yemen (London: Treaty Series No. 42 (1952), Cmd. 8590, January 20, 1951). The quotations in the following paragraph are extracted from this document.

Yemeni arguments at the conference in support of her claims can be found in a memorandum entitled "Reply of the Yemeni Delegation to the British Memorandum" published in Amin Sa'id, Al-Yaman (Its Political History Since the Third Islamic Century) (Cairo: Renaissance Bookshop, 1959), 159-169.

for a freely negotiated compromise between the parties. From 1952 onwards, the new forces were at work in the Arab World. As the various anti-colonial policies were coordinated in Cairo, astonishing and dramatic successes were achieved. The result is that, at present, compromise seems to be out of the question. Only the use of force, the withdrawal of the claims of one side, or the removal of the support given to either side will now settle the problem. And, no matter which of these is eventually utilized, one party will have the distasteful task of stepping down. Of course, both parties feel that such action would only provoke the very happenings which they most fear, i.e. the annexation of the South Arabian Federation to Yemen or, on the other hand, the establishment of a firmly controlled anti-Yemeni South Arabian Federation. Under such circumstances, it is doubtful that the situation will be altered for some years to come without the application of one of the three possibilities mentioned above.

While copies of this agreement gathered dust in the archives of the two nations, renewed violence erupted in the disputed border areas. Although the intensity of these disturbances varied from time to time, they formed a permanent backdrop for the propaganda warfare which lasted during the Imam's lifetime. By the end of 1957 or the beginning of 1958, the engagements had changed from "horse-opera" type skirmishes to a more disciplined and sophisticated modern style of warfare, supplemented by terrorist activities deep within the Protectorate. The introduction of foreign advisors and modern Soviet arms (1956) in Yemen plus the effective grouping of Aden-Yemeni nationalist elements within the Protectorate enabled such happenings while the international events seemed to stimulate

them.¹ But, by mid 1960, the physical manifestations of the ever-present Yemeni menace had gradually subsided as other events served temporarily to restrain such aggressions.

From the standpoint of maintaining his authority and position within Yemen, the Imam's policies were basically defensive reactions to the progressive advances within the Protectorate,² the actual changes which occurred within the Arab World, and the new forces which have already been mentioned. Thus, irrespective of the validity of the claims which each side put forth, he was fighting for a far deeper and meaningful objective than territorial gains. If this fundamental point is overlooked, the significance of the conflict is lost as the history of the period quickly bogs

¹It should be mentioned here that joint talks were held throughout the period. Sir Tom Hickinbotham visited Taiz in October 1954. See, New York Times, December 23, 1954. As a result of his more favorable military position, Ahmed suggested that his son, Crown Prince al-Badr, go to London for another round of talks. The British government accepted this and the talks were held between November 10-12, 1957 with the Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd participating. However, no progress was made toward settling the dispute. See, Ibid., 6,11,12,21, and November 22, 1957. Meetings were later held at DIREDAWA, Ethiopia in 1958. Ibid., July 12, 1958. Then, in November 1959 following some informal discussions, the Governor of Aden visited Taiz where he concluded an agreement on civil aircraft flights between Yemen and Aden and one establishing a "local frontier commission which would deal with incidents by parley instead of protest". "The first such parley took place at the beginning of February 1960". See, Rupert Hay, "Great Britain's Relations with Yemen and Oman", Middle Eastern Affairs, Vol. 11 (May 1960), 149.

²It is ironical that while surrendering many of her former imperial possessions to the rising nationalist forces following the war, England embarked on a Protectorate policy designed to strengthen and maintain her control. It is not my intention to discuss the pro's and con's of this policy as others have amply stated both sides. But, it must be pointed out that the basic contradiction in these policies is extremely important from the Arab standpoint. After all, to an Arab nationalist, how can one justify granting independence to other nationalist inspired colonies while denying him the same right?

down in the intricate and meaningless vocabulary of legal jargon and formal protests.¹

Before analyzing the remaining ideas and forces which nourished the fears of the Imam, it is necessary to summarize the constitutional developments in the Protectorate, because these produced the basic irritant which drove the Imam to extremes in his border war.

In general, British policy can be described as unwillingness to surrender her existing position and, as a corollary to this, her policy of reinforcement in the face of strong Arab opposition through strengthening and attempting to unify the local and international position of the Protectorates.

As a start in this direction, the original Protectorate Treaties² were supplemented by an Advisory Treaty system which was implemented just prior to World War II. The idea was to establish closer relations between the Sultanates and the United Kingdom through the presence of a permanent "resident British advisor".³ During the war years, five of the

¹Protests and threats were continuously exchanged by the two governments throughout the period. These were eventually repeated in the United Nations. In addition, the Yemeni government received supporting statements from the various Arab governments, the Arab League, and international conferences, such as that held at Bandung in April 1955.

²The Protectorate treaties originated in the 19th Century as Britain felt it necessary to formalize her relations with the territories adjacent to the India route in order to legally preclude interference by other powers. In return for financial considerations, the tribal sheikhs, sultans, or amirs would agree to accept British protection for their lands and people, to avoid all types of foreign agreements without the sanction of the British government, not to sell, lease, or give any of their territory to another foreign power, and finally, all heirs of the territory were to be bound by this agreement.

³In essence, the chief agreed "to cooperate fully and at all times, with the Governor of Aden and to accept his advice on all questions relating to the welfare and progress of his territory" while at the same time retaining the right to represent matters to the British Secretary of State for Colonial Affairs if he so desired. The other articles of these treaties served to reinforce and reinstate the previous Protectorate agreements. See, M. Fathall El Khatib and Khalid I. Babaa, British Imperialism in Southern Arabia (New York: Arab Information Center, November 1958), 28-29 for the general provisions of these treaties.

Western Sultanates accepted this relationship.¹ However, it was not until the Modus Vivendi agreement (1951) had been concluded that three of the remaining Sultanates signed similar treaties.² Unfortunately, the traditionally staunchest and most faithful friend of Britain, Lahej (relatively speaking the largest, wealthiest, and most advanced state), remained outside the treaty structure.

In April 1952, the Sultan of Lahej, Fadhl Abdel Karim, was ordered to Aden when it was discovered that he had condemned two of his cousins to death without apparent justification. Unfortunately, subsequent events made it appear as if the British were forcing the submission of Lahej to their demands. Troops were sent to the capital to preserve peace, and the Sultan fled to Yemen while his son, Ali Abdel Karim, was elected in his place.³ The whole affair culminated shortly thereafter with the signing of an Advisory Treaty with the new Sultan. To the Yemeni and Adeni nationalists, the implications were plain enough.

A little less than two years after this event, January 7, 1954, the Governor of Aden, Sir Tom Hickinbotham proposed that the nine Sultanates which had negotiated Advisory Treaties should unite in a Federation.⁴

¹Beihan, 1944; Lower Aulaqui, 1944; Fadhli, 1944; Amiri, 1944; and, Lower Yafai, 1946.

²Upper Aulaqui Sultanate, 1952; Upper Aulaqui Sheikdom, 1952; and, Audhali, 1952.

³The London Times, April 23 and 29, 1952.

⁴For a discussion of the Arab attitude toward this proposal, see, Khatib and Babaa, op. cit., 35-36. It must be remembered that with Great Britain's responsibilities for the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, Aden's strategic importance was enhanced. The government felt that Aden offered a good base from which forces could embark to various trouble spots, if the need arose. Its position in relation to the Suez Canal, its airbase, its use as a bunkering station, and its impending importance as an oil refinery, all combined to stimulate this.

Initially, this brought a favorable response from the various rulers as they could see the advantages of the strength gained through unity. But, anti-colonial, particularly anti-British, propaganda and pressures originating in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and the Arab League,¹ along with the growth of similarly disposed nationalist elements within the Protectorate were soon challenging the plan as an attempt to increase British control and betray the people. These events together with the realization that British insistence would be met by tragic and deadly resistance forced the authorities to shelve their proposal.

However, in 1956, a proposal was made by the government in which they offered "to guide and assist the states in seeking some form of close association with each other for the mutual assistance and support which the rulers and peoples of these states are entirely free to negotiate among themselves."² Although this was a more logical approach to the problem because it provided for Arab initiative rather than foreign, it was destined for immediate failure. The Suez Canal crisis, the fears of the protected tribal chiefs inherent in surrendering their individual authority, the continuing harsh propaganda, and the nationalist elements within the Protectorate were ample enough to preclude any action until Yemen joined the United Arab States on March 8, 1958. This action coupled with events in Lahej, where the estranged Sultan Ali Abdel Karim was planning under the influence of friends "to contract out of the Protectorate, to join the United Arab Republic",³ precipitated an immediate

¹For the Arab League resolution and report of the Mission to Yemen, see, Khalil, op. cit., 179-180.

²King, op. cit., 59.

³Ibid., 60. As these moves were felt to constitute a violation of existing treaties, the Aden authorities resorted to force. Troops were once again dispatched to Lahej for the purpose of arresting the Jafri brothers and the Sultan fled before them to Yemen.

request by the rulers to unite for their own protection. Thus, later in the same year, six of these rulers went to London for consultations.¹ These were followed by the signing of a Federation Agreement on February 11, 1959.² Within the Protectorate, both the nationalists and Pan Arabist elements, who voiced themselves primarily through the trade unions, were against this since they felt that England was in reality consolidating her control over southwest Arabia. However, their efforts, although causing a great deal of unrest, did not prevent the successful execution of this agreement.

The next step was to formalize the relations between the Protectorate and Aden Colony. Talks were held in London and Aden throughout 1961 and into 1962 for the purpose of developing a constitutional link between these two entities. They were met with many anti-unification proposals but resulted in the signing of a draft treaty on August 16, 1962³ which visualized the incorporation of Aden Colony into the Federation of South Arabia by the 1st of March 1963.

Considering the problems which confronted Great Britain throughout the period, her accomplishments are praiseworthy. At the same time, her ability to insure the proper growth of this new state is considerably weakened by the internal and external forces which block and delay each constructive advance. But then, these attacks will not cease as long as she occupies her present position in South Arabia. The best she can hope for is a tacet armistice between herself and the nationalists along with open hostilities between herself, Yemen, and the Pan-Arabists. Only her

¹Beihan, Audhali, Fadhli, Dhala, Upper Aulaqi, and Lower Yafai.

²For text, see, Cmd. 665 (1959).

³For text, see, Cmd 1814 (1962).

complete withdrawal from direct and indirect political domination and the establishment of a more business-like arrangement will satisfy the new forces in the Arab World.¹

The answers which remain to the question, why these events in the Protectorate so dramatically effected conditions along the frontier, are found in the religious-tribal-political nature of the governmental system of Yemen. As mentioned, the Imam derived his basic authority from the position he occupied as head of the Zaidi sect. But, from the demographic standpoint, this group only represented fifty percent of the population.² The remaining fifty percent were Shafi'i of the Sunni persuasion. They recognized his authority, not on religious grounds, but rather, due to the power he exerted through his army, his Zeidi tribesmen, and the oppression typified by the hostage system.³ Such a condition naturally lent itself to constant internal tensions as the Shafi'is attempted to better their positions.

¹Considering the propaganda attacks recently endured by Saudi Arabia, it is questionable that she would desire the English to withdraw. English presence acts as a stabilizing influence and protects her southern frontier. A Protectorate dominated by pro-Nasser forces could present a real threat to the maintenance of Saudi Arabian stability. Her actions in Yemen today are indicative of this attitude.

²In the early forties, a compilation of the population based on the Imam's tax records indicated that he had just over 4,000,000 tax paying inhabitants in Yemen. No census has been taken in Yemen. Today, the population is estimated at 4-5 million. I have been unable to find any information which factually states the proportion of Zaidis to Shafi'is. Both groups claim the majority and most writers state the relationship on a 55% to 45% basis, favoring either side without stating how they derived their conclusion. Since the proportion, as generally selected, is so nearly equal, I have chosen the above ratio to avoid favoritism and inaccuracy.

³It should be remembered that this system was applied to both Zaidis and Shafi'is.

In the Protectorates, there were very few Zaidis.¹ As a consequence, when the British decided to strengthen the various protected states through unification², the Imam was faced with the possibility of having a strong Shafi'i political entity on his southern border. This would not only preclude the possibility of territorial acquisition but it would also provide a potentially stronger center for Shafi'i fifth-column activities within the Yemen which the Imam, with justification, felt would in turn lead to the overthrow of the Zaidi rule. This possibility was further enhanced by the growth of more liberal minded Yemeni groups (principally Shafi'i) contiguous with the Pan Arab movements. It was only natural then that he should use the long disputed border problem to instigate old tribal rivalries and hinder British efforts. Indeed, he must have received some inwardly sinister satisfaction from pitting Shafi'i against Shafi'i throughout these struggles.

In addition to this, the Protectorate was more economically advanced than the Yemen. Thus, "the markedly conservative government (of Yemen) could not remain oblivious to actual and contemplated changes in the economic and social life of the Aden Protectorate, inasmuch as any obvious contrast between the two areas was apt to prove disruptive to Yemen's

¹Although undoubtedly attracted by the money and jobs available in the Protectorate, very few Zaidis remain as residents in Aden. Their religious orientation and minority position probably account for this. It should also be pointed out that Yemenis remaining in Aden are denied Adeni citizenship. This perhaps more than any other policy within the colony has deeply embittered the relations between the administration and the people. In addition, it has helped to intrench the concept of transient labor. Yemenis go to Aden, earn a substantial sum (in comparison to Yemen), and then return.

²Speaking of the differences between the Zaidis and the Shafi'is, one author writes, "It is this antagonism that has kept the Aden Protectorate states independent of Yemen and will continue to preserve the desire for independence, although the emotional force of Arab nationalism, fostered by Cairo propagandists, may well transcend it in time". New York Times, May 24, 1958, 5:1.

internal stability".¹ More important, the prospect of discovering oil and other mineral deposits in the Protectorate regions undoubtedly served to whet the Imam's appetite as he thought of the advantages which might be derived from such wealth. Naturally, any such discoveries would also have the disadvantage of insuring continued English presence while providing a united Protectorate with a far greater reason to remain outside of any plan which the Imam might put forward in satisfaction of his own ideas for a Greater Yemen.²

A final point was made by Mr. Ingrams when he discussed the nature of the Imam's claims over all Yemen. He stated that "in view of his belief in his divine commission he could no more abandon them (claims) than the Pope could surrender his claim to spiritual authority over all Christendom; both can only regard their claims as in abeyance."³ This is an important point and yet it is one which is subject to a great deal of criticism and neglect. In our modern, fast-moving, rational world such beliefs are often overlooked in the rush to develop a secular projection for a given action. In essence we thereby limit or completely nullify our ability to understand the truly significant aspects of divergent societies. But, this belief is inherent in the Imamate and although it is difficult to access its true value in this struggle, it undoubtedly contributed to the personal conduct of the Imam and helped to sustain him throughout his fight.

Thus, the Imam was destined to follow a collision course with English

¹Lenzowski. op. cit., 580.

²Expeditions into the Protectorate regions began in 1952; however, to date, there is no evidence of commercial quantities of oil or other mineral deposits having been discovered.

³Ingrams, op. cit., 86-87.

aims. Naturally, he could not hope for success without the moral and physical support of more powerful nations. For this reason, the other aspects of his foreign policy were designed to satisfy this need while skillfully heeding and playing the new forces at work in the Arab World to his own advantage. It is in this context, then, that we must view the foreign relations of Yemen throughout the Imam's lifetime.

EARLY ASPECTS OF THE IMAM'S FOREIGN POLICY

With the signing of the Rhodes Armistice Agreement on February 24, 1949,¹ the state of Israel was born in the midst of an Arab World whose joint military efforts had proven incapable of realizing victory. No event in the last seventy years of Arab History has produced such dynamic reactions in the development of inter-Arab affairs as this. It has served as the springboard from which the dissatisfied and disaffected elements dove into the unstable political arena and vanquished their more hesitant and conservative opponents. And, it was in the face of these developments that Ahmed had to tread cautiously in guiding his Kingdom toward the realization of an advantageous foreign policy.

While the Syrian Army entered politics in Damascus; the Free Officers Movement gathered momentum in Egypt; and, the anti-imperialist attacks against England sharpened, Imam Ahmed was in the process of strengthening his authority after the 1948 Coup d'etat and initiating his attacks on the Protectorate. For the time being, his anti-colonialist policy in the Protectorate was sufficient to gain the full support of the Arab League

¹Yemen was not represented in the Lausanne Conference of 1949 which followed the armistice. It was an attempt by Israel to negotiate bilateral or collective peace treaties with the Arab states.

and the last remnants of his isolationist policies were adequate enough to keep him outside direct involvements in the international struggles of other Arab countries. Then too, there was no reason to fear that internal events in other Arab countries might produce forces acting in contravention of Article 8 of the Pact of the League of Arab States¹ and Ahmed could be reassured by the knowledge that his internal position was not intricately intertwined with the ups and downs of inter-Arab happenings. Thus, when he adhered to the Treaty of Joint Defense and Economic Cooperation of the Arab League on April 13, 1950, he could still make reservations which, in effect, served to greatly nullify the intent of the treaty,² and, during the London Conference in the fall of 1950, he

¹Article 8 states, "Every member State of the League shall respect the form of government obtaining in the other States of the League, and shall recognize the form of government obtaining as one of the rights of those States, and shall pledge itself not to take any action tending to change that form." United Nations, Treaty Series-1950, Vol. 70, Dec. 241, 254.

²Yemen signed this treaty on June 17, 1950 and deposited its instrument of ratification on October 11, 1953. The reservation is repeated here as it indicates the carry-over of Imam Yahya's isolationist policies and the degree of independent action still open to the Imam.

"1. As regards the provisions of Article 2, Yaman does not consider aggression to be aggression against any Arab state, unless it is an aggression against that State itself and not because it is bound by a treaty or agreements with any other state or because foreign troops exist in its territories for any other reason.

2. Yaman has reservations with regard to the last paragraph of Article 6, because the Mutawakkilite Government of Yaman expects that certain circumstances may occur which may make it appropriate for Yaman to take a special stand of its own. Yaman has, therefore, decided not to consider the decisions of the joint Defense Council as binding on her, unless she accepts those decisions. This is because of Yaman's geographical position, her general possibilities and her special considerations.

3. The Government of Yaman does not object to the provisions of Article 1 of the Military Annex. But certain special considerations may make it impossible for her to execute certain matters required of it. Accordingly, being desirous of accomplishing whatever may be requested of it, it has decided as follows: The Government of Yaman approves the provisions of Article 1 of the Military Annex, with the exception of paragraphs 4 and 6, and nothing shall be considered as operative except that which will be approved by the Mutawakkilite Government of Yaman in due time." Khalil, op. cit., 101-102.

was free to conclude any compromise agreement with England which he felt would satisfy Yemeni claims in the dispute.¹

This freedom of independent action characterized the Imam's foreign policy throughout the first four years of the fifties. His policy was based on securing moral, financial, and physical support for his border war; the granting of limited economic concessions to the western powers while carefully guarding against too much influence; establishing new international relations; and, supporting the principles of the Arab League.

Throughout the period, the influence of Nasser was somewhat limited as the leaders of the Egyptian Revolution (July 23, 1952) were too busy at home with their reforms and struggle with England to offer great dangers abroad. They had to prove themselves at home before being able to assume any type of inter-Arab leadership. But the breathing spell was to be short and it was a wise Arab leader who listened attentively to the speeches and read the words of these men.² The time when the Imam could proceed along a truly independent course in his foreign policy was rapidly drawing to a close. And, it is unfortunate that his international contacts

¹It must be remembered that prior to the 1950-51 period, Yemeni claims to all the Protectorate were unrealistic from the standpoint of actually being realized; but, after the Nasser Revolution, the Suez Canal crisis, and the formation of the United Arab States, this was no longer true. The most one could say then as today, is that the prospect is still improbable but not impossible.

²The Egyptian reservation to the Arab League Extradition Agreement signed on September 14, 1952 bore an acid warning to leaders of the Arab World of things to come. It reads, in part, "Egypt does not accept the definition of offences in respect of which extradition shall be obligatory and which are provided for in Article 4, namely, crimes of assault against monarchs, presidents of states, their spouses or their direct descendants; crimes of assault against crown princes; crimes of premeditated murder and terrorist crimes." This was signed by Egypt on June 9, 1953 and the instrument of ratification was deposited on March 8, 1954. Yemen never signed this agreement. Khalil, op. cit., 106.

during this period did not help to bring him closer to the western nations.

One of the reforms demanded by the 1948 rebels was the lifting of the curtain of isolation which surrounded Yemen by allowing the more economically advanced nations to obtain concessions within the country--principally in the exploration of mineral resources which were felt to be present in abundant quantities.¹ The Imam realized the importance of pacifying these reformist elements but he, like his father, was afraid of the progressive influences which would accompany such an open-door policy. Therefore, he granted limited concessions to satisfy these elements while rigidly controlling and limiting the amount of progress made by Yemen toward the removal of the mediaeval bonds. But, to the more powerful western nations, any assistance depended largely on the over-all aspects of the Imam's policies and while he was engaged in his border war the situation did not seem conducive to the granting of extensive economic assistance: military or otherwise. Nevertheless, it was to the west and the United Nations that the Imam first turned for assistance. A sufficient number of reports exist to substantiate this trend in the Imam's policy but it is unfortunate that more information is not available concerning the details of these relations during this period.

Although the Modus Vivendi Agreement with England provided for economic assistance at the request of Yemen, it would be unrealistic to assume that the Imam would have requested such when the tempo of the border war was gradually increasing. This does not mean that England would not

¹During the 1949-1950 period, an estimated 40-50,000 Jews were airlifted from Yemen to Israel under what was then known as "Operation Magic Carpet". Although it is difficult to determine the true significance of this exodus on the economy of Yemen, research conducted in Israel following their re-settlement indicates that they formed the artisan class and worked extensively in agriculture. Under these conditions, their mass migration undoubtedly hindered the Yemeni economy and served as an added incentive for requesting assistance. S.D. Goitein, "The Transplantation of the Yemenities", Commentary, Vol. 12, No. 1 (July 1951), 24-33.

have granted his requests but it is highly unlikely that they would have done so without receiving Imamate concessions at the same time.

With this road blocked, the Imam turned to the United States for Point Four Aid¹ and technical assistance after the re-establishment of diplomatic relations in February 1950.² Negotiations were first opened in May 1951 when the American Consul in Aden visited Taiz in order to discuss "the various developmental schemes which the government proposed to undertake."³ During the next eight years, similar negotiations were to be repeated several times without achieving satisfactory results. The last two attempts in this period were those of the Weins Mission, September 1957, and the Wadsworth Mission, December 1957.⁴ These two missions were initiated following pronouncement of the Eisenhower Doctrine, January 5, 1957, and the visit of Special Ambassador James P. Richards to Yemen between the 11th and 15th of April of that year.⁵ All of these efforts failed. Soviet influence provided a major obstacle. But, in any

¹The London Times, January 6, 1951.

²Diplomatic relations were broken off on February 17, 1948 following the assassination of Imam Yahya. They were not re-established until Ahmed gave assurances that he would abide by the former Imam's international obligations. This was accomplished on December 22, 1949 when the Yemeni Deputy Foreign Minister called at the State Department. United States, Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 22 (February 27, 1950), 326.

³"Chronology", Middle East Journal, Vol. 5 (1951).

⁴The Weins mission appears to have opened preliminary discussions in preparation for more formal negotiations by Ambassador Wadsworth.

⁵Ambassador James P. Richards toured the Middle Eastern countries following congressional approval of the Eisenhower Doctrine in order to explain American policy and offer assistance to the Arab countries. After visiting Yemen, he recommended further discussions be conducted concerning an aid program. For text of Richards Sana Statement issued on April 15, 1957 see, Khalil, op. cit., 925.

case, to the Imam, the American offers were small¹ and always seemed to be accompanied by unnecessary conditions such as the establishment of air navigational rights over Yemen,² the removal of the Imam's conditions which precluded negotiations, or the cessation of hostilities in the south. Aside from these and the international events which played an important part in the attitude of Yemen, American contacts had not proven satisfactory to them. The unfortunate adventures of the Wendell Phillips archaeological expedition into Yemen³ and the failure of the US owned Yemeni Development Corporation in its oil exploitation concession because of

¹On January 29, 1958, Cairo reported "that Imam Ahmed rejected an American offer of 1 million dollars in economic assistance because the AID mission requested permission to install four radar stations in the Yemeni mountains." See, "Chronology", Middle Eastern Affairs, Vol. 9 (1958), 4.

Shortly thereafter, on March 1, 1958, the New York Times indicated that Imam Ahmed was still considering 5 million dollars worth of technical assistance. However, the same article stated that the USSR had recently offered a 100 million ruble loan (25 million).

The specific purpose of the American offer was not discussed. It is not known whether both sources refer to the same or separate proposals. However, no American aid was granted during 1958.

²Heyworth-Dunne, op. cit., 46.

³Permission was granted to the American Foundation for the Study of Man to send an archaeological expedition to excavate in the region of Serwah, the first capital of the Queen of Sheba on June 16, 1951 under the leadership of Mr. Wendell Phillips. On February 12, 1952, the Yemeni government forced the withdrawal of this expedition. "The government accused Mr. Phillips... of violating several provisions of an agreement made with the government by 'failing to obtain a visa, meet time schedules, submit reports and films, or to deliver copies of the priceless rubber squeezes taken from the ruins'. It also accused him of failure to repay a Government loan of 2000 riyals and to pay his workers before leaving." Chronology, Middle East Journal, Vol. 5 (1951) and Vol. 6 (1952). For an account of his expedition, see, Wendell Phillips, Qataban and Sheba (London: Victor Gollancz, 1955).

difficulties encountered in Yemen¹ did little to enhance the American position in the eyes of the Yemenis. Under such circumstances then, it was natural that relations remained cordial but not mutually beneficial.

