South Yemen's Revolutionary Strategy, 1970-1985

From Insurgency to Bloc Politics

Joseph Kostiner

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SOUTH YEMEN'S REVOLUTIONARY STRATEGY, 1970-1985

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The Dayan and Jaffee Centers are, to paraphrase Winston Churchill's assertion concerning the British and American peoples, two centers separated by one common corridor. As a member of the Dayan Center, I have enjoyed walking that corridor to the JCSS end and having its researchers cross it toward ours, as part of our cooperation in a variety of projects. I hope this study provides a model for further collaboration between our two centers.

Summary

South Yemen's regional strategy evolved from insurgency to bloc politics over a period of nearly 20 years following independence in 1967. This reflected a maturation process in the country's foreign and strategic policymaking. It marked Aden's ability to emerge from a pre-independence strategy based on tribal practices and linked with the relative isolation of the Arabian Peninsula from superpower influence, to one that suited both the Peninsula's growing involvement in world affairs in the late 1970s, and the PDRY's own internal political and economic development.

This change evolved through a process of intra-elite struggle. Notwithstanding their overall adherence to Marxism, members of the South Yemeni elite were also influenced by views emanating from their region of origin, and by the experience of governing a country and running a party. All these caused them to develop varied perceptions of state-building and foreign policy.

The South Yemeni elite originally had to cope with an intrusive environment that was characterized by inter-tribal, cross-border feuds. By the mid-1970s, however, against a backdrop of the growing strategic importance of oil in and around the Gulf and the Red Sea and the parallel growth in superpower interest in the region, local governments consolidated their rule. In parallel, regional conflicts broadened in scope and became more convoluted. The South Yemeni leaders, faced with the need to stabilize their rule over a young, traditionally decentralized and economically poor state, applied a variety of Marxist strategies to their internal and regional problems.

The changing nature of these internal and external influences led, in turn, to changes in the PDRY's revolutionary strategy. Three main periods can be described. First, between 1970 and 1974 the impact of internal consolidation under a leftist leadership, combined with the initial regional political power vacuum in the Peninsula and the PRC's influence in Aden, caused the country to embark on an insurgency campaign against the Gulf regimes.

Secondly, between 1974 and 1980 growing economic difficulties and Marxist institutionalization, coupled with mounting attempts by regional

and world powers to dominate the Peninsula — as manifested in fluctuations between regional detente and escalation — generated a split between elite factions over both internal and foreign policies. In turn this division produced, on the one hand, a continuum of insurgency (into the YAR) and, on the other hand, first attempts at creating a new, long-term strategy of participation in a Soviet bloc.

Third, during the period 1980-1985 sharp economic constraints combined with a renewed regional strategic relaxation to enable Ali Nasir Muhammad to withdraw from the strategy of insurgency in favor of a full-fledged but flexible strategy of active participation in a Soviet bloc.

Insurgency established South Yemen's reputation as a revolutionary state — but failed to satisfy its economic and strategic needs. Strategic participation in a regional pro- Soviet bloc better suited long-term regional developments, and produced a measure of relief for Aden's economy. While this strategy was not developed to its full potential during Ali Nasir Muhammad's period of leadership (1980-1985), it was sufficiently effective to remain intact even after the civil war of January 1986, when Ali Nasir's rivals took power. As such, South Yemen's strategy of bloc politics attested to a new flexibility in emerging relations between the Soviet Union and its client states.

Main Organizations and Persons mentioned in the Text

FLOSY — Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen. A rival front to the NLF, which defeated it prior to independence. Active in 1966-67.

Abd al Fattah *Ismail* — A native of al-Jawf in North Yemen, and a leading NLF activist who favored a doctrinaire Marxist-Leninist approach. After South Yemeni independence Ismail rose from minister of guidance to the post of general secretary of UPONF and the YSP. He was president of the PDRY from June 1978 to April 1980, when he departed for exile in Moscow until February 1985. He was Wiled during the civil war of January 1986.

Ali Nasir *Muhammad* — A native of Abyan in South Yemen and a leading NLF activist who favored a pragmatic Marxist approach. Served as minister of defense and prime minister in the 1970s, and was president, prime minister and YSP secretary general between April 1980 and February 1985, when he relinquished the post of prime minister. Removed from power in the civil war of January 1986, and went into exile in the YAR.

NDF — National Democratic Front. Led the leftist insurgency in North Yemen, with South Yemeni support, primarily between 1976 and 1982.

NLF, NF— The National Liberation Front (NLF) led South Yemen's struggle for independence after October 1963. Following independence it became the National Front (NF), and embodied the country's political elite.

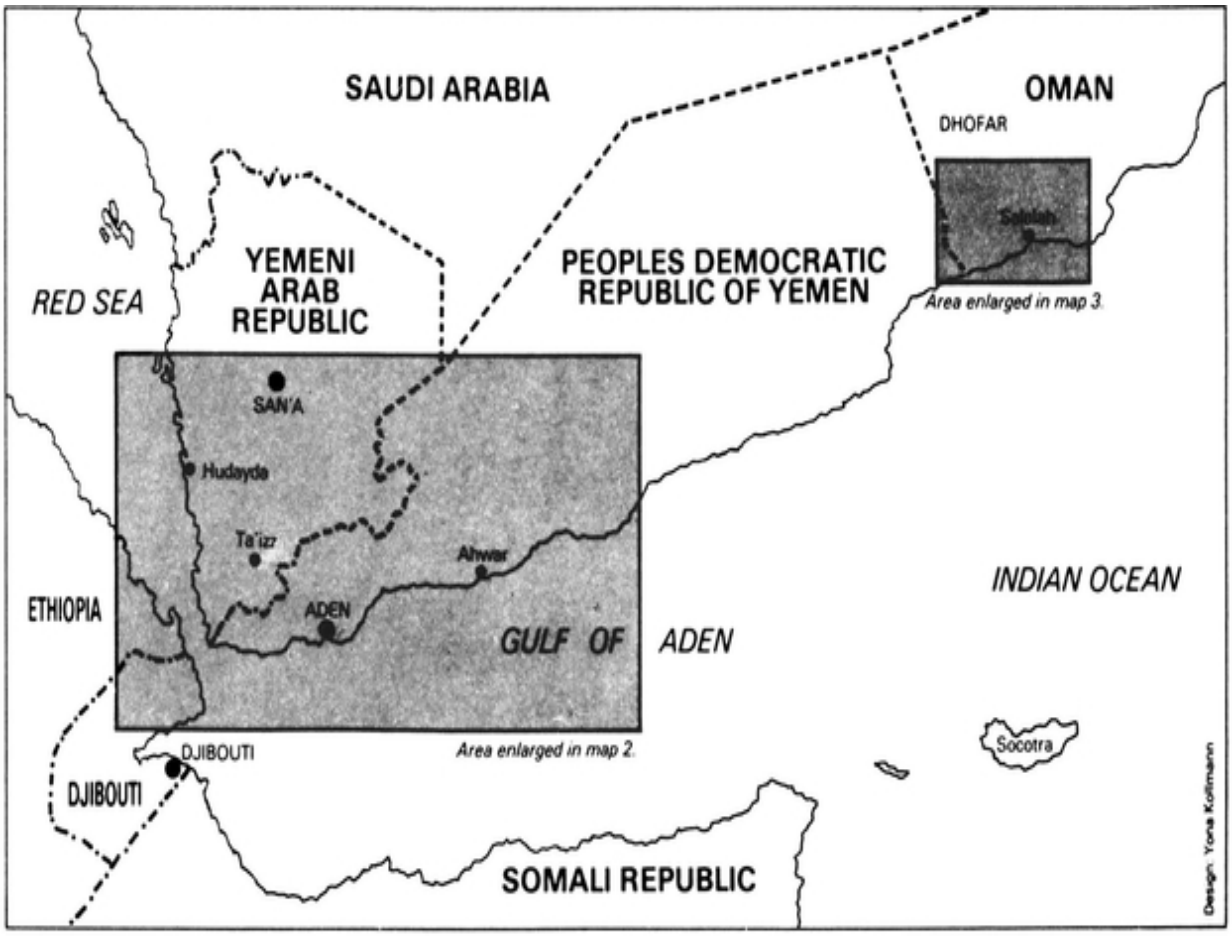
PFLOAG, PFLO — The Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Occupied Gulf (PFLOAG) was founded in September 1968 to lead the leftist, South Yemeni-inspired guerrilla struggle in Oman. In December 1971 it revised its structure and aims and became the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Gulf (still known as PFLOAG). It was renamed the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO) in July 1974.

PRSY, PDRY— The Peoples Republic of South Yemen (PRSY) was the name given to South Yemen upon its independence on November 30, 1967. The country was renamed the Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) by the leftist government that took power on June 20,1969.

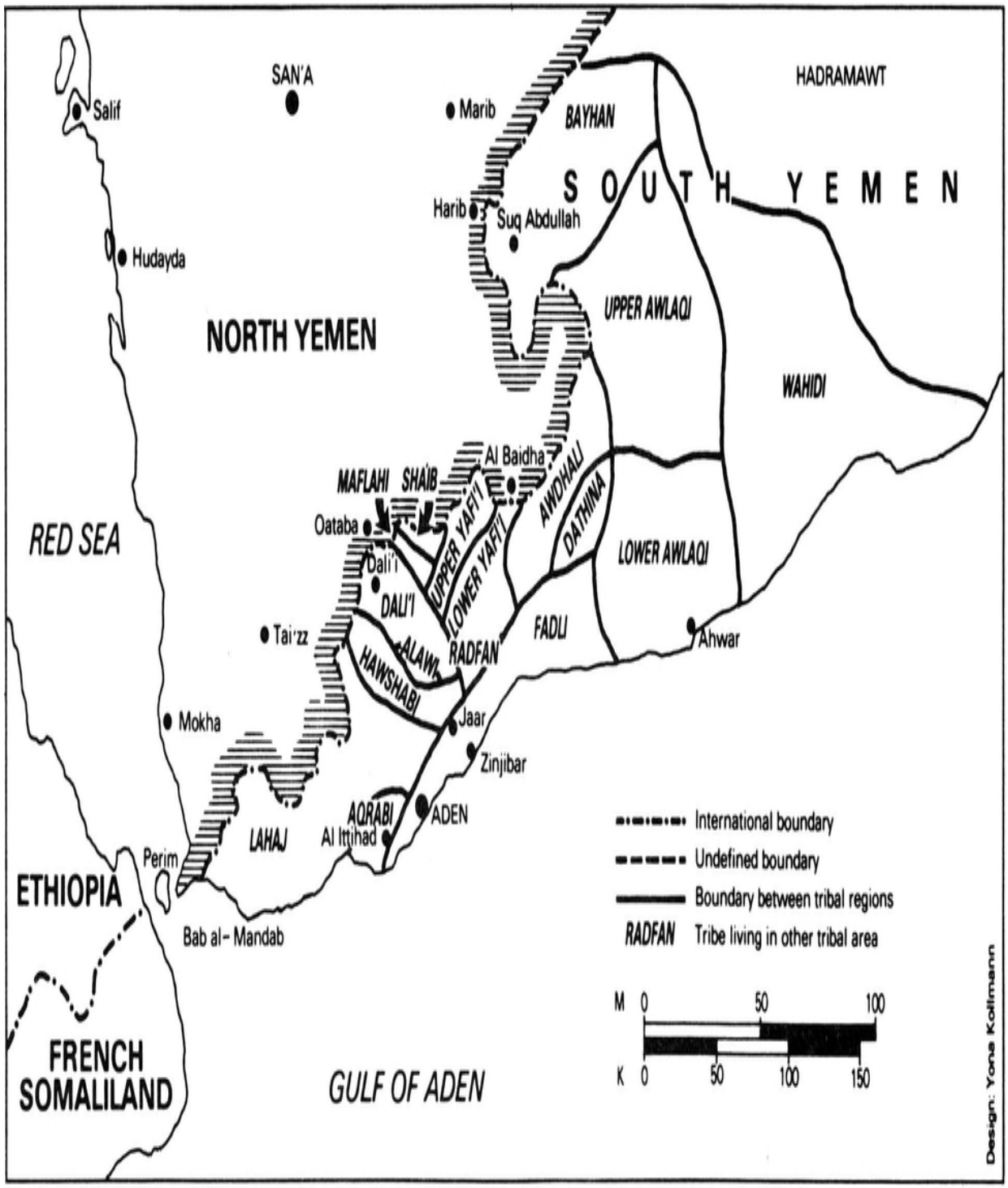
Ali Salim *Rubay* — A native of Hadramawt in the PDRY, who held quasi-"Maoist" views. A leading NLF activist, Rubay served as president of the PDRY during the 1970s, until his execution in June 1978.

UPONF, YSP — The Unified Political Organization, the National Front (UPONF) was constituted upon the merger in October 1975 of the NF and other Marxist and Ba'th groups, and functioned as the PDRY's governing political party. Its role was strengthened yet further in October 1978, when it was renamed the Yemeni Socialist Party.

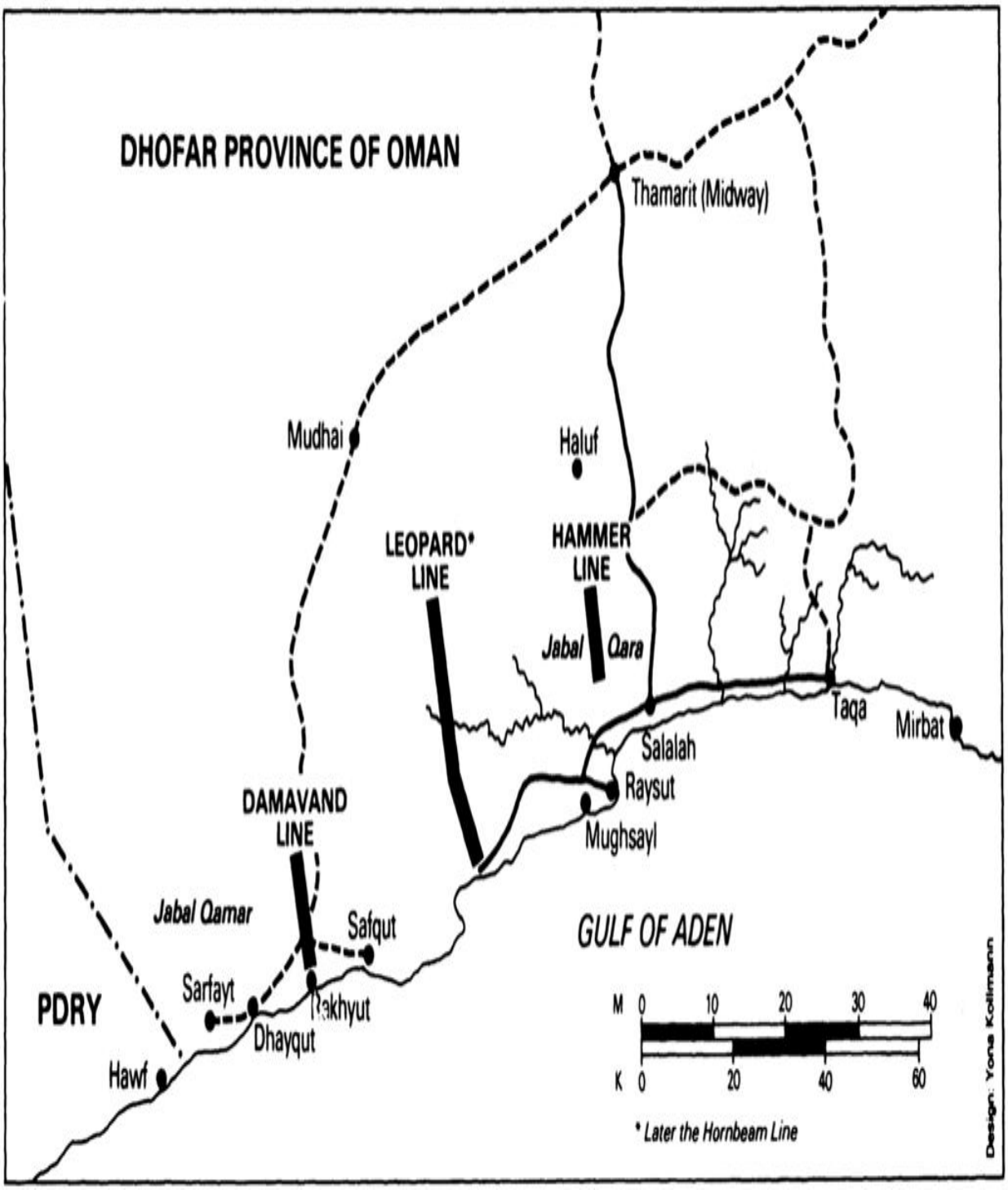
YAR — Yemen Arab Republic. The official title of North Yemen since the Imam's regime was deposed in 1962.



Map 1. SOUTH WEST ARABIA



Map 2. SOUTH YEMEN AND ITS TRIBAL REGIONS, 1962
Source: D A Pamphlet 550—182, *Area Handbook for the Yemens,* Washington; 1977, p 44



Map 3. KEY LOCATIONS IN THE DHOFAR REBELLION OF 1965-1976
Adapted from Otto von Pivka, *Armies of the Middle East,* Mayflower 1979; DMA. special insert to Department of State Publication 7835 Revised March 1971; and Anthony H. Cor desman. *The Gulf and the Search for Strategic Stability* (Boulder Westview 1984).

Introduction

This study focuses on South Yemen's ongoing attempts to instigate, maintain and defend a revolutionary process in its neighboring regions: the Gulf, the southern parts of the Arabian Peninsula, and the Horn of Africa. As a strategy of spreading a revolution necessarily combines internally anchored motives with those of an externally rooted, frontier-crossing nature,[1] the revolutionary strategy of South Yemen was shaped by an interplay of two main processes: state-building, and changing regional strategic conditions.

State-building evolved in South Yemen after World War II, but was particularly enhanced after independence was granted on November 30, 1967. Emerging from a bloody guerrilla war that the new South Yemeni leaders had instigated against the British and the rulers of the local tribal states, South Yemen was beset by numerous tribal, regional, and class divisions and by economic crises; and had to deal with undemarcated frontiers conducive to foreign intervention. Yet its leaders were armed with a will to carry on and spread the revolutionary process they had started in South Yemen itself.