On January 5, 1951, the Yemeni government announced that they had applied for technical assistance from the United Nations² and, by the end of 1953, thirty-five United Nations experts (this was the fourth largest group of UN advisors in the Middle East at that time with Iraq, Egypt, and Syria surpassing Yemen) were engaged in helping to expand crop production, improve the monetary and banking systems, develop water resources and ports, and in mapping the country. In terms of financial expenditures of United Nations Technical Assistance Grants the UNICEF Calendar Year, 1952-1953, showed a total outlay of 2,735,000 dollars (the largest for a single Middle Eastern country) and the United Nations Calendar Year expenditures for the 1953-1954 period showed that she received \$18,300 dollars.³ Although the statistics indicate that Yemen was the recipient of substantial funds, the indications were that "its services are unsuitable as its experts are seldom available long enough to make much impression on a people so full of misgivings about strangers."⁴

¹It was announced on November 1955 that the Yemeni Development Corporation of the United States had been granted an oil concession in Yemen on a fifty-fifty profit sharing basis. If commercial quantities of oil were not found in six years, the agreement could be voided. New York Times, November 23, 1955. Very little information is available concerning the successes or failures of this company. They were no doubt handicapped by Russian presence in Yemen at the time. The New York Times stated on November 28, 1955 that the State Department attached some significance to this agreement because it came at a time when anti-US feeling was high in the Middle East. But later it was generally known that the Imam was not satisfied with the progress of this corporation.

²The London Times, January 6, 1951.

³The New York Times, May 24, 1954.

⁴Royal Institute of International Affairs, The Middle East, A Political and Economic Survey (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1955), 107. Hereafter referred to as RIIA.

This might account for the fact that in January 1956 the Approved Project Costs for Technical Aid to Yemen during the 1956 period only amounted to 153,000 dollars, inclusive of equipment and supplies, while twenty experts and fifteen fellows were to be employed.¹ Nevertheless, United Nations experts did prepare the first geological map of the country² and extensive work was performed in trying to develop a system for monetary transactions.³

In the Arab World, the political structure and inter-Arab policies of Yemen were more closely related to those of Saudi Arabia than any other country. Thus, in searching for economic and technical assistance, she was more inclined to turn to Egypt than to one of the Hashmite Kingdoms of the North. Of course, the advanced economic position of Egypt, their mutual struggle with England, the monarchical forms of both governments (at the time), their geographical positions, and Egypt's willingness to participate in such missions were also important factors. Therefore, it was no surprise that the first foreign legation which opened in Yemen, June 7, 1951, should be Arab and Egyptian.⁴ This was an important step for Yemen--not only from the standpoint of Egypt--but because it was the opening needed for the establishment of normal diplomatic relations with all foreign governments. Henceforth, the diplomatic community was to grow rapidly.

Before Yemen began negotiating for technical assistance from the United States, she requested that an Egyptian mission be sent to Yemen to

¹David Owen, "International Technical Aid to the Middle East", Middle Eastern Affairs, New York, Vol. 7 (January 1956), 10.

²Ibid., 6.

³RIIA, op. cit., 108-109.

⁴Chronology, Middle East Journal, Vol. 5 (1951).

determine the prospects for closer economic and commercial cooperation between the two countries, especially in the field of developing mineral and petroleum resources. Al-Ahram published letters on January 21, 1951 from the head of this mission to various prominent Egyptian personalities which supported such cooperation since it would provide an outlet for surplus technicians and cement Egyptian-Yemeni relations. The article also stated that "Yemen is preparing to let Egypt have 250,000 tons of coal a year."¹ During the same period the Imam had sent seventy young men to Egypt to study medicine and technical processes.² These initial exchanges led to an Egyptian geological survey and the gradual pressing by Egyptians for exclusive rights to be the only foreigners in Yemen.³ But the Imam was not desirous of limiting himself in such a manner. During April and May 1952, he signed treaties of friendship with Pakistan and Spain which provided for the establishment of diplomatic relations.⁴ Immediately thereafter, King Farouk was disposed in the July 23rd Revolution. This temporarily ended cooperation between the two countries. Thus, for the next few years Egyptian-Yemeni economic relations remained fairly static and the Imam began his search for other countries from which to gain technical assistance.

On February 19, 1953, Prince Hassan, the Imam's brother, arrived in

¹Heyworth-Dunne, op. cit., 45-46.

²The London Times, January 6, 1951.

³RIIA, op. cit., 108.

⁴Keessing's Contemporary Archives (Weekly Diary of World Events), London, Vol. 3 (July 7-14, 1952), 12267. There is no evidence to indicate that additional treaties were planned, but it is interesting to note that the German oil firm which was granted the first Yemeni concession also had a similar concession in Spain. See, Alexander Melamid, "Economic Changes in Yemen, Aden, and Dhofar", Middle Eastern Affairs, Vol. 5 (March 1954), 90.

Bonn, West Germany to commence trade talks with Ministers and industrialists.¹ These negotiations resulted in a Friendship and Trade Agreement with Yemen (came into force on December 9, 1954) "which was to run for five years...and provided for mutual most favored nation treatment. Bonn stated that it was ready to use its good offices to supply Yemen with the services of German experts, especially physicians and engineers".² Although there was talk in 1953 about the Germans setting up a 50,000 kw. power station to run from the coal mines near the capital,³ the positive results of this treaty were expressed in the granting of concessions for building a cement factory and tannery, for developing the salt mine of Salif which was capitalized entirely by Yemenis,⁴ and for the exploitation of oil. This latter concession was granted to the Deilmann Bergbau Firm. It provided for a twenty year concession if oil was discovered within five years. Yemen was to receive seventy-five percent of the profits and the company twenty-five percent.⁵ German imports from Yemen jumped from

¹The London Times, February 19, 1953, 7d.

²Fritz Hauenstein, "West Germany and the Middle East", Middle Eastern Affairs, Vol. 7 (January 1956), 16. This treaty was renewed in 1959.

³RIIA, op. cit., 108.

⁴By February 1954, Mr. Conde could write that using modern German Equipment this Yemeni Rock Salt Company had a 1,000 ton daily output and that a Japanese salt monopoly was in the process of negotiating for the entire output. Deposits estimated at 4000,000,000 tons were reported. See, Bruce Conde, "Seven Weeks of Yemen in the Sixth Year of Ahmed", Al-Kulliyah, Vol. 29 (February 1954), 7.

⁵Headquarters of the Deilmann Company was located in Salif and their oil survey included aerial photo coverage of the Salif portion of the Tihama. Ibid., 8.

According to Mr. A. Melamid the "Yemen authorities claim that American and British firms were not interested in these concessions." He suggests that the low profit possibilities and the terms of the concession prevented a more favorable response. Op. cit., 90.

10,000 dollars in 1953 to 20,000 dollars in 1954 while her exports to Yemen jumped from 100,000 to 300,000 dollars in the same period. But, the failure of the Deilmann company to discover oil led to the granting of an oil concession to the American owned Yemeni Development Corporation in 1955 and the subsequent temporary reduction in German trade.¹

In addition by 1953, the Imam had nine aircraft piloted by Swedish nationals. An Air Cadet Training School had been opened in Hodeida under Swedish supervision. The first graduates performed their solo flights over Hodeida on August 17, 1953. They were then used as co-pilots on the non-scheduled airlines and some had been recommended for advance training overseas.²

TOWARD A NEUTRALIST BLOC

In 1954, the attention of Yemen was focused on the Protectorate. Ahmed could not visualize the British Federation proposals (January 1954) as being anything other than detrimental to his own state and personal desires. He therefore intensified the border-engagements of his tribesmen and using the talented services of the Governor of Beidha³ embarked on a positive and calculated program to sow dissension within the Protectorate using every imaginable tactic. Formal charges and counter-charges continually passed between the two governments and, by June, the first reports of the use of Yemeni regular troops began filtering into

¹New York Times, May 13, 1955. Prince Badr said Yemen was dissatisfied with the Deilmann Company of Germany. They had been prospecting for oil for two years without drilling any test wells. He claimed experts said there was an eighty percent chance of finding oil.

²Conde, op. cit., 6. The Imam's airline consisted of 2 C-47 transports and approximately seven other small twin engine aircraft.

³Ingrams, op. cit., Chapter 6, *passim*.

the newspapers.¹ As usual, these events enhanced the crystalization of the opposing attitudes rather than stimulating appeasement. From this point onward, the fluctuations of the border war became unequivocally meshed with the broader aspects of the inter-Arab foreign policies (particularly Egyptian) to which the Imam paid an ever-increasing amount of attention.

In the meantime, developments in Egypt were beginning to show signs of bearing fruit for the revolutionaries. With the signing of the Anglo-Egyptian Canal Base Agreement on October 19, 1954, Nasser accomplished one of the key promises to the Egyptian people: that of obtaining the withdrawal of English troops from Egyptian soil. Immediately thereafter, an assassination attempt was made on his life (October 26, 1954). This act served as the governments justification for crushing the last remnants of the old political parties, namely the Moslem Brotherhood. Together, these two events solidified his position within Egypt and allowed him the opportunity to engage more freely in international affairs.

Nasser's attention was first drawn to the proposals by the western powers for the formation of a defensive alliance. These proposals inaugurated the "Great Debate" between the pro-western and neutralist states and a period of great fluidity in inter-Arab politics.² As Mr. Sayegh states, "It was a time when some Arab governments came to define and envision their mutual affinities primarily, if not exclusively, in terms of the similarity in their respective outlooks on foreign policy, and to conclude agreements of mutual defense on that basis."³

¹New York Times, June 20, 1954.

²Fayez A. Sayegh, Arab Unity, Hope and Fulfillment (New York: The Devin-Adair Company, 1958), 177.

³Ibid., 176.

Nasser was convinced that these proposals, if executed, would defeat the purpose of the Arab League, result in continued reliance on the big powers (this is exactly what he had been fighting against), and possibly bring the Soviet Union into Middle Eastern politics as a counterbalance to the western moves. Actually, he wanted a breathing spell in which to develop a joint Arab policy without direct attachment to the more powerful nations. But, with the signing of the Bagdad Pact on February 24, 1955 and the subsequent adherence of Britain to this same alliance on April 4th, the outlooks of the contending sides were finalized; thereby, destining 1955 to become one of the most momentous years of the last decade for Arab politics. The bitter struggle which ensued within the Arab World had three important results: (1) The Arab League Collective Security System became outdated, (2) the concept of "positive neutrality" was solidified as a counterpoise to involvement in the cold war, (3) Soviet Bloc arms assistance was initiated in the Middle East.

Although there appears to have been some controversy in the various governmental circles,¹ Yemen announced on March 27, 1955, along with her ally Saudi Arabia,² that she was in agreement with the Egyptian-Syrian Communique of March 2, 1955³ which set forth an outline for Arab Defense and Economic Cooperation in opposition to the Bagdad Pact and that she

¹New York Times, February 27, 1955. Prince Hassan, the Imam's brother, said that the Iraqi-Turkish Alliance did not violate the Charter of the Arab League. Both Hassan and his brother Abdullah were considered to be pro-western. It is not unlikely that one of the reasons which motivated Prince Abdullah to assume power was his fear that the Imam was blocking chances of western alliances and assistance if he entered into such agreements.

²It is not known how much influence King Saud exerted over the Imam.

³For text, see, Khalil, op. cit., 239.

would join the projected Arab Security Pact. Three days later dissatisfaction within the army was seized by Prince Abdullah, the Imam's brother, as an excuse for a coup d'etat.¹ This rebellion was tremendously important to the future history of Yemen because it was the key which opened the door to an alliance between the pro-Nasser elements and the Imam. The immediate result of the revolt was the removal of all dynastic contenders except one--Hassan--and the appointment of Mohammed al-Badr, the Imam's son and known Nasser sympathizer, as Crown Prince April 7, 1955, Deputy Premier, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Minister of Defense.²

After forecasting reforms with the use of Imam Yahya's hidden fortune and stating that Americans would be offered oil and development projects, al-Badr flew to Egypt (May) in order to thank Nasser for the support he had shown the Yemeni government during the coup.³ In the meantime, a Yemeni delegation attended the Bandung Conference and, in the final communique, April 24, 1955,⁴ she received the satisfaction of obtaining international recognition and support for her position in regard to the occupied south. The profits of following the Nasser line were beginning to be realized. The signature of an Egyptian-Yemeni military training mission agreement, July 10, 1955, emphasized this even further. Now, her "rag-tag" army was to receive the training necessary to conduct successful

¹See Chapter III for detailed discussion.

²New York Times, September 1, 1955.

³Ibid., May 13, 1955. At news of the revolt, Nasser sent Lt. Colonel Shafai on a mission to Yemen in order to arbitrate the dispute. Keesing's, op. cit., (April 23-30, 1955), 14167. Al-Badr undoubtedly used this meeting to negotiate for the Egyptian military training mission which was sent in July.

⁴For text, see, Khalil, op. cit., 899.

operations in modern warfare. There is little question that such training was necessary if more favorable results were to be obtained in the Protectorate.

On September 27, 1955, President Nasser announced the purchase of Czech arms in a speech to his army. The western embargo was broken and the formation of the Southern-Tier military alliance was thus stimulated.¹ Within three weeks, October 11, 1955, the Soviet Ambassador to Egypt, Mr. Daniel A. Solod was offering industrial, agricultural, and technical assistance to any Middle Eastern Country who desired it.² This act initiated the formal Soviet economic offensive in the Middle East and Yemen began negotiations immediately, October 17, 1955, in order to renew the Treaty of Friendship of 1928. This was accomplished on October 31st. The year ended with Yemen granting an American oil company concession rights over large sections of the Tihama, November 23rd, and the formation of an Egyptian-Syrian-Saudi Arabian unified military command in compliance with their earlier treaties on December 27th.

Having witnessed the advantages which were accruing to Egypt through Soviet Bloc assistance and having failed to acquire western military support, the ratification of the USSR-Yemeni treaty of Friendship by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet (February 28th) paved the way for the conclusion of a number of agreements which further aligned the Egyptian-Yemeni foreign policies.³ Concurrently, the Saudi Arabian dispute with Britain concerning her southern frontier, her earlier alignment with Egypt,

¹The initial agreements were signed on October 20th with Syria and October 27, 1955 with Saudi Arabia. For text, see, Ibid., 242.

²New York Times, October 11, 1955.

³Ibid., February 29, 1956.

and her willingness to supply arms to the Protectorate¹ gave added impetus to the mutual benefits which could be derived from joint policies. Thus, on March 30, 1956, Yemen and the USSR signed a Friendship and Commerce Agreement² and on April 21st, Yemen added her signature to the Egyptian-Saudi Arabian Defense Agreement³ which automatically unified the military policies of the three countries. The indications are that Nasser had promised the Imam assistance in acquiring Soviet arms as an enticement while King Saud offered the 3-4 million dollars necessary for the purchase.⁴ Although the treaty was regarded in a number of circles as being little more than a paper gesture, the psychological effects resulting from the extension of the neutralist bloc and Nasser's influence deep in the Peninsula forced a more realistic appraisal. At the same time, there is reason to believe Nasser was urging moderation in the Yemeni attitude toward Britain while desiring to rely primarily on his propaganda--in particular--because, henceforth, such policies would have direct repercussions in Egypt. Then too, the British had given up the idea of federation and turned the problem over to the Protectorate chiefs who were known to fight among themselves and were subject to Cairo propaganda attacks as well as other pressures.⁵ Other indications supporting this

¹Ingrams, op. cit., 91. Two Saudi trucks were sent to Aulaqi territory in February.

²This treaty resulted in a 25 million dollar loan of which 5 million was to be used for agriculture (principally irrigation works and cotton cultivation) and the remainder on the Hodeida port. Credits were extended for a 5 year period to be repaid over a 15 year period at 2.5% interest.

³The Imam flew to Jedda where he met Nasser. This was the first time that an Imam had been out of Yemen since the turn of the century.

⁴Ingrams, op. cit., 92 and United States, Senate Document No. 58, "Soviet Economic Penetration into the Middle East", (Washington: US Government Printing Office, September 4, 1959), 13. One source mentions that Saudi Arabia loaned 10 million dollars for this purpose. See, "Chronology", Middle East Journal, Vol. 17 (1963), 149.

⁵Yemeni engagements had subsided since 1954.

contention are that a more aggressive attitude might have been detrimental to the Aswan Dam negotiations. Also, it was advisable to acquire substantial big power support if the scale balance was to be changed in favor of the Arabs.

SOVIET BLOC SUPPORT

Once committed to the idea of using the Soviet bloc to offset the West, Yemeni foreign policy was characterized by swift endeavors to conclude beneficial agreements. For the next few years the outward indications were that Yemen was quickly becoming a Soviet satellite. On the 11th of June, Crown Prince al-Badr arrived in Moscow for an official state visit which included discussions with Mr. Dimitri T. Shepelov, the Soviet Foreign Minister. Al-Badr was the first leading Arab representative to officially visit the USSR. This visit was followed by an agreement for the exchange of diplomatic envoys and subsequent trips to the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia where he concluded trade agreements and arranged for the purchase of Czech arms.¹

In the months immediately following his return, the United States withdrew its offer to participate in the Aswan Dam Project (July 19, 1956), Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal Company (July 26, 1956), and the combined Israeli-French-English forces attacked Egypt. Yemen sat on the sidelines throughout this crisis. She announced her willingness to send

¹Details of the arms agreement have never been published but during a 1962 news conference, al-Badr commented that Yemen had only received 20 old type aircraft as part of the transaction.

On September 8, 1956, Yemen accepted an offer from Czechoslovakia to send student missions to Czech universities to take courses in engineering and medicine free of charge for a six year period. Middle East Journal, Vol. 11 (1957).

volunteers but, Nasser, feeling that this was a crisis which could be met by Egyptian forces, did not call on the unified command to execute other than alert plans.¹ But, it was during the height of the crisis in October that the first shipment of bloc arms arrived in Yemen.² By January 10, 1957, Yemen was ready to announce her purchase of Czech arms and it was estimated at that time that she had already received 8,500,000 dollars worth. Propaganda was intensified and the tempo of the border war began to pick up as Yemeni regulars were once again (the last time was in 1954) introduced into the conflict.

Egyptian success during the canal crisis and the Yemeni receipt of arms completely changed the existing balance of power along the Red Sea coast and the relationships of the principle powers. These changes were manifested principally in the renewed vigour of the Yemeni attacks and an apparent drive to remove Great Britain from the Peninsula. From the English standpoint, the crisis severely weakened her position in the Peninsula. In particular, any reinforcement now was bound to bring forth far more logical and meaningful attacks of colonialism. In essence, the maintenance of a military base was one thing: the domination of an alien area because of it another. In the face of their withdrawal from Egypt neither really seemed a valid reason to the Arabs. Under such circumstances, an analysis of the situation could not but point to an ever-increasing Yemeni threat, especially as 1957 was dominated by repeated Yemeni overtures to the Soviet bloc countries.

The Eisenhower Doctrine, January 5, 1957, brought no positive results

¹Khalil, op. cit., 254-255. Statement by Joint Arab Commander.

²Ingrams, op. cit., 99.

in the way of strengthening US-Yemeni cooperation, since to the Arabs, it was directed against some distant, vague, and improbable menace.¹ The true menace was not communism but Great Britain. Mr. Ahmed Ali Zabarah, the Yemeni Charge d'Affairs in Washington, amply stated this viewpoint when he asked the United States to intervene in the Peninsula by invoking the Eisenhower Doctrine "to fulfill President Eisenhower's determination to prevent further aggression in the Middle East by taking retraining action against the British."² Such a twist to the Eisenhower Doctrine must have resulted in a few smiles among Washington diplomatic circles. The point is simply that the doctrine was not directed to the immediate problem of Yemen but rather that of Washington. Although negotiations were carried out throughout 1957 with the aim of achieving greater economic cooperation, no positive results were achieved. If anything, the pronouncement of the doctrine initiated additional Soviet offers of assistance which were substantially larger than those of the United States.³

In any case, the early months of 1957 must have appeared to be an ideal time for a show of unity and force. Yemeni regulars and irregulars armed with modern weapons were in action on the frontier. Threats of mushrooming the dispute into major warfare were on the lips of Yemeni officials. Announcements of Egyptian and European volunteers for the struggle were made in the newspapers. Formal protests were exchanged bilaterally and through both the Arab League and the United Nations. The Yemenis threatened to abrogate the 1934 and 1951 treaties with England. The Imam was trying to get world opinion to back his idea of having a

¹New York Times, February 3, 1957.

²Ibid., January 1957.

³As indicated below, it does not seem that these offers were ever implemented.

plebiscite in the Protectorate if the English would withdraw their troops first.

By the time that the newspapers started to publish articles on the quantities of arms which the Yemenis had received, seven ships had been unloaded and the weapons were either at or on their way to the front.¹ The arms included light infantry weapons, anti-aircraft artillery and field artillery, personnel carriers, T-34 tanks, and ground attack aircraft of the piston type along with an estimated 50 to 100 advisors, technicians, and pilots. Concurrently, the USSR was preparing to construct the harbour of Hodeida and on October 10, 1957, it was announced that they had started to construct an airfield near Sana. Thus, to the Imam, his bargaining position never seemed better.

When Great Britain accepted his proposal for negotiations his hopes for British concessions were probably higher than they had ever been. As before, neither side would compromise. The paradox of the new situation was that although his position had been strengthened, he felt content to continue his demands with the prospect of bettering his position, while England was not about to surrender in the face of such threats.² The failure of this conference was magnified by al-Badr's subsequent visits to Rumania, Poland, Yugoslavia, and Communist China. Al-Badr's one month stay in China netted Yemen three treaties: A Treaty of Friendship, a Treaty of Commerce valid for five years, and a Scientific, Technical, and Cultural Cooperation Agreement. Under the provisions of this latter agreement, Yemen was to receive 70,000,000, interest free, Swiss Francs (16.3 million dollars) to be used for the construction of a one hundred

¹New York Times, August 9 and 14, 1957.

²Following this conference it was announced that France had refused to sell the Yemenis arms two months earlier after consultations with England.

and forty-two mile road, a textile mill, and a cigarette and aluminum factory while bearing the living expenses incurred by the technicians and skilled workers who would work in Yemen.¹

The Sino-Soviet economic offensive in the Middle East represented a real challenge to the West. Quick initial successes were gained in dealing with the underdeveloped countries by: (1) playing upon the "indignities" of colonialism, (2) stressing the fact that she too had been an underdeveloped country, (3) advertising the mutual advantages to be gained by barter agreements which would be a "kind of insurance system against economic frustration", (4) expressing her willingness to sell arms without stipulating defensive clauses, (5) negotiating these agreements on a strictly business basis.² Yemen was but a small part of the overall program; however, considering her population, Soviet assistance appeared to be overwhelming and it was in this context that Mr. Allen W. Dulles, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, made the following comments to the United States Chamber of Commerce in Washington on April 28, 1958.

"Soviet bloc economic penetration of Yemen provides a striking instance of the use of trade and aid as an investment in disorder."

"Yemen is strategically located at the entrance to the Red Sea from the Gulf of Aden. It commands one entrance to all Suez Canal traffic; the oil moving westward as well as goods moving from Europe to the East."

"Soviet overtures were appealing to the Imam because the bloc was willing to supply him with arms, while the west would not. Arms in Yemeni hands on the scale contemplated can only create more trouble in the Middle East. They will fan the Imam's dispute with the British and with local Sultanates over the

¹Only newspaper accounts indicated the possibility of building a cigarette and aluminum factory. The textile mill has never been constructed.

²Senate Document No. 58, op. cit., 5-7.

borders of the Aden Protectorate."

"The Soviets were quick to sense the opportunity to create disorder by giving aid to Yemen. They moved quickly. In less than two years, this small country of some 4,000,000 people has been granted 80,000,000 in credits. Additional offers of over 20,000,000 are currently outstanding. Arms valued at 30,000,000 have been delivered. A Soviet Czech mission of some sixty-five advisors is currently in Yemen for training assistance."

"Even the Red Chinese have joined in an offer of a loan of 15,000,000. If all proposed projects are carried out, the communists will play a key role in Yemen's economic, as well as military development."¹

Since this time, three important facts have come to light. First, the Soviet bloc economic, non-military, offensive in Yemen, although providing a basis for future assistance, does not appear to have been followed by other loans or investments during the Imam's lifetime. Also, largely on account of internal problems, it did not immediately realize the direct or indirect advantages of permanently tying Yemen to the Soviet World.² Secondly, the initial estimates of the amount of non-military aid offered are approximately double that which was actually delivered through the 1956-1962 period.³ Thirdly, in the field of military aid, it appears

¹New York Times, April 29, 1958. It is not my intent to lessen the significance of this statement; but, it must be remembered that in a country which was as underdeveloped as Yemen, the initial expenses will be high no matter who undertakes the project.

²With the birth of the Yemeni Arab Republic in September 1962, the Soviet bloc seems to have re-intensified its effort. This second stage of the program will be discussed in chapter 4.

³In the field of non-military aid, Mr. Dulles indicated that Yemen had received or been offered 100,000,000 dollars of bloc aid by April 28, 1958. Following this, it is known that they presented the Imam with an Ilyushin 14 airliner (September 16, 1958), donated 10,000 tons of wheat (February 15, 1959), extended an 80 million ruble (20 million dollars) agricultural aid offer (December 1, 1959), trained numerous Yemeni students from 1959-1962, and entered into negotiations for construction of a bunkering port on January 16, 1961. However, unclassified figures of the Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research (through 1963) only indicate the initial 25 million dollars grant which is assumed to be for the wheat and the airliner. I have not been able to uncover any indication that the offers of additional assistance were ever accepted and executed prior to the end of 1962. For reference see footnote 1 below.

that the initial estimates are far more accurate; if not conservative.¹

There can be no question as to the advantages incurred by the Imam in following such a policy. Coupled with the events in South Arabia, Mr. Dulles's comments certainly served to cast ominous shadows across one of the last anchors of British imperialism in the Middle East.