State-building thus affected several major aspects of South Yemen's revolutionary strategy. It related to the delineation of South Yemen's frontiers and thereby to its leaders' attitudes to surrounding states. It focused on the formation of new social structures in South Yemen, a process that affected the Aden leadership's outlook toward society throughout the Peninsula. State-building further related to internal integration at leadership and broader societal levels, a process that determined the extent of cooperation and division within the new Aden elite. All these processes had an impact on South Yemen's revolutionary strategy.

Relevant regional strategic conditions evolved during the 1960s and 1970s, as the region witnessed the end of direct and indirect British dominance. Due to the growing importance of Gulf oil and the Red Sea and Gulf waterways, different parties successively sought to fill the void: mostly Iran, with increasing US support, and the pro-western and oil-rich kingdoms of the Arab Gulf Littoral, but also Iraq, supported by the Soviet Union. Almost devoid of natural resources, sparsely populated (1.7 million

in the 1960s) and desperately trying to assert its statehood, South Yemen was profoundly affected by each attempt to reset strategic conditions in the region.

Changing regional strategic conditions generated the means — whether threats or incentives — to implement South Yemen's revolutionary strategy. They set the scope for this strategy and determined its tactics and pace. They were played out at several levels: first, superpower involvement with regional actors, which was a minor factor in 1970, but which rapidly developed into intervention and rivalry during the decade; secondly, the regional setup, where power fluctuated and depended on interrelations between and among radical, pro-Soviet revolutionary forces and pro-western, mostly monarchical ones. South Yemen belonged to the revolutionary, leftist axis that emerged in the Middle East, whose members were seeking to replace the Arab-nationalist, Nasserist-dominated strand that had disappointed its supporters over its failures to achieve Arab unity and economic progress and to overcome Israel in 1967. The new strand was led largely by the Palestine Liberation Organization, accompanied by South Yemen, and sought to present armed, revolutionary struggle as the new dawn of liberation in the region. It confronted a clear challenge from the monarchical states of the Middle East. Third, there were the states of the immediate, surrounding environment, including monarchical, conservative states such as Saudi Arabia and Oman and republican but unstable North Yemen. These countries' policies as well as their internal social divisions had a direct impact on Aden's revolutionary strategy.

Our analysis of these complex forces aims to answer some specific questions. First, in what way did the interplay of external and internal parameters affect South Yemen; how were the different factors and influences perceived, and how did South Yemen's leaders respond? Secondly, what in particular prompted South Yemen's leaders to embark on a revolutionary policy in the region? In other words, how were influences converted into crucial causes and rationales for South Yemen's revolutionary strategy, as it fully emerged in 1970? Third, how did this combination of influences evolve over the years and enable South Yemen to change its revolutionary perceptions and strategies? Fourth, how did South Yemen fare under the impact of superior, yet conflicting foreign forces: on the one hand, the wealthy Gulf states (notably Iran and Saudi Arabia) that attempted to dominate the region; and on the other, the Soviet Union which

in the 1970s became South Yemen's patron? How was Soviet influence reconciled with that of the Gulf states and Saudi interests? It is particularly important to consider what kind of cooperation Aden developed with the Soviet Union. What services did it render to Moscow, and did the latter have an escalating or a restraining impact on South Yemen's revolutionary strategy? Fifth, how did the vicissitudes of state-building, including crises related to internal integration and a weak economy, affect the pursuit of a revolutionary strategy? Sixth, what were the actual features of this revolutionary strategy: the nature of the decisionmaking and political strife looming behind it; its practical organization and operations; and the successes, failures and shifts it underwent?

A useful methodology for our purpose is a variation of systems analysis. Factors emanating from both internal and external environments formed the 'input' into the decisionmaking process conducted by the elite, and its consequent policies became the 'output.' Our examination of these policies and of the lessons the elite learned from their success or failure will then reveal the 'feedback' that caused the elite to carry on or modify its policies so as to meet new challenges. This method of systems analysis has already been used to explain the actual functioning of insurgency,[2] but it can also be utilized to explain more complex revolutionary strategies.

By applying this method one can examine the interaction between the South Yemeni elite and the wider, socio-economic and political environment that inspired the elite's goals and activities. It enables us to translate the influences coming from the internal state-building environment and from the external strategic setting into valid 'inputs' of policy. These include threats posed against South Yemen, as well as the incentives and opportunities available to it in the region.

The activities, factional inter-relations and perceptions of the elite are the focus of this study. No archival documents concerning South Yemen's contemporary annals are available. Hence the study analyzes the elites' strategymaking according to their known cultural, social and political inclinations. It seeks guidance from first hand, media and secondary accounts.

In the first years after independence, members of the South Yemeni elite manifested two main qualities: an overall inclination to a Marxist type of revolution, and parochial, locally-shaped perceptions. These characteristics illustrate the nature and parameters of 'regionalism' in politics.[3] The term

'regionalism' means that a given regime, however ideologically uniform and institutionally centralized, nevertheless operates according to primordial, regional-tribal inclinations that govern both its main political groups and their leaders. In this kind of polity, government policies and activities reflect either a chaotic rivalry among parochially-motivated elite groups, or a fragile compromise among these groups or, at best, a policy forcefully imposed by the strongest group among them. Regionalism further means that the policies of different political groups and respective elite members reflect their individual regional outlook on current affairs, shaped by regional conditions and cultural environment. The groups tend variously to interpret, absorb and respond to foreign and domestic challenges according to their regional-parochial perceptions and experiences. The analysis of regionalist policymaking is particularly suitable for understanding the system under question.

South Yemen's traditional political and societal structure well illustrated such regional fragmentation. Although the population of the republic is now quite homogeneous, consisting mainly (90%) of Sunni Muslim Arabic speakers, prior to independence South Yemen was divided into a variety of quasi-independent chieftaincies (or principalities), each comprising a tribal confederacy and ruled by a local notable of tribal descent. Societal divisions based on kinship and geography were paralleled by other divisions, among village and urban populations and among social estates, based on religious seniority and occupation, in which the prophet Muhammad's descendants (sayyids) and then the tribal leaders and religious sages occupied the upper strata. Although South Yemen was a British Protectorate for several decades prior to its independence, the British focused mostly on governing its main city, Aden, which was considered vital for Britain's connection with the Far East, and exercised minimal control over the tribal hinterland. Regional and social divisions therefore prevailed despite British-inspired administrative reforms introduced during the last four decades preceding independence. Moreover, even the short-lived Federation of South Arabia (1959-1967), which reflected a futile British attempt to establish a unified pro-British regime in South Yemen that would rule the country after Britain's evacuation, further articulated South Yemen's inherent divisions prior to independence.

Four regional district divisions that affected policymaking could be discerned. The eastern part of South Yemen — the Mahra and notably the

Hadramawt which consisted of the Saybani, Kathiri, Qu'ayti, Whaidi, Shenafir, Hamuni and Mahra tribal confederacies — was geared to agriculture and trade, and its inhabitants were relatively inclined to religious concerns. Its population had a longstanding association with the Far East, particularly the Dutch East Indies, which was manifested in emigre colonies of Hadramis in the East Indies Islands. East Indies values and habits were imported to Hadramawt by a constant flow of returning visitors, and were absorbed into Hadrami practices.

The city of Aden formed a second major region. Having been under British rule since 1839, and supporting major enterprises such as the port, British military bases, oil refineries and various private businesses, Aden grew into a cosmopolitan and stratified business community. Its inhabitants included many ethnic groups, such as diverse Yemeni migrants, Indians, Jews, and Europeans. Aden's cultural and political milieu were shaped both by the influx of European and Asian values which the British and Yemeni migrant groups introduced, and by the class relationship which developed among the business and working communities in the city.

Other regional divisions were the northwestern mountainous states (comprising the Yafi'i, Awlaqi, Awdhali, Dathina and Bayhan tribes), and the tribal states north of Aden (the Subayhi, Aqrabi, Abdali, Hawshabi, Amiri, Alawi, and Fadhli tribes). In addition to their adherence to local tribal values, an interest in agriculture and a dependence on Aden's economy, these regions were also influenced by their adjacent northern Arab states — notably North Yemen.[4]

When they held official positions, South Yemeni leaders were definitely influenced by the sovereign responsibilities and requirements of their posts. They did, however, blend patterns acquired at work with their regional perceptions. They also cultivated contacts with their regional constituents and recruited them to the administration and armed forces. Hence it was a combination of regional perceptions mingled with outlooks they developed on the job that shaped the revolutionary concepts of Aden's leaders.

When the nationalist armed struggle against the British developed in the early 1960s, each of the regional divisions contributed its own share and made its own specific impact, The majority of Adeni nationalists favored a political struggle, geared at constitutional changes and the implementation of socialist ideas. Marxism, specifically, developed gradually in Aden. Since the 1940s socialist ideas had percolated through British trade unionist

circles that assisted their Adeni counterparts, and were picked up by a small group of local intellectuals — mostly teachers and officials. In the 1950s some of these adherents became well versed in Leninist doctrine, and in 1961 they organized into the Popular Democratic Union (PDU). While most of the Hadrami population were rather apathetic to the prevalent nationalist movements, there arose small nuclei of Marxist opposition groups that actively opposed the ruling heads of local principalities. This process was nurtured by Hadrami emigrants returning from Indonesia and East Africa, where they had been exposed to Marxist ideas of a Maoist tendency. On their return, they developed small Maoist communes in Mukalla and in other cities in Hadramawt, which flourished among local youth.

The most significant nationalist movement, the Palestinian-led but widely supported Arab Nationalists' Movement (ANM), evolved in the tribal principalities in the northwest. Its development was spearheaded by Arab radical, mainly Nasserist influences that infiltrated the area in the late 1950s and peaked following the deployment of Egyptian forces to aid the revolution in North Yemen in 1962. Inspired by the Nasserist organizational model and pan-Arab ideas, ANM branches emerged in the regions affected by Nasserist influence emanating from North Yemen. They were organized in a cellular clandestine network among both tribes and townspeople. The mixture of Nasserist influence, the popular ongoing practice of tribal raiding, and the newer ANM cell structure, generated a guerrilla war waged by nationalist groups against the British and the South Arabian Federation. In 1963 the nationalists even succeeded in forming a front organization, the Nationalist Liberation Front for the Liberation of South Yemen (NLF).

Marxism in these regions evolved through an internal change of guard, organization and ideology within the NLF. Here the most influential factor was the spreading disappointment in Abd al-Nasir's meager economic achievements in Egypt and in his abortive Arab unity efforts. During 1965-68 several of the Beirut-based ANM groups turned away from Nasserism and adopted Marxism as an ideological alternative, thereby inspiring younger NLF cadres too. Moreover, in the eyes of local NLF junior leaders, by 1966 Nasserist organization and tactics were exhausted by the struggle. They thought that a Marxist strategy of guerrilla warfare, as developed in North Vietnam and Cuba, offered a more successful model of organization and a proven set of tactics for the advancement of the basically tribal and rural guerrilla struggle in South Yemen. These junior leaders adopted

Marxism as their basis for struggle and for gaining popular support, thereby weakening the power of the older, pro-Nasserist NLF cadres. During 1966, the Marxist-inclined NLF cadres coalesced with their counterparts in Hadramawt and Aden to turn the NLF into a nationwide Marxist guerrilla body. Abd al-Nasir's support for a rival organization, the Front for the Liberation of South Yemen (FLOSY), further distanced NLF cadres from this group. As the British gradually evacuated South Yemen in 1967, the NLF succeeded in defeating FLOSY, and took power.[5]

Hence, external influences — i.e., British, Nasserist, Far Eastern — and local state-building inclinations (i.e., socio-economic and political developments in the various regions) generated a nationalist body that waged revolutionary warfare in South Yemen against federal and British rulers of the state. The different activists of the NLF shared a common denominator in fighting these rulers, but each also manifested certain regional revolutionary perceptions. This pattern was to exercise a growing impact after independence.

Chapter 1. Elite Patterns and Revolutionary Strategy: An Overview

Patterns of State-building and Elite Tendencies

The aim of this discussion is to demonstrate how development of state and society affected the elite of the Peoples Republic of South Yemen (PRSY) — its name immediately after independence — and particularly its revolutionary policies.

The composition of each of the elite factions reflected divisions in the leading National Front (NF). One division comprised a leftist aggregate of several groups. One of these was composed of old-time ardent Adenese Marxists, affiliated with a declared communist party, the Popular Democratic Union. Their leader, Ba-Dhib, was influential among other NF leaders. There was also a group of leading former NLF fighters, all Arab Nationalists, who had converted to Marxism in the mid-1960s due largely to the overall decline of Nasserism in the Arab world, but whose inclination to Marxism varied.[1] This group included figures such as Abd al-Fattah Ismail, the new minister of guidance; Ali-Salim al-Bayd, the new minister of defense; and Abdullah al-Khamiri, head of the Supreme State Security Court. It had two main regional strongholds: in Abyan and Dathina northeast of Aden where other NF members, such as Ali Nasir Muhammad and Ali Antar, enjoyed firm support; and in the coastal cities in Hadramawt, notably Mukalla, where a group of Maoists, led by Faysal al-Attas, set up Chinese revolutionary-style "communes" according to ideas they had acquired among Hadrami emigrant communities in the Far East.[2] Both al-Bayd and another NF member, Ali Salim Rubay, descended from Hadramawt and espoused similar ideas.

Hence the leftist aggregate was composed of a Marxist-Leninist doctrinaire group from Aden, an Arab nationalist stream recently converted to Marxism whose members came from the regions north of Aden, and a

Maoist group from the Hadramawt. The leftists' common platform held that the ruling NF should have embarked on a sweeping nationalization of all economic assets, immediate agrarian reform, removal of 'bourgeois' and 'petit bourgeois' elements (i.e., bureaucrats and businessmen who had served the former regime) from the administration, implementation of party indoctrination within army ranks, the establishment of a party-controlled 'popular-militia,' and a foreign policy of 'exporting the revolution' into other countries. They argued that the new president, Qahtan al-Shabi, had in fact embarked upon a moderate policy that fell far short of their expectations.[3]

There was a 'middle of the road' NF group led by Arab Nationalists, who harbored socialist views but did not develop a full-fledged Marxist attitude. These were the founders and leaders of the NLF. They maintained a coalition with the Marxists in the NF and became the main functionaries of the new regime. They included leaders from the agricultural regions north of Aden, notably Lahaj, who traditionally were receptive to Arab nationalist, mainly Nasserist perceptions. They also followed the Nasser ist regime in promoting agricultural development projects in Dathina and Lahaj. Most prominent among these were Qahtan al-Shabi, president until June 1969 and prime minister until April 1969, and his cousin Faysal Abd al-Latif al-Shabi, who was minister of foreign trade until March 1968 and prime minister between April and June 1969. Qahtan and his group focused on improving the country's economy, which after 1967 had been weakened both by a cutoff in British aid and by the closure of the Suez Canal after the Six-Day War, which turned maritime trade away from the Aden port. With revenues of £10 million and expected expenditures of £18 million in 1969, Qahtan preferred to resort to 'traditional' means of administration, such as soliciting for hard cash from both western and eastern bloc countries, encouraging rather than purging the existing bureaucracy, and avoiding a straightforward policy of insurgency against neighboring states.[4] Qahtan's group was supported by the state's armed forces (the regular army, the security forces and the popular guard), who tended to back the central government both because many of the units had 'professional' British training and because their tribal descent made them equally unreceptive to leftist revolutionary programs and to FLOSY's intrusions.[5]

The first stage of state-building in the PRSY evolved from late 1967 up until June 1969, and marked the NF-led government's success in consolidating its rule over the entire state, and also in imprinting a firm

leftist stamp throughout the country. To achieve this aim the NF had first to surmount FLOSY's opposition. Devoid of a clearly demarcated frontier line and crisscrossed with mountainous passages used by local tribes, the border region between the two Yemens and between the PRSY and Saudi Arabia evolved into a FLOSY stronghold. Although defeated prior to independence, FLOSY succeeded thereafter in rallying diverse anti-NF cadres. These were largely groups of tribesmen, followers of the former rulers of the country, the sultans of the South Yemen Principalities (who had either left the country or were evacuated by the new regime). They were in league with army officers and administrators of the pre-independence regime, who together formed a 'right-wing' opposition to the NF's government. They were led by FLOSY, whose headquarters were in North Yemen, although its leaders were occasionally reported to have met in Jidda (Saudi Arabia) and Asmara (Ethiopia).[6]

During this period, FLOSY's incursions against South Yemen exploited the advantages the frontier offered. FLOSY leaders had a safe haven in the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR, as North Yemen is officially called); they used its southern cities, particularly Ta'izz, as operational headquarters. According to diverse sources FLOSY also enjoyed the active support of Royalist elements in the YAR who received Saudi Arabian financial aid.[7] FLOSY's leaders activated friendly tribal groups and former sultans: thus, tribal uprisings in Bayhan (in the north of the PRSY) in February 1968, and in Sa'id in August 1968 and again in 1969, were coordinated by several of the former sultans from the Habili, Abu Bakr and Fadhli clans, respectively.[8]

In light of FLOSY's initiatives, the South Yemeni government adopted a number of counter tactics. To try to block infiltration at the border would have been useless, given the difficult topography and unclear division of state authority prevailing in this zone. Instead it focused on curbing the insurgents north of the line of towns (Yashbum, Kawr, Mukiras, Lawdar) in the mountains near the frontier, to prevent the incursions from affecting the main parts of the PRSY. South of this line the government was able to secure the loyalty of tribes and enlist them against FLOSY.

In actual clashes, PRSY troops proved superior militarily to the insurgents in all battles, and the South Yemeni army engaged in successful hot pursuit of the insurgents into the YAR: in February 1968 an infantry column destroyed a FLOSY base in the North, and in December an aircraft

from the South pursued and destroyed rebels in Bayhan and across the frontier into North Yemen.[9] Avenues of political penetration were also developed. During 1968 the PRSY supported a leftist faction led by Abd al-Raqib in the internal power struggle in the YAR, in the capital San'a. South Yemen also exploited the support of the Shafi'i-dominated townspeople, who opposed the tribal, Zaydi-dominated government in the North. This provided a human infrastructure and an incentive for attempting a revolutionary strategy in the.future.

While the defeat of FLOSY signified the government's ability to counteract the activity of the right wing in the PRSY, a similar challenge was posed by the left wing — by groups led by Attas in Hadramawt.[10] Encouraged by a series of leftist resolutions adopted by the NF's fourth conference in March 1968, Attas and his colleagues, supported by 'popular guards' in Hadramawt, started to form 'peoples' councils' on the Chinese model.[11] In response, the NF's main stream led by Qahtan formed an alliance with the army to thwart the leftists' initiatives. Still loyal to the professional standards set by the British, the army leaders feared the leftists' aim to place the military under strict party authority. On March 20, 1968, army units arrested several major NF leaders of the leftist faction, and in May the army successfully quelled rebellions instigated by leftists in both Abyan (northeast of Aden) and Hadramawt.[12] Qahtan went on to exploit the central government's victory to spread its administration and establish communications to the remotest (and previously opposition dominated) territories.[13]

In the following months, until June 1969, the struggle between the government and the leftists diminished as both sides directed their energies toward countering FLOSY. In this sense, although the struggle over power in the government was not over, the superiority of the center over disputed peripheral regions and opposition groups was established, and the NF became more confident in its ruling position.

A second stage of state-building in the PRSY evolved roughly between June 1969 and May 1970. In June 1969 Qahtan and his 'middle of the road' comrades were toppled in an internal leftist coup; Qahtan had apparently succeeded in spreading central government authority, but not in stifling intra-elite rivalries, which finally precipitated his end. The NF elite then adopted a full-fledged Marxist line under the leadership of Ismail, Rubay,

Ali Nasir, Bayd, Khamiri and their followers. The dismissal in August 1971 of Prime Minister Muhammad Ali Haytham of the tribal-agricultural region of Dathina, northeast of Aden, fostered this process.[14]

This development was conducive to a revolutionary strategy in foreign affairs that most South Yemeni leaders, confident in their leftist outlook and political position, seemed to promote in the early 1970s, Its evolution can be explained with reference to the fluctuations of state-building that now took place, as the new leaders embarked on a course of reshaping social institutions according to Marxist models. Thus, already in 1969-70 the army and regional administration were purged and restructured: recruitment to both institutions became dependent upon administrative competence and ideological aptitude. The former upper echelons, mainly tribal-state leaders and religious sages, were purged and their properties confiscated. For symbolic reasons, the state's name in 1970 was changed to the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY). Strict state planning (mainly manifested in the five-year plans, 1974-1979 and 1979-1984) sought to transform South Yemen into a productive Marxist society: radical agrarian reform laws provided for land redistribution among peasants (by mid-1975, to about 30,000 farmers), and these assets were then reincorporated mainly into cooperative farms. Employees in state-controlled agriculture and industry constituted a large public sector. The government founded health and educational services, attempted to reduce tribal feuding, and sought to accompany this with the establishment of popular organizations of militia, workers, youth, and women; these maintained the necessary socialization of society and cadre recruitment.[15]

Above all, the leading institutions were reconstructed to improve their functioning according to Marxist practices. Thus in October 1975 the NF united with the PDU and a small former Ba'th splinter, the Vanguard Party, to form United Political Organization, the National Front (UPONF), which in turn became the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) in October 1978. This unification of diverse Marxist and quasi-Marxist bodies provided for a strong ruling party. Its role, particularly that of its secretariat and politburo, was to control all social, economic and political activities (including government performance) and to form the ideological vanguard or leadership. By administering the popular organizations, controlling the army, and presiding over the government, including its powerful

presidential council, ministry of state security and general administration, the dominant NF leaders controlled the state.[16]

Throughout these developments, the leadership restructuring process continued. It resulted in an alliance between Ali Salim Rubay as president (until June 1978) and Ali Nasir Muhammad as prime minister and defense minister (for most of this period), against their rival Abd al-Fattah Ismail,[17] the architect and then secretary general of UPONF and the YSP, and president between June 1978 and April 1980. Their rivalry showed the effects of regional perceptions: Rubay favored a Maoist-style regime, reminiscent of the popular model the Hadramis had favored in 1968; and Ali Nasir preferred to focus on the economic and administrative development that his colleagues of Abyan had favored since the 1950s, when Abyan was a center of agricultural development for the entire country. On the other hand Ismail, a native of al-Jawf in North Yemen who had no regional roots in South Yemen, aligned himself with Aden's Marxist intellectuals of the PDU and became a spokesman of their largely Marxist-Leninist doctrinaire concepts.

In the context of the PDRY's state-building of the 1970s, the rivalry resulted in two different approaches toward state affairs. Ismail's Marxist-Leninist approach focused on strict development of a central party, a socialist, state-directed economy, cadre development, and political instruction of the masses. His routine dealings, as party secretary, with party counterparts in Moscow reinforced these views. In contrast, both Rubay and Ali Nasir followed more ostensibly pragmatic approaches. Rubay's Hadrami Maoist inclination led him to prefer a less centralized state and to stress more popular, grass roots activity, attempting to cope with daily countryside affairs. This attitude matched Ali Nasir's emphasis on profitable economic, mostly agricultural development. Their government tasks, too (Rubay as president and Ali Nasir as prime minister), brought them face to face with the PDRY's most difficult problems, thereby shaping their pragmatic approach to public affairs.

These differences predictably led to disputes. Rubay's and Ali Nasir's efforts during the mid-1970s to expand cooperativism among farmers and fishermen and to alleviate the PDRY's dire financial situation[18] by attracting outside investment, met with moderate success but were criticized by Ismail's group as being too lax and inefficient from a doctrinaire Marxist viewpoint. On the other hand, Ismail's successful venture in developing

UPONF and YSP (in which he overpowered Rubay, who became the YSP's Assistant Secretary General) triggered Rubay's and Ali Nasir's objections to a doctrinaire party leadership. Other NF activists, such as the former anti-British guerrilla leader Ali Antar, who represented the Arab-nationalist tribesmen in the regions northwest of Aden, also criticized Ismail's attachment to urban party hacks. The disputes came to a head on June 25, 1978: Rubay was accused of instigating the murder of the YAR's president. His attempt to enlist loyal forces was counteracted by pro-Ismail units, who captured and executed him. As Ismail was able to muster decisive support among the armed forces at that stage, Ali Nasir and Ali Antar accepted Rubay's demise and recognized Ismail's ascent. Ismail's period in power, both as president and as the YSP's secretary general, lasted only until April 1980, when he was deposed by a coalition of Ali Nasir and Ali Antar, and left for exile in Moscow.[19] Ali Nasir became the new paramount leader.

These events had a distinct impact on Aden's revolutionary strategy. To secure the PDRY's development and improve its economy, Rubay's and Ali Nasir's group had become interested in a foreign policy based on cooperation with neighboring countries. In contrast, Ismail's group sought mainly to expand the PDRY's revolution throughout the Arabian Peninsula. In his view, only the establishment of Marxist regimes in all neighboring states would be conducive to stable state-building in the PDRY.

Ali Nasir's tenure did not bring formal structural changes, as the YSP and the Presidium of the Supreme People's Council (formerly Presidential Council) continued to rule the state. Ali Nasir functioned as president, prime minister and YSP secretary general until February 1985. Anxious to introduce pragmatic measures to improve the PDRY's administration and economy, Ali Nasir introduced changes designed to liberalize these sectors and improve the standard of living. He placed greater emphasis on private housing construction, and gave cooperative peasants certificates of title to their land, in order to foster their security in their tenure. He improved marketing, encouraged private enterprise, and launched a major search for minerals. In particular, oil prospecting in Hadramawt was conducted by the Italian company Agip rather then by a local or communist-bloc company. Ali Nasir strongly emphasized the training and recruitment of capable technical and administrative manpower, mainly from the developed regions — notably his own home area, Abyan — and from the army. Although his policies could not repair the chronic problems of the PDRY's economy, they

stimulated development within PDRY society. GNP rose from $395 million in 1983 to $686 million in 1985. In addition, Ali Nasir's policies focused on institutionalization: the YSP's control over popular organizations and the army was strengthened and regularized, and central and local government administrative activities were also formalized.[20] Hence, under Ali Nasir PDRY society became geared to administrative and economic development, and professionals — technicians, army officers and economic entrepreneurs — now ran society.

These developments had a new effect on elite positions and rivalries. As a result of previous struggles, the elite now consisted of a loose coalition of surviving splinter groups that coexisted uneasily. Ali Nasir's preference for a centralized and development-minded administration run mostly by urban technicians alienated the tribal elements from the mountainous regions, such as the Awlaqi and Dali'i areas, whose influence in the administration declined. Ali Nasir's success in expelling from influential cabinet positions two representatives of this group, Foreign Minister Salih Muti in August 1980 (he was later executed) and Minister of Defense Ali Antar in May 1981, strengthened Ali Nasir's leadership position but prompted the tribe-based leaders from the mountainous regions in the north to seek vengeance against him. In addition, there were remnants of Ismail's groups, such as Ali Salim al-Bayd and Adbullah Ushaysh (who occasionally held high government and YSP positions). They criticized Ali Nasir's pragmatic policies as deviations from the declared YSP socialist line; they accused him of preferring private enterprise and bypassing civil service and party procedures.[21]

Furthermore, the tendency to recruit regional supporters into administrative and party positions encouraged elite leaders to base their support on regional and sectorial constituencies. The armed forces were prominent on the elite's favored list, and elite members sought inroads into the military's ranks. Ali Nasir succeeded in advancing both officers and rank and file of his own loyalists from Abyan and Dathina, whereas Awlaqi inhabitants who had traditionally staffed military positions tended to support Antar. Abyan inhabitants also fared better in the administration and economy, while Aden intellectuals and the Hadramis lacked any direct involvement in these processes. The Aden-based intellectuals sided eventually with Ali Nasir, while the Hadramis tended to support the critical position of al-Bayd, who was both a radical and of Hadrami origin. A

coalition of Antar's and al-Bayd's groups formed during 1984 and 1985; it was bolstered by the return of Abd al-Fattah Ismail from Moscow in February 1985 and his resumption of major YSP positions. In early 1986 this group defeated Ali Nasir's followers in a bloody clash.[22]

During Ali Nasir's period in power, his foreign policy focused on creating regional and international conditions conducive to the type of reforms he was seeking in the PDRY. This was principally an attempt to introduce stability and relative good neighborliness in the region, coupled with the forging of a strategic alliance with the PDRY's patron, the Soviet Union, that would secure South Yemen's development in the long term future. The opposition that sought a return to Ismail's revolutionary activism in the region's states had little influence during this period.

External Conditions and Elite Characteristics

Events among the PDRY's neighbors influenced the diversity of opinions held by the country's elites. The elites' interpretations of such events shaped their understanding both of external dangers and of the opportunities available for the PDRY, thereby affecting foreign and security policies as well as ongoing internal divisions.

During South Yemen's first years of independence and until approximately mid-1972, a major superpower vacuum prevailed in the Arabian Peninsula and its surrounding regions, and various regional states tried successively to fill it. The void resulted mainly from the evacuation of the formerly dominant great power, Great Britain. Britain granted independence to South Yemen in November 1967; in January 1968 it decided to evacuate the Gulf. The British withdrawal, accompanied by the evacuation of the Egyptian forces from North Yemen by late 1967, left the region without forceful, dominating outside powers. But several other parties were eager to fill the vacuum. In the Gulf itself, the Trucial Coast principalities tried to realize a British design to maintain their independence and their pro-western orientation by embracing regional unity. Unable to extend the unity scheme to include the northern principalities of the Gulf, a federation of the states of the Trucial Coast materialized in December 1971 in the form of the United Arab Emirates. Iran's seizure of two islands in the

Hormuz Straits at the entrance to the Gulf (the two Tunb islands) on November 30, 1971 with the tacit consent of both Britain and the Gulf states, further reflected the desire of the pro-western regional states to dominate the Gulf.[23]

In the Peninsula itself, Saudi Arabia tried to assert an Islamic-conservative and pro-western profile. This approach was enhanced following the discovery in June 1969 of a plot against the Saudi government, which had been initiated by local ANM members in collaboration with officers in the Saudi air force and army. Thereafter Saudi government fears of leftist elements in the region greatly increased. Subsequent clashes between Saudi and South Yemeni forces in Wadi'a (along the undemarcated Saudi-South Yemeni frontier) in December 1969,[24] impelled the Saudi government to take clear action to limit South Yemen's influence. Notably, Riyadh attempted to encourage FLOSY's activities, main ly from the YAR, against the PDRY, and to foster Oman's regime east of the PDRY. These initiatives prompted the NF to confront Saudi designs and frustrate them.

Another factor that shaped the outlook of the PDRY elite was its relationship with eastern bloc and communist states, two in particular. The first, the People's Republic of China, viewed the South Yemeni struggle for independence as an incarnation of Mao Ze Dung's ideas of a 'countryside' version of guerrilla warfare carried out by a non-industrial society. Chinese experts boosted the PDRY's potential to spread insurgency by promoting South Yemen's assistance to the Dhofar Liberation Front. And in 1968 the PRC saved Aden from bankruptcy by aiding it with a £5 million loan.[25]

The second key link was with the Soviet Union, particularly its communist party; this contact gradually became closer after the leftists' ascent to power in June 1969.[26] Soviet aid came slowly, in small portions, and in different forms. Light arms were delivered during 1968; ten MiG-17 aircraft came in January 1969; and 50 technicians subsequently arrived in South Yemen. All these aided the PDRY in its insurgency and counter-insurgency warfare. Some 50 South Yemenis were then sent to the Soviet Union for training. Modest economic aid, mainly for the fishing industry, was contracted during Qahtan's visit to Moscow in January 1969. In April and May 1970 Ismail visited Moscow on the occasion of Lenin's centenary and met with all the major Soviet leaders. This visit resulted in growing contacts between the ruling parties of the two states: in August the leaders

of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) agreed to train cadres of the NF, mainly by establishing a special curriculum and providing teachers.[27] Marxist revolutionary thought was thereupon institutionalized among the new leaders.

These developments merit further elaboration. Interestingly, Soviet and Chinese activities did not reveal any clear and overwhelming bid to dominate the region. Either due to the centrality of the Arab-Israel conflict, which still attracted most superpower and regional attention, and/or because of Britain's previous dominance (challenged only by Egypt's intervention in Yemen), patterns of Soviet intervention in South Arabia were rather protracted. An over-reliance on Egypt to handle affairs in the area and the resultant Soviet support for the Egyptian-based but weak FLOSY, prevented an immediate Soviet-NLF rapprochement after South Yemen's independence. Moscow's lack of familiarity with the NLF and its suspicion of the role played by the PRC in Aden also prevented any massive Russian involvement. Only as Moscow's global interest in establishing naval and air bases grew from the late 1960s on, did it step up its drive to find collaborators in the region. Eventually the growing leftist tendency of the new NF leadership combined with Moscow's own realization that Peking should not be left to dominate the PDRY, and generated a growing Soviet involvement in the region.[28] But this was of little significance prior to 1972.

Still restrained by former British initiatives in the region, and fully occupied in Vietnam, the United States, too, did not evince any firm drive for direct involvement. As the Nixon doctrine implied, the US relied on initiatives of local powers such as Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. However, prior to 1972 the Saudi and Iranian forces were still modest in scope, and their ambitions had not yet fully matured. They therefore limited themselves to specific local aims and sought no permanent regional hegemony. The Chinese, who presumably were beset by logistics and economic constraints, acted no differently, and focused only on aiding South Yemeni efforts to instigate a rebellion in Western Oman, in the region of Dhofar.

This situation had a two-fold impact on the PDRY elite. First, it became evident to all South Yemeni leaders that several regional, pro-western and conservative forces were trying to fill Britain's role in the region, and that their initiatives were having a burdensome if not destructive effect on the PDRY. Containing these initiatives therefore became Aden's main goal.

On the other hand, the evolution of foreign interests in the region gradually encouraged Aden to link up with a superpower. Thus after June 1969, PDRY leftist leaders intensified their drive to establish an alliance with Moscow. Here diversified Russian assistance was a major motive. During 1972 the Soviets concluded a $20 million arms deal with Aden, then added $20 million for economic needs. China, faced with superior Russian competition, began to disengage from South Yemen. Moreover, in the aftermath of its cultural revolution China began to develop contacts with "non-revolutionary" states, including Ethiopia (under Haile-Selassi) and the Gulf states, and its interest in aiding revolutionary campaigns launched against such states steadily declined. Thus it was not surprising that no Chinese delegate attended the NF's fifth conference in 1972, even though the Chinese had attended the fourth conference in 1968.

At the same time, both NF factions grasped the Soviet Union's significance for the PDRY and competed for Moscow's favors. Rubay occasionally displayed a Maoist undertone by initiating projects such as popular militias (in late 1971) or by stressing the role of peasants in South Yemen's revolution. He did, however, criticize China's moderation, calling it a "betrayal" of the "Global Revolution." He also succeeded in projecting an image of reliability on Moscow's leaders, who signed several military and economic agreements with him. For his part Ismail maintained close relations with CPSU cadres, and particularly with the Soviet Politburo's ideologue, Mikhail Suslov. Both Ismail and Rubay visited Moscow frequently. Hence each of the PDRY leaders fell under growing Soviet influence.[29]

During the period from mid-1972 to 1980, the situation in the areas surrounding South Yemen changed markedly, generating new PDRY elite perceptions. Here the main thrust was a direct attempt by several powers to fill the gap left after Britain's evacuation from the Gulf, thereby to gain regional dominance. Until 1976 this state of affairs evolved fairly peacefully. However, from 1976 until 1981, tension and conflict increased between and among the pro-western and the pro-Soviet states.

Encouraged by increasing oil revenues and by the influence and arms that these had purchased, the pro-western conservative states in the Peninsula and the Gulf sought regional dominating roles. Iran in particular was bent upon obtaining hegemony in the Gulf. Tehran's strategy may have been motivated by traditional imperial interests in governing the region and/or by

Iran's tacit rivalry with Iraq and Saudi Arabia over control of the Gulf. Iran, however, also viewed itself as the 'gendarme' or protector of the Gulf and was particularly hostile to pro-Soviet insurgent states or organizations in the area. Iran's main policy tool was its army, which had become a large and potent force. Due to the energetic initiatives of Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi, by 1973 Iran's army consisted of 342,000 soldiers, 1620 battle tanks and 341 combat aircraft.[30]

In addition Egypt, Sudan, and Saudi Arabia sought to counteract both the Soviet position in Somalia (where the Soviets had bases in Mogadishu, Kismayu and Berbera) and the concurrent pro-Soviet drift of Mengistu Haile Mariam's regime in Ethiopia. Slogans such as "a Red Sea free of superpower influences" and "an Arab lake of peace" that were boosted by these states, in fact masked anti-Soviet intentions.[31] Several meetings among heads of Red Sea states took place to coordinate this aim, notably a conference which convened in Ta'izz in the YAR in March 1977.[32] Despite its leading role in sponsoring these initiatives, Saudi Arabia decided to avoid official and overt exposure, and did not participate in the Ta'izz conference.