THE UNITED ARAB STATES

For Yemen, the new year opened quite auspiciously. Crown Prince al-Badr had concluded his tour of the Soviet Bloc states with the Communist Chinese loan agreement which was extremely favorable to Yemen. Concurrently, Soviet officials were visiting Yemen to discuss development plans and the further extension of Soviet aid while the United States representatives awaited the Imam's answer to their previous offers. In the south, Yemen could look forward to brighter prospects as the effectiveness of her foreign policy showed signs of permanently blocking British designs in unifying the Protectorate and her military units began to demonstrate a slightly more professional quality under the tutelage of skilled advisors and with the use of modern weapons. At home, the situation remained

¹In the field of military aid, the only figures available are those of Mr. Dulles (30 million) and those published by the Senate which indicate that Yemen had purchased 9 million dollars worth of arms for which she would pay 3-4 million dollars (the estimate was dated September 4, 1959). At the same time, it is known that Yemen was the recipient of 20 piston type aircraft, a large variety of ground equipment including tanks, artillery, personnel carriers, and light infantry weapons; fortifications in the Bab al-Mandeb; and the assistance rendered by numerous military specialists.

This summary was compiled from The New York Times; United States, Senate Doc. No. 58, op. cit., 13; United States, Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 39 (July 7th and December 8, 1958, 31, 922-928; United States, Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Research Memorandum RSB-145, "The Sino-Soviet Economic Offensive Thru June 30, 1962", dated September 18, 1962, uncl, 9,17,30; United States, Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Research Memorandum RSB-43, "The Communist Economic Offensive Through 1963", dated June 18, 1964, uncl, 8, 26-27, 39.

relatively stable. The undercurrents of the reformist elements could still be felt because there really had not been any significant internal reforms but the "unholy alliance" following the 1955 coup had served its purpose well. Indeed, the success of al-Badr in achieving a reconciliation with these elements had paved the way for the survival of the Imamate for a number of years and stimulated the foreign policy accomplishments to date. Further, the pro-Nasser sympathies of al-Badr were well known throughout Yemeni circles and no doubt this, together with the fact that the Imam was old, provided a great deal of consolation for his friends when their joint campaigns appeared to become bogged down in the uncompromisingly archaic system of despotic rule. Thus, when President Nasser announced the formation of the United Arab Republic on February 1st, the Imam was quick to realize the benefits of attaching himself to his coat-tail. His telegram to President Nasser on the same date contained one sentence and the possibility of greater achievements for Arab unity within the Arab World. It stated simply: "In the name of God, do not finalize your actions (toward unity) until you have given us the opportunity of sharing with you (in this endeavor)".¹

To the Imam the advantages inherent in such a venture were far more numerous than the prospective disadvantages. It is to his credit as a politician that in a period charged with emotion and visions of grandeur, he was able to analyze and play these currents with a shrewdness which forced the less experienced Nasser to make concessions to him in the name of Arab unity which would never have been obtainable otherwise. It is indeed a paradox of the time that while Nasser was leading the Arab

¹Salah id-Din al-Munajjad, Al-Yaman wa al-Mutihadah bin al-Itihad wa al-Infisal (Yemen and the United Arab Republic Between Unity and Separation), (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-Jadid, 1962), 9.

Nation on to greater achievements with visions of rapid accomplishments in the perpetuation of his own grand schemes, he was in turn being led by the Imam, through the auspices of the United Arab States, toward a virtual nullification of his efforts. Naturally, Nasser's primary concern, at that time, was his union with Syria. However, from the standpoint of the monarchies, the United Arab States was far more important if Arab Unity, as then envisioned, was to be meaningful. In this context, the success or failure of the Yemeni-Egyptian confederation takes on a far greater significance than is normally accredited to it thereby placing the Imam's role in its proper perspective.

From the political standpoint, the Imam's initiative had the merit of identifying him with the Arab Nationalism of President Nasser. Outwardly, his primary concession was to the reformist elements who were undermining his authority. In reality, it was a superficial concession because while containing professed manifestations of agreement his internal policies embodied no such concessions and Nasser was "compelled to discontinue showing sympathy towards the revolutionary minded Yemenis abroad, without in return being able to count on extending his influence in the country".¹ Thus, in one quick move, which demonstrated a great deal of political realism, the Imam had taken out a very beneficial insurance policy for his regime.

Naturally, the acceptance of this union meant the Imam approved of President Nasser's foreign policy. Also, the Imam would obtain what he considered to be a more effective counterpoise to British presence in the Protectorate. After all, Nasser had been successful in forcing a

¹Nevill Barbour, "Aden and the Arab South", World Today, Vol. 15 (August 1959), 307.

British withdrawal from Egyptian soil following the canal crisis. Perhaps with his unconditional support and a united foreign policy, quick results could be achieved in the Protectorate. It was definite that without such assistance the possibilities of success were negligible. Then too, through such an alliance, it might be possible to draw similarly disposed elements in the Protectorate into a closer and more meaningful alliance which would further weaken the British hold.¹ In conjunction with this aspect of his considerations, he could look forward to the strengthening of his military position through the services of Egyptian military advisors, the purchase of arms, and possibly the use of Egyptian troops if the situation should demand it. Of course, there were always the economic considerations. Reports of the time forecast the use of technicians and advisors to aid in the implementation of various economic programs. But, above all, these advantages were available without sacrificing any of the internal sovereignty of the country. This was the greatest enticement because it was the element in the confederation plan which provided the key to the success of the Imam's policy while insuring the failure of President Nasser's ambitions in Yemen.

From the Egyptian standpoint, there were several advantages at the moment which seemed to far outweigh the apparent inconsistencies in aligning with such an underdeveloped (not yet reactionary) regime. These were summarized by Mohammed Hussein Haykil in an article written for Al-Ahram on December 29, 1961. He states that President Kuwatly of Syria was the deciding factor in bringing this alliance into being and that he proposed to President Nasser acceptance of the Imam's request for the following

¹The Sultan of Lahej was said to have reached an agreement with the Imam through which his internal security was guaranteed in exchange for blocking English Federation proposals.

reasons: "(1) It would be a positive step toward Arab Unity and we should accept it as that without hesitation, (2) This unity might provide the way in which modern civilization can enter Yemen, (3) Unity might lessen the pressure on the nationalist (reformist) elements in Yemen, (4) If we do not take him with us, this means that we are offering him as a gift to King Saud who has been plotting against the Republic since the first day (of its announcement)."¹

Each of these played an important role in bringing the United Arab States into being but the possibility of setting an example throughout the Arab World by aligning the new and the old--let alone the most backward--regimes in a workable type of confederation in opposition to the more hesitant nations, certainly dominated all other considerations. And, implicit in the summation attributed to President Kuwatly was the idea that the reformists needed external support in modernizing the country. Using hindsight, it might be said that this was a realistic appraisal of the situation but not of the methods required in order to implement such support. However, considering the possibilities which the confederation, as envisioned, held and the fact that the Egyptians had long been supporting these elements, there was a chance that substantial gains could be made. An additional enticement was the possibility of using the Imam to oust the British from the Protectorate under the auspices of the alliance without Egypt being directly committed. At the same time, the Imam's efforts toward Yemeni aggrandisement might be subverted within the framework of broader plans for a South Arabia aligned directly to Cairo. Then there was the chance that if a foothold could be gained, perhaps the

¹Munajjad, op. cit., 46-47.

infectious ideas would also spread rapidly into Saudi Arabia, thereby toppling the existing monarchy and establishing a government more susceptible to the Cairo political line. From the strategic standpoint, a close alliance with Yemen would aid in controlling the southern entrance to the Red Sea and possibly bring additional revenues to the coffers of Egypt if the economic resources could be developed.

Having accepted the Imam's proposal, Crown Prince al-Badr was sent to Cairo in order to conduct the negotiations. These lasted from February 5th through the 16th. They proceeded rather slowly because all matters had to be referred to the Imam and, inasmuch as the result of the discussions would be an example for all the Arab governments, it was important that the pact provide for the flexibility necessary for widening its scope. Following the conclusion of these talks, al-Badr returned to Yemen and then flew on to Saudi Arabia where he had talks with King Saud.¹ Although the exact nature of the talks is unknown, it is apparent that Saud was not interested in joining the confederation. It is quite probable that al-Badr carried his final decision to President Nasser in Damascus where the confederation documents were signed on March 8, 1958.²

As written, the Pact of the United Arab States³ provided for the complete internal sovereignty of the participating states (Article 2); the

¹Al-Badr had flown to Jedda for a two day visit on January 25, 1958. It appears that he notified King Saud of the Imam's decision and that his subsequent visit was also an attempt to bring Saud into the confederation.

²This was also the day that President Nasser, having already begun his attack on the Arab Federation of Jordan and Iraq, launched his bitter campaign against the Saudi monarch. It was almost as if an ultimatum had been given to Saud and his failure to comply meant open, unrelenting, and unconditional war.

³Khalil, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, 641-651. This reference contains the Pact, the Decrees, and the texts of the six Union Laws.

establishment of guarantees of equal rights for all citizens to work, hold public office, and to move freely within the confederation (Articles 2, 3, & 4); the unification of foreign policy (Article 5) and of diplomatic representation abroad (Article 6); the unification of the armed forces (Article 7); and, the coordination of economic affairs to facilitate production, exploitation of natural resources, a joint currency system and customs union, as well as a means of coordinating education and culture within the union (Articles 9, 10, 11, & 12). Further, it envisioned that the affairs of state would be controlled by a Supreme Council which was to consist of the heads of the two states who had absolute powers over the decisions of the subordinate governmental structures. The decisions of the council were to be taken unanimously and it was to be assisted by a permanent Union Council consisting of equal representatives from each state who would hold ministerial rank. All diplomatic representation between the two states was to be abolished.

Subsequent decrees promulgated on March 13, 1958 specified that the permanent seat of the Union Council would be in Hodeida and that Marshall Abdel-Hakim Amer would be the Commander-in-Chief of the unified armies. On the same day, six laws, which had been generally outlined in the Pact, were announced. These dealt with the specifics of establishing the Union Council (Law No. 1), Budget Matters (Law No. 2), the establishment of a Currency Institution for Yemen (Law No. 3), the coordination of the monetary system within the United Arab States (Law No. 4), the establishment of a defense council and the coordination of defense matters (Law No. 5), and, the establishment of Economic and Cultural Councils (Law No. 6).

As mentioned, the key to the establishment of this confederation was the retention of internal sovereignty, the requirement for unanimity within the Supreme Council, and the retention of the final authority by it.

However, while making the confederation possible, it also provided the apparatus through which progress might be effectively nullified by either head of state. At the same time, the laws announced on the 13th provided for a far greater degree of direct and indirect Egyptian dominance than the concept of a loose confederation, as envisioned by the Imam, allowed.

The United Arab Republic was to pay 97% of all costs of the general budget. The Central Bank of the United Arab Republic was to "assume the creation of a Yemenite currency institution" and was given the "sole concession for the issuance of currency notes in the Yemen". The newly established currency institution was to have extensive powers in the supervision and control of Yemeni finance. The Yemeni currency was to be guaranteed by the United Arab Republic "in such a way as to ensure the reinforcement of the ties between it and the currency of the United Arab Republic". In substance, the financial situation of Yemen would have been closely tied to that of the United Arab Republic and, to achieve this, a greater degree of control would have--out of necessity--been given to the new institution in opposition to that previously exercised by the Imam.

In conjunction with this the cultural proposals as put forward would have had the effect of drawing the educational system of Yemen into close alignment with that of more progressive Egypt through the use of common curricula, text books, and the unification of technical and vocational education while the economic proposals would have resulted in similar development of trade. In matters of defense, Yemen would have been assured of the advantages derived from adopting the more advanced techniques was a revolutionary army and the Imam had already experienced the difficulties which an unloyal army could generate during the 1955 coup attempt.

In summary then, the laws as announced provided for a far greater unification of effort than at first anticipated because they were directed as much to the internal situation in Yemen as the external. If implemented there is little question that the modernizing forces would have been greatly facilitated and the system of government in Yemen would have undergone many changes which would have altered the position of the Imam. Therefore, the laws calling for implementation were in direct opposition to the second article of the Pact (maintenance of internal security) as seen by the Imam.

While the Imam was willing to make concessions, he was not willing to accept any proposal which would alter his authority within the state. Thus, from the very outset the Union was doomed to failure and the Union laws were never ratified. But, in March 1958, there was hope that the differences might be resolved and that Yemen would move quickly into the modern world under Egyptian auspices. The psychology of the moment was more than enough to outweigh the realities of the situation.

To the observers of the time, the slowness with which both parties were moving toward the realization of the Federation was an extremely good sign that it might truly be consummated with a lasting permanence. The Imam appointed his six members to the Union Council on August 16th and this was followed by the inauguration of the Union Council in Cairo on September 4th. Once again the Imam had assumed the initiative thereby displaying his continued willingness to participate and test the Pact.

In the meantime, Nasser was busily engaged in the formation of the union of the United Arab Republic and attacking the monarchies which had opposed his unity plan. The British government had dispatched additional reinforcements to the Protectorate to offset the growing number and effectiveness of Yemeni attacks and to enforce her policies.

In April 1958, it was discovered that the Sultan of Lahej under the influence of the Jafri¹ brothers was planning to announce his intent to join the United Arab Republic. He had been suspected for some time of having contracted outside the Advisory Treaty system by coming to agreement with the Imam of Yemen. It was believed that the Imam had guaranteed the "maintenance of security in Lahej in return for the Sultans blocking British efforts at creating a viable unit out of the Protectorate and the Aden Colony. In support of this theory, it was noted that there was never any trouble along the Lahej-Yemeni frontier and that the Sultan had permitted troops to pass through his territory."² Now, it was discovered that the Sultan had been offered 25,000 Egyptian pounds by Egyptian agents in return for which he was to announce his willingness to join the United Arab Republic. The British moved quickly and the Sultan and his friends fled to Yemen where he openly declared his allegiance to the principles of Nasserism.

This contributed to two important happenings. The first was that six of the other Protectorate Sultans recognized the danger which the new Cairo-Taiz alignment held for them and they requested permission to federate from the British government. The second was just as disadvantageous to the Imam as the first. By trying to get the Sultan of Lahej to join the United Arab Republic, Nasser, while satisfying the ideas of Pan-Arabism, was indirectly by-passing the Imam and the Imam's own ideas of incorporating the Protectorate into Yemeni territory. Of course, the

¹Mr. Mohammed Jafri was the leader of the South Arabian League. This group envisioned Aden as becoming the core of a United Southern Arabia inclusive of Yemen. "This aspect is kept somewhat under cover, in the hope of making common cause with Yemen against the British and then being able to deal with the Imam later." New York Times, May 18, 1958.

²Ibid., May 18, 1958.

Imam could not denounce his new partner because Sultan Karim did seek to establish a state which was composed of Yemen and the Protectorates and allied to the United Arab Republic. But, the Sultan had different ideas as to who would lead and where the center of the state would be. This subtle difference gave the Imam cause to question the true allegiance of his new ally. In addition to this, there were two different political lines of approach in the propaganda machines of the two states. While Radio Sana was demanding the transfer of the Protectorate and Aden to Yemeni sovereignty and administration, the Voice of the Arabs envisaged an Arab South which would throw off the shackles of English domination but left the question of its future status deliberately vague.¹

Although these verbal attacks were extremely violent, the Imam could never get a firmer commitment of support from Nasser in his border war.² As a result, the border engagements gradually subsided after 1958. The Imam went his own way in directing his foreign policy while the advantages of having a united foreign policy were lost in the variance of the concepts to execute it. Of course, once the South Arabian Federation became an accomplished fact the ability of either party to subvert and destroy it was greatly reduced.

The other aspect of the Imam's foreign policy which further estranged the two governments was his unwillingness to accept Egyptian leadership in the execution of internal development projects in the place of communist advisors whom al-Badr had obtained through his recent treaties. It was all right for these advisors to be working in Egypt and Syria because they could be kept under strict surveillance; but, in Yemen, Nasser had no

¹Barbour, op. cit., 308.

²New York Times, August 1958.

control and the belligerent attitude of Yemen toward Britain--which Nasser objected to--was felt to be instigated by the advisors. From the Imam's standpoint, there could be less trouble in relying on communist advisors than on the Egyptians who brought active, Arab-inspired, revolutionary ideas with them and had the ability to converse with the people. This does not mean that the Imam relished the idea of having so many foreigners on Yemeni soil. At one point, he is reported to have had Yemenis who showed sympathy toward their advisors flogged. Be that as it may, the number of technicians increased. By the end of 1958, there were reported to be more than 200 communist advisors working in Yemen and the anti-communist propaganda originating in Cairo had aroused the Yemenis to stone groups of communist workers.¹ However, this unpleasant incident did not stop the influx. By 1960, the number appears to have reached its peak with 1,130 economic technicians working in Yemen (approximately 800 of these were Chinese working on the Sana-Hodeida road). The statistics for 1961 and the first six months of 1962 indicate that there were 640 and 655 technicians respectively. It must be remembered that none of these figures indicate the presence of military advisors and it is not known how many were in Yemen. There is no question as to their presence in significant numbers. The airfield north of Sana was under-construction and Soviet technicians had installed the coastal fortifications and guns in the Strait of the Bab al-Mandeb.

The presence of these advisors was, to a large extent, responsible for the opening of more cordial relations between the United States and Yemen. Being aware of the dangers involved in employing large numbers of

¹The statistics are extracted from Senate Document No. 58, op. cit., 13 and Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research, RSB-145, op. cit., 17.

Soviet technicians and fearing the policies of Nasser as well as his limited ability to cope with such a powerful nation, the Imam turned to the arch opponent of communism in an attempt to moderate the effects of the Soviet presence.

The first agreement was concluded on January 28, 1959 when the Yemeni Government requested emergency food supplies to reduce the suffering of thousands of drought victims. Fifteen thousand tons of wheat were sent to these people on a grant basis under Title II of P.L. 480.¹ This mercy donation appears to have been the real spearhead of the US aid program in Yemen. It was followed by the establishment of the first American Legation in Taiz on March 16, 1959,² an offer to build the Mocha-Taiz-Sana road as a gift on June 20, 1959,³ an exchange of notes, June 29 and October 3, 1959, through which the US Government promised to pay 800,000 dollars for the transportation of American wheat from Red Sea ports to inland distribution points,⁴ and the granting of an oil exploration concession to the American Overseas

¹United States, Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 40 (February 16, 1959), 246. The Soviet Government also approved a ten thousand ton grant of wheat to Yemen. The first shipment was reported to have left the USSR on February 15, 1959, thereby initiating somewhat of an international race and factionalism at the Yemeni dock area.

²Ibid., April 13, 1959, 538.

³"Chronology", Middle East Journal, Vol. 13 (1959). Yemen accepted this offer on August 17, 1959. Construction began on December 4, 1960 and by November 5, 1962 (immediately following the revolution) one third of this 313 mile highway had been completed. Following American recognition of the Republican regime, a new Aid agreement was signed on January 27, 1963. It provided for the completion of this road and assistance in irrigation projects.

⁴For text of notes, see, United Nations, Treaty Series, Vol. 357 (1960), 138, and Vol. 358 (1960), 386.

Investment Company on November 10th.¹ By June 30, 1962, two and a half months prior to the Imam's death, General Lucuis D. Clay was able to report to President Kennedy that Yemen had received 22.9 million dollars worth of non-military aid funds since July 1, 1945.² As can be seen, the advantages of positive neutrality were quite evident to the Imam. It is possible that the Imam's quest for American assistance and the resultant American influence also aided in lessening the tensions along the border. Once the Federation Agreement was signed, February 11, 1959, the Imam's representatives entered into negotiations with the British to settle their differences. Initially these did not end in concrete results but they were the beginning of reduced tensions.

In March 1959, the Imam departed for Rome for medical treatment. He remained there through the 6th of August. In his absence, Crown Prince al-Badr was in charge of the government. He placed Egyptians in positions where advice counted, contrary to the wishes of the Imam. During his tenure of office disturbances occurred in Sana as a result of troubles fostered by the army. This was the second time the army had led disturbances and considering the nature of the Egyptian revolution, it must have represented an ominous sign to the Imam. It was also reported that Badr had substantially reduced the wealth of the treasury through the implementation of some of his projects.

¹In a pamphlet published by Dr. Abdul-Rahman El-Baidani, he states that in the fall of 1959, the Imam was "interested in the foundation of a Yemenite-American Bank" and that this project was "referred...to us (Mr. Baidani and associates) for economic and legal study." Apparently, no further action was taken.

²"Report on AID", Time Magazine, Vol. 81 (March 29, 1963), 13. In addition, to the various commitments already mentioned, this figure includes emergency aid of 3,000 blankets, 5 tons dried milk, 150 tons wheat and flour, plus the services of a 6 man US Army medical team granted on February 20, 1961. See, United States, Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 44 (February 20, 1961), 271.

The Imam's return brought a reversal in these policies. He also discharged an Egyptian military mission, industrial and farm experts, and a teacher training mission and sent them home. Once again, Nasser had been rebuffed and the reformist elements had failed.

Throughout 1960, the political situation in Yemen remained unchanged. The border war had virtually come to a standstill. The Imam knew that he could no longer count on the unconditional Egyptian support of which he had once dreamed. His energies were needed to offset Soviet influence and keep the internal situation quiet. Negotiations were opened with a Swedish delegation for an oil concession in the Tihama region and other parts of the southern region (October) and the United States began the construction of the Mocha-Sana road in December.

During the first part of 1961, negotiations were opened with the Soviets for the construction of a bunkering station on the Red Sea Coast; a trade agreement was concluded with North Korea; the first part of the Hodeida-Sana road was opened; a Houston Independent Oil firm (John Mecom) took over the concession of the American Investment Company; and, the harbour of Hodeida was officially opened on April 7th. On March 27th, an attempt to assassinate the Imam while he was visiting Hodeida hospital resulted in his suffering several wounds and the government was once again turned over to Prince al-Badr; however, he did not alter any of the existing policies of the Imam and by October 4th the Imam was reported to be back as the head of the government.

In the meantime, events in the United Arab Republic were quickly leading to the severance of the union with Syria. This transpired on September 28-29th after many months of difficulty. The Imam reacted to this by issuing a decree renewing the Pact of the United Arab States for

another three years, November 17, 1961, in an apparent demonstration of support for the idea of Arab unity and the desire to retain the good graces of Nasser. If the Union was to fail perhaps the confederation would succeed. But it was already too late. Not only had the policies of the two countries never been unified but several recent actions of the Imam demonstrated that the chances of cooperation had not increased.

On July 25th, he requested that Iraqi teachers be dispatched to Yemen instead of Egyptian; on August 22nd, he had refused to allow the Arab League Military mission which was visiting the Arab capitals to plan Arab replacement of British troops in Kuwait to visit Yemen; and, on October 13th, on the occasion of the 14th anniversary of his ascension to the throne, he indirectly attacked the ideas inherent in the government of Egypt while trying to consolidate the support of the people and ulema for his son's succession.

President Nasser's shift toward socialism magnified the internal social differences of the two governments. The Imam felt that socialism violated the tenets of Islam and he was fearful that it would lead further down the path toward communism. Interesting enough, this had been one of Nasser's fears three years earlier when he viewed the communists working in Yemen. On December 14, 1961, the Imam attacked socialism and its supporters in a poem published in an Aden newspaper.¹ Nasser, in turn, used this poem as the excuse for the severance of the relationship established by the United Arab States. The Imam repeated it in a broadcast from Radio Sana immediately following the break, while at the same time stating that he would not participate in a propaganda war with any country.

¹For text, see, Munajjad, op. cit., 35-41.

The publication of this poem ended any possibility for continued peaceful coexistence between the two states. The differences of their governments and societies had long been topics for discussion in the light of their union. But, this was the first time that they were clearly laid before the world. The battle was formerly joined when President Nasser publicly attacked Ahmed on December 23rd at Port Said where he was celebrating the 5th anniversary of the withdrawal of British troops. This event was followed by the issuance of a formal statement (repeated below) on December 26th.

"The United Arab Republic has decided to terminate the federation of the United Arab States in which she has been associated with the government of His Majesty, Ahmed bin Hamid id-Din, the Imam of Yemen. The United Arab Republic takes this opportunity to announce to the Arab public the true motives which compelled her to initiate this step."

"First: It is not inherent in the nature of the two governments that the establishment of union could be a politically active institution which could achieve positive progress in terms of the Arab Nationalist struggle. The differences in the two government preclude the existence of similar concepts as to their eventual aims. Naturally, both governments have the right to adopt their own procedures but after years of experimentation it is necessary to face the differences in a decisive manner. This is particularly true because the United Arab Republic feels a deep obligation to the Arab mass movement which seeks social justice (collective justice)."

"Second: The United Arab Republic finds herself obliged to clearly state her position toward union. It is felt that union can never be achieved without there being a mutual understanding as to how the complex problems of development may be solved. If on the one hand the United Arab Republic believes that socialism is the true solution to the Arab problem, on the other, she is firmly convinced that unity is inevitable. But, she believes that the alignment of social views is essential if the spirit of unity is to be successfully implemented."

"Third: The United Arab Republic initiated the call for Arab unity in the hope that this could be a method of serving the people of Yemen by answering their just problems. However, the experience of the past few years has assured us beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Yemeni people did not benefit from the experiment. The United Arab Republic had been hopeful that the government of Yemen would recognize the true purpose of this union."

"At the same time, this step does in no way alter the ability of the United Arab Republic to live in peaceful coexistence with states who do not share similar social views and whose systems differ. Therefore, the United Arab Republic will adhere to its relations with the Yemen Government and will never hesitate to offer this government any political, economic, or military assistance from which the brother Arab peoples of Yemen would receive benefits."¹

Thus ended the truce between these two extremely divergent governments. In reality, the accomplishments of the confederation had been negligible. If anything, it had simply served to magnify and broaden the differences which initially existed while providing a superficial example of the concepts of Arab unity. In light of these differences, it is all the more amazing that the federation was able to withstand the forces which tended to split it, as long as it did. Once committed to the idea of socialism and the attack of reactionary regimes, there could no longer be any compromise with the Imam as the Egyptian attacks would have lost their significance. The past had demonstrated the uselessness of such ventures, perhaps the future would bring more positive achievements.

¹Manajjad, op. cit., 42-44.

CHAPTER III

THE REFORM MOVEMENT

On September 26, 1962, the Yemeni revolutionaries overthrew one of the most despotic dynasties remaining in existence during the 20th Century. This government had conducted its foreign relations under the official title "Mutawakkili Kingdom of Yemen" since the declaration of its independence following the first World War. Indeed, in outward manifestations, it was similar to a monarchy but, in reality, it was a theocratic state existing under the strict tenets of Zaidi Islam. Its title was simply a device adopted by Imam Yahya to facilitate international relations in the modern era: he well knew the skepticism and lack of understanding of foreign powers toward a government based upon the sovereignty of God. Yet, it was this religious concept from which the Imam derived his basic temporal authority and under which he and his religiously based oligarchy dominated the affairs of Yemen for half of this century.

RELIGION AND THE SOCIETY

The Imam obtained his right to occupy this religious office from his genealogy which showed that he was related to the Prophet Mohammed. In addition, as an aspirant to the Imamate, he had to possess numerous qualities¹ prescribed by the Zaidi doctrine which, it was felt, would insure a

¹Gibb and Kramers, *op. cit.*, 650-651. These authors state that there were three essential demands on the Imam: 1) descent from the Prophet, 2) ability to use sword, 3) necessary learning. Mr. Farouhy stated that there were 14 qualities which an aspirant had to possess. Among them were the three mentioned above. *Op. cit.*, 37.

just tenure of office. Finally, he had to be elected by a council of ulema (religious leaders) before he could assume office.¹

The greatest difficulty with this system was that it did not provide for a smooth succession. This was due in great part to the fact that aspirants were required to use force, if need be, to defend the faith and their right to the holy position; and, in part, to the fact that once elected there was no guarantee that other contenders would not put forth their claims. Thus, the Imam's position contained inherent "fears" of intrigues, rivalries, and rebellions. A great deal of effort was expended in devising and maintaining methods which would preclude the realization of such plots.

Once in power, the Imam, as believed by the Zaidis, derived his religious and temporal authority from God through his direct descent to God's messenger, Mohammed. The true impact of the extent of the prerogatives, functions, and obligations of this office become more meaningful with the realization that no power could ever be more absolute than that which is divinely inspired.² When coupled with the mediaeval nature of the society in which this religion existed, the magnitude of his power is more readily understandable but, at the same time, almost inconceivable to those not exposed to this way of life.

Around the Imam was assembled a group known as the Sayyids. They formed a type of religious-temporal hierarchy consisting of an estimated

¹In practice, both Imam Yahya and Imam Ahmed designated successors and tried to obtain the approval of the Ulema prior to their deaths. Each was met with strong opposition. Although the circumstances varied, both nominees resorted to the sword in the defense of their positions: Ahmed in 1948 and al-Badr in 1962.

²There were religious leaders (ulema) who acted as advisors to the Imam. They provided the conservative, traditional, religious influences to which the Imam paid strict attention.

"300,000" people within a society which contained between four and five million people.¹ Here again the ability to provide a genealogy which showed descent from the prophet justified entrance into this class and drew the reverence of the populace. Because of their esteemed positions and the fact that Imamate contenders could only originate from their ranks, it was natural that positions of authority should gravitate to them. On the one hand, the religiously oriented society was prone to credit them with greater knowledge and judgement while, on the other, the Imam was desirous of placating them through lucrative positions thereby destroying their motives for anti-Imam activities. In time, this group came to dominate every important position existing within Yemen thereby forming an oligarchy whose interests pivoted around the maintenance of their status. It was against this conservative group that the efforts of the reformers were directed. They were the symbol of oppression and injustice to those who could detach themselves from the traditions and religious doctrines and understand why Yemen failed to progress.²

Structurally, the society of Yemen is basically tribal even though it does not possess the nomadic qualities normally attributed to such an

¹William R. Brown, "The Yemeni Dilemma", Middle East Journal, Vol. 17, No. 4 (Autumn 1963), 350. This is the only figure available as to the size of this class. I am indebted to Mr. Brown for his summary of the forces operating within the society, government, and economy of Yemen and I have made liberal use of his analysis in this chapter. Having spent two years in Yemen with the State Department, he is well qualified and his article is one of the best available on the internal structure of Yemeni society which I have found in the English language.

²Numerically, there were few who could do this. The continued failures of the "Free Yemenite" movement attests graphically to this. The apathy of the majority was steeped in tradition and religious doctrine. Thus, it would be wrong to assume that the revolution was a popular based movement. The quickness of foreign intervention and the prolonged struggle demonstrates, far better than words, the degree of truth in this.

entity.¹ By its very nature, this society is conservative and lends itself to isolation and to an endemic fear of new innovations. An inwardly directed concentration of effort combined with the strictness of the applied religious doctrine helped to ward off and preclude the influences of modernization and sustain the isolationist policies of the Imam. Enhanced by the practices of the Zaidi oligarchy, it is little wonder that Yemen was underdeveloped.

Superimposed on this society was a merchant class which existed in the larger cities and whose influence was largely limited to their confines. A better appreciation of their relative insignificance within Yemen can be acquired when it is realized that Yemeni townsmen formed only three percent of the total population² while it was estimated that the politically articulate group in Yemen was less than 3 to 4 percent.³

¹Salem, Takwin al-Yaman al-Hadith, *op. cit.*, 11-17. Mr. Salem has presented an interesting discussion of the society of Yemen. He attributes its characteristics to three distinguishing factors: 1) the tribe as a social unit, 2) the differences created by the geography of Yemen: inhabitants of the mountains verses those of the plain, 3) differences in religious doctrines: Zaidi verses Shafi'i.

James Heyworth-Dunne, "The Yemen", Middle Eastern Affairs, Vol. 9 (February 1958), 54. He states that there are "74 tribes in Yemen, about 40 adhere to Zaidi sect, although some sections of some of these are Shafi'is; the rest are Shafi'i." The only other reference to the number of tribes states that there are 28 tribes in the Tihama and 141 throughout the mountainous areas. Mohammed Sadiq Aqal and Hiyam Abu Afah, Adwa ala thawat al-Yaman (Lights Concerning the Yemeni Revolution), (Cairo: National Press, 1963), 31. Neither writer states the method used in determining his figures.

²Gabriel Baer, Population and Society in the Arab East (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964), 179. Mr. Baer has based this estimate on the fact that only Sana and Hodeida possess a population which enables their inclusion in the category of towns (50-80,000 and 30-40,000 respectively). If towns with less population density were included this figure would probably rise to 10%.

³Charles D. Cremeans, The Arabs and the World, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963), 89. This politically articulate group in Yemen was located primarily in the merchant class, thus the significance of the existing relationship.

This merchant group was the first to feel the strangulation effects of the unjust economic isolation policies and the entrance of government officials into commercial enterprises in competition to themselves. Since its members possessed the wealth to travel, maintained the contacts with the outside world, and educated their sons abroad, the gap between their desires and the unjust Imamate practices constantly increased. Their grievances multiplied and eventually took on the broader aspects of an external liberal reform movement which envisioned dramatic alterations of Yemeni society.

But, the antagonism which fostered this situation also contained religious overtones inherent in the differences between the Zaidi and the Shafi'i doctrines. In Yemen, the Shafi'i did not have an opportunity to obtain other than a modicum of political influence. Economic wealth was the only answer if any status was to be acquired. Therefore, the merchant group was primarily Shafi'i. They had prospered under the Turkish system but, once the Turks withdrew, the Zaidis quickly moved in to lessen their prosperity and render their economic influence ineffectual. Zaidi success is clearly seen when it is realized that the reform movement was predominantly Shafi'i in its religious orientation. In final analysis, this religious difference was more significant than the strictly economic aspects of the quarrel since it remained constant throughout Yemeni history and only served to intensify ill-feelings at any given moment.

As is always the case in such a society, the vast majority of the population existed to sustain the privileged few. Their principle occupation was agriculture. The existence which they managed to reap from their fields was barely adequate to sustain life: let alone pay the exorbitant taxes which were levied on them. Their apathy to this situation was an

outgrowth of the deeply engrained religiously-inspired customs and traditions which had prevailed in Yemen for centuries and virtually precluded any organized effort to better their lot.¹

Thus, the social-religious structure of Yemen did not encourage an articulate populace: instead, it sought through "the lack of communication and the self-sufficiency of tribal groups"² to keep the populace introverted within their own spheres thereby enhancing and securing the oligarchy and retaining the traditional patterns of political intergration.

THE GOVERNMENT³

In Yemen, the Imam was the government and the government was the Imam.⁴ A system of non-functional ministries did exist on paper. The heads of each acted as advisors or secretaries to the Imam when he desired assistance. The Ministries provided no service to the people as they didn't possess the bureaucracy or authority to do so.

The Imam's commands radiated to the people through an antiquated administrative system which had been established by the Ottoman Empire and

¹Heyworth-Dunne, "The Yemen", op. cit., 56. This author attributes toleration of harsh government to the peoples "universal addiction to Qat and prohibition of all freedom of movement." These were certainly extremely important contributing factors but their staunch religious beliefs dominated all other factors.

²Gabriel A. Almond and James S. Coleman, The Politics of the Developing Areas, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1960), 447.

³Salem, op. cit., 452-474. Mr. Salem presents an excellent discussion of the internal aspects of Imam Yahya's policies which clearly illustrates the manner in which he governed Yemen. This system was carried over into the era of Ahmed. In the English language, perhaps the most extensive investigation of this subject is that of Mr. Heyworth-Dunne in his book "Al-Yemen" and his article "The Yemen". All sources cover different aspects of this subject in varying degrees.

⁴Heyworth-Dunne, Al-Yemen, op. cit., 12-17. Mr. Dunne states that the "Zaidis believe that without the Imam in the system they would die a pagan thereby accounting for his being the main pillar of the system..."

provided for the existence of semi-autonomous districts (liwas) with various subdivisions.¹ The Amirs of these districts were directly responsible to the Imam for all happenings within their spheres of influence; however, they were generally free to operate as they saw fit, as long as they did not violate his wishes and maintained the order and security necessary to control the populace. As mentioned, the task of administering the religiously inspired laws fell to the Sayyid oligarchy. They governed the majority of the provinces and districts, administered justice in the courts, supervised tax collection, and controlled access to the Imam. "In effect, they served in most official positions from which the people were required to seek approval for almost every aspect of gainful or social activity permitted under the authoritarian rule of the Imamate."²

Aside from his divinely inspired powers, the Imam's authority was based on the collection of taxes, the maintenance of an army, and a system of inter-tribal relationships which he had nurtured. To the general populace, the system of taxation was undoubtedly the most oppressive subjugating element of Imamate rule. The entire administrative system was devoted, almost exclusively, to the various aspects of tax collection. Mr. Heyworth-Dunne has presented perhaps the briefest and clearest outline of this

¹For a detailed analysis of the Administrative divisions of Yemen just prior to Imam Yahya's death (1940-1944), see, Nello Lambardi "Divisioni amministrative del Yemen con notizie economiche e demografiche (Administrative Divisions of Yemen with Economic and Demographic Information)", Oriente Moderno, Vol. 27 (July-September 1947), 143-162. This appears to be the original work on this subject by a western writer. The information is based on unedited statistics of the central accounting office of the Yemeni government and personal notes of Mr. Lambardi. Mr. Heyworth-Dunne has assembled this information in chart form in his book, Al-Yemen, Op. cit., Appendix E. The administrative divisions of Yemen have gradually increased. Under the Turks there were 4, when Mr. Lambardi wrote there were 6, and Mr. Salem states that there are now 8.

²Brown, op. cit., 351.

system. It is somewhat of an oversimplification but, at the same time, it clearly illustrates the major direction of effort of the various officials as dictated by the Imam. He states:

"The ministries are filled mainly by the Imam's immediate relatives or entourage, but they have no authority or power. The State officials who execute his orders fall into eight distinct categories: 1) residents or provincial agents; 2) judges; 3) tax collectors (with two sub-categories--estimators and investigators); 4) jailers; 5) customs officers; 6) armed forces; 7) treasury store-keepers; 8) teachers. They are paid in cash and in kind. Of the eight classes, seven are engaged in the all-important business of collecting taxes: 3 and 5 collect; 7 take care of what is collected; 2 and 4 take care of those who do not pay their allotted share to 3 and 5; 6 are billited on tax-dodgers until they pay up or are handed over to 2 and 4; 1 reports and hands over the tax receipts to the Imam."¹

The injustices which were incorporated into this system were numerous. Being agarian and poor, taxes were levied in cash and kind: the later being the most common method. Estimators arbitrarily fixed a collective tax on the tribe or village. No scientific methods were employed. Bribing was not uncommon. If the taxes were not paid, then military units (they did not have separate installations) were quartered on the villagers until such time as the whole amount was surrendered. This meant that instead of a 10% taxation as prescribed by Islamic law, "the average farmer paid 25% or more, as well as substantial bribes for the accessor... Normally no more than 50 percent of the tax collected found its way into the royal coffers. The Sayyid oligarchy, in addition to being the beneficiary of the state, and therefore of the taxes that reached the royal treasury, in effect exploited the system to extort large sums from the citizenry."²

¹Heyworth-Dunne, "The Yemen", op. cit., 55.

²Brown, op. cit., 352. Some figures go as high as 70%; however, Mr. Brown's figures represent the general consensus of opinion on this subject.

But these were not the only taxes which served to subjugate and stifle initiative. Mr. Brown writes that there were "a multitude of internal transport taxes, pier taxes, and export taxes" and illustrates their severity as follows:

"In addition to the ad valorem custom duties derived from old Ottoman schedules, a standard fee was charged on the export or import of each parcel regardless of value or size. Total dues averaged 20-30 percent and export charges 10 percent. The incidence of taxation on agriculture was 25 percent or more. A small head tax was charged. The most oppressive charge was the road tax. Trucks traveling from Sana to Taiz, 168 miles, paid the equivalent of \$31.57 for a round trip. The charge from Taiz to Rahida, the border station, enroute to Aden, was \$17.71. Prior to 1960, when the Chinese completed the Hodeida-Sana road, and the United States began work on the Taiz-Sana route, no improved roads existed in Yemen. Trucks were compelled to use mountain trails that received virtually no maintenance. Because of the short life of their vehicles under these conditions, and also because of high taxes, truckers charged exorbitant rates, sometimes as high as \$70.00 per ton for the 205 mile trip from Sana to the port of Hodeida. This placed Yemeni coffee at a price disadvantage on the world market and caused the prices of imported goods to be unreasonably high."¹

Actually, the system of government was, in essence, nothing more than an extension of the system of tribal relationships into a type of confederation which recognized the Imam, first, as the religious, and, secondly, as its temporal head upon which was superimposed the Ottoman administrative system. The methods employed by the Imam in winning and sustaining the allegiance of the various tribes had been common to them for centuries and, although oppressive by more modern standards, they were well understood and accepted by the society in which they were applied.

The tribes were kept in line through the use of subsidies, Zaidi-Shafi'i differences, rivalries, alliances, marriages, special

¹Ibid., footnote 8, p. 356.

dispensations,¹ and the practice of taking hostages.² The interaction of these various methods combined to enhance the religious loyalties and guarantee the temporal authority of the Imam. Of these, the hostage system was perhaps the most effective. It entailed the surrendering of the oldest son or sons of the ruling tribal family to the custody of the Imam as a guarantee of their loyalty. They were housed in special buildings far from their tribe and educated by the government. All expenses were paid by the parent tribe. If it did not maintain its loyalty, the lives of the hostages were sacrificed. The effectiveness of such a method is self-explanatory and it has been estimated that there were some 4,000 young men held captive in this manner.³

The system of inter-tribal relationships which the Imam evolved were closely interwoven with the maintenance of his military forces. The army was conscripted from the various tribes and was divided into a small regular establishment and tribal contingents: the latter being the larger of the two forces. These military forces were important for three reasons. First, "they were recruited almost totally from the Zaidi tribes of the north Yemen... who were always prepared to follow the bidding of the Sayyid officialdom to keep the Shafi'is under control."⁴ Second, "the

¹Heyworth-Dunne, *op. cit.*, 54. As an example of this, the "Bani Dhabyan tribe are so difficult to handle that they are exempt from military service and from many taxes, unusual for the Imamate system."

²It must be remembered that the loyalty of the tribes often hinged on the particular political situation of the time. This is important when considering the events following the 1962 Revolution.

³Many stories exist as to the nature of the captivity of these men. However, this does not concern us here. Numerical estimates go as high as 7,000 but the general consensus of opinion varies from 2-4,000. No detailed statistics are available.

⁴Brown, *op. cit.*, 353.

army was perhaps the only important aspect of society under the Imamate in which Sayyid control was not directly manifested." Thus,... "in the control of the States' implement of coercion, was the weakest aspect of Sayyid rule."¹ Third, the primary mission of the army was not defense of their country but rather to provide internal security, insure that the taxes were collected, and sustain the Imamate. The degree and effectiveness of the tribal armies allegiance has been amply demonstrated three times in the last 15 years.²

In this manner, the Imam ruled Yemen until the 1962 revolution. His policies and those of the ruling oligarchy had virtually snuffed out initiative and developed an engrained complacency which further acted to retard advancement. Concurrently, the government which they dominated contained a structural rigidity which could not bend to articulate reform elements without destroying itself in the process. Under such circumstances, their personnel efforts were directed toward the maintenance of the existing system. Economic stagnation³ enhanced by primitive agricultural techniques, a lack of modern implements, no modern educational system,⁴

¹Ibid, 353.

²1948, 1955, and 1962.

³The extent of the significance of the economic aspects of this struggle will become clear as the demands and the aims of the Free Yemenites are discussed in the succeeding pages. It is interesting to note at this time that the per capita income was estimated at \$70 annually. "In 1961-62, daily wages of agricultural day laborers reportedly ranged from... \$.15 to ... \$1.15 (including meals and lodging in some cases); of unskilled urban workers, from... \$.48 in Hodeida to... \$.77 in Sana; and of clerks, plumbers, masons, and auto mechanics, from... \$2.15 to... \$3.70. Many clerks engaged in commercial activities on the side, often raising their daily income to \$5.00. Government employees are commonly paid partly in grain or flour. See, United States, Department of Labor, Digest No. 10, "Labor Conditions in Yemen", October 1963, 2 pages.

⁴80-90% of the population are considered to be illiterate: meaning the ability to read and understand an Arabic newspaper. United States, Department of Commerce, "Basic Data on the Economy of Yemen", Part 1, No. 60-2, January 1960, 3.

no governmental bureaucracy, under-developed natural resources, high taxation, no currency or banking system and fostered by isolationist foreign policies, was magnified by the rapid and rewarding advancements in the outside world (particularly neighboring Arab countries) and had ignited desires for progress. At the same time, the articulate few had been forced to leave their country under the threat of summary punishments which usually brought long imprisonment or death. Once out of the country, they engaged in anti-Imam activities but they also lost contact with the people they hoped to assist. Thus, their ability to insure progress was greatly reduced even though the country continued its economic decline.

EARLY GRUMBLINGS

There is a tendency, exhibited by some defenders of the current revolution to date the earliest activities of the Free Yemeni reform movement to the period immediately following the First World War. The sacrifices of numerous people which resulted from the continuous oppressive tactics of the government are often misconstrued to represent a more organized type of popular resistance. At the same time, in their zeal to exclaim the principles of reform, the narrower dynastic struggle which historically surrounded the Imamate is intentionally overlooked. This is natural because with the incorporation of these dynastic undertones into the movement, the higher ideals of reform were sacrificed to the inner-Imamate power struggles.

The many factors which generated the reform movement apparently realized their first expression about 1935 when a constitution was proposed for adoption¹ and a small group of independent liberal minded

¹Davis, op. cit., 505.

writers began publishing. The efforts of these men do not appear to have caused concern until 1936 when, as a result of the formation of a secret society calling for reform which had branches in Zabhan, Taiz, Ibb, and Sana, several of them were arrested. Among those so detained in Taiz was Mohammed Ahmed Nu'man, a future leader of the Free Yemenis.¹ The exact details surrounding the actions of these men are unknown but one author commented that "as early as 1936, some foreign sources reported, without confirmation, the arrest of several persons in Sana on the charge of circulating a manifesto asking for internal reforms and the modernization of the country."²

Similar activities were apparently being conducted by individual Yemenis who had escaped the restraint of Yemeni injustice and sought refuge in Aden where there was greater freedom of expression. It was there in 1937 that Mr. Farago attended the meeting of one of the Aden political clubs and listened to a "prototype of Arab revolutionaries" a leader of Yemeni political refugees, Mr. al-Hathrani, attack the Yemeni government for its cruelties and backwardness. His activities were not limited to speeches as he was known to have "smuggled poems into Yemen for the oppressed people" in which he predicted the return of refugee Yemenis "as free men in a free land".³

Such activity in Aden was to be understood because it was a natural home for the refugees. It was close to Yemen, there were a large number of Yemenis living there, and there were few other Arab countries where revolutionaries could be active in the Arab World. From the outset, Aden

¹Aqal and Aafah, op. cit., 131.

²Faroughy, op. cit., 26.

³Farago, op. cit., 61, 78.

provided the headquarters of the emigrant Yemeni movement and played a key role in the activities of the dissidents. It is this fact which greatly reduced their effectiveness in dealing with the Imam. He felt that they were really encouraged and supported by the British who either desired to overthrow the Zaidi dynasty or expand their sphere of influence northward through the indirect means of reform. Either supposition, combined with his almost child-like fear of losing Yemeni independence, provided ample reason for his quick summary acts against groups of free thinkers.

In the meantime, the problem of Yahya's succession also needed solution. Following his brother's death in 1933 (Mohammed), Ahmed became the most likely candidate to be nominated by his father. However, his popularity fluctuated from time to time and it was generally known that his other brothers were more favored by the Ulema for the office of the Imam. Then too, Sayyid Abdullah al-Wazir, an outwardly dedicated servant to the Imam, was not above suspicion in desiring this office. His ancestors had occupied the Imamate and his popularity among the Ulema and Sayyid oligarchy was well established. Nevertheless, he adhered to Imam Yahya's desires and signed a document recognizing Ahmed as successor (1937). He carefully abstained from overt actions which would draw the wrath of the Imam while working secretly to better his position and secure the Imamate.¹ His success was dramatically revealed in 1948 when he emerged as the leader of the coup d'etat.

¹Ingrams, op. cit., 70-73. For discussion of Wazir's activities. Comment: Wazir had headed the Yemeni delegation which concluded the Treaty of Taif with King Abdul Aziz in 1934. Later, he had been appointed Governor of Hodeida and it was largely through his efforts that the northern boundary was quickly established and peace maintained along the border. Later, he was the Governor of Taiz prior to Ahmed's appointment in 1938; and, subsequently, Minister of state and the Imam's personal advisor and confidant.

In 1938, a number of the officers trained by the Iraqi army in 1936 were arrested for suspicious activities against the Imamate¹ and in 1940, another group of authors referred to as Al-Amr bil-Ma'ruf (Young Men of Decent Commands) were arrested. Mr. Muhammed Mahmoud Zubari, another future leader of the Free Yemeni movement, was among the first arrested. The war years witnessed an intensification of individual efforts which resulted in threats of death (1943) by Crown Prince Ahmed if the various authors continued to publish modern thoughts. Although many fled, mass arrests of reformers and educated men were carried out in Sana, Ibb, and Taiz during 1944.² In May and June of that year, several prominent Yemeni personalities went to Aden. The Imamate was openly criticized and "the newspaper Fatat al-Jazirah (The Youth of the Peninsula) sponsored their cause and published articles on the state of affairs in Yemen."³ The Imam

¹It is not known what relations existed between the army and the reform movement throughout this period (1935-1948). The army does not appear to have played a significant role. Thereby contributing greatly to the eventual failure of the 1948 coup. It must be remembered that the Yemeni army because of its lack of modernization never did develop an officer group of reformers, "New Middle Class," capable of executing and sustaining a coup independently of more powerful civilian groups. This is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the 1962 Yemeni revolution; and, it is one of the factors which separates Yemeni revolutions from others of the Middle East.

²Aqal and Aafah, op. cit., 131. These authors have provided the most detailed link between internal events and the growth of the reform movement during the 1938-1944 period. Their comments blend with the general pattern of events mentioned by other authors and have been used freely in this presentation.

³Heyworth-Dunne, op. cit., 37. Mr. Heyworth-Dunne has written the most detailed account of the events leading to the 1948 coup which I have found in English. Referring to the efforts of these men he states that "This was the first open and public criticism of the Imam by any Yemeni, in fact, by anybody..." This statement appears to be slightly exaggerated. It is true that the British tried to limit open criticism of the Imam but evidence indicates that he was continually being attacked. Among the individuals who entered Aden at that time were Sheikh Mohammed Ahmed Nu'man and al-Qadi Muhammed Mahmoud Az-Zubari.

protested to the British authorities and these activities were temporarily restricted even though Al-Ahrar al-Yemeniyin (Free Yemenis) was by now being organized, gaining strength, and evolving into an external pressure group of significance. By February 1945, it was felt that the open attacks should be renewed irrespective of British desires. The next year saw intensification of the campaign which greatly troubled the Imam and resulted in his dispatching Crown Prince Ahmed, April 11, 1946, then the Governor of Taiz, to Aden. Ahmed promised in an interview with Fatat al-Jazirah that: "(1) the Yemeni government was ready to enter direct negotiations with the rest of the Arab World, (2) to exchange diplomatic relations with the rest of the Arab States, (3) to exploit the mines of the country, (4) to establish industries with the help of foreign and Moslem technicians, (5) to spread education in accordance with the policy of the Arab League."¹ In turn, the Free Yemenis countered these proposals in this same newspaper by demanding that: "(1) the Imam must establish a constitutional assembly of jurists, high officials, and prominent personalities, (2) he must form a ministry of capable and expert men, (3) he was not to allow any of his sons to be employed in the affairs of state, nor were they to be allowed to interfere in the administration; they were to receive pensions and remain inactive."² As can be seen, the concessions which Ahmed had offered--if executed--would have opened the door to progress but the counterproposals of the Free Yemenis would have destroyed the Imamate.³ Unrealistic as these proposals were, they are important

¹Ibid., 38.