Although the United States was not directly involved in these particular attempts, the emerging importance of oil for both the US and its western allies impelled Washington to establish its own presence in the area, so as to sustain the oil flow from the Gulf through the Indian Ocean. Toward this end the US conducted the MIDLINK naval maneuvers in the Indian Ocean in November 1974. It also leased a British airfield at Masira Island near Oman, and the US Congress decided in July 1975 to expand facilities on the island of Diego Garcia.[33] In addition, the US supported the aim of the pro-western states to achieve dominance in the region.

Soviet activity in the Peninsula and the surrounding region during the early 1970s can be characterized as exploratory: seeking improved relations with states that previously had not been friendly to Moscow. This strategy was anchored in Moscow's existing strongholds: the PDRY, Iraq (which signed a treaty of friendship with the Soviets in 1972), and Somalia, which provided harbor facilities for Soviet ships. In addressing the Gulf states and the YAR, Moscow had to deal with societies that were essentially anti-Marxist and therefore hard to win over. However, in the Soviet view the Gulf states offered advantages, too: they had an attractive commodity to supply (the Soviets developed a slowly growing interest in Gulf oil,

particularly for the use of their East European clients), and they were gaining full independence from the British, thereby presenting Moscow with new opportunities. Hence, although Moscow exploited the subversion that its clients launched against Gulf states, its main strategy toward these states was not aimed at toppling their regimes by force, but rather at developing cooperation with them by delivering foreign aid, seeking diplomatic relations, and making treaties. Thus Moscow provided technical aid and opened trade relations (including the acquisition of oil and gas) with Tehran, and sought in the mid-1970s to improve relations in all these spheres with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE.[34] The Soviets also maintained close relations with the YAR, whose Red Sea ports were a strategic asset for Moscow and whose regime was increasingly receptive to Moscow's interests and its assistance.

By 1976, and until 1980, the Soviet Union changed its strategy. Confronted by the pro-western regional influences evident in the growing power of states such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia, Moscow sensed that its position might deteriorate. Hence it intervened directly on Ethiopia's side against a former client turned pro-western — Somalia — in 1977-78; and it tried to maneuver its clients, notably Ethiopia and the PDRY, into an alliance. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 completed the encirclement of the Gulf region from the Horn of Africa, Afghanistan and South Yemen.[35]

Among the western states in the region it was primarily Saudi Arabia that attempted first to reinforce the pro-western inclinations of the YAR and Somalia to prevent their falling under Soviet influence, and then to enlist overall Arab support against the ventures of Ethiopia and the PDRY in 1978 and 1979.[36]

All these developments had a strong impact on the PDRY's elite. On the one hand, Aden's anxiety over pro-western strategic changes in the region — the new and ambitious Saudi, Iranian, and US initiatives — definitely grew. On the other hand, the readiness of Saudi and Kuwaiti actors to use 'positive sanctions,' notably financial help, to entice their target states into the western orbit, and the parallel Soviet strategy of rapprochement with the Gulf states, resulted in a quasi-'detente' in the region that allowed the PDRY considerable latitude in dealing with both friend and foe.

Prior to 1976 it was mainly Rubay and Ali Nasir who displayed a pragmatic outlook — trying to exploit their potential maneuverability in the

region and devise a versatile foreign policy that would adjust to the new threats and opportunities confronting the PDRY. They sought to achieve this by cooperating with both the Soviet Union and the pro-western states. On the other hand, supported by the Aden Marxist elite, Ismail advocated a clearer pro-Soviet line, focusing on generating congruence with Soviet interests and on advancing revolutionary goals. The hard line Moscow adopted after 1976 seems to have boosted Ismail's policies, and after his victory over Rubay in June 1978 these policies prevailed.[37]

During 1980-1985 the active powers in the region once more preferred to embark on a political approach of calm and detente. Each party probably realized that it had reached an optimal level of influence, and sought to consolidate it within its camp. In addition, each had particular reasons for relaxing regional tensions. The Gulf states feared the split that had developed in the inter-Arab system following the Egyptian-Israeli peace — especially after the Baghdad summit of late March 1979 had imposed a diplomatic and partial economic boycott on Egypt. The Gulf principalities felt that this split could precipitate anti-western radicalization, perhaps even a detrimental campaign of terrorism.

They were even more fearful of a possible expansion of the Iran-Iraq War, which broke out in September 1980. A decisive victory of either of the protagonists was undesirable, as Iraq was a radical Arab power and Iran a hostile Shi'ite fundamentalist power. Moreover, the war might have resulted in a clash between the superpowers that would have obstructed the region's oil industry on which the Gulf States depended. These fears prompted Saudi Arabia and its smaller allies in the Gulf to seek regional relaxation in order to prevent additional inter-Arab animosities that might generate further unwanted radicalization.

By 1981 these fears substantially lessened. The new rift between Syria and Iraq — which had broken out due to Damascus' sympathy with Iran in its war with Iraq — further split the Arab radical camp. Baghdad's growing dependence on the Gulf states for financial and logistical assistance also helped reduce these states' anxiety over the Arab radical camp. The stalemate in the Gulf war, with the two foes battering each other seemingly endlessly, allayed fears that the war might result in any of the aforementioned consequences. In fact, the Gulf states' leaders felt confident enough to engage in new ventures.[38]

One new initiative was the establishment, on May 25, 1981, of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to coordinate Gulf states' policies in several fields. This organization, comprising all the Gulf Arab states except Iraq, operates mainly through councils composed of heads of states and various ministers, and has been focusing mainly on reinforcing internal security in the region.[39] The GCC soon constituted the hub of a pro-western orbit in the region; Oman even participated in the US-led "Bright Star" maneuvers in the early 1980s. But this was exceptional, as the GCC venture was aimed at increasing the Gulf states' security essentially through conciliatory regional efforts. The GCC states sought regional security by exploiting the maneuverability granted to them by the deadlock in the Arab-Israeli and Iran-Iraq disputes, and hoped thereby to enhance their role as mediators and pacifiers in Arab conflicts. Accordingly, they redoubled their efforts to improve relations with Aden and to neutralize the PDRY's feuds with its neighbors the YAR (during 1981 84) and Oman (since 1982). Moreover, GCC policy showed deference to Soviet interests by reiterating Moscow's important role in the Middle East. Indeed, with the exception of Oman, GCC states refused to permit the establishment of US military bases in the Gulf or any increased American military presence there.[40]

By this time the Soviet Union, too, had come to exercise a policy of consolidating its strategic strongholds in the region and improving relations with the Gulf and Peninsula states. The Kremlin decided that it had already acquired sufficient proximity and potential impact over the oil-rich Gulf and the adjacent waterways from its existing strongholds. Its Soviet allies — the PDRY, Libya, and Ethiopia — even embarked on a "Tripartite alliance" in August 1981. The Soviet Union also enjoyed close relations with the states of the Arab Steadfastness Front, notably Syria. Soviet leaders therefore thought they should reinforce their 'exploratory' interest toward the Gulf states, to promote a nonviolent, if not totally normalized relationship with them.

In their view, this policy would generate several advantages. First, it would lure states that had been either non-aligned or even staunch supporters of the West, over to the Soviet side, particularly after the mounting criticism the Gulf states' voiced against the US in the aftermath of the Camp David Accords, This policy was directed in particular at the YAR and even at Iran, whose revolutionary regime had not yet fully crystalized. While the Soviets did not harbor any illusions regarding the pro-western

attitude of the Gulf states, they thought that a correct and even friendly attitude toward them would also reduce their objections to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. This policy was also aimed at reinforcing the Gulf states' belief that it was unnecessary to accept American bases in their territories. Moreover, the Soviets' capacity to restrain leftist insurgency (or, if Moscow wished, to enhance it) was also aimed at increasing its influence with Gulf states. Finally, despite its being a major oil exporting state, the Soviet Union may have wished to purchase Gulf oil on preferential terms, whether for barter agreements or at discounted prices, and thereby boost its limited hard currency reserves.[41]

These policies of restraint suited Ali Nasir's pragmatic attitude, by offering his government more diversification in foreign policy. Motivated by its desire for developments, Ali Nasir's elite set out to exploit this situation so as to benefit from the assistance of both the Soviets and the Gulf states. However, internal instability made it difficult for Ali Nasir to implement his pragmatic, non-doctrinaire policies.

In fact, Ali Nasir's often adventurous and unorthodox approaches contributed to the criticism voiced against him by the dissatisfied elements within the elite, who accused him of deviating from the conventional revolutionary policies of the PDRY.

Chapter 2. Insurgency in Oman and the Gulf

Embarking on Insurgency: The Guerrilla Option

The NF elite opted quite naturally to wage guerrilla warfare against neighboring states that they perceived as hostile. Their choice was based on their own practice in fighting the British and the South Arabian Federation, which they carried over to surrounding societies. However, evidence shows that this strategy was also based on political motives that stemmed from the domestic state-building and external strategic conditions. Guerrilla strategy was fully implemented only in late 1969 and further in 1970, rather than immediately following the NLF's takeover of South Yemen's government in 1967. Initially it was primarily aimed against Oman, in the direction of the Gulf, rather than against other PDRY neighbors. It reflected a conscientious decision of the leftist NF leadership that rose to power in June 1969.

The new strategy drew encouragement from the vacuum generated in the region following the evacuation of British and Egyptian forces. This left Southern Arabia without the restraining influence of foreign powers, and generated small-scale, tribal warfare all over the area: sequences of the civil war in the YAR (begun originally in 1962); clashes in the north and east of the PDRY, where the new government fought opposition groups; and fighting in Dhofar, the western province of Oman, where the local tribes revolted against the Sultan. The disputed and undelineated frontiers among these states and the tribal practice of the population in these regions of disregarding state sovereignty and territorial limits during a feud, added a parochial dimension to essentially politically and ideologically motivated clashes. The fighting thus tended to spread from one frontier region to another, generating an ongoing disorder in the late 1960s. It corresponded to what A.S. Feldman calls "fragmented systems" of ubiquitous character, or what J. Rosenau views as a "penetrative process" whereby elements of one

state infiltrate and influence the political process of another.[1] This state of affairs had a twofold effect on the elite that propelled it to embark on guerrilla warfare. On the one hand, it focused the elite's mind on the external dangers posed against South Yemen. In the eyes of the different leftist factions that formed the PDRY elite after June 1969, the danger lay in the weakness of neighboring regimes and societies, as the power vacuum attracted western powers to manipulate and dominate local countries, and this western influence could easily affect South Yemen itself through its porous frontiers.

Moreover, as followers of neo-Marxist perceptions, PDRY leaders saw some value in struggling against what they saw as the negative ramifications of international capitalist interdependence. According to this theory, the major western economic powers continue to exploit the underdeveloped third world states even after the latter have received their independence, through economic activities exercised by a combination of local benefactors and western companies. This exploitation, the PDRY leaders maintained, is absorbed by a socio-economic structure comprising mostly businessmen, landowners and the ignorant peasants typical of underdeveloped states. The economic backwardness of these states therefore provides a perpetual opportunity for western ventures. Hence the achievement of political independence is no final remedy for these states; ironically, this event becomes a major danger, as it only sets into motion continuous economic exploitation. A proper struggle for independence should therefore focus not only on evacuation of the colonial power, but even more upon a popular revolution within the government and the social structure, that would bring to power workers, radical intellectuals and peasants who would establish a socio-economic order to save the new state (or states) from continuous exploitation and deprivation. This view implies that the period immediately preceding independence is the proper time for a liberation movement to take action. This is when both the threat of the future and the opportunity to change the backward society are juxtaposed.[2]

On the other hand, the penetrative system was also conducive for the PDRY to exert its own influence across the frontiers. To understand this point, the input of the state-building processes of the day should be considered. The South Yemeni leadership succeeded in blocking the penetration of FLOSY from the YAR, suppressing the unrest in Hadramawt, and establishing effective control over most of the state. This was an

advantage that the YAR and Oman had not yet acquired. Hence, when the NF came to power in Aden, it turned the penetrative system into a one-way track leading into the PDRY's neighboring territories, to both subvert these regimes and eliminate the dangers posed against the PDRY from there. To use S. Spiegel's and L. Cantori's phrase, the PDRY became the "core sector" of the regional "intrusive system" of the southeastern part of the Peninsula by harnessing guerrilla warfare against its neighboring states.[3] In other words, Aden acquired both the will and the ability to command direct insurgent activities into its neighbors' territories.

Another factor derived from foreign conditions was the South Yemeni elite's belief that guerrilla warfare was suitable to the conditions prevalent in the neighboring countries — conditions that had also characterized South Yemen under British rule: economic and cultural backwardness, manifested in a wide gap between the urban population and the countryside. The NF leaders assumed that the South Yemeni paradigm of a successful countryside guerrilla campaign — which could ultimately erode the government's power centered in the cities — could be successfully emulated in neighboring states. The PDRY leaders feared that unless they embarked on such a campaign, those states, with the exception of the YAR, that were dominated by "reactionary" regimes would eventually launch their own tribal infiltrations that would evolve into guerrilla operations inside the PDRY. These states were, therefore, the South Yemeni elite's main target. In their view, the PDRY should act as a vanguard-center to conduct revolutionary warfare in the region: "a revolution that would breed further revolutions."[4] They were encouraged by the Chinese advising the NF in 1970, who were experts in rural-based guerrilla warfare.

The strategy which the PDRY leaders embarked on in 1970 can be defined as insurgency: an organized attempt to instigate within the target state a network to carry out small-scale warfare against an incumbent regime, in order to weaken or even destroy it.[5] In the eyes of the South Yemeni leaders, the arena deemed most suitable for insurgency operations was that of Oman and the Gulf. The regional conditions there aroused NF fears. The South Yemeni leaders viewed the attempts to establish a federation of local Gulf states (which culminated in December 1971 in the formation of the UAE) not just as a means of self-preservation for the smaller Gulf states, but as an attempt to establish a proxy regime in the area, to counteract the revolutionary regime in the PDRY.[6]

This threat emulated, in South Yemeni eyes, Britain's attempt to designate the Federation of South Arabia as a replacement for its own rule in South Yemen in the early 1960s — an effort that the NF had fought bitterly. The NF thus expressed its equal determination to oppose the new formation. Moreover, Saudi Arabia's emerging influence in the Middle East was perceived in Aden as that of a new "reactionary," dominant power. The growing Saudi influence over both major Middle East states, Egypt and Syria (after the latter's defeat in the Six-Day War), and over the negotiations leading to the formation of the UAE, symbolized Riyadh's power in NF eyes. Iran's emerging military power, manifested in its capturing of the islands governing the Hormuz Straits, was also viewed as a boost for reactionary prominence. The continuing activity of western oil companies in the Gulf constituted, to South Yemen, the economic instrument that would exploit the region's resources.[7]

In the NF view, this situation generated several specific dangers for the PDRY: a "policy of engulfment" aimed at "choking" or surrounding the PDRY from different directions through penetration and blockades; the presence of "proxy" regimes all over the region;[8] and the danger of perpetuating capitalist-oriented but backward and divided societies in the Gulf, which would continue harboring anti-PDRY bases.[9]

At the same time, the Gulf region offered the NF tempting opportunities. A power vacuum that the NF could fill, even prior to the UAE's establishment; a rural-urban gap; and "exploited" elements — peasant tribesmen, laborers, and even bureaucrats — who could provide a social basis for a revolution—all provided an avenue for intrusion. Most tempting of all, a rebellion was in progress in Dhofar, assisted by the NF since 1964. Ongoing divisions in the Mahra tribal confederacy (in the eastern parts of South Yemen, bordering Dhofar) and its complicated relations with the al-Kathir tribe in Dhofar, had fueled longstanding cross-frontier disputes. The NF could now encourage the rebellion of the two main Dhofar confederacies of al-Kathir and Qara against Sultan Said bin Taymur's regime, and turn them into guerrilla fronts.

NF leaders regarded Dhofar as the gate to the Gulf. They perceived local conditions as conducive for guerrilla ventures, which would then spread all over the Gulf region. Dhofar was characterized by a gap between the Arab and Negro coastal, urban inhabitants who engaged in fishing and trade, and the 'Jabalis' of the northern Dhofar mountains, many of whom still lived in

caves and spoke a language distinct from Arabic, derived from an old Himyarite dialect. Dhofar was both a deprived and an exploited region: it lacked adequate educational and health services, but was taxed heavily by the Sultan.[10] NF leaders also regarded Britain's influence over the government and armed forces of Oman as an integral part of western control over the Gulf principalities, aimed at sustaining imperialism and the ignorance of local inhabitants.

The struggle against deprivation and imperialism in Dhofar was thus perceived as a prototype for the "liberation" of the entire Gulf. The NF set out to achieve ambitious goals: to eradicate "foreign" (namely pro-British) rule in the region, and to prompt the building of a more egalitarian and developed society there.[11] The combination of tribal strife between the Mahra and Kathir confederacies, the prevalent social and economic practices, the political isolation of Dhofar — all seemed conducive to guerrilla warfare there, in the direction of the Gulf.

At the same time, Aden presumably regarded insurgency in other regions as of decreasing importance. Saudi Arabia was an archenemy, but one whose main effort was vested in building a regional strategic "reactionary" network, in oil economics, aid to pro-western forces and payoffs to insurgents. The struggle with Riyadh was perceived in wide regional terms rather than as a bilateral collision in the frontier zone. The relatively short-lived incident at Wadi'a and the indecisive results that subsequently emerged on this front showed PDRY leaders that the bilateral problem was neither acute nor militarily solvable. A successful campaign (either military or insurgent) against Saudi Arabia had no prospect of success: South Yemeni forces would have to cross the Rub' al-Khali desert and then face a religiously motivated and anti-Marxist society, quite loyal to its monarch. It is therefore logical to assume that Aden's leaders sought to thwart Saudi efforts by counteracting their strategic manifestations in the Gulf, rather than by a head-on collision in the frontier zone.