²Ibid., 38.

³One of the most interesting comments concerning the relationship between the Free Yemenis and the British in Aden is made by Mr. B. W. Seager and, if true, tends to throw considerable light on the severity of these counter-demands. He writes that "Prior to, and after, the abortive

because this was the first open declaration for a constitutional form of government. The effectiveness of Ahmed's attempts were completely nullified.

When Ahmed returned home he left a revitalized group of reformers who had gained encouragement from the purpose and failure of his visit. They quickly formed Al-Jam'iyat al-Yemeniyat al-Kubra, the Grand Yemeni Association; established a newspaper, Saut al-Yemen, The Voice of Yemen, with the assistance of 30 wealthy Yemenis who bought a printing press for 30,000 riyals;¹ and, unified the activities of the Free Yemeni society and the Grand Yemeni Association under the name of the latter. Their campaigns were conducted through newspapers, pamphlets, and books, and they were not confined to Aden. A newspaper was published in Egypt called "Friendship" which also assisted them.²

The movement obtained a great deal of prestige when Saif al-Islam Ibrahim, son of the Imam arrived in Aden and joined the Free Yemenis.³ His true motives are still questionable: in particular, whether he only aspired to the Imamate or was sincere in his desire to see a reformed Yemen. The truth probably lies somewhere between these two extremes;

coup d'etat of 1948, the Shafi'is toyed with the idea of separatism (which they would always prefer: a purely Shafi'i state, consisting of Yemen, Protectorate, and Adeni Shafi'is, numbering about 2 million) so as to escape continued Zaidi domination, or the replacement of the Zaidi Hamid ud-Din dynasty of the Imams by a Republic. At the outset they approached the British authorities in Aden for guidance and help but without success; this discouraged them, as they had a profound admiration for the British. B. W. Seager, "The Yemen and the Aden Protectorate", Contemporary Review, No. 1097 (May 1957), 298.

¹Heyworth-Dunne, op. cit., 39.

²Salem, op. cit., 476.

³Ibrahim was reported to have quarreled with his father. He claimed that both he and his brother, Ali, had tried to win reform concessions from his father; however, other sources indicate he was fond of alcohol.

however, his public statements do not help in this regard as they all emphasize his support of reform. In his personal writings, he envisioned a reform movement which did not demand the dissolution of the Imamate, which sought reform through peaceful methods, and which looked toward constant contact with the Arab League for support and guidance.¹ The league disregarded all overtures in compliance with its charter. Nevertheless, Ibrahim's contributions to the movement are significant because of the social-religious-political nature of Yemen. As a Zaidi Prince and son of the Imam, he occupied a notable position which served to undermine the Imam and distract from the predominantly Shafi'i religious orientation of the movement. His true position among the reformers was defined after the coup when he bowed to the leadership and appointment of al-Wazir as Imam.

As the external movement gathered momentum, events within Yemen led the religious dignitaries and prominent men to the conclusion that an Imamate regime under Ahmed would not improve the country's situation. Under the leadership of Al-Wazir, they plotted to seize the Imamate and dispose of Ahmed when the aged Imam died. In the meantime, with open rebellion and warfare prevailing in the plains (Zaraniq tribe rebelled in 1947), the growth of the internal dissidence, and sharp attacks from without, a number of the Ulema tried to get the Imam to cooperate with the reformers in the hope of avoiding unpredictable conflict. They addressed

¹Rashid Barawi, Al-Yaman wa al-Intilab al-Akhir (Yemen and the Last Coup), (Cairo: Renaissance Bookshop, 1948), 27-31, 36. Mr. Barawi attributes leadership of the external movement to Saif al-Islam Ibrahim. He has extracted many statements from various publications, particularly Saut al-Yemen, which tend to clarify and illustrate Ibrahim's ideas but do not relate them to those of other members of the party. Thus, the impression created is that Ibrahim was the spiritual as well as actual leader of the movement. This is incorrect.

a series of memoranda and letters to him in which they explained the conditions of discontent existing in the country; conceded that the demands of the reformers were justified; and warned that the existing policies would bring destruction as "your enemies are many and awaiting the opportunity to strike."¹ Such warnings fell on deaf ears.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE FREE YEMENIS

The failure of the Imam to redress the grievances of the people had, over a period of years, resulted in a number of specific demands which were finalized by the end of 1947. A "Sacred National Covenant" was drawn up and agreed upon by both the elements inside and outside Yemen.² It was to be promulgated once the new government was established.³ Through these stated objectives a clearer picture of the existing situation in Yemen and the liberal movement emerge. The most complete summation has been prepared by Mr. Rashid Barawi from the various publications and statements of the Free Yemeni leaders. Although it is rather a lengthy compilation, it is repeated here in order that the vastness of the undertaking facing the reformers might be better appreciated and because these demands, with slight alterations, remained basically unchanged during the next fifteen years of struggle.⁴ In recalling the agreements concluded by Imam Ahmed for the development of Yemen during the fifties, a striking

¹See, *Ibid.*, 31 and Ibrahim Ali al-Wazir, Bayn Yadi al-Ma'sat (Between the Hands of Tragedy), (Beirut: Dar al-Andalus, 1963), 52-53 for extracts of these memoranda.

²I have not been able to locate a copy of this document.

³This was never done.

⁴Barawi, *op. cit.*, 32-35. Where it was felt necessary, comments to clarify a given demand are added in parenthesis.

similarity exists between these demands and the actual efforts of the Imam.

"FIRST: The establishment of a form of consultative religiously-inspired government which would blend the concept of democracy, as understood by the advanced nations, with the traditions and customs of the Yemeni people: in particular the basic religious concept of the Imamate and the royal system which accompanied it. This was to be realized through the formation of a legislative council which would initiate legislation, impose taxation, regulate and supervise all governmental transactions, as well as supervising the conduct of internal and foreign affairs. The Free Yemenis did not believe that a popular electoral system was feasible because of the tribal nature of the society, the religious differences, and the historical background. Instead, they preferred an appointed council which would include the influential notables, prominent personalities, and the well educated young men of the country. As can be seen this would not place the sovereignty in the hands of the people but it would tend to diffuse the absolute Imamate authority to a group who would be more susceptible to popular demands. However, the Free Yemenis stated that they were practical and realistic. After a sufficient length of time and the successful fulfillment of this plan, they would institute the parliamentary system as used in other countries. They also insist that the 'ministry' be responsible to the legislative council - not the executive - thereby preserving its entity while enjoying the confidence and support of the council.

SECOND: To organize the government and governmental structure on the following lines (This entailed an almost completely fresh start.):

(1) The establishment of different ministries with specific functions to include ministries for agriculture, commerce, communications, culture, foreign affairs, and defense. Personnel were to be selected on the basis of efficiency and honesty.

(2) To administratively divide each ministry into appropriate subdivisions which would insure the smooth performance on governmental operations.

(3) Appointing the officials, especially those occupying high positions in accordance with their abilities.

(4) To set forth a fixed system of government employee wages, promotions, and salaries in the case of disability, retirement, or death. (None existed in Yemen.)

(5) The establishment of a separate central office which would be charged with the task of maintaining internal security.

THIRD: Reform of the Judicial system in accordance with the following: (No legal code or judicial system as understood by western society existed in Yemen. Justice was administered in accordance with the harsh canon law of Zaidi Islam which had been reinstated by the Treaty of Da'an, 1911, to satisfy Imam Yahya's demands. "...the Sayyid technique of rendering justice proved to be one of the most irritating aspects of the relationship between the government and the people. Quite often it appeared to be the purpose of the courts to continue litigation endlessly without deciding in favor of either litigant."¹)

(1) To set forth a clearly defined legal code based on Islamic law and the dominating traditions while adapting beneficial and proven laws of other countries.

(2) To establish courts of various levels and to increase their number throughout the country.

(3) To meticulously select the judges from among those men distinguished by their honesty, justice, and efficiency.

(4) To separate the judiciary authority and surround it with guarantees which will preclude its subordination to the influence of the executive authority.

FOURTH: Reform of the financial system of the country through the application of scientific techniques, inclusive of:

(1) The establishment of a governmental budget showing all revenues and expenses.

(2) The establishment of a government owned bank. (Only one bank existed in Yemen. It "provided nothing more than foreign exchange and limited short-term commercial credit. Yemeni merchants were in the habit of keeping all capital reserves in Aden and conducting their affairs through the British-administered business facilities of the colony, well beyond the reach of the Yemeni ruling oligarchy."²)

(3) The immediate issuance of a national currency which is a usable form of foreign exchange in order that commercial relations can be systemitized with those of foreign countries. (Yemen did not possess its own currency. Barter transactions were common. The only hard currency utilized was the European Maria Theresa thaler and, because of its silver content, it functioned much like any commodity whose price was determined by the world market; thereby, favoring exchange profits. The government had no control over its regulation. Coins smaller than the Maria Theresa thaler were minted in Yemen; however, if a riyal (Maria Theresa thaler) was

¹Brown, *op. cit.*, 351.

²*Ibid.*, 357.

exchanged for these a commission of $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 % of the riyal was charged.¹⁾

(4) To reform the tax system so that it would be based on the individuals income: thus more representative of his ability to pay. To abolish customs duties and fees which paralyze the economy and prevent the entrance of Yemeni businessmen or foreign businessmen into trade.

(5) To seek the assistance of experts in banking and financial matters.

FIFTH: To develop an economic system which would include the following:

(1) To reform the agricultural methods and institute multiple harvests which the country is capable of handling. (Only one crop a year was harvested in Yemen. Primitive methods and implements were still in use. Coffee production, at one time an important export commodity, had declined terrifically.²⁾

(2) To limit royal prerogatives in order that the livelihood of the farmers will be secured.

(3) The establishment of irrigation projects, especially in the fertile sector of the Tihama so that the land can be ideally exploited to insure high crop production.

(4) To establish a railroad net between the major cities and to pave the roads of the country in order to facilitate transportation. (No paved roads existed in Yemen prior to the construction of the Hodeida-Sana route by the Chinese Communists and a few stretches around Taiz.)

(5) To remodel and expand the harbors. To establish piers capable of handling the larger ships.

(6) To establish a commercial fleet owned by the government or privately.

(7) To exploit the mineral wealth of gold and oil (Many geological surveys were conducted during the fifties. It was reported that Yemen was felt to have deposits of oil, gold, silver, copper, iron, lead, coal, mica, precious stones, sulphur, salt, sodium chloride, and uranium. However, it is not known whether these exist in commercial quantities. Only salt mining has been carried out to date; however, numerous oil concessions have been granted without positive results.)

(8) To establish industries which rely on local products.

¹Aqal and Aafah, op. cit., 28. This is the only source which mentions commissions applied to the exchange of the riyal for smaller coin.

²In a report submitted to Imam Ahmed in October 1959, Dr. Abdul-Rahman al-Baidani stated that coffee exports had dropped from 12,000 tons in 1946 to 4,000 tons in 1959. United States, U.S. Joint Publications Research Service, "The Yemenite Economy", January 18, 1962, 6.

(9) To liquidate the existing government commercial monopoly thereby providing for the engagement of individuals in commercial ventures without unjust restrictions.

(10) To expand commercial relations with other countries, especially the neighboring Arab States.

SIXTH: The institution of immediate measures to combat illiteracy, spread the modern sciences, and increase the number of modern schools (religious moslem schools predominated in Yemen). To send students to study abroad as well as scientific missions. (If an individual desired a modern education, he was forced to go abroad to study. This method was used throughout Ahmed's era). To abolish censorship and provide guarantees of the freedom of expression. To encourage the issuance of books, magazines, and newspapers and maintain the radio station. To establish libraries in the capital and other major cities. (None existed)

SEVENTH: To establish hospitals (only three existed by 1962) and sanitariums. To increase the number of physicians to facilitate the improvement of health standards and combat indigenous diseases.

EIGHTH: To expand consular and political representation with foreign countries and adopt a foreign policy which would insure the maintenance of independence while freely cooperating with other countries.

NINETH: To maintain the defense of the country by adopting the following procedures:

- (1) The establishment of a regular defensive army.
- (2) To insure a proper standard of living for the individual soldier which would guarantee the supply of his uniforms and food and an increase in the salary paid to him.
- (3) To supply the army with modern weapons and equipment such as artillery, tanks, and airplanes which are purchasable abroad.
- (4) To establish a military academy and send individual cadets abroad to study while seeking the aid of foreign military experts from Arab countries if the need should arise."

THE FIRST COUP

An air of mystery still surrounds a great many of the inner-events which occurred during the 1948 Coup d'etat. However, its main characteristics have been sufficiently substantiated to allow an adequate and realistic appraisal of its merits and faults. Generally, it can be described as having been initiated through a series of uncoordinated

announcements by over anxious members; as visualizing the Imam's death as a necessary prerequisite to success; as being a dynastic struggle which incorporated liberal reform ideas; as being influenced by foreign groups which played an important part in its initiation and failure; and, as drawing its supporters from the more articulate but numerically weak group of leading Yemeni personalities.

The fact that it was the first Middle East coup in the past World War II series has never drawn much comment from western observers. No doubt Yemen's peculiarities, remoteness, and relative insignificance within the Arab World has greatly contributed to this. But, to the Yemenis, this fact was extremely important and it hurt their movement badly. The reactions of the Arab states were openingly hostile. In retrospect, the worst fears of the rulers who disapproved of these events were amply justified.

As the Imam's age increased, the efforts of the anti-Ahmed notables and Ulema intensified: their candidate being Abdullah Ibn al-Wazir (in the western sense, Wazir could be considered a legitimate heir to the throne). There is little question that irrespective of the external reform movement, an attempt to elect al-Wazir to the Imamate was to be made. In accordance with Zaidi law such an act was justified. The elective system was standard procedure.

Concurrently with the growth of the Wazir faction, the liberal movement was gaining strength. Its period of greatest effectiveness was reached in 1946. In that year Ahmed's visit to Aden failed and the Free Yemenis began a renewed, organized, and concentrated attack on the Imamate. It was natural that these two forces--the Wazir Party and the Free Yemenis--should join forces. The Free Yemenis had little choice in

the matter. They were few in number; located outside Yemen; did not command the support of sufficient internal forces; represented principally Shafi'i groups; and they could not relate themselves to the dynastic struggle in any other way: al-Wazir being the only candidate strong enough to challenge Ahmed. At the same time, it would be unjust to consider Wazir's acceptance of Free Yemeni support as hinging entirely on his need of increasing his numerical support. There is little question that he knew and understood the tensions which were devouring the cohesion of Yemeni society and that he personally desired to see reforms instituted. This fact overrides all others and justifies the inclusion of the 1948 coup into the category of a truly liberally oriented movement.

Toward the end of 1947 and during January 1948, rumors concerning the death of the Imam were not uncommon as his health continued to fail. Final preparations of the revolutionaries had been completed. It was simply a matter of waiting the Imam's demise. Suddenly, an announcement was made in the world press, January 16, 1948, that Imam Yahya had died on the 15th and that he had been succeeded by al-Wazir. A great many of the details surrounding the intended coup were also accurately revealed. But, the Imam had not died. A rumor, combined with over anxious liberals, had resulted in the premature disclosure of impending events.¹ Once exposed, the complexion of the movement changed overnight. The loyal Sayyid oligarchy and the Imam's sons tried to convince him that Ahmed

¹Heyworth-Dunne, op. cit., 40. Mr. Heyworth-Dunne states that an attempt was made to assassinate the Imam on January 17th. This is the only reference to such an attempt at this early date. It does not fit the statements of the Free Yemenis, principally Ibrahim, who decried violence. In addition, the first press statements announcing the Imam's death appeared in Cairo on the 15th. Considering the difficulties of communication and the emotional strain encircling the plotters, this error was understandable but unpardonable. It indicates a certain lack of organization and realism in their effort.

should be called to Sana in order to take over the reigns of the government. Meantime, additional rumors continued to circulate concerning the Imam's death,¹ however, the handwriting was on the wall. Action had to be taken swiftly if their safety was to be guaranteed.

On February 17, 1948, Imam Yahya was assassinated by a small group of soldiers under the leadership of Colonel Jamal Jamil, an ex-Iraqi army officer who had remained in Yemen following the withdrawal of the Iraqi Military Mission in 1943 because of his pro-General Bakr Sidqi activities in Iraq in 1936.² The Imam, his Prime Minister Abdullah al-Amri, his grandson Amir al-Muhson, and his two sons, al-Hussein and al-Muhsin, were killed in the initial stages of the coup. Abdullah al-Wazir was immediately proclaimed the Imam and many notables, religious leaders, sheikhs, princes, and dignitaries who did not appear to have any other choice pledged their homage to the new Imam on the following day.³ The new Imam was formally mentioned in the mosques at Friday prayer on the 20th and the text of the Sacred National Covenant was announced.⁴ The new government included Mr. Hussein al-Kibsi as Minister of Foreign Affairs; the post and editor of Saut al-Yaman, Mr. Mohammed Mahmoud Zubari as Minister of Education; Mr. Mohammed Ahmed Nu'man as Minister of

¹Majid Khadduri, "Coup and Counter-Coup in Yaman 1948", International Affairs, Vol. 28, No. 1 (January 1952), 62. Mr. Khadduri discusses subsequent rumors in Aden and states that "Leaflets were also prepared for distribution in which the members of the new government were announced." Op. cit., footnote 2, 62.

²General Bakr Sidqi attempted to overthrow the Iraqi government by coup d'etat in 1936.

³Mohammed al-Badr, the son of Crown Prince Ahmed, did also.

⁴This is the traditional manner in which a new leader is officially proclaimed. It signifies the acceptance of his leadership and the necessity for the people to pay allegiance to him. See, Khadduri, op. cit., 63-64. He is the only source who explains these happenings.

Agriculture; Colonel Jamal Jamil as Director of Public Security; and "a representative Assembly, composed of sixty members of the Ulema and juriconsults, under the Presidency of Amir Ibrahim, was appointed to advise the government and legislate."¹

Ahmed was immediately advised by his brother al-Qassim of the Sana events and he departed Taiz "with 180 soldiers, \$100,000 in silver, and a bag of gold" for the stronghold of Hejja in the northwest: arriving on February 22nd.² Relatively secure from the threats of the new government, he proceeded to raise the tribes. He gave them lavish gifts; incited them against the towns people, their traditional enemy; had himself proclaimed Imam; and, began a series of propaganda attacks on the new government in which he accused them of being English sympathizers, supporting the towns people against the tribes, and only desiring to rob the government treasury for personal profit. In addition, he promised to rule Yemen in an enlightened manner and to throw the gates of Sana open to the plunder of those tribes who would join him.³ The incentives were great but, more important, this was the type of appeal which the tribes understood and which the new government failed to incorporate in their efforts to gain support. His tribal support gradually increased until he had a force of some 20,000 men who departed Hejja for Sana on March 11,

¹Ibid., 64. This group never met.

²Heyworth-Dunne, op. cit., 40. This is the only source as to the amount of money involved.

³Eric Marco, "Yemen-A Brief Survey", Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society, Vol. 36 (January 1949), 43.

1948 under the leadership of his brother Amir Abbas.¹

As Ahmed fled north to Hejja, the Free Yemenis left Aden in mass for Yemen and the Al-Wazir government began its unsuccessful attempt to win Arab League support for the coup.² However, the messages dispatched to the League were ambiguous. There was a question as to how the Imam had died and the true situation within the country. Fearing premature recognition, a preparatory commission was dispatched to Sana only to be followed by a seven man commission of Inquiry under the leadership of Azzam Pasha, the Secretary General of the Arab League, on March 1st. This later commission arrived in Jedda and was invited to Riyadh by King Abdul Aziz to discuss the Yemeni situation as both factions--Ahmed and Wazir--were now communicating with the League and the situation seemed to be rapidly deteriorating within the country. The League Commission accepted this offer and a suggestion to invite the contesting parties to send representatives to Riyadh in order that they might arbitrate the dispute. Wazir complied; but, Ahmed, who had warned the League against intervention, had begun his march on Sana which he occupied on March 14th thereby ending the coup.³

¹Heyworth-Dunne, op. cit., 41. Only estimated strength figure available.

²Ibid., 41, 43. Apparently there was some disagreement among the leaders of the external Yemeni group as Mr. Zubari and Mr. Nu'man, the leader of the Shafi'is in the revolution, are reported to have quarreled violently. Mr. Nu'man wanted Ibrahim to remain in Taiz - a stronghold of Shafi'is - in order to organize resistance. Mr. Zubari thought he should be in Sana. This is the only report of disagreement between these men. If Mr. Nu'man's plan had been followed the revolution could have been strengthened.

For text of the telegram sent by Mr. Kibsi to the Arab League, see, Ameen Said, Al-Yaman, op. cit., 138-139.

³Mr. Aqal and Mr. Aafah estimate that 4,000 people were killed in the assault and plunder of Sana. Op. cit., 124. This figure seems high but considering the nature of the struggle it is not unrealistic.

From the outset, it is known that King Abdul Aziz was against the Wazir government because he feared similar developments in other Arab countries if the League were to extend its recognition.¹ His delaying tactics helped Ahmed and, without League support, Wazir could not hope to achieve his aims as he did not possess the internal strength to do so. But, the hesitancy of the League representatives can not be attributed entirely to Abdul Aziz. Egypt and Jordan were opposed to Wazir for obviously similar reasons; Iraq was apparently neutral although leaning toward Egypt and Jordan in her sympathies; while Syria and Lebanon were at least sympathetic during the initial stages of the coup. Under such circumstances, the League could only act as a stumbling block to the Wazir government.

The leaders of the coup were seized during the final assault on Sana. Al-Wazir and al-Kibsi were executed on April 2nd and other participants who were captured were executed during the following year.² However, several members of the new government, including Mr. Zubari and Mr. Nu'man, did escape. They quickly became the leaders of the new movement. Imam Ahmed established himself in Taiz stating that he would not enter a city which had killed the Imam. His government was recognized by the various foreign powers and amidst promises of reform a new era was opened in the history of Yemen.

One of the most interesting and yet least known aspects concerning the coup is its apparent relationship with the Moslem Brethren in Egypt:

¹Khadduri, op. cit., 65. "It was even suspected that the Saudi Monarch was secretly in touch with Amir Ahmed and that both moral and material support were offered him."

²Ibid., 67. He states that Colonel Jamal Jamil, with a promise of pardon, revealed the names of the principle participants in the Imam's assassination and the details concerning the inside story of the coup. He was executed for killing the Imam's two sons at Saada.

in particular why this group supported the revolutionary government. It is known that the Brethren vigorously attacked the Imam. According to Mr. Khadduri "it seems that the Imam's restrictions against the activities of the new generation and his opposition to education might have been construed as measures against the Ikhwan's activities in the Yaman. A number of Yamani students in Cairo, who had joined the Ikhwan, seem to have acted as links between the Ikhwan and the leaders of the Opposition in the Yaman. When information reached the Ikhwan of the impending coup d'etat in Sana, their paper prematurely announced the death of Imam Yahya, giving the names of the members of the future government with a singular accuracy."¹ But, perhaps a more important contact between these two groups was maintained by an Algerian nationalist, Mr. al-Fadil al-Wartalani, who had been quite successful as a businessman in Yemen.² This man was a member of the Moslem Brethren³ who had "joined the opposition and acted as a liaison between them and those abroad, especially with the Ikhwan al-Muslimun in Cairo. He also promised to supply arms to the rebels..."⁴ During the coup, it was al-Wartalani, accompanied by al-Wazir's son and

¹Ibid., 61. Mr. Salem, (op. cit., 481) states that a group of the Moslem Brethren went to Yemen just prior to the coup.

²Mr. Wartalani headed the Egyptian-Yemeni Import-Export company which was financed by an unknown Egyptian capitalist and located in Sana. He had obtained concessions from the Imam but seeing a chance to gain position and wealth it appears that he joined the rebels and apparently played an important but not clearly defined part in its activities. Although it is purely supposition, I suggest that perhaps the backing for this company came from the Moslem Brethren who desired entry into Yemen.

³Sa'id, op. cit., 137. Only source which specifically says this. But, from the comments of others, it seems that this is correct.

⁴Khadduri, op. cit., 62. Mr. Khadduri credits Mr. Wartalani with being the "brains of the opposition". Although he appears to have played an important role, it would appear that al-Wazir occupied this position unless he was being completely deceived by his alien supporters.

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Mr. Zubari, who headed the Wazir delegation to the Arab League Commission in Riyad and put the new governments case before King Abdul Aziz.¹ Perhaps Mr. Barawi's comment on the activities of the Brethren, in view of the above, provide a far greater clarity to the confused and questionable relationship with this organization. He writes:

"Some people question themselves astonishingly about the role of the Egyptian organization--the Moslem Brethren--in preparing the coup and the nature of its purposes to be accomplished through this participation, if it is indeed true. This is due to the fact that when the new government was installed in office, the Egyptian Weekly magazine, al-Akhbar al-Yom, declared that the head of the Brothers was called upon to participate in organizing the matters of the country and that a few of his group were prepared, at that time, to travel to Yemen. When the new government collapsed some of the newspapers reported discovering that 100,000 guineas had been sent to the Moslem Brethren and that the leaders of the Brethren confirmed this even though they had not as yet received the money. They said that the purpose of the money was to purchase weapons and other items needed by the Yemeni government. Observers feel that contact was maintained between the two groups and that the Brethren were hostile to the government of Imam Yahya because he had forbidden them to practice in Yemen."²

As can be seen sufficient information is available to thoroughly implicate the Brethren in the coup. Their relationship with the Free Yemenis is not illogical. Their objectives of regenerating Islam in light of modern developments were quite similar to the avowed aims of the Free Yemenis.³ After all, the strictness of Islamic doctrines was an

¹His representation on the Yemeni delegation seems rather strange as he was not a Yemeni citizen. It leads one to suspect that he was appointed for reasons other than those of explaining the case of the new coup. However, this is but supposition.