We have noted that skirmishes and insurgent activities were widespread between the two Yemeni states. Yet the YAR, too, did not present at this stage a target for Aden's rulers. The YAR republican regime was not viewed as totally hostile, but rather as 'revolutionary' in character, impeded by a variety of 'reactionary elements.' To surmount these elements — the Saudi-inspired northern Zaydi tribes, FLOSY, and royalist groups — the YAR regime would have to be strengthened. Besides, there were genuine

brotherly feelings toward the YAR among the South Yemeni leaders, regardless of their political views (Ismail in fact came from the North). All the leaders released statements advocating unity between the states, which attest to the ambivalent or even sympathetic attitude Aden had toward North Yemen. Hence there was only one recorded indication of South Yemeni subversion in the YAR: a leftist North Yemeni officer, Abd al-Raqib Abd al Wahhab, who had strong ties with the new South Yemeni leaders, apparently received their support in an abortive coup in January 1969 against the San'a government.[12] However, this event had no direct follow-up. Finally, in addition to all the other considerations, the prevailing enmities among tribal, urban, Zaydi, Shafi'i, republican and royalist groups in the YAR probably convinced the NF in its leftist posture of 1970, that a leftist takeover was not very likely to win broad-based support in San'a, and their insurgency would be better hatched in the Gulf.

Setting up the Struggle: Organizational Framework, 1970-71

To promote their aims, South Yemen's leaders relied on friendly organizations that were already operational in Dhofar and had roots in the Gulf. They turned mostly to organizations that were offshoots of the ANM, had similar backgrounds to its own, and shared a common Marxist conviction. We have already recorded how the originally pro-Nasserist ANM gradually lost interest in the failing Nasserist doctrine between 1965 and 1969, and underwent a change that led most of the leading members (e.g., George Habash, Naif Hawatima and Muhsin Ibrahim) as well as some of the rank and file, to different brands of Marxism.[13] ANM groups had proliferated in diverse Gulf states since the 1950s; in fact, the Dhofar Liberation Movement (DLF), which operated in Oman in the 1960s, consisted of returning migrant workers who had become acquainted with ANM ideas during their stay in the oil states.[14] As in South Yemen, ANM cadres succeeded in harnessing discontented groups and incorporating them within the DLF. Their leaders initially harbored a mixture of ideas of Arab unity and a vague notion of socialism and anti-imperialism, blended with a

drive to overthrow what they perceived as the Sultan's tyrannical rule. Influenced later by Marxist ideas, their perceptions gradually changed and focused more on inducing revolution through class struggle.

The NF's victory in South Yemen had generated the extension of the struggle and the founding of a larger and more broadly-based front. Similarly, the DLF turned into the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Occupied Arab Gulf (PFLOAG). In its founding conference at Hamrin in central Dhofar, between September 1 and 20, 1968, PFLOAG departed from the DLF's original perceptions, focused on the liberation of Dhofar, and adopted 'scientific socialism' and 'organized revolutionary warfare' as guiding principles. By 1970, most of western Dhofar (or, in PFLOAG terms, the "western command"), including the towns of Dalkyut and Madhub and the coastal town of Rayhut, was dominated by the insurgents, who secured control over the roads and logistic lifelines from South Yemen into Dhofar. In the central area (or "command"), the rebels succeeded in blocking the main road leading from Salala to Thamarit (also known as Midway) and launched mortar attacks on Salala itself. The rebels focused less on the eastern region, but did launch sporadic attacks on its main settlements, Taqa and Sadah. The Sultan's few scattered forces could not match the strength of the guerrilla uprising.[15]

The new NF insurgent strategy of 1970 led to the establishment of a new guerrilla organization that included members of PFLOAG, but developed outside its ranks. This was the National Democratic Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf (NDFLOAG), founded on June 12, 1970. It stepped up operations not just in Dhofar, but in Eastern Oman and the Gulf. It consisted of different bodies of ANM veterans who held Maraist convictions, together with students and dissatisfied tribesmen.[16] It declared itself a follower of the principles adopted by the Hamrin resolutions, seeking cooperation with PFLOAG, the establishment of a 'popular government,' and the advance of what was called the 'Arab revolutionary movement.' NDFLOAG operated in the mountains of Jabal Akhdar and Sharqiyya (northwest and southeast of Musqat, respectively) and launched its most spectacular operations on June 12, upon its foundation: mortar attacks on the towns of Izki and Nizwa, in the interior of Oman. In addition, a one-day general strike in Oman's capital, Musqat, was initiated by NDFLOAG in September 1971.[17]

To improve the insurgents' performance, the PDRY sought to merge the different bodies fighting in Oman into a single organization. In early December 1971 PFLOAG and NDFLOAG formed the "Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Gulf" (also known as PFLOAG) which undertook to fulfill the aims formulated by earlier conferences of the two fronts.[18]

There is some evidence that the PDRY tried to merge other organizations prior to the new PFLOAG's official inception. These attempts were apparently aimed at creating a guerrilla network spreading into additional Gulf principalities, and involved relatively obscure bodies, such as the Revolutionary Popular Movement in Oman and the Gulf, the Nationalist Liberation Front of Bahrain, the Arab Communist Party of Oman, the Gulf Liberation Front in Bahrain and Qatar, the Front for the Liberation of the Eastern Arabian Peninsula, and the ANM branch in Kuwait. These bodies originated from different ANM cadres, communist parties and (in the case of the Eastern Peninsula Front) a Ba'th branch. Possible cooperation with the Iranian communist party, the Tudeh, was also considered.[19] Presumably these different bodies were incorporated into PFLOAG and indeed engaged in sabotage activities; thus in January 1971 several explosions occurred in Kuwait which led to the detention of a PFLOAG member.[20] In addition, Kuwaiti security detained several PFLOAG and ANM members in April 1971, based on information supplied by the new sultan of Oman, Qabus.[21]

Initial Tactics and Achievements

South Yemen's tactics and achievements in launching a guerrilla campaign in the direction of the Gulf will be examined according to the following criteria: the compatibility of the tactics with prevailing economic, topographical and socio-political conditions; maintenance of control in the arena; and the ability to readjust tactics according to changing regional conditions.

PDRY leaders had to take into consideration the varied nature of the arenas they set out to 'liberate.' The expanse from their eastern frontier with Oman to Kuwait comprised a variety of theaters. One was Dhofar, an arena

whose socio-economic nature and topography was familiar to the NF leaders.

In Dhofar the PDRY focused on a strategy of guerrilla warfare as devised in the Chinese and Vietnamese experiences. Accordingly, the NF leaders sought to maintain a constant state of combat that would exhaust the Omani government and gradually divert its means of power and authority to PFLOAG, ultimately leading to the toppling of the Omani regime. These tactics did not focus on quick military achievements, but rather on the government's withering and, at the same time, the building of an infrastructure for a new regime and a new government.[22] According to John Duke Anthony:

> They [the guerrilla commanders] worked on the premise that if they could continue to drain 40 percent of the Sultan's budget, his legitimacy would erode quickly enough and there would be uprisings in northern Oman which would finish him and his dynasty off. Their goal was to set in motion steps toward establishing a first republic, not necessarily to win the war on the ground.[23]

The NF was definitely able to oversee and control the insurgency in Dhofar. PFLOAG headquarters was located in Aden and the Front's propaganda was transmitted by Radio Aden. The PDRY operated some of PFLOAG's training camps at Hawf on the South Yemeni side of the frontier, near the Dhofari town of Dalkyut, and other camps in Dhofar itself. Some accounts suggest that in 1971 Chinese instructors were involved in the training, and several dozen of the Front's cadres allegedly received training in the PRC. The PDRY provided the link between the PRC and PFLOAG; the PDRY maintained a cadre of Chinese experts in Mukalla, and most of the food and arms it supplied to PFLOAG were Chinese. From 1972 on, Russian supplies delivered through South Yemeni harbors replaced the Chinese goods.[24]

The guerrillas' problem in this arena was that the orginal socio-political milieu they sought to erode quickly changed to their detriment: PFLOAG, led by the NF, had set out to topple the regime of Sultan Sa'id, but from July 1970 it found itself facing an energetic reform and counterinsurgency campaign carried out by the new sultan, Qabus. The latter replaced his father in a British-encouraged coup in June 1970, and set out to remedy the problems inherent in Omani society that had prompted the initial revolt in Dhofar. Under these circumstances PFLOAG found it difficult to act.

Militarily, the guerrilla units (bearing designations like "Lenin," "Ho Chi Min" and "Che Guevarra") formed a "People's Liberation Army" (PLA) that spread out along the aforementioned fronts, which were considered "liberated areas," From there they engaged in a long war of attrition for the main cities, using hit and run methods mixed with sabotage against government units and disobedient tribes. Whatever achievements PFLOAG registered in early 1970 were soon counterbalanced by the new enlarged Omani Army. Its troops were drawn from the local population (rather than Baluchi mercenaries, who had formed the core of Sa'id's forces). By 1972 it numbered 9000 strong. Aided by seconded British personnel (notably from the Special Air Service), Jordanian officers, and hired pilots who operated the Sultan's small but developing air force, and under British command, the army launched several successful campaigns in 1971 that disrupted the guerrilla's supply lines, pushed them westward toward the South Yemeni frontier, and even destroyed some of their mountain strongholds.[25]

The guerrillas sought to instill broad societal support. They introduced among the local population ideas of Arab-nationalism and class consciousness, and attempted to attenuate tribal loyalties. They incorporated women into PFLOAG ranks. In July 1971 "popular councils" were elected in the "liberated areas." Medical teams were sent in from the PDRY, and in 1972 a PFLOAG hospital was established in South Yemen.[26] All these projects were intended to earn for the Front the responsibility and prestige of the builders of a new society and a new government in Dhofar. There are conflicting reports as to the effectiveness of these reforms. While some stress how the Dhofaris benefited from the new educational and health facilities at their disposal, and by and large accepted Marxist ideology, other reports point out that PFLOAG had to use force and coercion to alter residual tribal habits.[27] PFLOAG's achievements became less effective particularly after Qabus initiated new reforms.

Qabus' counterinsurgency campaign included a number of sociopolitical elements. First, he proclaimed an amnesty for rebels, hundreds of whom surrendered with their arms. Secondly, declarations were made concerning the integration of Dhofar into the Sultanate and the improvement of conditions for the local population. Utilizing Oman's growing oil revenues, along with financial assistance that began to flow in from the Gulf states and Saudi Arabia, a 'hearts and minds' campaign was introduced, aimed at winning back the Dhofaris' support. Thus, medical centers and schools were

established in Dhofar, the water supply system was improved, and electricity was introduced. The new sultan was, however, attentive to the different character of the Dhofari population; he promised them autonomy in their own affairs,[28] and as early as 1970 established a radio station in the Jabali language.

Hence by 1971 the NF found itself in an unexpectedly awkward position. The state government, whose powers were supposed to be eroded, was successfully competing with a guerrilla force in meeting the population's 'demands' (or necessities) and counterbalancing the insurgents' powers. Through the sultan's reforms, PFLOAG lost its claim as the sole force capable of creating a new authority, as Qabus' reforms and military campaign made parts of the population feel more content with the new regime and less inclined to join PFLOAG. In fact, several hundred Dhofaris who called themselves "nationalists" (as opposed to Marxists) and who belonged to the DLF, defected from the Front and joined the sultan's ranks.[29]

While the NF's difficulties in Dhofar reflected the PDRY's lack of ability to readjust tactics, its conduct in Eastern Oman and the Gulf attests to more basic faults in devising suitable tactics for these regions and in controlling the outcome.

Eastern Oman and the other Gulf states were distant from the PDRY and their socio-economic and political conditions were relatively unfamiliar to the NF. Even a cursory look at these regions shows that, in contrast to Dhofar, Eastern Oman and the Gulf states had since the 1960s utilized their oil income to generate rapid urbanization that altered the local nomadic, undeveloped environment. As standards of education, health and transportation rose, accompanied by the introduction of comprehensive welfare programs initiated by local governments, the Gulf states became more stable, and their societies more content than the NF perceived. True, new processes of discontent in the Gulf did emerge — due to frustrated expectations of students and educated middle classes, and the rapid influx of a western life style — and these collided with the austere and traditional style typical to the region. But these problems derived from rapid modernization and the new affluence, and were far from the NF's perception of a tribal and backward society residing along the Gulf.[30]

There is no evidence that the NF devised a specific strategy of insurgency suited to these changing socio-economic conditions. Neither the NF nor

PFLOAG developed a 'countryside guerrilla' or an 'urban guerrilla' scheme. Rather, as described earlier, the operations in the Gulf during 1972 were few and sporadic, and could hardly be attributed to any strategic scheme at all.

A second problem, related to the first, was that of controlling the insurgent bodies. PDRY control over insurgency operations in the more distant arena — Oman and the upper Gulf — was less effective than in Dhofar. Though it considered Dhofar a 'springboard' to the Gulf, Aden obviously could not establish supply, training and control facilities for populations dwelling far beyond its frontiers; it was therefore forced to collaborate with other parties. Nor was rivalry with another 'progressive' state anticipated by the NF. Yet the Gulf states were targets for other sponsors of insurgency, notably Iraq, and operations were often competitive rather than cooperative. Thus there were reports that NDFLOAG's instructors and suppliers were mainly from Iraq,[31] while South Yemen failed to establish an 'axis' with Baghdad.[32] In addition, though definitely friendly with the NF, the ANM cadres leading the operations in the Gulf seemed to have a particular inclination toward the Ba'th party in Iraq.[33] In conclusion, South Yemen was unable to fully direct and coordinate operations in the distant Gulf arena.

'Phase Two' of Guerrilla Warfare, late 1971-72

'Dual-authority' conditions generally present a difficult testing period, when the revolutionary body and the rival incumbent government each maintains some of its control and support in a given territory. Throughout 1971 and 1972 the military situation in Dhofar and Oman indeed remained undecided. The Omani Army initiated most of the operations. In late 1971 two fortified lines of strongpoints and wire barriers were erected. The Hammer Line north of Raysut was designed to block access from the mountains toward Salala and the east, while the Leopard Line, built at the desert's edge north of the coastal town of Mughsayl, obstructed the way to the mountains. In late 1971 the Jaguar operation and later in the spring of 1972 the Simba operation were launched to disrupt PFLOAG's supply lines.

However, during this period the guerrillas took advantage of the monsoon seasons, when the Omani Air Force was unable to operate, and pushed back into the areas they had been cut off from earlier. In May 1972 they managed to occupy an army strongpoint at Thaqbit and lay siege to another Omani stronghold located at Sarfayt near the South Yemeni frontier. On July 19 they attacked the coastal town of Mirbat in the east, but they later suffered heavy losses in a counterattack.[34]

In an effort to recapture the initiative in one major but swift blow, the NF decided to enter into 'phase two' of guerrilla operations. According to Maoist strategy, as practised by Mao Ze-Dung himself in China and by General Vo-Neguyen Giap in Vietnam, guerrilla warfare should undergo several stages, in which 'hit and run' operations carried out by irregulars gradually turn into more organized warfare carried out in the open by regular forces. The second phase should be carried out after the enemy's forces have been sufficiently weakened by irregular warfare, and as a final and decisive blow by large and rather organized regular forces[35] becomes inevitable. However, in 1972 the initiative for a second phase was prompted by conditions of stalemate and even revolutionary weakness rather than by PFLOAG progress on the battlefield. The situation in Oman did not fit the pattern of a worn out government force, and the guerrillas in their turn were not organizing themselves into regular military formations.

The NF was therefore forced to rely on PFLOAG's existing guerrilla units, and to disregard its lack of control in the remote areas of Oman, while the guerrillas were facing strengthened Omani forces. To deliver its blow the NF established underground 'revolutionary committees' in several major Omani towns (Musqat, Matrah, Nizwa and Sawr) to instigate uprisings all over the country. In addition, a coup was devised to assassinate the Sultan and his advisers. Weapons, mainly of Soviet-bloc origin, were shipped from South Yemen to Oman in August 1972. NF Politburo members and PFLOAG leaders supervised the operation, which was planned for November and December 1972. However, several of the 'commissioners' who had been responsible for carrying out the operation were intercepted and the plot was foiled. At the same time, PFLOAG members were apprehended in Abu-Dhabi and Bahrain, where they presumably tried to instigate additional operations. Several officers of the new "Union Defense Force" (of the UAE) who had defected to PFLOAG were also caught and

jailed.[36] The failure of this initiative led to a further decline in the guerrilla's stature in Oman and the Gulf.

Intensified Counterinsurgency

By extending PFLOAG's activities to Oman and the Gulf, the NF collided with other regional, pro-western powers that, in the early 1970s, attempted to extend their own control over the Peninsula and its surrounding water passages. Saudi Arabia, the smaller Gulf states and Iran, as well as western powers such as Britain and the United States, viewed PFLOAG as a dangerous, pro-Soviet body, striving to disrupt order in the Gulf. In an effort to halt PFLOAG's actions, some of these states engaged in an intensified campaign of counterinsurgency against the guerrillas. This campaign had two courses: reinforced anti-guerrilla warfare and diplomatic initiatives.