²Barawi, op. cit., 22-23. This is a free translation of Mr. Barawi's statement.

³For an excellent discussion of the Moslem Brethren, see, Ishak Musa Husaini, The Moslem Brethren (Beirut: Khayat's College Book Cooperative, 1956), 186 pages.

integral part of Yemeni experience. Considering the period involved and the Free Yemeni aims of adapting the advantages of the modern advanced nations within the framework of their religious society, a striking similarity exists. It is one which, if properly exploited, could possibly have led to the formation of a state based upon the doctrines of the Brethren. Then too, this organization was capable of aiding the development of Yemen as its membership included a wide variety of professional men; there was an apparent dislike for the Imam Yahya: quite possibly because of his Zaidi doctrines; and, the movement definitely needed external support if success was to be achieved.

The assassination of the aged Imam brought the disapproval of the entire Arab World crushing down upon the new government. If they had waited as initially planned, that is if they had been able to wait, it is doubtful that the other Arab States would have disapproved so quickly; especially since Zaidi doctrine provided for the transfer of power through elections. But nations with Kings at their head could not be expected to sanction murder. The assassination was also a mistake from the standpoint of the Yemeni people. Imam Yahya had carved the independent state of Yemen out of the Turkish Empire almost singlehandedly. His rule may have been harsh and led to isolation but it had also kept Yemen Independent. Thus, he was a respected individual of the society. When it was learned that this gentleman of 83 had been murdered, the wrath of the people was quickly seen in their transfer of allegiance to Ahmed. Coupled with this was the fact that the new government did not punish the criminals who executed the assassination. Instead, it appeared to honor them by giving them important positions within the framework of the new government. In a society where the old adage "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" still operated as a law of life, this was as

great a crime as firing the actual shots.

It appears that the leaders of the revolution lacked a great deal of political realism. In their haste to establish a government which was enlightened, they overlooked the existing traditions and the lack of general Yemeni ability to relate himself to new experiences without relying on centuries old experiences. Therefore, when the new government failed to surround itself with the traditional leaders (these were the important people for success)¹ of the society (they appointed many young educated individuals instead); failed to emerge from Sana and secure the country; and failed to offer the tribes or utilize other forceful methods to win the tribes, their speeches did little to arouse the populace who could not comprehend the revolution or its aims. But then, the movement was confined to a relatively small Sana based group who never had a large following in Yemen and, in the initial stages of the revolution, they had failed to secure the treasury. This was extremely important because it meant that they lacked the funds necessary to conduct governmental affairs and win the tribes while their opponents spent liberally and promised freely: the accepted method. What's more, they had not been able to win the support of the army. It is true that a small group did participate initially; however, the remainder of the personnel apparently remained neutral. With no physical forces to protect them and to maintain internal security and no influence outside Sana, the country quickly became engulfed with a number of disturbances and incidents which further tended to illustrate the weakness of the new government when they failed to take appropriate action.² In short, by the time that Ahmed reached Sana there

¹Heyworth-Dunne, op. cit., 42.

²Sa'id, op. cit., 141-142. Mr. Sa'id has reproduced two of al-Wazir's radio warnings against violence and disorder in which he threatened the people with bombings and other oppressive measures. He did not have the ability to carry out his threats.

was hardly anyone to protect the new government. One writer states that the leaders were imprisoned by their guards who had maintained contact with Ahmed's forces throughout the coup and held them captive pending the arrival of Ahmed.

It should also be remembered that the premature announcement of the coup gave the government an opportunity to prepare for the impending events and that there was apparently some disagreement within the leadership as to how their plan was to be executed. This latter point is understandable because their basic plan did not contain a realistic appraisal of the forces which they would be operating against once in power and the methods to be used in reducing them. On top of this, their announcements and threats of calling in foreign powers--particularly the English--also provided reasons for disapproval. The Yemenis could visualize another foreign occupation while the Arab States resented any indication of the further spread of English influence.

Thus, in reality, the 1948 coup accomplished very little. With the fall of Sana, the government quickly returned to its former state and a few fortunate free Yemenis escaped to Aden and Cairo. If anything, this first aggression did serve as ample warning to the new Imam that changes had to be instituted. It is to his credit that the next few years witnessed the granting of Yemen's first concessions and a slightly accelerated acceptance of foreign assistance. But, these developments were confined to the economic sphere. The internal governmental structure remained as it was with the wounded cries of the Free Yemenis still echoing from across the frontier and the Red Sea.

THE FREE YEMENIS AND THE 1955 COUP

As the defeated Free Yemenis fled to all parts of the Arab World, Ahmed set about to re-establish his absolute authority while instituting minimal concessions which he hoped would serve to moderate liberal attacks and possibly be a basis for rapprochement. His economic foreign policy aimed at satisfying these goals and his Protectorate policy was such as to stimulate a regrouping of national support around the Imamate while distracting the populace from internal problems. The effectiveness of his self-imposed compromise with the forces of change was substantial. Dr. Abdul-Rahman al-Badani, a Free Yemeni and future Deputy Premier following the 1962 Revolution, attested to this quite pointedly in a pamphlet published October 30, 1959 in which he states: "At the beginning of his reign the Imam used to accept advice and suggestions; he pretended to have a desire for reform. He used to listen to my hard and daring words pronounced in the presence of some friends, some of whom are still living. At that time, I pointed out to him the bad situation in the country and its economic decline..."¹

As indicated, the attitudes engendered by such a policy did serve to temporarily pacify the reformers. They were instrumental in reducing the effectiveness of the liberals within Yemen: the ones who, if properly organized and supported, could do the greatest damage to the regime. This was further enhanced by the fact that the opposition felt the only way in which reforms could and should be instituted was through reconciliation and support of the existing government. This attitude had been prevalent since the inception of the movement in 1946. Yemeni experience had been

¹U.S. Joint Publications Research Service, op. cit., 2.

so intricately tied to the Imamate system and the weakness of the movement following the 1948 coup was so apparent that the reformers could not visualize success without compromise. Later, this would create a wider divergence of attitudes within the movement. For the time being, the malcontents were committed to this idea: their differences centering around the question of succession.

The importance of these inner-party differences to the Imamate can not be overly stressed. It is the one aspect of the struggle which the Imam keenly understood and effectively used to prevent the positive solidification of the opposition.¹ In this respect, his greatest asset was his son, Mohammed al-Badr, who became an avid liberal sympathizer and devout Nasser supporter. The manner in which the Imam manipulated the political activities of his son to his personal advantage and that of the Imamate is a tribute to his political acumen. More than once during his reign, it was al-Badr and his loyalty to his father that saved the day for the decadent government.

In some respects, Badr's liberalism almost seems to represent a coldly calculated move by the Imam to reassure the opposition that the existing regime was amicable to their desires and to provide al-Badr with a modified set of personal qualities which would insure his succession as Imam in a rapidly changing world. At first glance, this may appear to be a rather harsh judgement, but as the role of al-Badr unfolded during the fifties and early sixties, this interpretation evidently gained strength among the liberals as one reform attempt after another collapsed and the

¹His final failure stemmed from the fact that his policies were adapted to delay, disorganize, and destroy the opposition instead of reaching a compromise solution for the improvement of Yemen.

promises of al-Badr failed to be realized.¹

From the beginning of his reign, there was a continuous undercurrent of family intrigue involving the question of succession and the broader aspects of reform.² The Imam wanted to proclaim al-Badr the new Crown Prince. The Ulema and many of the Sayyid oligarchy, who could see their livelihood threatened, would not approve the Imam's requests. Using the Zaidi law which demands the election of a successor following the Imam's death as their argument, they continuously resisted his attempts. During this struggle, the Imam's brothers, Abdullah and Hasan, emerged as Imamate contenders. Both worked to delay the impending announcement of Badr's succession. Very little is known about the inner family conflict except that phase of it which erupted into the 1955 coup. However, it is reported that all the family contenders except Hasan (the one the Imam supposedly feared the most) were removed during the Imam's lifetime.³

¹At the same time, there were still supporters who believed that al-Badr should have an opportunity to demonstrate his abilities unhampered by the restraints of his father.

²Here, I should like to quote two statements of Mr. Heyworth-Dunne which are particularly meaningful in the light of this discussion. He states that the Zaidi sect is "very conscious of its responsibilities as a ruling group, constantly alive to the uncertainties of the Imam's tenure of office, always ready to join in the game of deposition, abdication, rivalry, or giving allegiance." Then discussing Imam Yahya, he states that he had six wives thus creating "as many factions as son-producing mothers." Op. cit., 52-53.

³The London Times, February 22, 1950. An article reported the arrest of Ahmed's brother Ismail, Minister of Education, on a charge of attempting to overthrow the regime. This was verified on the 26th but it is not known what happened to him. About this time, mention of the Imam's other brothers also disappeared from the international press and little is known of their subsequent activities. Mr. Heyworth-Dunne comments that Ahmed "deliberately adopted a policy of fraternal extermination since all his brothers were opposed to his desire to place his son... in the line of succession." Op. cit., 53.

In the Arab World, the greatest single event which encouraged the program of the Free Yemenis was the Egyptian Revolution and the rise of Gamal Abdel Nasser. It will always be difficult to relate the true significance of this event to the western observer; but, in Nasser, the Free Yemenis found their answer to the tyranny of the Imam as well as strong, meaningful, inter-Arab support for their program. After all, the very word "Nasser" quickly came to embody the symbol of progress: the essence of the long struggle which the Free Yemenis had fought for years. But, above all else, he was successful and willing to share his revolutionary ideas with all who would accept his leadership and continue the fight against reactionary governments. It was this fact which served to temper the Imam's actions and led him to seek political methods to minimize, silence, and possibly destroy Nasser's ability to effectively render assistance to the malcontents.¹ Thus, if on the one hand, the internal struggle centered primarily on the question of succession, the foci of the external struggle was Nasser and the rise of the revolutionary inspired new middle class which, by their very existence, lent credence to the ideas and aims incorporated in the Free Yemeni movement. Needless to say, Nasser's success held incalculable dangers to the existence of the Imamate.²

¹Ingrams, op. cit., 84. "Imam ordered the confiscation of all radio sets in public places to prevent Egyptian contamination. Seeing their advantage, the malcontents again demanded freedom of trade and the end of royal monopolies. To gain time, Ahmed agreed to examine these claims."

²The London Times, September 11 and 18, 1953. These two articles state that Ahmed had been ill and regained his health. Mr. Ingrams states that this was really a plot to assassinate Ahmed and that several of his bodyguards were arrested. This is the only reference; but, if it is correct, it would serve to strengthen the Imam's fears while making him more desirous of settling the question of the succession. Op. cit., 84.

Once the Nasser government was firmly installed in power, remnants of the Free Yemenis who had returned to Aden in 1948 decided to transfer their headquarters to Egypt. The British government in Aden had, in accordance with the propaganda and subversive clause of the Modus Vivendi agreement of 1951, restrained the activities of the liberals in order to pacify the Imam whose resentment of the position Aden had played during the pre-coup days was being manifested on the border.¹ The Free Yemenis had little choice in the matter if they were to continue their attacks against the Imam. They moved to Cairo in the hope of gaining moral and physical support for their movement. There, they established the Yemenite Union (1952) under the leadership of Mr. Mohammed Mahmoud Zubari and Mr. Mohammed Ahmed Nu'man both former members of the Free Yemeni government of al-Wazir.² At that time, the 1948 demands and aims of the movement remained unchanged. The leaders resorted to their former techniques in putting their case before the world. Once again, the Moslem Brethren appears to have encouraged them in their activities.³ Gradually, the movement was reorganized. It was centered around a small hard-core group who kept in constant touch with the internal Yemeni affairs while attempting to increase their foreign influence and strength.

Initially, these reformers must have viewed the beginnings of Ahmed's economic emergence with misgivings but, as time passed, these misgivings were supplanted by hope. True, the internal government had not gone

¹It is to the credit of the British that they actually did institute repressive measures in the face of the expanding border war.

²Aqal and Aafah, op. cit., 131. These authors state that the first efforts of the Yemenite Union were confined to press activities. Among the leaders in these activities were Abdullah bin Ali al-Hukami from the newspaper "al-Salem" and Abdullah Abdel Wahab from "al-Fusul".

³Ingrams, op. cit., 82. The Brethren were not silenced until 1954.

through any transformation; nevertheless, the doors were being opened. Students had been dispatched to Cairo for study, an agricultural school had been opened,¹ the Imam was listening to a few of the more prominently educated and liberally minded young men still in Yemen, United Nations experts were busy investigating ways to solve many of the most chronic economic problems, and, the Imam had even granted an oil concession to the West German government: the first in the history of Yemen.

In her inter-Arab policy, Yemen offered little for criticism. When it came time to fight colonialism and to choose between the policies of Iraq or Egypt, the Imam adhered to the latter and staunchly held to his support. Then too, al-Badr's visits to Cairo were not infrequent and his pro-Nasser statements gradually became more numerous, more positive, and more ideally suited to the cause of the Free Yemeni movement: in particular since they visualized reform through the auspices of an enlightened Imam. The opposition leaders might still explain their aims and desires for Yemen in their publications but, when it came time to criticise, they found it ever more difficult. The Imam's policy offered the chance that constructive influences would eventually succeed in altering the worst oppressions. In the light of these events, a feeling of cautious hope developed during this period.

Concurrently with these events, the question of Ahmed's successor, always an element of internal political maneuvering, began to take on a greater significance in Yemeni political circles as Ahmed came closer to the day of announcing al-Badr as Crown Prince. This problem was reflected in Cairo where three factions had developed among the Free Yemenis: al-Badr,

¹"Chronology", Middle East Journal, Vol. 6 (1952). This occurred on December 15, 1951. Twenty-one students began a three year course designed to cover the rudiments of modern agriculture.

Hasan, and Abdullah.

It seems that all three of these men had, at one time or another, made contact with the opposition. Each was well educated and both Abdullah and Hasan had traveled extensively throughout the world on various missions. But, it was to al-Badr that the leadership of the opposition gave its tentative and cautious support following a series of meetings in which a mutually beneficial understanding was reached by both parties. Perhaps it was this event, more than any other, which actually precipitated the coup attempt of Abdullah in March 1955.¹ In essence these meetings (evidently during 1954 and early 1955) witnessed an agreement in which the Free Yemenis promised to support al-Badr's right to the succession while he promised the establishment of a constitutional government and political freedom, the abolishment of the mortgage system, and the lifting of the economic isolation. The "unholy alliance" appeared to be a victory for both sides.

It appears that the most significant factor which discouraged Free Yemeni support for Abdullah and Hasan was their staunch support for the

¹Ahmed al-Saqaf, Anna Aid min al-Yaman (I returned from Yemen) (Beirut: Dar al-Katib al-Arabi, 1962), 21. Mr. Saqaf has presented the only account which I have been able to uncover concerning this alliance. However, the introduction to his book has been written by Mr. Ahmed Mohammed Nu'man and, in it, he verified the events as presented by Mr. Saqaf. As a result, I have made liberal use of Mr. Saqaf's presentation of these events in explaining the Free Yemeni position under the leadership of Mr. Nu'man and Mr. Zubari. I should also like to indicate that all information available substantiates this account as being the most accurate.

In reference to the coup, it must not be forgotten that Abdullah was pro-west and that Ahmed's refusal to accept the Bagdad Pact could have been a contributing factor. In addition, Mr. Heyworth-Dunne states that Ahmed had failed to implement recommendations made by his brothers in 1954 concerning reform. Op. cit., 57. The fight over the line of succession was the most important aspect and had been going on for over a year. New York Times, April 3, 1955.

Americans and British at a time when it was not politic to be either pro-American or pro-British if you were an Arab. Although his liberalism was similar to that of the malcontents, Abdullah demonstrated the autocratic tendencies of his brother and had lost a great deal of the personal internal tribal support necessary to obtain the Imamate. Hasan's position was quite similar. While Nasser was attacking Iraw for its actions concerning the Bagdad Pact, Hasan was making announcements to the press which supported Iraq's position and the American-British attitude in opposition to the policy of the Imam. Further, he was suspected of having been responsible for a number of deaths following the 1948 coup when he was the governor of Sana.

Undoubtedly, the Free Yemenis retained fears and misgivings about this agreement. At the same time, their prospects seemed brighter than they had in years. To them, the Yemeni governments announcement, March 27, 1955, that she was willing to join her brother Arab States in the formation of a defensive and economic cooperation pact under Egyptian leadership, must have appeared as the seal to a very worthy bargain. But, they did not have time to ponder long. On March 31, 1955, Prince Abdullah attempted to force Ahmed from the Imamate and the "unholy alliance" moved into its execution stage. The Free Yemenis, as a group, were not involved in the execution of this coup.¹ It was purely a dynastic struggle

¹Mr. Saqaf states that it was known in Cairo a week ahead of time that another coup was going to take place in Yemen. He does not indicate the source of his information or whether it was common knowledge among all factions or just that of Abdullah. In any case, if this was common knowledge, there is a possibility that al-Badr knew of it. In comparison to the efforts of his father in 1948, his reaction was much quicker when it came to collecting the tribes and moving on Taiz.

Mr. Heyworth-Dunne states that "The 1955 rebellion was fostered in Cairo by secret groups organized by Shafi'is from the south of Arabia and the Yemen." This would support Mr. Saqaf's statements concerning the various factions while tending to credit the entire Free Yemeni group with responsibility for the coup. Op. cit., 54.

between Ahmed and Abdullah.¹ At the most, they can only be attributed with playing an indirect role by not supporting Abdullah; thereby demonstrating their loyalty to Ahmed. Of course the coup had liberal overtones. Abdullah did announce his intention to make reforms. Also, he had the support of his faction of Free Yemenis;² however, the bulk of the opposition, under the leadership of Mr. Zubari and Mr. Nu'man, remained loyal to their agreement. It was this fact which defined the true nature of the struggle.

The immediate cause of the coup was a dispute between the regular army units garrisoned in Taiz and neighboring villagers. It seems that while the army was in the process of collecting taxes, an argument developed which led to the killing of two soldiers.³ Lt. Colonel Ahmed Yahya al-Thalaya, the commander of the troops, requested permission to collectively punish the villagers but the Imam refused pending an investigation to ascertain who was at fault.⁴ This was not acceptable to the colonel or the army. Following an attack on the village, the Imam's palace was surrounded by Thalaya's units (approximately 600 men).

¹For a statement of al-Badr on nature of the coup see, New York Times, May 13, 1955.

²Ibid., 51-52, 53. This author states that Mr. Abder-Rahman abder-Rabbuh al-Baidani was the key man in the 1955 rebellion and that two of his brothers were also involved. I have been unable to uncover any information which supports this; however, it is known that Abdullah had support among the liberals and it is quite possible that Mr. Baidani was involved. Unfortunately, Mr. Heyworth-Dunne did not explain the details of Baidani's activities.

³It is not known whether or not this was intentionally initiated by the army. Press reports indicate that it all started when the army tried to collect firewood over the protest of the villagers. New York Times, February 3, 1957.

⁴Another version states that Thalaya was imprisoned because he couldn't control his army and that loyal followers later attacked the jail to obtain his release. Then, they surrounded the palace.

Pressure was brought to bare on the Ulema and notables of Taiz in order to force them to accept the abdication of Ahmed and appoint Abdullah as Imam.¹ An abdication document was signed by the Imam which stated:

"With the knowledge and understanding of what is good, we give our brother Saif al-Islam Abdullah the trust, and we abdicate in order that he might rule according to the laws (legislations) of Almighty God. There is no need for discussion as this was accomplished in the presence of some of the Ulema. Let everyone resume his task in looking after the people. We depend on all of you to obey. He who fails to do so will be punished by God. God is our helper. We have also written to our assistants to maintain internal security..."²

With this document, the new government of Abdullah proceeded to establish itself. It quickly issued a communique to the Arab countries which outlined the Imam's abdication and announced the election of Abdullah.³

But, Abdullah was not destined to rule long. Although Ahmed had officially abdicated, he refused to surrender himself and the fortress in which he was surrounded. In fact, he maintained a militant resistance from its confines. None of the efforts of the army to dislodge him were successful. This was disastrous to their fighting effectiveness because the fortress contained the provisions necessary for them to sustain their

¹Neither Abdullah or Thalaya seem to have desired the Imam's death. Instead, they wanted to send him abroad. New York Times, April 3, 1955. Unfortunately, a great deal of information is lacking concerning the army-Abdullah alliance.

²Sa'id, op. cit., 260. Mr. Saqaf states in his book that this document was very ambiguous and only included the following: "The right hand relinquishes to the left hand as I and Abdullah are the same (like twins) according to the request of the army of rebellion in Taiz." It is not known whether this or the one in the text is the true document. Perhaps that quoted in the text is taken from the announcement made to the public following the abdication and the installation of the new government. Mr. Sa'id does not state his source.

³Ibid., 261. Mr. Sa'id reproduces this document.

activities. As time passed and the weakness of the attackers became more evident, the Imam's resoluteness combined with the secret messages he sent to the neighboring tribes¹ gradually strengthened his position. The loyal tribes encircled and besieged the army.² Finally, the army fled in panic and the leaders were soon captured.

As these events were transpiring, both Imam Abdullah and Colonel Thalaya had statements broadcast to the people. While Abdullah addressed the public in general concerning the Imam's illness and the necessity for obedience, Colonel Thalaya's remarks were directed to the army. These are repeated in their entirety because they represent the only statements available by the leaders themselves concerning the reasons and aims of the coup. Abdullah stated:

"We declare to the public that in accordance that which is common knowledge, that is the continuous sickness of our Master the Imam, May God cure him, that he has been unable to carry out interviews and perform the affairs of state. This has created difficulties which have effected those with grievences, those who are oppressed, and others. This led to general discontent and disgust. Then the army, the learned ones, and the wise ones submitted a request to His Majesty to relinquish his rule to us. This he did and the transfer of authority has been made public to all. We prefer to guarantee (at this time) the (satisfaction) of everyones desires in the execution of state affairs in order that the country remains devoid of foreign interference, etc. and that a division within the country, bloodshed, and chaos may be avoided. We have pledged to us to act in accordance with the book of God and the law of his messenger as established in the religious law (which incorporates) the spreading of justice, reforming the country, exploiting the minerals, reviving education, agriculture, and good benefits derived from public

¹This information appeared in the newspaper "South Arabia" on April 12, 1955. The article is reproduced in Mr. Saqaf's book, op. cit., 56.

²By this time, Badr's tribal army was advancing southward. This encouraged the local tribes and panicked the rebels.

utilities. This will be performed with all available means with the assistance of God who is the supreme power. And we make it obligatory on the public to maintain tranquility and security. Everyone must be careful not to disobey this order. God is the assistant of everyone and he is the one who crowns the rightpath with success."¹

Colonel Thalaya's statement, repeated below, is particularly interesting in view of the broadcasts originating from Cairo three years earlier and the relative significance of Yemens regular army in comparison to the tribal contingents which the Colonel appears to have overlooked.

"In the name of God the Merciful and Compassionate: My Brothers, Soldiers, and Officers of the zealous Yemeni Army! We, your brothers, soldiers, and officers humiliation, and a complete lack of concern, along with the rest of the Yemeni army throughout the country, for our rightful wages and at the same time, mistreatment. We have become oppressed and we have suffered much pain in life. We have executed that which our religion, the tribe, and Fan-Arabism imposes on us. We have a mutual understanding with His Majesty, Imam Ahmed. As a matter of fact--Praise Be To God--he abdicated in favor of his brother Saif al-Islam Abdullah, May God Protect Him! Everyone was satisfied with this. Having your just interests at heart, he was elected by the learned ones, the tribes, and the army. There is no one who can protect the country and the homeland except the army. We have seized all centers following the conclusion of a mutual understanding and union (with Abdullah and the learned ones) which will protect the demands of all and forces us to receive the grievances of all parties as well as to become one of the best armies in the world. These ideas are not new to all Moslem thinkers. You are all heroes and brave men who adhere to God's path: he who is the greatest. We ask all of you to maintain security and discipline and not to be aggressive toward any man. Those who join our cause are our brothers, inclusive of the merchants. Through God's grace this is a wonderful day and the world is no longer laughing at our army. Do not listen to those who are prejudice and corrupt. You have known us and we know you. You have understood our purposes, the truth of our honest words to you, our love of that which is good for you, and our desire to give you the best treatment. We ask only that you maintain obedience; that you submit to your princes

¹Saqaf, *op. cit.*, 37. This is a free translation of Abdullah's statement.

and officials; and, that you protect the national treasury. We beg you not to ask anything of the officials such as wages and compensations in addition to that which we have requested for you--- the army and the country---in the form of wages, dignity and sovereignty. Henceforth, may you work to execute your duties before God in such a way as to strengthen the army. Today we have enemies who do not believe. We need a holy war against Israel and May God realize these hopes through you." Signed: Your brother and Friend, the Army Instructor, Ahmed Yahya al-Thalaya.¹

When the coup began, al-Badr is believed to have been in Hodeida.² He immediately proceeded to collect the Hashid and Bakil tribes for an assault on Taiz.³ He also sent a delegation to Riyadh which was to explain the situation and seek the assistance of King Saud. Abdullah did likewise. In addition, the Egyptian government sent Colonel Hussein al-Shafei, Minister of Social Affairs, to assist King Saud in any way he might to reduce tensions in Yemen and improve the existing situation.⁴ As in the 1948 Revolution, the coup ended while these delegations were in Riyadh. Al-Badr had been successful in winning the allegiance of the tribes (approximately 8,000 men joined him). His advance on Taiz coupled with the actions of the loyal tribes in the neighborhood had ended

¹Ibid., 38-40. This is a free translation of Thalaya's statement. There is not a great deal of information available concerning Thalaya's background. He is known to have received military training in Iraq and to have been imprisoned several times.