Reinforcement of Anti-guerrilla Warfare

Saudi Arabia in particular viewed the PFLOAG initiative with anxiety. Whereas South Yemen's activities in Dhofar prior to 1970 were regarded as a localized affair against an archaic regime, the attempt to subvert the Gulf in 1971 -2 was deemed by Riyadh to be a serious threat which, if persistent, let alone successful, could severely weaken the Gulf states. Saudi leaders were by then motivated both by their fear of leftist insurgency (following the June 1969 plot in their army and the December 1969 Wadi'a incident) and by emerging confidence in their role as a pro-western moderator in the entire Middle East, with particular pretensions to control affairs in the Gulf.[37] Qabus's new initiatives, which replaced his father's stagnant rule, appealed to Saudi Arabia's King Faysal. Old frontier problems between the two states were dealt with; and when the new Sultan visited Riyadh in December 1971, he was promised support. In July 1972 $15 million in Saudi aid reportedly reached Oman.[38]

Iran viewed PFLOAG's encroachment into the Gulf within the context of its own strategy, after 1971, of striving for predominance in the Gulf. To Iran, curbing PFLOAG was an opportunity to demonstrate its might as a regional power and, at the same time, eliminate a Marxist danger to the Gulf. The appearance in Oman of some 1200 helicopter-borne Iranian troops and military equipment added a new dimension to the conflict: the ability to launch what Cordesman referred to as "hunt and kill" counterinsurgency operations.[39] Alongside the British advisers, pilots, commanding officers and SAS men, and with the addition of two Jordanian battalions dispatched to Oman in 1973, the Omani side gained in strength. Qabus engaged in massive recruitment among tribes to strengthen the indigenous units (known as "firaqs" or groups) in his armed forces. Together with the Baluchis, who traditionally participated in the Sultan's forces, the number of troops grew from 2000 in 1971 to about 14,000 in 1974.[40] According to an internal PFLOAG report (a Lebanese newspaper claimed the report was found among the papers of a member of a defeated guerrilla group in April 1975), the guerrillas themselves were aware of their tactical inferiority. Indeed, this was evident in their relatively small numbers (in 1973-74 there were no more than 2000), growing defections from their ranks, strained logistics (due to Qabus government initiatives to disrupt supply lines) and dispersed deployment which made it easier for government forces to hunt them down.[41]

In late 1973, following the monsoon season, Iranian troops occupied the mountains north of Salala, leading to Thamarit, thereby opening an overland route to Oman. In the west, the government reinforced the Leopard line, which was then renamed the Hornbeam Line, with ground sensors, mines and barbed wire in June 1973. The line, which was laid out about 20 miles west of the Thamarit road and was 35 miles long, blocked the guerrillas' route to the east and obstructed their movements in the mountains. In January 1975 the Iranians captured Rakhyut and erected another line from the coast to the mountains — the Damavand line. In August 1975, government forces were able to push the guerrillas into a small strip near the South Yemeni frontier and block their way effectively into Dhofar. Oman erected a third line there, leading to the mountain strongholds of the guerrillas — the Sarfayt Line. By 1976, though a hard core of several hundred guerrillas still existed, the Sultan's authority had been reestablished in Dhofar.[42]

Diplomatic Initiatives

The growing power of Saudi Arabia and its fellow Gulf states in the early 1970s, and most notably after the October 1973 war, was also articulated in intense diplomatic initiatives. Beset by internal socio-economic divisions, threatened by powerful rivals outside the Gulf, and traditionally relying on small armies, the Gulf states — while not neglecting the need to build up their armed forces — preferred to boost their security and assert their interests in the region by relying on diplomatic skills and financial resources.[43] In the case of the NF's insurgency, it was Kuwait, in collaboration with the UAE, Iran and Saudi Arabia, that took the initiative.

Kuwait and the other Gulf states were concerned about the wider implications of PFLOAG activity. First, they feared that branches of the NF's insurgency network might try to foment unrest and even revolution in their own territories. Secondly, they (notably Saudi Arabia and Iran) were interested in curbing PFLOAG as part of their strategy of furthering pro-western interests and blocking Soviet incursions into the region. Third, they feared that PFLOAG activities might lead to the intervention of the regional powers, Iran and Iraq, or even to a collision between them that could spill over into the Gulf states. Thus, while Iran's intervention in Oman to stifle guerrilla activity in Dhofar was certainly appreciated by the Gulf states, they also feared that Iran would try to develop a stronghold on the western shore of the Gulf in order to spearhead Iranian expansion into the Arab littoral and engulf the Hormuz Straits from both sides.[44] After an abortive Arab League attempt to mediate the dispute in Oman, Kuwait launched its own initiative in summer 1972.

Full evidence as to the process of subsequent negotiations is lacking. From what is known, Kuwait apparently attempted to reduce regional tensions, mainly in the Gulf region itself, by persuading South Yemen to stop its insurgency campaign in the Gulf and in particular to cut its aid to PFLOAG. In return, the Gulf states offered the PDRY financial aid. However, in early 1974 Kuwait, confronted with the NF's determination to oppose the foreign Iranian "raid" on Oman, agreed that South Yemen could continue aiding a core of anti-Iranian guerrilla forces that would operate only in Oman, In so doing, Kuwait offered Aden both financial benefits and a face-saving way of disengaging from its extended revolutionary plan. Even Irin tacitly agreed with this arrangement, as Tehran was confident of

its ability to destroy the guerrillas by force on Oman's soil.[45] By now Saudi Arabia, too, was seeking to deescalate the conflict between the PDRY and Oman, as a means of bringing Aden closer to the Gulf States and distancing it from the Soviet Union, and therefore supported this plan. Apparently, the logic of the plan led even Qabus to agree to Kuwait's initiative, even though it was on his national territory that the fighting would continue. Qabus understood that he could continue to rely on Iranian forces, and that Oman's long term interests would be secured in cooperation with Kuwait and other Gulf states, because only their initiative could facilitate a degree of termination of PDRY-led insurgency.

Relinquishing the Strategy of Insurgency in the Gulf

Under these circumstances, new strategic perceptions emerged within the PDRY elite, which ultimately altered its outlook. First, the perspective of the external danger poised against the PDRY drastically changed. It became evident that the backward and tribally-fragmented societies in the Gulf would not turn into western proxy regimes threatening the PDRY. Rather, it was the buildup of forces of major pro-western regional powers drawn into counterinsurgency that could threaten the Marxist Yemeni regime, indeed, by now the PDRY's major concern was the Iranian presence in Oman and the Shah's possible ambitions in the Gulf. Secondly, the perspective of opportunities for the PDRY also changed. Rather than rushing into the Gulf in a sweeping guerrilla campaign, Aden learned that the Gulf states could become sources of economic aid, achieved through diplomatic process. In this sense PDRY leaders found Kuwait's overture to Aden quite acceptable, because it proved to them that the Gulf states were not 'imperialist outposts,' but rather 'fraternal Arab states' that would come to the aid of their fellow Arabs. The tens of thousands of South Yemeni workers who resided in the Gulf and sent back remittances underlined this fact. In addition, the offer of economic aid was timely and appealing, as occasional reports indicated shortages of food supplies and related unrest in Aden.[46] Hence economic

necessities, stemming from the difficulties of state-building, further helped to alter Aden's view.

Another important input stemmed from the Soviet Union, the PDRY's patron superpower. In the early 1970s Moscow gradually broadened and deepened its assistance to South Yemen. Although CPSU ideologues sometimes expressed reservations about South Yemen's shallow and poorly prepared manner of adapting communism, the Soviet Union found comfort in the PDRY's campaign of nationalizing private property, developing party cadres, executing agrarian reform, and applying internal Marxist practices.

Moreover, there were sound strategic reasons that led Moscow to view South Yemen with growing favor. Hostile intrusions from North Yemen's frontier in 1971 and 1972, instigated by the Saudi Arabian-backed FLOSY, enabled the Soviets to reinforce their military assistance to a fellow Marxist revolutionary state under 'imperialist' attack. In addition, the aforementioned growing American interest in the Indian Ocean turned strategically located South Yemen into a tangible asset for Moscow. Britain's withdrawal from the Gulf and the growing importance of oil, which peaked after the October 1973 war, also led the Soviets to view Aden as a forward base suitable for advancing their interests in this region.

Soviet support for South Yemen was manifested in the training of South Yemeni pilots in the Soviet Union, a $20 million arms sale in 1972 and, in the same year, an additional $20 million loan for economic and technical needs. In the wake of clashes along the North Yemeni frontier, the Soviets helped develop an airfield in Hadramawt to facilitate Aden's troop-deploying capabilities in this area. In 1974 Moscow reportedly canceled $50 million of Aden's debts to the Soviet Union. In return for this aid, the Soviets enjoyed the use of naval facilities in the ports of Aden and Mukalla.[47]

These developments affected Aden's relations with Beijing, and this in turn further led NF leaders to modify the strategy of guerrilla insurgency in the Gulf. Chinese aid to PFLOAG declined in 1972 and ceased almost completely in 1973.[48] This not only marked a weakening in material aid to the guerrillas, but also removed a main ideological driving force behind the NF's attempt to instigate guerrilla warfare in Oman. Thus the removal of Chinese instructors from PFLOAG's training bases was an irreplaceable loss in tactical and ideological terms for the guerrillas.

In this way, enhanced Soviet influence emanated from the USSR's 'exploratory' interest in the Gulf during this period. We have noted that this strategy involved the improvement of the Soviet image with Gulf states, who were to be persuaded of the advantages of having the Soviets as a neutral actor rather than a hostile superpower. Hence, the Soviets did not seek major revolutionary involvement in the Gulf. Although they provided some guerrilla units with Soviet aid and arms, and even occasionally summoned PFLOAG representatives to visit Moscow, they did not engage directly in preparations for guerrilla operations in Oman, or in tactical assistance, as Ghinese instructors had done. Their public proclamations emphasized the element of "liberating" Oman rather than the entire Gulf.[49] NF leaders, by now fully coopted by Moscow, adapted themselves accordingly.

Modified Guerrilla Warfare

Thus it was that in the wake of the growing problems the guerrillas encountered in Oman after 1973, and under the impact of mounting domestic economic problems and modifying foreign influences, NF leaders developed a new outlook toward the Gulf. The most obvious change was the adoption of a pragmatic, non-doctrinaire attitude by Rubay, Ali Nasir and their followers. While it is not clear precisely how this attitude was formulated, it seems that leaders like Rubay gradually replaced their initial inclination toward Maoist ideas with the 'businesslike' outlook that they sensed in Moscow's strategy, and which was dictated by economic needs. This attitude was also shared by Ali Nasir, whose Marxist convictions were never too doctrinaire, and whose interest in economic development tallied with this approach.

Here Rubay as president and Ali Nasir as prime minister and minister of defense succeeded in isolating Ismail, the NF's doctrinaire secretary general, who favored a fervent revolutionary policy. In the event, Ismail's Northern Yemeni roots presumably led him to focus more on the YAR than on the prolongation of guerrilla warfare in Oman, so that his main efforts were now geared to the formation of UPONF. Certainly he did not impede his colleagues' new ventures.

Hence, following the Kuwaiti-PDRY deliberations, PFLOAG split in July 1974, and a new organization was formed — the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO). This new body was committed to insurgency, but focused only on liberating Oman from "reaction" and "foreign invasions." It tried to trigger another uprising by assassinating prominent Omanis, but its assassination team was apprehended in October 1974. The PFLO's subsequent decline was then hastened by Iranian attacks and widespread defections,[50] Be that as it may, the PFLO's aims definitely reflected the PDRY's new strategy of disengaging from the Gulf and fighting only over Oman. Correspondingly, the PDRY toned down its propaganda, which had emphasized South Yemen's revolutionary aims, and instead concentrated on the liberation of Oman from foreign (Iranian) invasion[51] — an approach more in tune with the interests of the Soviet Union and even of the Gulf states.

By now the PFLO's 1000-2000 hard core guerrillas — who were armed and trained by the PDRY — were little more than an irritant to Qabus' regime. No further attempt at revolutionizing the Gulf was seriously contemplated by Aden. In February 1975 Ali Nasir expressed Aden's sense of failure when he admitted that there was no "ultimate perception" of a revolution for this region and that no "effective and comprehensive" model of such a revolution had been found.[52] This indicated that Aden had in practice abandoned its strategy of exporting revolution to the Gulf.

Chapter 3. Subversion in the Yemen Arab Republic

From the early 1960s, North Yemen constituted a typical zone in the South Arabian 'intrusive system.' As such it was marked by two main characteristics. First, both its government and society were fragmented, and failed to produce an effective 'center' to unite the country. Secondly, YAR policies and Northern Yemeni society were affected by outside interests that emanated from Saudi Arabia in the north, as well as from South Yemen in the south.

The structure of the YAR elite manifested both the difficulty of achieving stability among a diversity of leading groups, as well as their receptiveness to diverse and contradictory outside pressures. Several forces participated in the politics of the YAR. First were the 'nationalist' army officers, of both urban and rural origin, who mostly supported the incumbent republican regime and harbored Nasserist views, notably pan-Arabism and Arab socialism. In the early 1970s they were mainly represented by Hasan al-Amri, who held such posts as chief-of-staff and prime minister. Secondly, there were leftist, 'progressive' politicians and army officers, mostly of urban descent, such as Muhsin al-Ayni, who held quasi-Ba'thist ideas of socialist revolution. There were 'moderate' politicians, too, some of whom were Shafi'i intellectuals, and there were cabinet ministers such as Muhammad Abduh Numan, who sought conciliation with the royalist and traditional elements (supporters of the deposed Imam's regime) within the framework of a republic.

Then, too, there was a traditional wing that consisted of tribal leaders who had come to terms with the republic, but who sought to maintain traditional tribal autonomy, and to undercut leftist influence in the country. The leader of the tribal confederacy of the Hashid, Abdullah al-Ahmar, whose role earned him the position of chairman of the Consultative Assembly, was the most prominent figure in this group, which also included members of the clergy and adherents of the Muslim Brethren.[1]

These diverse groups formed the target of both Saudi and PDRY intrusions aimed at promoting collaborating partisan forces in the YAR. Consequently the YAR was at one and the same time both a target for subversion by foreign interests, and an insurgent vehicle that the two neighboring states could use against one another.

We have already noted the NF's perception that the incentives to abstain from carrying out insurgency into the YAR prevailed over those favoring intervention. Thus in 1970 the NF held that the YAR regime commanded sufficient credibility through its revolutionary aura, and that the NF itself had sufficient influence with powerful revolutionary elements inside the YAR. However these traits seemed to attenuate during the next years. After 1972 new developments in the YAR provided incentives for PDRY insurgency. These emanated from changes in regional conditions that Aden perceived as new dangers — in particular Saudi Arabia's emerging drive in the early 1970s to influence the region, which was most evident in its policies toward the YAR. Riyadh was interested both in maintaining the YAR as an independent buffer zone between the Saudi kingdom and the PDRY, and in promoting North Yemen's traditional orthodox character, to render it completely amenable to the Saudis.

NF leaders found two kinds of threats in this situation. First, the YAR might evolve into an anti-leftist entity serving as a proxy for Saudi interests. There was varied evidence to support Aden's anxiety over this possibility: Saudi Arabia influenced the YAR by utilizing its immense financial resources and contributing the equivalent of one-quarter of the YAR's annual budget. Moreover the Saudis also afforded subsidies to some of the major tribes in the YAR, and encouraged the activities of al-Ahmar and the clergy. They thereby succeeded in promoting a pro-Saudi 'party' in YAR politics that could check the policies of the government and spread traditional values.[2]

This was the background for PDRY grievances. Aden criticized the "corrupting" manner of Saudi financial activities in North Yemen — a largess that it obviously could not match. NF leaders were also perturbed by the socioeconomic implications of Saudi influence over Yemeni society; they emphasized that "revolutionary goals" such as the improvement of lower class conditions had been abandoned, and the government was ignoring progressive elements such as students and officers.[3] The absence of a prominent Marxist leader in the YAR at this stage seemed particularly

disturbing in the NF's view. On the other hand, according to the NF, the role of the traditionalist elements was rising. Persons such as Amri, Numan and Ayni — who rotated as prime minister in the early 1970s — were not only trying to mend fences with the major tribes and clergymen but, in Aden's view, were purging the leftists, had failed to improve the conditions of peasants in the YAR, and were complacent over corruption.[4] The appointment of Abdullah al-Hajri — a notable, a former judge and an ally of Saudi Arabia — to prime minister in 1972, seemed to confirm the NF's suspicions of its declining influence in North Yemen, and to prove Riyadh's dominance.[5]

A second major danger emanating from Saudi aspirations was the direct threat of insurgency from the YAR into the PDRY, in the form of the reemergence of FLOSY. In 1971 the NF tried to induce some FLOSY leaders to return to Aden and affect a reconciliation with the government,[6] but to no avail. In the following months Saudi Arabia reportedly again launched FLOSY groups against the PDRY. These efforts peaked in spring and summer 1972, when FLOSY was reorganized (including departments for financial and political affairs, and operations). The new headquarters, located in the southern part of North Yemen, would facilitate FLOSY's aim of launching raids into the western part of the PDRY.[7] The ensuing clashes between FLOSY (now reinforced by the YAR Army) and the PDRY in fall 1972 were viewed in Aden as a manifestation of an anti-PDRY, Saudi-inspired threat, backed by the YAR traditionalists. The YAR government in San'a was deemed too weak to stop this movement, and at least some of its members were thought to be willing to support it.

Split Strategy: `Conventional' versus `Revolutionary' Responses

The NF's response to the dangers perceived to be emanating from the YAR was not uniform. The main controversy revolved around the question whether Aden would be satisfied with the 'conventional' response to these dangers that it had invoked prior to autumn 1972: befriending leftist elements among the elite and among urban and tribal groups at diverse

political levels, and using them for pro-PDRY, socialist leverage on the government in San'a. This strategy also evolved into occasional counterinsurgency activities inside the YAR, launched by either Aden backed YAR leftist groups or by the PDRY Army. These operations sometimes degenerated into frontier skirmishes which, in turn, sparked off diplomatic attempts to end the conflict.

This conventional strategy was employed on several occasions. In October 1971 the PDRY Army launched attacks against FLOSY groups along the frontier and within the YAR, resulting in the destruction of a FLOSY base.[8] Later, in the last days of September and the first week of October 1972, Aden reported that the YAR had launched an armored invasion of Bayhan in northern PDRY; in response, South Yemen launched air raids against southern cities in the YAR, while PDRY troops fought the YAR Army. The latter succeeded in occupying the island of Qameran which had been governed by South Yemen. An Arab League mediation mission introduced a ceasefire on October 13, which included the withdrawal of troops to a distance of ten kilometers from the border, and the establishment of peacekeeping patrols.[9]

These skirmishes subsequently led to negotiations over unity. The idea of unity between the two Yemens was frequently put forth by spokesmen of both countries. It emanated from the cultural and ethnic ties linking the people of the two states since pre-Islamic times. However, during the period under review the gaps dividing the two regimes were too deep to facilitate genuine unity. Governed by a fragmented military regime seeking to exercise nonalignment in its international relations, and led by a Zaydi (a Shi'ite offshoot) majority, the YAR completely differed from the Marxist, pro-Soviet, centralized and Sunni (of the Shafi'i school) polity that governed the PDRY. Still, both sides found it convenient to raise the issue of unity as a useful common denominator for defusing crises and reducing tensions in bilateral relations.

As a result of efforts by the Arab League's mediation committee in October 1972, the prospect of unity was once again raised. The prime ministers of both states agreed to meet in Cairo to discuss the possibility of unifying the states. Committees dealing with mutual state affairs were established, and the parties agreed to draft a constitution within a year. The presidents of the two states then met in Tripoli in November to sign a

formal agreement.[10] An aura of friendly relations between the Yemens seemed at reach.