²Mr. Saqaf states that Mr. Nu'man joined Prince al-Badr in Hodeida when the coup began and urged him to fight Abdullah. Op. cit., 42. This is understandable in light of their previous agreement. The actual location of both these men prior to the coup is not known.

³Al-Badr is reported to have put on a rather dramatic show while trying to collect the tribes. New York Times, April 6, 1955.

⁴It must be remembered that Abdullah's pro-western sympathies were known in Cairo and that Ahmed had just stated that he would join the Egyptian defense plan. Mr. Saqaf states that King Saud offered ammunition to Ahmed's forces. Ibid., 50. Mr. Sa'id presents the only account of various delegations. Op. cit., 262.

hostilities. With the conclusion of all resistance, the Egyptian and a Saudi Arabian delegation proceeded to Taiz where they congratulated the Imam on his victory and supposedly received assurances that the gates of Yemen would be opened to economic reform.¹

The two main distinguishing features of the 1955 coup were the absence of collective Free Yemeni support and the major role played by the army. This later aspect is particularly interesting because it reflects the growing significance of President Nasser and his methods throughout the Arab World. But, ideas alone were not sufficient to realize a transfer of power in Yemen. The Army of Yemen was not that of Egypt and they soon discovered the hard facts of their inability to sustain themselves. Success was impossible with inadequate weapons, insufficient planning, a lack of rigid discipline and organization and a numerical disadvantage. Minimal numerical support had to be obtained from the tribes and populace.² Failing in this, it seems that Abdullah³ relied heavily on a de facto recognition of his government by all elements fighting oppression. Indeed, there seems to have been a completely unrealistic appraisal of the existing situation and probabilities of success, prior to the coup.

¹Keesing's, op. cit., April 23-30, 1955, 14167.

²If it were not for the fact that these events were anticipated in Cairo, this coup would quickly fall into the category of a spontaneous army mutiny which once begun could not retract its errors, thereby forcing the participants to solicit the aid of Abdullah. This may be closer to the truth than anyone desires to admit. The coup could have been prematurely triggered by a series of uncontrollable factors which weakened its chances for success. There is little to support either contention.

³Ingrams, op. cit., 91. This author states that Abdullah was said to have amassed 8,000,000 English pounds through his money grabbing.

It is questionable whether Free Yemeni support would have helped. The 1948 coup had demonstrated the cleavage between the tribes and the townsmen. The situation had not altered in the intervening eight years. The Free Yemenis may have been politically articulate but they certainly could not count on the support of groups who did not understand their aims. The majority of the Free Yemenis were realistic when it came to this point. They well understood that Yemeni society was no closer to accepting a liberal coup in 1955 than it had been in 1948 and that Abdullah did not command the required numerical strength.

The leaders of the coup were quickly executed. Colonel Thalaya was beheaded, April 11, 1955, in front of assembled units of the army, the Ulema, and notables. Reportedly, this was a rather dramatic event in which the Imam offered to 'forgive' Thalaya if the assembled group felt he should be forgiven.¹ Abdullah and Abbas were unceremoniously executed during the following month at the northern fortress of Hejja.² In total, fifteen men lost their lives³ and numerous people were imprisoned: a great many on the basis of guilt through association.

Prince Hasan, who had been in Cairo, attempted to return to Yemen in order to save the lives of his brothers; however, the Imam arrested his sons and nephews and forbade him to enter.⁴ Hasan had been in contact

¹"Revolt and Revenge", Time Magazine (Atlantic Edition), Vol. 65 (April 25, 1955), 28.

²Abbas had apparently supported Abdullah from Sana. He had also been instructed by Abdullah to form a new ministry. See, Sa'id, op. cit., 261.

³New York Times, May 13, 1955.

⁴Saqaf, op. cit., 48. Mr. Saqaf had a personal interview with Hasan in Aden while he was trying to regain entry into Yemen. It appears that his sons were held as hostages to insure his obedience. They were later released.

with Abdullah during the coup.¹ Ahmed suspected that he had worked with Abdullah. He knew that Hasan did not favor al-Badr's succession which the Imam had officially proclaimed following the coup in view of Badr's actions in saving the Imamate. However, there was still opposition to his appointment and Hasan was the only contender left to challenge it with effectiveness. With the situation still unstable, it was wiser to keep him out of the country. In June, Hasan was dismissed as Premier and sent as the head of the Yemeni delegation to the 10th Anniversary celebration of the United Nations in San Francisco.² The Imam was in the process of further consolidating his power.

AHMED'S LAST YEARS

With the situation returning to normal, the new Crown Prince immediately announced the implementation of various reforms with the money hoarded by Imam Yahya. He specifically mentioned agricultural improvement, the development of the port facilities with French guidance, and the fact that invitations had been extended to American firms to aid in modernizing Yemen. His meeting with Nasser in May provided him with the opportunity of announcing that Yemen's foreign policy would adhere to that of President Nasser's.³ These announcements had two important effects: (1) they aided Nasser's prestige and handicapped any desire he might have had to attack the Imam or render assistance to his attackers, (2) they served to further placate the Free Yemenis.

¹New York Times, April 12, 1955.

²Hasan was destined to stay out of Yemen on various governmental missions until his recall in 1958. Ibid., June 8, 1958.

³New York Times, May 13, 1955.

Perhaps more important to the pacification of this group were the Imam's announcements of a general amnesty to those individuals misled into joining the perpetrators of the coup¹ and the "offer of a royal pardon to educated 'Free Yemenites' willing to return and lend a hand in modernizing the country": the only stipulation being that "the pardons would be revoked if the emigres indulged in political activities".² It now appeared that the agreement reached with al-Badr had been justified.

While Mr. Zubari remained in Cairo, Mr. Nu'man returned to Yemen with al-Badr. The liberals, "primarily a small group of young Sayyids who had infiltrated the royal court, resolved that one of them should be near the Imam at all times in an effort to isolate the Imam from reactionaries and to break the monopolistic grip of a few families on Yemen's commerce and finance."³ In the meantime, Saut al-Arab and various publications of the malcontents continued to call for reform. The clearest indication of their predicament at that time is illustrated by their reaction to Yemen's adherence to the Egyptian-Saudi Arabian Defense and Economic Treaty (Jedda Fact) on April 21, 1956. A long statement was issued in Cairo by the reformers which supported the Imam's actions but warned that an effective alliance would not be realized unless her two allies could get her to establish the necessary administrative apparatus and facilities prerequisite to establishing a modern effective military force. A great deal of emphasis was placed on the allies responsibilities

¹Ibid., April 7, 1955.

²Ray Allen, "Stirrings in Arabia", Commentary, Vol. 21 (April 1956), 345.

³New York Times, February 3, 1957. It is not known whether this plan was known to the other Free Yemenis. This is the only mention of it. However, once the decision was made to accept the Imam's offer such techniques were mandatory if success was to be insured.

while the deplorable state of the army and the measures required to rejuvenate it were discussed in some detail to reinforce their argument.¹ In this manner, the campaign was continued during the rapprochement phase of the struggle: modernization was demanded.

The year following the coup demonstrated that Ahmed had no intention of altering the existing governmental system so that the liberals might execute reforms. All measures still had to carry the Imam's approval and none of the prerequisite administrative offices had been established to handle a planned development. Without such an administrative system the obstacles to modernization were prohibitive and talk of economic development was unrealistic. But, the Imam only thought in terms of outward and technical modernization. Projects put forward by the Free Yemenis were met by a well entrenched opposition of the Sayyid oligarchy which either delayed consideration of proposals indefinitely or forced the renewed exile of those demanding reform. As an example, during 1956, Mr. Mu'man had "put forth plans of reforms in which he called for more and better schools and more efficiency in government administration with particular emphasis on curbing graft by the establishment of an audit bureau."² The Imam and court denounced him as irreligious and attempting to subvert the Moslem faith. He had to flee in order to avoid persecution. Also by this time, the Free Yemenis had become somewhat disenchanted with Badr's influence over his father.³ They had counted a great deal on him: only to be disappointed.

¹Saqaf, op. cit., 73-79. Mr. Saqaf has reproduced the text of this document.

²New York Times, February 3, 1957.

³Al-Badr had been appointed Crown Prince, Deputy Premier, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Minister of Defense when the new cabinet or advisory council had been formed on August 31, 1955. See, Ibid., September 1, 1955.

Having failed in their reconciliation efforts the aims of the Free Yemenis were restated (1956) in such a way as to incorporate the new ideas of Nasser without changing the basic demands of 1948 which were merely expanded in their scope. Gradually, a complete regeneration of the existing society became more and more mandatory. The new tone was typified in statements such as that below which were broadcast from Egypt.

"The Free Yemeni movement is a national movement which believes that Yemen is the property of all its people and that its nationalistic bonds represent the strongest unifying force among the people. The blood which they shed in the two revolutions is unstained and pure. It is not confined to one sect or group but it is the blood of one father. It is Arab Nationalism demanding the realization of a unified Arab nation. For this reason, the movement of the Free Yemenis is aiming at the extermination of religious, ancestral, and tribal fanaticism. It seeks to insure social justice for all the sons of the people."¹

While this projection of the Nasser line had its advantages in securing his support, it also contained the disadvantage of tying and regulating the attacks of the Free Yemenis to the foreign policy of Nasser. They virtually became his political puppet and, as such, a trump card which could be used against the Imam when desired. This was beautifully demonstrated with the formation of the United Arab States in February 1958. The two years between the failure of the reconciliation and the consummation of the confederation had witnessed a steady increase in the Free Yemeni attacks. Suddenly, almost over-night, these ceased as the confederation came into being. The completeness of the inactivity in Egypt was brought to light following the collapse of the union when the Free Yemenis applied for licences in order to renew their propaganda

¹Saqaf, op. cit., 80-83 for summary of Free Yemeni aims as expressed over Saut al-Arab.

attacks.¹ Of course, individual Free Yemenis had attacked the Imamate during this period and there had been an attempt to revitalize activities through Aden, but without Egyptian support they carried little threat and cause for concern. But then, the confederation was extremely important to Nasser. He could not allow the organized Free Yemenis to attack and destroy his first endeavor at bringing a reactionary government into the sphere of his unity plans. Too much was at stake. His new position in Yemen "...would provide a base for subversive political and military activities as a first step towards disrupting Saudi Arabia and undermining the British position in the Persian Gulf."² Having made this decision, the Yemen and the UAR had to be brought into a closer relationship. His failure in achieving this resulted in the dissolution of the United Arab States and his subsequent intervention in the 1962 Yemeni Revolution. According to al-Badr, his goals remained constant since 1959: only his methods changed.

During these years the transformation of Yemeni society was accelerated. With the increasing arrival of foreigners to work in Yemen and the importation of more and more foreign goods--particularly the radio--the society in general was bombarded with constant reminders of its underdeveloped state. Further, the propaganda from Cairo forced the more articulate people to reconsider and reevaluate their environment. Unfortunately, they found the basic transformation was principally a material one. While it served to awaken new desires, it had been too

¹New York Times, December 28, 1961.

²Ingrams, op. cit., 142. Mr. Ingrams says that Nasser formed this plan in 1958 at a meeting with Tito and Badr. Al-Badr related this to Colonel McLean shortly following the 1962 Revolution. The date stated was 1958, however, Badr went with Nasser and Tito to Damascus in February 1959. New York Times, February 22, 1959.

rapid to include the social, intellectual, and political arrangements which must accompany such changes. The result was the development of general unrest, located primarily in the towns and cities, which was desirous of modernization but unable to obtain it because of the government and the complete lack of competent technical and administrative staffs. The resulting frustrations were typified in the young foreign educated class which felt that they could revitalize the government and economy if presented with the opportunity.¹ Ironically, the Imam had been responsible for the growth of this class. He had spent large sums of money for their education but he did not realize the potential danger which his contradictory policies were creating. In a short time, he found himself with an expanding politically articulate class whose efforts to gain a voice in government were constantly being blocked: increased tensions resulted.

This general unrest manifested itself in various ways throughout the remainder of the Imam's lifetime. It is difficult to attribute these various anti-Imam happenings to an organized movement. They could just have well been a series of unrelated events which because of their anti-Imam flavor, have come to be called acts of the Free Yemenis. In either case, they reflected the growing internal dissatisfaction with the existing regime.

In 1957, the tribe of Sarwah carried out a strong armed mutiny. They are reported to have asked for a change in rulers and abolishing

¹Mr. Brown states that "By 1961, there were three or four hundred Yemenis in Egyptian secondary schools, more than one hundred in Cairo University, and an additional 70-80 in European and American educational institutions. Perhaps 300 more were receiving training in Communist bloc countries. Even the 500 or more who studied in Aden at their own expense brought home ideas that were revolutionary in a country as backward as Yemen." Op. cit., 354.

inherited privileges in Yemen.¹ In January 1958, thirty-five persons were arrested in an attempt to assassinate Ahmed² and in November of that same year, reports were circulating to the effect that Ahmed had been shot.³ The government denied this latter report.

In March 1959, Imam Ahmed departed for Rome where he was to undergo medical treatment. In his absence, Crown Prince al-Badr was left in charge of the government. His actions indicate that he was seriously interested in instituting reform measures in line with his promises to the Free Yemenis several years earlier. He is reported to have "dispersed his father's trusted slaves at Taiz;"⁴ liberalized the life and death powers of the Imamate;⁵ placed Egyptian advisors in positions of influence (an Egyptian was appointed Director of Public Security);⁶ carried out a major purge of elements trying to sow dissension;⁷ and, executed a largescale reshuffle in the administrative organs; removed the army commander, police chief, and named an eight man parliamentary council.⁸ In addition, he halted border hostilities and "sent a delegation to Aden to discuss a frontier settlement."⁹ Unfortunately, these efforts were

¹Aqal and Aafah, op. cit., 131

²"Chronology", Middle East Journal, Vol. (1958).

³New York Times, November 21 and 26, 1958.

⁴Ingrams, op. cit., 108.

⁵New York Times, August 25, 1959.

⁶Ingrams, op. cit., 109.

⁷New York Times, May 27, 1959.

⁸Ibid., May 27 and June 4, 1959.

⁹Ingrams, op. cit., 109.

nullified by a series of tribal rebellions (these were caused by a dislike for al-Badr and his relations with Cairo and Moscow)¹ and an army mutiny. Both were apparently widespread² and al-Badr had to use substantial sums from the treasury in order to settle the differences (he promised the army a 25% pay increase).³ When Ahmed returned in August, he proceeded to reinstate his previous policies, tried to recover some of his money,⁴ punished the main offenders, and, placed al-Badr in house arrest for several months.⁵ The Crown Prince's failures further estranged him from the liberals. Now, there was no question of his ability to reform the country while Ahmed was still alive.

The complete story underlying the tribal disturbances is unknown. However, there is a possibility that they were inspired by the so-called Qahtani political movement. "Generally, non-Sayyid Zaidis were identified as the Qahtanis, or those who considered themselves descendents of the pre-Islamic population of South Arabia. In this role, they looked upon themselves as being distinct from the Sayyids who, as descendents of the Prophet, originated in Hejaz. The Qahtani political movement was

¹Ibid., 108-110. Mr. Ingrams has provided an excellent discussion of the problems confronting al-Badr as regent during this period.

²Aqal and Aafah, op. cit., 131. The tribes of Qubayta and al-Wusuifiin rebelled in addition to the army units in Taiz, al-Beida, Hejja, and Sana.

³Ingrams, op. cit., 109.

⁴Mr. Ingrams states that this led to disturbances in the north (Hashid had been principle recipients of money) in November and that the Imam treacherously killed the leader of one of the tribes in December. This helps explain why 10,000 of the Hashid were said to have given their allegiance to the new Yemen Arab Republic following the 1962 coup. The disturbances continued.

⁵Bruce Conde. "Letter to Dr. Nabih A. Faris from Colonel Abdurrahman Conde, Headquarters First Yemen (Royalist) Army, Arhab, Yemen, dated February 17, 1963," page 8.

well developed among the Zaidi tribes, particularly the Hashid. It's proponents advocated the desposing of the Sayyid and the ascendancy of Yemen's original inhabitants. To the Qahtanis the Sayyids were outsiders without a legitimate claim to rule Yemen."¹

The existence of this movement further complicates the overall picture of the Free Yemeni struggle. It is known that the Qahtanis sought the destruction of the Sayyid class and replacement with their own elements but other than this their aims are not defined. Under such circumstances, it is almost impossible to state their true significance. At the same time, it is reasonable to assume that the Free Yemenis used their dissatisfaction as a target for propaganda and did everything they could to gain the numerical advantage necessary for victory by playing on these differences. In combination with the other factors of unrest, perhaps a great deal of the intensified anti-Imam tribal activities can be more logically accounted for in this manner.

These disturbances continued throughout 1960 (the north remained unsettled, there were plots among Imam's retinue in south, and, in June, Yemeni youths threw bombs at Imam's new palace² and 1961 with tribal restlessness creating as much of a problem to the Imam as his efforts

¹Brown, op. cit., 364. Mr. Brown goes on to say: "It is not difficult to see how tribal elements, who, after 1100 years, objected to Sayyid on the grounds that it was foreign, would refuse to accept the dictates of Egyptians when they entered the country." I have only found one other reference to the Qahtani movement; however, Mr. Brown's is the only clear description of the movement available which points to the growth of a third force. It is unfortunate that this aspect of Yemeni political history has not been more fully investigated. It undoubtedly would account for many of the problems formerly attributed to other reasons.

²Ingrams, op. cit., 111.

to avoid assassination. Three attempts (November, 1960; March, 1961;¹ and December, 1961)² almost succeeded in accomplishing their objectives. In the meantime, the Imam's unwillingness to accept reform demands under auspices of the United Arab States and the ideas of the Egyptian revolution, caused a group of Yemeni Army officers to begin organizing a secret liberal movement (1960) within the army.³ Their efforts were confined to planning an infallible coup and distributing pamphlets to the people which they hoped would prepare them for future happenings.⁴ The individual propaganda efforts of the Free Yemenis continued. In August 1961, Dr. Abdul Rahman el-Baidani published a pamphlet in which he indicated the hopelessness of the situation. He stated that there were only two alternatives if the reformers were to obtain their aims: (1) military force, (2) unification of public opinion and effort for attainment of the same goals. He discounted the army's ability to execute and sustain such an effort because of its decentralization, lack of communications, and organization which precluded their ability to dictate reform by force. He thus envisioned a movement by the total population instigated by the continuous publication of reform literature.⁵ Dr. Baidani knew the

¹Ibid., 112-113. Mr. Ingrams presents an excellent account to the assassination attempt. Two army officers were involved. The army's importance as a revolutionary element was becoming increasingly apparent to the Imam.

²New York Times, November 28 and December 25, 1960; March 28 and December 13, 1961.

³Ingrams, op. cit., 119. "It seems that in 1959 Nasser's Egyptians in Yemen discovered as-Sallel, a man who through circumstances had become a natural revolutionary and who, because he was quite unscrupulous, would be useful."

⁴Aqal and Aafah, op. cit., 131.

⁵U.S. Joint Publications Research Service, op. cit., 19.

weakness of the army and how crucial numerical strength was to victory.

With the dissolution of the United Arab States in December 1961, the full weight of the Nasser propaganda machine was brought to bare on the decadent Imamate. No longer was the conduct of the attack simply limited to the exiled Free Yemenis. It is true that they were very instrumental in its execution but the most damaging blows to Ahmed came through the withering attacks of Nasser. No stone was left unturned in the search for usable material.

It was during this period that the leadership of the Free Yemenis under Nasser's influence shifted from the former exiled leaders (the true Free Yemenis) to Dr. Baidani. Of course, all of them participated in the propaganda campaign but it was Baidani who, through his broadcasts, mapped out the programs for a Yemeni Arab Republic modeled on the Nasser prototype.¹ Sometime between August, 1961, when his pamphlet was published, and May, 1962, when he outlined the ideas of a Yemeni Republic, the Baidani-Nasser pact was formalized to the point where the unification of public opinion was no longer required in attaining the desired goals. Now, the concept was revolution: the sooner the better. A week after separation, the first call echoed across the Red Sea. It was repeated time and again until three days before the coup when the army was specifically singled out to launch the attack.²

While the Crown Prince attempted to salvage the rapidly deteriorating situation,³ the restless elements, egged on by Cairo broadcasts

¹Ingrams, op. cit., 123-126. Mr. Ingrams presents the only account of these events which I have been able to find.

²U.S. News and World Report, Vol. 53 (October 8, 1962), 74. "When the old Imam died, Nasser's radio Cairo, broadcasting to Yemen, urged the Yemeni Army to revolt and set up a "republic", Nasser-style."

³"Chronology", Middle East Journal, Vol. 16 (1952). Badr's attempts are outlined.

and secret groups within Yemen, became more active. Tribal disturbances continued but the real manifestations of this mood was demonstrated by the students. In August 1962, a series of pro-Nasser student demonstrations occurred in which Ahmed was burned in effigy in Sana. The significance of this event was in the fact that "... a great deal of the population had supported the students. In Taiz, the student movement extended to the merchants who closed down their shops. It is the first time that a combative opposition (of this nature) to Yemen's Royal government has developed."¹ Several students were killed during these demonstrations.² The situation seemed to call for drastic measures and they weren't long in forthcoming.

The Imam died on September 19, 1962. His reign had been one of continuous bloodshed. But, from his standpoint, it had been successful as he had effectively blocked the opposition from achieving its purposes and he believed that--short of foreign intervention--his son, the liberal sympathizer, would be able to do likewise. The power still rested with the Imam.

¹Oriente Moderno, Vol. XLII, No. 12 (December 1962), 953.

²New York Times, August 11, 1962.

CHAPTER IV

THE 1962 REVOLUTION: A COMMENTARY

With the death of his father, Crown Prince al-Badr immediately became the Imam. He took the title Al-Mansour Billah Mohammed bin Ahmed Hamid id-din. As in 1959, he set out to initiate the reforms which he had promised many years earlier and which the Yemenite Union requested in a telegram, September 21, 1962.¹ He announced that Yemen's foreign policy would incorporate the principles of positive neutrality and non-alignment² while his internal program would be directed toward raising the social, economic, military, and political standards of the country. As a beginning in this direction, an amnesty was granted to all political prisoners and the refugees were asked to return to their country. All taxes were annulled for the remainder of the year; the hostage system and the feudal mortgage laws were abolished (this was the system whereby a person could be detained as a bond for debts to the government); the armed forces were granted a pay increase;³ and, "a forty-member advisory council, half to be elected and half nominated, together with elected municipal councils in all towns with one member to every 5,000 citizens were established."⁴ There was little question that he fully intended to modernize Yemen.

¹Oriente Moderno, No. 12 (1962), 953.

²New York Times, September 21, 1962.

³Ibid., September 23, 1962.

⁴Ingrams, op. cit., 128.

The greatest problem confronting al-Badr in respect to modernization was the method by which he was going to successfully implement these measures. He realized from the outset that there were many groups within the Sayyid oligarchy, the tribes, and among the religious leaders who would oppose such endeavors along with his right to the Imamate. It was also apparent that they could only be controlled through an alliance with the reform minded young Sayyids and his uncle Prince Hassan.¹ As a result, he visualized a reform movement which: (1) retained the religious and temporal leadership of the Imamate, (2) combined the efforts of the reform minded Sayyids with those of the Free Yemenis in governing the people and forming the new bureaucracy, (3) would broaden the base of the Imamate through the introduction of a governmental structure which was more responsible to public opinion, (4) would entail surrendering many of the absolute powers of the Imam. Hassan's telegram of allegiance, September 23, 1962, not only ended the dispute over succession but also indicated that he would support al-Badr in his efforts to rejuvenate Yemen's society. More important, it signified that al-Badr had agreed to break with Nasser and abandon the plans to spread the socialist revolution and Egyptian unity concepts throughout the Arabian Peninsula as planned a few years earlier.² In reality, he had little choice if excessive bloodshed was to be avoided. The nature of Yemeni society precluded other methods. The impetus had to come from the top and the top and the reins of government had to be held firmly. After all, the reforms which al-Badr envisioned would have shaken the foundations of

¹Conde, op. cit., 8.

²Neil McLean, "The War in Yemen", Royal Central Asian Society Journal, Vol. 51 (April, 1964), 104.

society just as much as those of the 1962 revolutionaries; the principle differences lying in the length of time allowed for transition, in the title, and in the structure of the state.

While the various messages of condolences and congratulations were being exchanged,¹ the revolutionaries had to make the decision as to whether they should proceed or temporarily halt their activities. It was apparent that al-Badr, if allowed to continue, would soon nullify a great many of the Free Yemeni demands. His efforts would extinguish the cries for general reform and narrow the controversy to the political sphere: Nasser socialism versus Imamate enlightenment. At the same time, the Imam's position would be strengthened; thereby, reducing and clocking (as had his father) future pro-Nasser moves.

The decision had actually been made many months earlier when the United Arab States was dissolved and the United Arab Republic propagandists evolved the concept of no compromise with reactionary government. No technique was considered improper in this struggle. The nine months prior to the revolution witnessed the development of the Yemeni republic concept which entailed the complete removal of the temporal authority entrusted to the Imamate.² The divergence of attitudes and aims of the

¹Oriente Moderno, No. 12 (1962), 958-959. The messages from Saudi Arabia are particularly interesting in retrospect. Firm support was pledged to the new Imam and a delegation was dispatched to reinforce the condolences and congratulations of the Saudi monarch. This delegation was in Yemen between the 22nd and 24th of September. The text of the various messages are reproduced in the above reference.

²It is doubtful that all the Free Yemenis supported this concept. The emphasis at that time was on Dr. Baidani and his Nasser-inspired concepts. Once the coup was executed, the leaders of the Free Yemenis had little choice but to support it. They had been fighting for reform for years. The first indication of a divergence in inner Free Yemeni attitudes came in January, 1963 when Dr. Baidani was expelled from Yemen. Yet, the question still remains unsolved because his expulsion was accredited to a personal bid for power. Having been pro-Nasser, the conclusions are obvious but unproved.