Ali Salim Rubay and Ali Nasir Muhammad were prepared to carry on with this conventional strategy toward the YAR. At this stage in PDRY history, their development-oriented inclinations, combined with the temporal responsibilities they assumed in their governmental positions, presumably led them to interpret events concerning the YAR according to the 'conventional' outlook. In particular, regional strategic factors were considered significant. In light of the enhanced relations between Aden and Moscow, Rubay and Ali Nasir took into account the Soviet interest in mending fences between the two Yemens.[11] Moscow's basic sympathies were with Aden, which had also received Soviet assistance during the clashes of fall 1972; but the Soviet Union, which had a 20-year agreement with the YAR from 1964, also sought to improve its relations with the republican regime in San'a, which had lately become strained because of the YAR's ties with Saudi Arabia.[12] In addition, Rubay and Ali Nasir interpreted the combination of military retaliation Aden used against the YAR, and the diplomatic efforts of the Arab league to improve inter-Yemeni relations, as a sufficient deterrent against future dangers to the PDRY emanating from the YAR. Moreover, while Rubay was probably not so naive as to believe that the negotiations he was holding with his YAR counterparts regarding unity would bear real fruit, he knew that they were a channel to restore some of Aden's leverage over San'a and prevent its falling completely under Saudi influence.

Ismail responded differently, seeking to subvert the YAR. His origins — from Al-Jawf in the YAR — and his association with Aden's Marxist intellectuals led him to adopt a tough ideologically-motivated approach toward his home country. Moreover, his outlook—shaped by his exclusive involvement with the NF's affairs and his direct link with Moscow's GPSU, and unaffected by mundane political constraints — led Ismail to disregard somewhat the diplomatic and economic incentives considered by Rubay and Ali Nasir. In his view, and that of his more doctrinaire comrades, the latest developments in the YAR reflected a Saudi-led "reactionary" master plan to curb the decade-old revolutionary achievements in the YAR — a plan that threatened to invade the South. Thus he even criticized Moscow's stand by accusing the "socialist camp" of not providing the PDRY with sufficient assistance to fight "imperialism" and "reaction." In Ismail's view

PDRY insurgency in the YAR was therefore vital, even more so than in Oman, particularly after the October 1972 clashes. He strongly maintained that a change in the YAR's regime facilitated by leftist insurgency was essential, particularly insofar as unity between the two Yemens was being considered.[13]

There is no evidence to suggest that an open split between Ismail and his comrades in the PDRY government over foreign policy occurred at the time. Rather, differences were evident at the level of perceptions and doctrines, with Ismail exerting pressure to compel the entire PDRY government to go along with his ideas. Thus in October 1972 Ismail met with a leftist insurgent group active in the YAR, and the PDRY began promoting insurgency there.[14]

Organizing the Insurgency

The organizational framework of the insurgent groups developed as follows. Until January 1974 the primary leftist insurgent group in North Yemen was the Yemeni Revolutionary Resistance.[15] After January 1974, five new organizations were reported to be engaged in similar activities and to have published anti-government pamphlets. They were the Democratic Revolutionary Party, the Ba'th, the Unionist Popular Democratic Party, the Popular Pioneering Party and the Yemeni Labor Party. In mid-1974 these bodies united as the National Front[16] and later, in 1976, the National Democratic Front (NDF).[17] In fall 1978 a new body, the "13 June" (named in commemoration of YAR President Ibrahim al-Hamdi's rise to power) was established and was soon incorporated within the NDF.[18] The particular characteristics of each of these bodies is unknown; however, they all reportedly consisted mainly of Sunni-Shafi'i urban dwellers in the YAR, who were led by middle class, salaried employees, professionals and other educated elements and army officers. The groups' main bases of support were in the southern parts of the YAR, where they benefited from the support of the bulk of the Shafi'i urban and tribal population and from their proximity to the South Yemeni frontier.[19]

The PDRY effort in the YAR must be examined according to its compatibility with pevailing socio-economic, political and topographical conditions in the YAR; its ability to maintain control over events there; and the effectiveness of PDRY strategy in the wake of evolving regional conditions.

Revolutionary organization in the YAR reflected the partial and partisan support of Ismail's wing within the PDRY elite. The revolutionary body was therefore flexible and open to change, and the organization and deployment of the leftist insurgent groups was not similar to that of PFLOAG. In the YAR, the NDF echoed what Fidel Castro, Che Guevara and Regis Debray called the "foco." In the words of John Gerassi the foco is "a center or a nucleus of guerrilla operations rather than a base...[it] refers to the unit of men fighting in a particular province or area rather than stationed in a specific place."[20] In other words, the foco theory stresses the "perpetuum violenta," the continuous offense against the enemy's government carried out by a small and mobile unit, rather than mass conscription of population aimed at 'liberation' of a given territory. As such, the foco theory was meant to complement or even replace some of the principles of 'traditional' Maoist guerrilla practices, by rendering them more flexible and applicable to different societies. In the YAR the foco organization was suitable both to a highly fragmented society and to the NF's non-institutionalized, partisan support for the insurgency.

Some of the principles of the foco theory were manifested in the NF's strategy of insurgency in the YAR, as opposed to its 'Maoist' strategy in Oman. In the YAR, the insurgents' first mission was to engage in actual combat activities to disrupt the government's positions, rather than to establish a 'liberated zone' and function as its government. Thus the organizations incorporated within the NDF were cellular bodies that did not operate openly among the tribal masses, but rather in the underground, in the main cities and among such major sectors of society as army officers and students. Recruitment was carried out modestly, on an individual basis.[21] The NDF's second goal was to act as a violent left wing pressure group aimed at changing government policies. As such, the Front was not interested in trying to legitimize itself as a future government by organizing large scale educational and medical campaigns, but rather pressed for policy changes through selective assassinations of government officials and erosion of army activities. The aims of the NDF (as outlined in 1977, once

it was fully established), were pragmatic and were generally formulated to avoid controversy among NDF supporters and incorporated groups. Hence, it sought to achieve "political independence," and the freedom of the "national economy" from "imperialist influence"[22] — an allusion to the Saudi grip on the YAR.

The foco model can provide a framework for limited, small scale operations carried out by the nuclei combat groups themselves. If a widespread, popular movement involving mass participation becomes the revolutionary aim, the nuclei groups can constitute the recruitment and command elements. Operations can oscillate between these two extremes. A clear and coordinated strategy for executing and controlling foco-like activities is therefore essential. But Aden found it difficult to devise such a strategy.

As in the case of PFLOAG, the PDRY provided training facilities (in Lahaj, north of Aden), arms and tactical guidance to the leftist insurgent bodies in the YAR. However in contrast to Oman, there is no evidence of different — and rival — assistance afforded to the NDF in the mid-1970s by other Middle Eastern or outside parties. The PDRY's influence and control over the NDF bodies was therefore predominant.[23] Nevertheless, it was beset by an internal division, leading to a split process of policymaking over the YAR.

On the one hand were the control lines of Abd al-Fattah Ismail. Engaged as he was in building up UPONF, Ismail's position in the PDRY became stronger as he became more enthusiastic about Marxist party building. Ismail also sought to cultivate the insurgent bodies in North Yemen as offshoots of the party he governed. Hence he coopted the NDF directly, by using personal contacts channeled through the party. He had a direct link with the NDF's general secretary, Sultan Ahmad Umar, a Marxist of North Yemeni origin who had been an NLF member prior to South Yemen's independence. Ismail also had close ties with army officers who formed part of the NDF leadership.[24] Ismail established another tie with the NDF by convincing one of his colleagues, Salih Muslih Qasim, to open the school he presided over — which trained party cadres in revolutionary indoctrination and para-military tactics — to North Yemeni candidates.[25]

On the other hand, Rubay, Ali Nasir and the PDRY government also had a certain influence over the NDF insurgency in the YAR. In comparison to Ismail's blunt involvement, the influence exerted by this faction was

complex and manifold. We have already noted that Rubay's and Ali Nasir's political state of mind tended toward the 'conventional' response; in this sense they did not seek to cultivate the NDF. However, due to Rubay's reluctance to let Ismail monopolize contacts with the insurgent bodies, lest he turn them into a major power base, Rubay involved the popular militias and even some of their Cuban instructors in training these groups.[26] Alternatively, to limit Ismail effectively, Rubay often abstained from giving any kind of encouragement to the insurgency in the YAR that Ismail had initiated and promoted.

This dichotomy of control clearly affected the PDRY insurgency in the YAR. Ismail's efforts evidently sparked a campaign to weaken the conservative and pro-Saudi elements in the North. There is some evidence that in late 1972 and the first half of 1973 a PDRY-guided insurgency network operated in the YAR. In addition to sporadic terrorist activities, this network was also responsible for the June 1973 murder of Muhammed Ali Uthman, a Shafi'i traditionalist who was a member of the Presidential Council and was closely associated with the San'a regime. But the network was neither successful at remaining in the underground, nor effectively supervised, and was soon intercepted. Official YAR statements disclosed that it consisted of four main cells, was named after a leftist officer killed in 1970, Abd al-Raqib Abd al-Wahhab, and was led from Ta'izz, in southern YAR. Lebanese commentators added that the murder of Uthman was aimed at weakening the traditional "Shaykh elements" in the YAR, in favor of the leftists.[27]

Soon after, new incentives stemming from regional developments seemed to encourage Rubay and Ali Nasir to stop all subversive attempts in the YAR. Rubay's attitude to the YAR presumably resulted from Saudi Arabia's new policy toward the PDRY. During 1974-76 the Saudis made a major attempt to further western influence in the region. Part of their strategy consisted of diffusing local conflicts and winning over pro-Soviet states. Following the compromise achieved with the PDRY over Oman, the Saudis attempted a softer form of counterinsurgency toward the PDRY: they offered 'positive sanctions,' mainly by increasing their financial aid to Aden. Their goal was to influence PDRY rulers to improve relations with the YAR and Oman, thereby drawing them away from the Soviet Union's patronage. Rubay and Ali Nasir were hardly amenable to the anti-Soviet bias of the Saudi strategy, but they favored improved cooperation with Riyadh because

of the financial benefits it could bring to the PDRY and because they shared Saudi Arabia's aim of terminating Iran's military intervention in Oman. On March 10, 1976, the two countries agreed to establish diplomatic relations; a month later the Saudis reportedly agreed to provide South Yemen with $400 million in aid over five years — almost double the total planned PDRY investment for that period.[28] Within a few months, Rubay's initiatives led to further visits among top officials from the PDRY and from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states, aimed apparently at promoting aid programs and diplomatic relations between the Gulf states and Aden. Due to these incentives, Rubay's and Ali Nasir's policy prevailed and insurgency into the YAR was reduced. Concomitantly, the split in the PDRY leadership became much more evident.

Another factor that influenced the pragmatists in the PDRY was the advent of a new government in the YAR which was more amenable to the PDRY. For the first time in almost two decades, under the leadership of Ibrahim Hamdi (June 13,1974-October 11, 1977) an ambitious central government emerged in the YAR. Hamdi succeeded in improving relations with Saudi Arabia, but simultaneously resumed unity contacts with the PDRY. He enjoyed (at least as late as 1976) the loyalty of the tribes, but at the same time established good relations with the Left and the Nasserists. Hamdi appointed a leading Shafi'i leftist — the commander of the Paratroop Brigade, Major Abdullah Abd al-Alim — to be a member of his Military Command Council. Al-Alim, together with Hamdi's brother, became the new leader's confidants.[29] Not only Rubay but even Ismail probably favored this new development, as it seemed to enhance leftist influence in the country.

However, from late 1976 and during 1977 YAR politics changed again. The new Soviet strategy to oppose the pro-western states' bid for regional dominance fed Ismail's revolutionary ambitions in the PDRY itself and in the region as a whole. In a UPONF conference held in October 1976 in Aden, Ismail succeeded in reinforcing his advantage over Rubay by persuading high-ranking figures in the police and the armed forces to support him. This hardened Aden's foreign policy, manifested in a UPONF refusal to ratify the aforementioned financial aid agreements with Saudi Arabia (they were subsequently not implemented). Rubay was then also forced to reiterate the PDRY's adherence to its agreements with the Soviet Union from 1969.[30]

Ismail's hard line was also manifested in his response to ensuing events in the YAR. In April 1977 the pro-Saudi and traditionalist former prime minister of North Yemen, Abdullah al-Hajri, was assassinated in London.[31] It is unclear whether the NDF, or PDRY security forces, were involved in his death. His assassination sparked off a tribal rebellion against Hamdi, which was led by Saudi Arabia's ally, Abdullah al-Ahmar, and was supported by the latter's major tribal confederacy. Hamdi mustered a 40,000 strong army and launched attacks against the rebels' headquarters in Sa'da, which led to their total defeat.[32] In spite of Hamdi's victory, the rebellion alarmed PDRY leaders and in particular Ismail. In their view, these events showed that North Yemen was still a state where 'reactionary forces' could act openly and endanger the government. Saudi assistance to the rebel tribes (though reluctantly given, because Riyadh was also cultivating bilateral relations with Hamdi) showed Ismail that the PDRY should once more strive to strengthen the position of leftist groups in the YAR, in order to counterbalance the power of traditionalists.

The event which finally provoked NDF activity was the assassination of Hamdi on October 11, 1977. Although the reasons for his assassination were unclear and the perpetrators unknown,[33] each of the parties active in YAR politics considered the assassination a manifestation of the other party's ambition to obtain power. Moreover, in the eyes of Ismail, Hamdi's death constituted the elimination of the only person capable of blocking Saudi influence in the YAR and containing its tribal elements. The actions of the new president, Ahmad al-Ghashmi, seemed to confirm these fears: he removed the leftist Major Abd al-Alim from power, reinstated tribal leaders in governmental positions, and detained journalists and intellectuals.[34]

Attempting to Launch `Phase Two'

The threat of losing influence in the YAR and the impact of a tougher Soviet line in the region (mainly in the Red Sea and Ethiopian zone) encouraged Ismail to embark on a 'phase two' campaign. Rubay, Ali Nasir and Ali Antar were only passive supporters of this new drive: they complied with Moscow's interests in abetting leftist powers in the YAR, but

were not interested in a full-scale insurgency. The campaign therefore reflected the NF's split leadership, and, as in Oman in 1972, was prompted by weakness rather than strength. The events which followed in spring 1978 attest to the PDRY's (notably Ismail's) intention to enhance the process of guerrilla warfare in the YAR by engaging in large scale popular uprisings. The first attempt was in February; it was sporadic and reflected no specific strategy: an army unit led by an officer named Mujahid al-Kuhali revolted in the region between San'a and Sa'ada. When the revolt was crushed, Kuhali joined forces with Abd al Alim, who had left San'a and gone to the Hujayriyya district in the southern YAR. There, Abd al Alim was assisted by fellow paratroopers and the local Shafi'i population, who considered him a suitable successor to Hamdi.

The insurgents were reported to be acting in a 'reinforced national deployment,' launching clashes with the army throughout the southern region of the YAR. However no clear aim or objective was attributed to these activities. Their importance lies in the actual buildup of a guerrilla front in the YAR, but one of little effect. Following failures by Ghashmi emissaries to bring Abd al-Alim back into line, the YAR army moved into the area in force, causing NDF forces to retreat. In June, Abd al-Alim and Kuhali fled to Aden; there, later in the year they founded the faction called the "13 June Front," which was incorporated into the NDF.[35]

A second chapter occurred in June 1978, and was heavily influenced by the internal South Yemeni power struggle. By then economic hardships had generated a fierce confrontation over state-building in the PDRY between the government, led by Rubay and Ali Nasir, which focused on revitalizing the local economy by injecting outside aid, and the UPONF, led by Ismail, who sought to foster 'scientific socialism' in the PDRY. This struggle was evident in the following events. On June 24 Ghashmi was assassinated by a bomb planted in a briefcase that an envoy of Rubay had personally brought to the YAR president. This led ultimately to an open power struggle in Aden itself: Rubay was accused of responsibility for the assassination (a "reactionary plot") and forced to resign by the UPONF Central Committee. lie refused to attend the Committee's meeting and instead sent militia units to bombard Committee headquarters. In retaliation, army units overpowered Rubay's supporters in a 12-hour fight in Aden. On June 26 the Central Committee had Rubay and two of his associates executed.[36]

It is unclear whether Ghashmi's assassination was indeed instigated by Rubay, or was an attempt by Ismail to frame Rubay in order to precipitate his downfall. One way or another, the assassination resulted from the convolutions of the power struggle in Aden. It also brought to a peak the split among the NF factions that prevented the emergence of an unequivocal and effective revolutionary strategy in the YAR. Indeed, it even jeopardized the mounting guerrilla activity that the NDF had been promoting. It caused the new YAR president, Ali Abdullah Salih (who had commanded operations against Abd al-Alim in May) to move more forcefully against the NDF by concentrating YAR troops along the PDRY border.[37] The YAR now stipulated that any dialogue with Aden concerning Abd al-Alim's extradition had to include the closing down of subversion training camps in the PDRY and the cessation of all sabotage coming from South Yemen.[38] A variety of Arab states denounced the PDRY and viewed its activities with growing suspicion.

The PDRY was now led by Ismail who, as the new president (and the Party's general secretary), followed a full-fledged hard line of insurgency. To counter Salih's reinforced anti-NDF operations, Ismail escalated NDF activities. October witnessed a third attempt to move the guerrilla warfare to 'phase two' by devising a more institutionalized and larger scale campaign. A popular uprising was instigated by Kuhali; it was based on several thousand tribesmen of his supporters who had followed him into South Yemen but who later returned with him to the YAR.[39] However this move collided with what seemed to be another hastily executed and poorly planned activity, namely an abortive coup attempt against Salih on October 15 which was led by several army officers.[40] Kuhali's association with these officers and the weapons of PDRY origin found with them may indicate that it was a PDRY-sponsored attempt: Ismail was apparently so eager to overthrow Salih that he indulged in overlapping operations to instigate an uprising and assassinate the YAR ruler. Certainly these abortive activities were aimed, for the first time, at toppling the YAR regime.[41] Other reports, however, indicate that Libya might have instigated or helped to generate this coup. In response, Salih put the army on alert, moved against the rebel officers (Kuhali was not apprehended), and detained leftist officials in the YAR, thereby once more foiling PDRY plans.[42]

Subsequently, tensions along the frontier remained high. Kuhali's tribal formation was still active, and the NDF declared a new policy of 'mass recruitment' on a personal basis, rather than through the foco organizations.[43] Under these circumstances guerrilla activities threatened to evolve into an open inter-state frontier clash that the PDRY sought to avoid. In July 1978, in what seems a mindless provocation, a North Yemeni army unit crossed into the PDRY and captured two villages there, prompting a major frontier clash. Ismail countered by deploying PDRY regular forces to back the guerrilla uprising in an open attack.[44] Moscow apparently supported Ismail in launching a counter-operation against what it deemed a case of YAR aggression. PDRY units and NDF groups advanced into the YAR during the last days of February 1979, capturing the towns of Bayda, Harib and Qa'taba. Inter-Arab mediation (including an Arab League meeting) failed to introduce a ceasefire. Meanwhile, PDRY forces advanced into the districts of Ibb and Dammar, thereby threatening to cut the road between Ta'izz and San'a and block the road between Ta'izz and Hudayda.[45] It was only in March, after subsequent inter-Arab (notably Iraqi) arbitration, that the PDRY army retreated to its bases and relative calm was once more introduced.