Nasserite Free Yemenis and the Imamate were clearly defined. If the ideas of Nasser were to succeed immediate action had to be taken. There were other important considerations. With a pro-Nasser Yemen on the Peninsula, it would be easier to subvert both the oil rich Saudi government and the Protectorate. Al-Badr could picture the Protectorate as a part of Yemen but he did not desire Yemen and the Protectorate to be a part of the United Arab Republic. Economically, there were also advantages. Yemen was reported to have various mineral deposits of some significance and her agricultural capabilities were extremely good.¹ Strategically, she was important because Nasser would have gained complete control of the Red Sea and the southern approaches to the Suez Canal. In this regard, al-Badr's Soviet bloc sympathies had bothered Nasser during the late fifties as their influence increased. While he was willing to accept their assistance and support, he preferred to keep a close control on their activities, and he could not trust al-Badr to do likewise. In his zeal for reform, it was possible that Russian influence might become greater and directly or indirectly hinder Nasser's ambitions. This was equally

¹I have been unable to find any source which stated what commercial quantities of minerals are available in Yemen other than salt. Oil prospecting has been continuous since the Imam granted his first concession and, although commercial quantities have not been reported, the activity of these companies is such as to indicate the belief that it is present. No known exploitation has been conducted in the eastern areas bordering the Rub al-Khali as the border has never been defined. Since oil has been discovered in The Rub al-Khali, this region presents interesting possibilities minerally and politically. With the proper inspiration, a great deal of friction could be created between Saudi Arabia and Yemen over the lack of demarcation.

According to Mr. Aqal and Mr. Aafah, the agricultural potential of Yemen is terrific. They estimated that only 5% of cultivatable land was under cultivation while 5½ million faddens are available. Full utilization of this land is believed to allow the export of 170,000 tons of wheat, mize, barley, lentils, sesame, mustard, beans; 10,000 tons of coffee; 120 tons of vegetables; and, 560 tons of fruit. Op. cit., 26-27.

true of the Americans. Finally, there was a religious difference, which, when coupled with all of the oppressive acts of the Zaidi Imams, might have played a small part in cementing and strengthening the desire to see the Imamate collapse.

On September 26, 1962, eight days following the Imam's death, Colonel Abdullah As-Sallal, personal friend and confidant of al-Badr,¹ executed his Nasser inspired coup with approximately "200 young Yemeni army officers who had been Egyptian trained and indoctrinated" providing him with the necessary subordinate leadership to dominate the principle cities.² Sallal's forces attacked and destroyed the Imam's palace in Sana and reported al-Badr's death to the world.³ This was extremely important because with the Imam supposedly dead there was no contender except Hassan, and he was in New York. The more time the revolutionaries had to consolidate their control without effective resistance, the greater their chances for success. The following day, the Revolutionary Command announced the formation of the Yemeni Arab Republic, that they had full popular support for their activities, and the formation of a cabinet which included such prominent Free Yemeni personalities as: Dr. Abder Rahman

¹Ingrams, op. cit., 119-122, 130-131. Mr. Ingrams goes into some detail concerning Sallal's background and relationship to al-Badr. His account is the most complete which I have read to date. The key point is that al-Badr considered Sallal a friend and reformer who could be trusted.

²Conde, op. cit., 2.

³President Sallal has stated several times that his revolt was planned for Ahmed. Although it has never been clarified, this presents the possibility that until the Imam's death, al-Badr was considered to be useful to the revolutionaries as a religious figurehead or a modified religious - temporal head of state. However, once in power al-Badr realized that his only chance for success was in compromising with Hassan. From this point onwards, the revolutionaries sought his destruction. As stated, this is speculation, but, at the same time, it is plausible and should not be discounted until more facts are available.

al-Baidani, Vice Premier and Minister of Economics, and Mr. Mohammed Mahmoud Zubari, Minister of Education.¹ The first week of the new republic was characterized by the execution or imprisonment of many of the former Sayyid oligarchy; warnings by the United Arab Republic against external intervention;² the return of Hassan from New York and his acceptance of the Imamate;³ Jordanian and Saudi Arabian refusal to recognize the new government; the granting of recognition by the United Arab Republic and the USSR, September 29th; a formal request to the United States for recognition and the closing of the Saudi Arabian Embassy, October 1st; the first report that al-Badr was alive, October 3rd;⁴ and, the departure of the first UAR ship from Suez on October 4th following Nasser's declaration that the Jeddah Pact was in full force.⁵

From the beginning, the claims and counter-claims of the opposing factions filled all news media. This greatly confused the existing situation. Initially, the royalist forces were greatly handicapped in this regard and their apparent inactivity was deceptive because it

¹Oriente Moderno, No. 12 (1962), 954. These appointments were announced over Radio Sana.

²New York Times, September 27, 1962.

³As indicated earlier, the Zaidi's must have an Imam at all times. If they do not, they believe that they will die a pagan.

⁴The first suggestion that al-Badr might be alive didn't appear in the Cairo newspapers until October 15. New York Times, October 16, 1962.

⁵Al-Ahram summarized the UAR position on November 28, 1962. The article stated: (1) Saudi Arabia had been the aggressor against the new Yemeni Republic, (2) the UAR had sent troops to Yemen, not as a show of force, but to defend it from external aggression, (3) the UAR has no desire to see the Jordanian and Saudi Arabian governments fall, her only desire is to consolidate the Yemeni revolution and ensure its stability, (4) the UAR had not sent its troops to fight in Yemen: her intent had been to prevent war and persuade Saudi Arabia that continued aggressions would be punished. Oriente Moderno, No. 12 (1962), 956-957.

tended to verify the clouded republican accounts of the situation which indicated a greater degree of control than actually existed. Nevertheless, the quick movement of UAR paratroopers into Sana, October 8th, and the subsequent buildup, afforded a much clearer picture. It also implicated the Egyptians in the plot and showed that their pre-coup evaluations of the existing situation in Yemen were accurate. Nasser knew that: (1) the Yemeni army was not strong enough or properly trained to control the situation and institute the necessary reforms: even with the help of the Free Yemenis, (2) Saudi Arabia would support the Imam because of his recent attacks and her fear of Nasser penetration onto the Peninsula (Saudi Arabia had been the traditional supporter of the Imam), (3) the vast majority of Yemeni society was not prepared for his concepts, (4) the removal of the Imam and destruction of the Sayyid class would not only embitter the Zaidi elements but would create a vacuum within the society which could only be countered by the quick, effective, implementation of the new regime, (5) it would take time for the Imam to begin activities against the revolution, (6) the tribal strength of the Imamate was located in the north and east and had to be blocked from entering the plains if the Yemeni Republic was to demonstrate any degree of control, (7) Egyptian forces had to move quickly if they were going to control the situation. He miscalculated by underestimating: (1) the degree of Saudi Arabian support and her willingness to continue the conflict indefinitely, (2) the strength of the Imamate: religiously and numerically ("...it must be remembered that the majority of the population of the Yemen is in fact living in the part which is under royalist control, because the central and northern mountain districts are the most highly

populated part of the country."¹), (3) the endemic dislike of foreign intervention: particularly when it entails military occupation.

By the end of October there was no question that the royalist forces were resisting the republicans. An exile government had been established and the tribes were being collected to fight.² Saudi Arabian and Jordanian aid in weapons and ammunition had begun to reach the tribes.³ But, it was not until October 30th that Sana radio announced that Egyptian units were fighting alongside the republican forces and that new contingents were arriving.⁴

The inter-Arab problems created by the intervention of both Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Republic quickly resulted in broader international involvements which centered primarily on the question of recognition. The communist countries had unhesitatingly granted this along with a great many of the Arab states which followed Egyptian leadership. On October 23rd, West Germany became the first major western nation to do so.⁵ The United States and Britain withheld recognition in line with their policies of non-intervention in the internal affairs of the Middle East and pending stabilization of the existing situation when a more accurate judgement could be made in regard to the criteria of recognition: complete

¹McLean, op. cit., 103.

²New York Times, October 17, 1962. Hassan had recognized al-Badr as the Imam.

³Ibid., October 21, 1962. The full extent of Jordanian participation has never been clarified. There were reports that she had allocated 3 million dollars and sent officers to Saudi Arabia to help train the royalist forces.

⁴Ibid., October 20 and 31, 1962.

⁵West German recognition was extended on the condition that the Yemen Arab Republic not recognize East Germany. Ibid., October 24, 1962.

control. The British were very careful in this regard. The capabilities of Nasser's techniques had been amply demonstrated in the Protectorate during the last few years. The Sheikhs had agreed to form the Federation in 1959 in order to protect themselves--under the British umbrella--from the very same elements who were now threatening to set up a Nasser inspired state on their borders. It was better to wait and investigate. A parliamentary mission under William Yates, M.P., was sent to Sana on November 29th,¹ and Colonel McLean, M.P., visited the royalist side in December.² In the meantime, Radio Sana had announced the formation of a Republic of the Peninsula, November 13th,³ and on December 15th, President Sallal repeated this when he announced "the inauguration of the seat of the Supreme Command of the Arab Peninsula and the beginning of action necessary for the formation of the United Republic of the Arabian Peninsula."⁴ The British were thoroughly aware of the contagious ideas incorporated in statements of this type and the substantial threats which they entailed.

From the international standpoint, American recognition of the new republic was crucial to Nasser. He knew that implicit in such recognition were the sanctions for his involvement, and that with them, he could go a long way in carrying out his policies within Yemen while girding Saudi Arabia with the restraints incumbent in the Washington-Riyad relations at the time. Short of open warfare with Saudi Arabia, he would be free to do as he pleased.

¹Oriente Moderno, No. 12, (1962), 957.

²Ingrams, op. cit., 134, 141.

³Oriente Moderno, No. 12 (1962), 957.

⁴Ibid., 957.

The problem confronting the American Department of State was not an easy one to solve. American commitments in Saudi Arabia were extensive and had to be protected. The Saudi government, although friendly, needed reform and was subject to the carefully planned propaganda attacks from Egypt. The defection of various princes and military officers was indicative of the tensions existing within the monarchy. In addition, its armed forces were not considered adequate enough to withstand an Egyptian invasion. With this in mind, President Kennedy wrote to Crown Prince Faisal, October 25, 1962, and pledged United States support for his government.¹

In Yemen, the United States was confronted with extensive Soviet bloc accomplishments and the threat of losing her position as a moderating influence on the government. The initiation of foreign aid projects during the years just preceding the revolution had enhanced the American position considerably and reduced Soviet willingness to expend additional sums on various projects.² Furthermore, there was no question as to the need for modernization in Yemen. To the nationalist Arabs, a definite anti-republican stand would have indicated favoritism for the reactionary regims. Then too, the new government had immediately sought Soviet assistance and threatened to cancel all American aid projects if recognition was not forthcoming. This would have precluded any chance of countering existing or renewed Soviet influence.

¹For text, see, Richard P. Stebbins (ed.), Documents on American Foreign Relations 1963, (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), 261.

²See chapter II. Another indication of the problems which the Soviet's were having prior to the revolution was reflected in their failure to gain the Imam's permission to build an airport north of Sana. New York Times, July 29, 1963.

The American-UAR relations had gradually improved in the years preceeding the coup. The policy of non-intervention (within limits) in Arab affairs was greatly appreciated by President Nasser and the sums expended on foreign aid were significant. Here again, it was felt that Soviet influence necessitated American counter-influence; especially in light of the fact that President Nasser was the leader of the new forces in the Middle East: politically, and perhaps more important, from the standpoint of modernization. Thus, American policy toward Egypt seemed to convey a certain attitude of appeasement and cooperation, which, it was hoped, would further enhance her position.

As the recognition story is revised, one is struck, in retrospect, by a failure of the parties concerned to determine the realities of the situation in Yemen. In the attempts to placate the various Middle Eastern powers, Yemen became a pawn and it does not appear that any effort was made to determine or analyze the situation in light of what was best for the Yemeni, or the traditional influence which was at work in the country. Here again, the secular projection of the western society operated to preclude a realistic evaluation of the situation and force its concepts (unwittingly) on a society which was both unprepared and unwilling to accept them. Thus, a true evaluation of the Yemeni situation was clouded by a desire to see reform implemented, greater stress being placed on the inter-Arab situation rather than that of Yemen, and an oversight in not taking into account the historical and religious nature of the country.

On October the 21st, it was announced that the United States had initiated action as mediator in the dispute and that President Kennedy had sent letters to each of the heads of state; Hussein, Faisal, Nasser,

and Sallal.¹ These letters resulted in assurances by all parties concerned that they desired a settlement of the dispute: the major prerequisite of each being the withdrawal of the oppositions external support.² With these assurances came United States Recognition, December 19, and official membership in the United Nations, December 20.³ The basis of recognition was clearly defined in the document. It may be summarized as: (1) Yemeni intent to fulfill all international obligations, (2) Yemeni desire to normalize and establish friendly relations with its neighbors, (3) Yemeni desire to raise the standard of living and modernize the country, (4) a Yemeni guarantee to maintain the status quo agreements concerning the disputed border, (5) the willingness of all parties to disengage as a basis for future cessation of hostilities and self-determination by the Yemeni people. As time passed, it became increasingly

¹A few of the press reports of the time are interesting because of the attitudes reflected in them. On October 7th, the New York Times reported that "At the State Department experts were urging the administration to prevent further foreign intervention. They tend to believe that the rebels have a good chance to survive. They discount reports that the rebel regime is beholden to Nasser." By the 14th, David Binder, writing from Washington, was able to state the US position accordingly: (1) the U.S. did not want recognition to be a slap in the face for Saudi Arabia, (2) the U.S. would not stand by if the rebels overthrew Faisal, (3) Saudi Arabian support of the rebels was felt unpopular with some of the Saudi military leaders and intellectuals. "Thus, an end to the fighting is seen here as a means of bolstering the Faisal regime in what is considered a very delicate period.", (4) the U.S. believes that a long delay would encourage the new government to seek Soviet assistance. Three days later it was reported that Washington felt most of the strategic points were held by the rebels and that Mr. Baidani had told reporters the American Charge d'affairs, Mr. Robert W. Stooky, had informed him that United States aircraft would not attack Yemen. In addition, attempts by Jordan or Saudi Arabia to do so would be prevented. On the 21st, the Middle East News agency reported that Mr. Stooky had stated that the rebels were in "full control" of the country except for some border areas.

²For a copy of the Yemeni governments statement, see, Oriente Moderno, No. 12 (1962), 958.

³For text see, US Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 48 (January 7, 1963), 11-12.

apparent that recognition had been prematurely granted. The old criteria of "complete control" had been subordinated to statements of good intention and misinterpretations of the existing internal situation. Ironically, while expressing support for Saudi Arabia, the very forces which were most disruptive and dangerous to her were legally condoned on the Peninsula.

While the United States was considering the question of recognition, events in Yemen began to point more and more toward a protracted struggle. The royalist forces were continually gaining in strength and demonstrating (although this was not verified) their effectiveness in the east. Perhaps the clearest indication of this was to be found in the rapid UAR troop buildup and the announcement by the new regime that it was forming a 20,000 man National Guard and had authorized a 100 to 150% army pay increase.¹ Meanwhile, the Arab League withdrew Yemeni representation on October 29th in order to avoid embarrassment;² President Sallal proclaimed a 5 year provisional constitution;³ the UAR bombed and shelled Saudi Arabian villages on November 6th; a Yemeni delegation was dispatched to Moscow to negotiate for arms;⁴ a five year Mutual Defense pact was signed with the UAR, November 10th;⁵ and, a bitter propaganda campaign was being conducted against Saudi Arabia in order to conceal the happenings within Yemen. By the end of the Year, Yemen was signing more agreements with

¹New York Times, November 6, 1962, and "Chronology", Middle East Journal, Vol. 17, 142.

²Oriente Moderno, No. 12 (1962), 956.

³New York Times, November 5, 1962.

⁴Oriente Moderno, No. 12 (1962), 957.

⁵New York Times, November 11, 1962.

the USSR¹ and Egyptian involvement was said to be costing her 1 million dollars a day, 1,000 casualties to date, and an increase in troop strength to 15-20,000 man level² (an increase in the number estimated prior to US recognition). Saudi Arabian territory was again bombed between December 30, 1962 and January 1, 1963.³

It was apparent that a disengagement was needed in order to prevent further escalation of the Yemeni conflict. However, in accordance with the concept of non-involvement, there was a reluctance on the part of the west to intervene further. All parties had pledged their intent to end hostilities and the best solution seemed to indicate that the heads of state should settle their own differences. It gradually became evident that the bitter differences between the parties precluded this and that a third nation must act as mediator in the dispute. This task fell to the United States. Her recognition of the Yemeni Arab Republic had resulted in renewal of the AID agreement for the completion of the Mocha-Taiz-Sana road and assistance in irrigation projects on the January 27, 1963⁴ and an agreement to raise diplomatic missions to Embassy level on February 1, 1963.⁵ British failure to recognize the new government resulted in the closing of the British Legation at Taiz, February 17, 1963, and the

¹"Chronology", Middle East Journal, Vol. 17, 143.

²New York Times, December 24, 1962.

³U.S. Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 48 (January 21, 1963), 90-91. According to this release, the UAR had assured the U.S. that these attacks would not be repeated. The U.S. made it known that she was interested in preserving the integrity of Saudi Arabia.

⁴"Chronology", Middle East Journal, Vol. 17 (1963), 143.

⁵U. S. Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 48 (1963), 250.

renewal of clashes between Protectorate and Yemeni troops.¹

During the first part of March 1963, former Ambassador Ellsworth T. Bunker was dispatched to the Middle East by President Kennedy to conduct negotiations concerning disengagement. Concurrently, Mr. Ralph Bunche, Under Secretary for Special Political Affairs, was sent on a fact finding mission by the United Nations. He arrived in Yemen on March 1, 1963 for a three day visit. Mr. Rusk stated on March 8, during a press conference that Mr. Bunkers "presence there is contemporary with Mr. Ralph Bunche's mission, but it is not organically a part of the same effort."² The discussions of these men—Mr. Bunker is credited with working out the agreement—resulted in a Disengagement Agreement in the middle of April which included the following points: (1) Saudi Arabia would end support of the royalists, (2) the United Arab Republic would withdraw her troops from Yemen (no time limit was established), refrain from punitive action against the royalist, halt all attacks on Saudi Arabian territory, and be permitted to keep a military training mission in Yemen (the size was not specified), (3) the United Nations would establish a twelve mile wide demilitarized zone along the Saudi-Yemeni border and provide military observers to insure compliance. On April 30, 1963, Mr. U. Thant announced that this agreement has been accepted by all parties.³ However, United Nations presence in Yemen was not officially established until July 4th. The major stumbling block was Soviet insistence that such a step had to be approved by the Security Council. In addition, the terms of financing the

¹"Chronology", Middle East Journal, Vol. 17, 143. Clashes were reported on February 5th and 26th.

²Stebbens, op. cit., 262.

³New York Times, April 30, 1963.

operation had to be agreed upon by both Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Republic. The Security Council finally approved this measure on June 11, 1963 and the advanced elements of the two hundred man observation mission under the command of Major General Carl C. Von Horn arrived in Yemen on June 13th. From the outset their mission was described as being more political than functional, and as representing a face saving device for President Nasser. It was generally conceded that the size of the military mission prohibited its proper utilization. These estimates were quickly born out. Both Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Republic were discovered to be violating the agreement although UN observers felt that Faisal had given orders to stop the shipment of supplies. The UAR instead of withdrawing her troops, rotated them and their strength remained about the same. Furthermore, there were indications that Soviet pilots had engaged in the civil war and were flying the supply run between Cairo and Sana.¹ By August 31st, when Major General Von Horn resigned from the mission, it was quite evident that the operation had been a failure. Secretary General U. Thant conceded this on September 4, 1963, and the United Nations mission was withdrawn.

The failure of the Disengagement Agreement and the United Nations mission can be more clearly understood by analysing a few of the basic assumptions apparently used by the negotiators in working out the terms of the agreement. These were: (1) that the war would possibly be expanded without an agreement, (2) that external support, if withdrawn, would not only reduce the tensions but allow the Yemenis to settle their own dispute, (3) that it was not necessary to deal with the royalist forces. In terms of the broader aspects of the existing situation and

¹New York Times, September 1, 1963.

the international analysis of the problem at that time, the first two assumptions were correct. However, from the standpoint of the participants, the validity of the second assumption almost automatically carried with it defeat of the republican forces. Thus, while the agreement offered Nasser a face-saving way to disengage, it also meant that he would sacrifice victory, and eventually lose a great deal of prestige which he could not afford in light of his statements and policies. It is interesting to note, in view of this, an attitude which was expressed in regard to the agreement in the New York Times on May 14th. It stated "Officials have acknowledged that the agreement was merely a diplomatic ratification of a Saudi defeat in the dispute." Although this appeared to be the case, it was incorrect. Egyptian withdrawal mean Saudi victory. Faisal completely understood the nature of the people who he was supporting, and the cohesive forces which united them. Further, he could agree to stop supplying them with arms because once the Egyptians had withdrawn, they would not need them. From a fighting standpoint, the methods and equipment used by the royalists had amply demonstrated their effectiveness against Nasser's best units. The untrained Yemeni republican forces would succumb even quicker. President Nasser must have realized this before the agreement was made. His troops had been suffering heavy casualties for some months. His willingness to adhere to the agreement can be attributed to foreign pressures and a "certain hesitancy" in his own policies. A difficult decision had to be made: expand or withdraw. This decision was made between the time the agreement was worked out, and the arrival of the United Nations mission. The war would continue.

Perhaps the greatest error of the negotiations was the failure to consider the royalist aspect of the situation even though countless requests and appeals had been made by them. The basic problem was

internal and only agreement between the disputing sides could effectively end the hostilities. The international projection of this, that to which the negotiators addressed themselves, was unquestionably important, but it could not solve the dispute. Only by drawing these elements together and agreeing could the international aspects be properly settled, and a permanent mutually advantageous peace be worked out. Mediation efforts had to be directed to the source of the problem, and both sides had to be considered. This was not done.

United Nations presence in Yemen and foreign pressures did outwardly reduce the tensions which had grown out of the dispute, and with the withdrawal of the UN mission, the situation seemed to stabilize itself within the Yemeni borders. The struggle has continued to be an extremely bitter one which has involved considerable death and destruction, and a growing hatred for the Egyptian "benefactors". To them, the costs have been high in lives and money: the rewards little. There can be no withdrawal without agreement or the complete destruction of the royalist forces.

As one reviews the events, he can not help but credit Saudi Arabian foreign policy with a good deal of realistic diplomacy. She has been the target of many bitter Nasser inspired attacks, verbally and physically, in the past years. Now, by supporting the royalist throughout the protracted struggle, at a relatively insignificant expense in comparison to the United Arab Republic, she is amply avenging herself on her bitterest enemy. Nasser's aggressions are costing him dearly.

With the advent of the republican government, the Soviet bloc economic offensive in Yemen entered its second stage.¹ From the

¹Soviet personnel in Yemen have been reported as fighting for the republican forces. However, there is little to support this although the reoccurrence of such reports tend to lend some credence to them.

beginning, her moves were directed to re-implementing and strengthening her influence. The quickness of recognition, September 29, 1962, clearly indicated her intent to identify herself with the revolutionaries. This was followed by the signing of an agreement for food and technical aid, October 17, 1962, and the dispatch of a Yemeni delegation to Moscow, November 8, 1962, to negotiate for arms.¹ These initial moves were later supplemented by additional arrangements, December 27, 1962, which authorized the establishment of a Soviet technical office in Yemen for studying the extension of electric power, industrial projects, and carrying out soil and underground water surveys.² During 1963, agreements were concluded providing for forty Yemeni scholarships in the Soviet Union and the building of a modern, 11,500 foot, jet airport north of Sana from a 20 million dollar development loan which had been extended to Yemen.³ By March 1964, the USSR was donating a hospital and three schools as gifts⁴ and promising to build a road from Hodeida to Taiz, reclaim 10,000 faddens in the Tahama, build two cement factories, and a fish canning factory.⁵ In September, the Chinese Communists granted a 10 million dollar loan for the construction of a 200 mile highway from Sana to Saada, a weaving factory, a school, and a hospital in Sana.⁶ As the year closed, a Hungarian loan of 300,000 dollars and

¹Oriente Moderno, No. 12 (1962), 956-957. No further information is available concerning military aid following the coup.

²"Chronology", Middle East Journal, Vol. 17, 143,

³New York Times, July 29, 1963.

⁴Walid Khalidi and Yusuf Ibish, Chronology of Arab Politics, (Beirut: American University, 1964), 103.

⁵"Chronology", Middle East Journal, Vol. 19, 92.

⁶Khalidi and Ibish, op. cit., 223.

trade valued at 1 million dollars was announced as well as forthcoming Rumanian technical aid and reciprocal trade agreements. Unfortunately, it is too soon to effectively appraise these endeavors; however, it appears that the Soviets are attempting to tie the Yemeni economy to that of the bloc, and firmly establish their influence over the new regime.

The problems confronting the republican government have been greatly overshadowed by international events. Not only has the new government been faced with establishing the modern structures necessary for its proper functioning, but it has also had to deal with political and religious factionalism which has sown descension in its ranks. The Sayyid oligarchy is gone only to have been replaced by the Zaidi Qahtanis. The Shafi'is have gained a voice in the government, but time will be needed before a proper ratio can be worked out for the satisfaction of all concerned. Plots have been uncovered to remove Sallal from power and it is evident that disagreement exists as to how the royalist question can be solved. A five year interim constitution was proclaimed on April 13, 1963,¹ but while it puts forth the ideals of a republic it can not truly take effect until the civil war has ended. In essence, the Yemeni Republic owes everything to its benefactors and can do little to re-establish its independence until they withdraw.

¹For text, see, Walid Khalidi, and Yusuf Ibish, Arab Political Documents 1963 (Beirut: American University, 1964), 223.

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