On the face of it, this operation brought the Ismail-led NF closer than ever to its long desired aim of imposing a leftist orientation on the YAR government. However a closer look reveals several faults in this achievement. First, the operation was beset by a split among decisionmakers in the PDRY, and therefore seemed reactive, rather than thoughtful and planned. Secondly, this achievement was generated by regular PDRY forces; by itself it did not attest to the existence of a strong NDF that would permanently influence the YAR. Third, this blunt exposure of the PDRY's audacity in using its armed forces to invade the YAR made various Arab parties anxious over Aden's designs and, like in 1972 in the Gulf, triggered forceful counterinsurgency measures.

Reinforcement of Counterinsurgency

The PDRY's insurgency resulted in an American boost to the YAR's defense and therefore, to Aden's obvious dismay, in growing US influence (albeit indirect) over San'a. In addition to the obvious emergency situation in the YAR, Washington was confronted at the time with the Soviet reinforcement in the Horn of Africa, Afghanistan and the PDRY itself; longstanding accusations of US inactivity against Soviet and Cuban inroads in Africa, and particularly the Horn; and criticism over US failure to aid Iran prior to the Shah's downfall. Hence the Carter administration moved strongly to reinforce the security of its allies in the Peninsula and the YAR in particular. The administration, acting under the Arms Export Control Act, avoided the necessity of obtaining congressional approval. The US provided the YAR with $400 million in weapons, including a dozen F-5E fighters, two C-130 aircraft, 64 M-60 tanks, 50 armored personnel carriers, artillery, and training teams. The weapons were actually drawn from Saudi reserve depots, while more sophisticated arms, including F-15s and AWACS aircraft, were transported to Saudi Arabia.[46] Hence Washington's aid to the YAR was given through Saudi Arabia and the US was not directly involved in YAR security.

Fearing the effects of the mounting consolidation of the radical Arab states in response to the Egyptian-Israeli peace process, Riyadh was also most anxious to prevent another radical upheaval in its own 'backyard' — as the PDRY's operation in the YAR was perceived — and to undercut the PDRY's hold over the YAR, which could have led to a united Yemen bearing the PDRY's communist stamp. The Saudis were also opposed to attempts by the YAR's new president, Salih, to reach a rapprochement with the Soviet Union and obtain military assistance from Moscow. Riyadh pressured the YAR government through financial manipulation. Saudi leaders promised $700 million in annual assistance (including payment for the US weapons), then occasionally (in 1979 and 1980) withheld the assistance, including arms shipments, pending YAR acceptance of demands that it distance itself from the PDRY and the Soviet Union.[47] Under this pressure, Salih dismissed leftist personalities from the government and army and replaced them with tribal, traditionalist figures. The most important appointment was that of Abdullah al-Ahmar's brother-in-law, Lt. Colonel Mujahid Abu Shawarib, to the senior position of deputy prime minister for internal affairs.[48]

Saudi Arabia used another tactic to counter the NDF's influence in North Yemen; it strengthened its contacts with the Zaydi tribes by affording them financial subsidies and political support. These tribes, in collaboration with the clergy in the YAR, became known in the early 1980s as the 'Islamic Front.' The Front functioned both as a pressure group on Salih's regime and as a counterinsurgency reserve, ready to join the YAR army to curb the NDF.[49] The internal balance between leftists and traditionalists in YAR politics was thereby turned against the former, and PDRY ambitions were once more frustrated.

Further, as renewed strategic relaxation ensued in the region in 1980, evident in a renewed rapprochement between the Soviet Union and the Gulf states, the PDRY had growing incentives to curtail its insurgency in the YAR. From the Soviet viewpoint, Moscow's strategic position in the region —based on Ethiopia, the PDRY and Afghanistan — provided a functional leverage over Arabia and the Gulf. Moreover, Moscow deemed it sufficient that PDRY influence over the YAR had, by strengthening leftist elements there, encouraged its ruler to seek diversified assistance from countries including the Soviet Union. Ali Abdullah Salih's policy of non-alignment, which enabled him to seek arms and assistance from Saudi Arabia and the US, yet to balance this course with overtures to Moscow, looked promising to the Soviet leaders. In fact, Saudi maneuvers to delay American arms shipments to the YAR in summer 1979 led San'a to conclude a large arms deal with the Soviet Union. At the end of September, 100 T-55 tanks, 400 MiG-21 aircraft, and about 200 Soviet military advisers arrived.[50]

Subsequently, Moscow's policy focused more and more on befriending the YAR and discouraging South Yemen from perpetrating further acts of insurgency against Salih's regime. This was manifested in several Soviet initiatives. For one, Moscow boosted the YAR's security and economy by granting it financial aid and cancelling repayment on previous loans. Then too, Soviet leaders seemed increasingly to prefer cooperation between the two Yemens (both had agreements with Moscow) to the subversion of one state by the other.[51] Moscow's strategy paid off in October 1981, when Salih visited the Soviet Union. It was agreed that the Soviets would undertake to persuade the PDRY leaders to cease aiding the NDF and to introduce a proper truce between the two states — a course that Moscow subsequently pursued.[52]

These initiatives in the region formed new incentives for most of the NF leaders, particularly Ali Nasir and Minister of Defense Ali Antar, to pursue a policy of regional relaxation. In both Ali Nasir's and Antar's perceptions (Antar came from the mountainous tribal Dali'i region, north of Aden), the anxiety over tribal elements in the YAR was not paramount, and Ismail's fears of a threat poised against the PDRY by the YAR's pro-Saudi tribes seemed exaggerated. In their view the more tangible threats emanated from Saudi and US counterinsurgency provoked by Ismail's initiatives. Moreover, in Ali Nasir's pragmatic and development-oriented view, the new situation also promised new opportunities, like those offered in 1974-75 when the PDRY decided to withdraw from Oman. These focused on the prospect of utilizing improved relations with the YAR to restore a process of rapprochement with Gulf states while simultaneously advancing Moscow's interests. At the same time, criticism by both tribal groups and administrators of Ismail's inability to improve the economy and his preference for YSP activists over regular administrators and tribesmen, also impinged on his ongoing insurgency decisions. For these groups, more attention to internal economic affairs was needed, rather than a commitment to insurgency into a country they did not deem hostile.

On April 20, 1980 Ah Nasir and An tar succeeded in persuading the Party's Central Committee to oust Ismail while the latter was on a visit to Libya. In light of its interests in the region, Moscow did not seriously object to the dismissal of its closest ally, who left for exile in the Soviet capital.[53] Ali Nasir became the Party Central Committee's general secretary and president, while remaining prime minister.

Diplomacy of Insurgency: Curtailment of the NDF

The perceptions of the PDRY's new leader, combined with the sobering effects of the anti-NDF counterinsurgency campaign and the moderating effect of Soviet counsels, now caused Aden to exercise restraint in supporting insurgency in North Yemen. The PDRY's new policies were evident in several spheres. First, it considerably decreased its support for the NDF. Until spring 1982 the only military activities perpetrated by the NDF were defensive and short-termed, aimed at preserving the Front's

positions in the southern parts of North Yemen against the strengthening forces of both the YAR government and the tribal, Saudi-inspired Islamic Front,[54] which launched several intense campaigns against the NDF in the Ibb area and along the PDRY frontier. Small-scale fighting continued through late 1980 and well into 1981. The NDF succeeded slowly in infiltrating the San'a-Ta'izz-Hudayda area, but could not prevent government incursions into its main strongholds in the south.

Secondly, the PDRY tried to direct the NDF into negotiations with the YAR authorities. Radio speeches and interviews given in Aden by the NDF's secretary, Sultan Ahmad Umar, following meetings he had with NF leaders, attest to the PDRY government's efforts to follow this course. However, this line created several problems for PDRY strategy. Without an effective military option, negotiations were difficult to sustain. Moreover, oscillation between active insurgency and negotiations was a course in which neither PDRY nor NDF leaders were experienced or resourceful. Finally, during this period the NDF failed to improve recruitment substantially. It was therefore unable to make inroads into tribal groups of the Bakil confederacy and to use them to halt the formation of the Islamic Front. It was more successful in recruiting defectors from the armed forces and some urban elements, but prior to 1982 it was unable to absorb them fully and utilize them effectively in combat.[55] Hence the PDRY found itself supporting a neutralized insurgent body, in a diplomatic process it could hardly influence.

These problems were reflected in ensuing events. Initial negotiations between Salih and the NDF had already commenced in June 1979; they continued intermittently in January 1980 and on other occasions that year. By then, Ismail was prepared to try the avenue of negotiations to complement his earlier insurgent initiatives. The NDF therefore demanded the formation of a new government in the YAR in which representation of traditionalists would decline while the number of leftists and Hamdi supporters would increase. The Front also demanded the release of political prisoners and a severing of relations with Saudi Arabia.[56] In the following weeks, five NDF members were rumored to be joining the new YAR cabinet.[57] According to NDF sources, an agreement based on these lines (including provisions to cease mutual "terrorism" and establish a provisional government that would prepare future elections) was concluded

between the parties on January 31, 1980.[58] However, its existence was not confirmed by the YAR government. Soon vehement Saudi pressure forced Salih to sever negotiations with the NDF.

The PDRY's lack of preparation for such a development became obvious in the following months, particularly after Ali Nasir came to power. NDF press releases focused on YAR government atrocities, which drew no effective response: apparently Abd al-Salam Damini, who was described as the leader of the NDF's military branch, was strangled along with his two brothers in the YAR's security headquarters in San'a; the NDF also reported that one of its officers, Lt. Colonel Ali al-Qadi, had been assassinated; and Umar and NDF Spokesman Yahya al-Shami reported that the government, with the help of the Islamic Front, systematically attacked villages that supported the NDF and detained and murdered nationalist elements.[59]

In November 1980, Ah Nasir was reported to have endorsed for a short period a counter campaign against the Islamic Front, which resulted in several clashes with the YAR Army in spring 1981 in the southern areas of Ibb and Dammar. However, Ali Nasir did this only as a means of pressuring Salih to cease his attacks against the NDF and to facilitate a future rapprochement between the two governments. Without much publicity Kuwait once more undertook an initiative of mediation. In a meeting between Salih and Ali Nasir in Ta'izz in September 1981, the two leaders agreed to refrain from using their states as bases to launch military or political insurgency against one another. During the following weeks Ali Nasir tried to persuade his colleagues to endorse a rapprochement with San'a in return for Salih's consent to incorporate the NDF into his government.[60] Thanks to new Soviet mediation efforts (following Salih's visit in Moscow), seconded by Kuwait, Salih met Umar in Damascus on November 3, and both met Ali Nasir in Kuwait on November 23. Salih then went on to visit Aden. These meetings seemed to bear out both the Soviets' and the two presidents' hopes for relaxed diplomatic negotiations. Accordingly, the NDF leaders were permitted to return to San'a without risking punishment or arrest, based upon their abstention from future insurgency. While refusing to recognize the NDF as a legitimate body, Salih was ready to allow NDF activists to open offices and stand for election to the People's Assembly, but on individual tickets.[61]

Ostensibly, the NF had finally achieved its goal of installing a leftist contingent body in YAR politics. Ali Nasir could now embark on a

campaign for relaxed bilateral relations. The presidents agreed to strengthen cooperation between their two countries by establishing a Supreme Yemeni Council. This consisted of both presidents, who were to meet every six months, and ministerial committees that were to carry out various mutual projects.[62] On December 30, 1981 a plan to draft a constitution for a "United Yemeni Republic" was announced.[63] By now the PDRY appeared to have completely relinquished its policy of insurgency in the YAR.

It was therefore surprising when, in March 1982, large scale skirmishes broke out between YAR government forces and the NDF in the Ibb, Ta'izz and Dammar areas. Apparently Sahh's forces precipitated the battle by launching a surprise attack aimed at crippling the insurgents. However the Front mustered 600 defectors from the YAR Army and several thousand irregulars, and threw all of its forces into a counter-uprising.

It soon became evident, though, that PDRY support for the Front's stand was factional rather than governmental. Once again insurgency had broken out against the backdrop of a split in NF leadership, A new faction had formed after 1981 around the new minister of defense, Salih Muslih Qasim, who pursued a pro-Ismail line. Qasim attracted the Marxists in Aden who had criticized Ali Nasir for taking too soft a line in building the state's economy and for befriending the Gulf states. He was apparently aided by Libya's leader Muammar al-Qadhafi, who displayed growing ambitions in the Peninsula but found insufficient satisfaction in the formal tripartite declaration he had signed in August 1981 with Ali Nasir and with Ethiopia's leader, Mengistu Haille Mariana. Qadhafi advocated an active line against Salih's regime and the pro-western, pro-Saudi elements that, in his view, dominated the YAR. He allegedly offered £500,000 in arms and financial aid, to be channeled through Qasim, to boost NDF activities. Qasim apparently directed the NDF through a network of his own men, either without Ali Nasir's knowledge or, at least, against the latter's judgment.[64]

Ali Nasir fought Qasim's initiative by dismissing Qasim's supporters from office, thereby undercutting the NDF's line of support.[65] In their places he appointed his own supporters. Soviet and PLO mediators then brought the struggle within the PDRY elite to a temporary halt, but not before Qasim undertook to withdraw his support from the NDF. In May 1982 Ali Nasir met with Salih in Kuwait for a conciliatory session. With

support for the NDF undercut, the YAR was able to move against NDF strongholds and decisively overpower their forces.[66]

Chapter 4. Participating in a Pro-Soviet Bloc

South Yemen's withdrawal from an active support role for insurgency in neighboring states resulted in a shift to what Aden's leaders regarded as another revolutionary strategy: active membership in a regional pro-Soviet bloc. Such a bloc is based on an agreement among its members, and between them and the Soviet Union, to cooperate in achieving strategic and ideological goals. This is not necessarily a rigid format; the members of the bloc may possess considerably more tactical flexibility and maneuverability than they would as participants in a formal alliance, and relations among individual member-states may become convoluted.

In contrast to the strategy of insurgency, the PDRY's role as an active member in a regional pro-Soviet bloc had different aims, presented a new spectrum of activities, and commanded a new type of regional relationship. These may be characterized as follows: 1) Aden shifted its focus to a long-term military and economic buildup as a Soviet client. 2) The PDRY diverted its geopolitical focus from its immediate neighbors (who comprised its natural 'intrusive system') to a wider region, which included the entire Peninsula, the Gulf, the Red Sea, the Horn of Africa, and often other Middle Eastern states. 3) On the tactical level, Aden departed from its earlier one-dimensional, insurgent approach to foreign policy, and adopted a complex combination of diplomatic, military and political means. Correspondingly, the NF's attitude and tactics toward both the Soviet Union and the pro-western states in the region became more versatile, involving a variety of 'give-and-take' combinations.

This strategy emerged gradually in the second half of the 1970s and came to the fore in the early 1980s.

The Rationale of the New Strategy

The period of 1974-75 has already been characterized for the PDRY's declining strategy of insurgency into Oman and the YAR. This process had a wider resonance, leading to the inception of a new strategy that ultimately replaced insurgency. It was nurtured by a combination of an internal state-building process and changing regional strategic conditions. The relevant regional developments were the ascent of pro-western states in the Peninsula and their drive for hegemony in the region. This process coincided with the emergence of a Soviet interest in projecting a non-hostile image and extending diplomatic gestures. A relative calm thus emerged in the region. Internally, the process of nation-building reached a degree of maturity: state institutions, including UPONF, had already reached dominant positions in society, while social and economic institutions had been established. Moreover, the PDRY's economic difficulties became increasingly evident and preoccupying.

The effects of these new realities were recognized by all NF factions, who presumably grasped that the new external conditions posed a different kind of threat to the PDRY. As in 1970, the new danger emanated from western designs in the region. Yet in contrast to 1970, the new threat did not derive from tribal intrusions launched by a neighboring pro-western proxy state, but rather from strategic alliances of pro-western states that grew to dominate the PDRY's surroundings in the Red Sea basin, the Gulf and the Indian Ocean itself. As such, this threat further differed from that of 1970 by its long term military buildup, by the political cooperation that linked regional powers, and by their financial and military abundance — which, unlike the tribal intrusions of 1970, the PDRY could not cope with. Hence in Aden's view the new danger, due to its solid financial, military, and broad political foundations, affected not just the PDRY's immediate security but also its long term ideological and strategic existence as a Marxist and pro-Soviet state.[1]

Of particular concern to Aden was the new scheme of "Arabizing the Red Sea." Sudan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia sought to coordinate political and military activities in the Red Sea arena to "defend" this waterway. In January 1977 these states reportedly even established a coordinating body for this purpose. Aden could only construe this move as an attempt to extend pro-western domination over the Red Sea, which would grow even stronger upon Djibouti's anticipated attainment of independence. This was accompanied by direct activities launched against Soviet interests in the

region. Saudi Arabia was particularly active in aiding the non-Marxist wing of the Front for the Liberation of Eritrea, which was fighting PDRY's emerging ally, Marxist Ethiopia. In early 1977 Egypt's President Anwar al-Sadat declared that his country would come to Sudan's aid if hostilities broke out between Sudan and Ethiopia.

To allay PDRY antagonism, and in light of the improved relations between South Yemen and Saudi Arabia during this period, Aden was invited to participate in a conference that took place on March 22-23, 1977 in Ta'izz in the YAR, along with North Yemen, the Sudan and Somalia. But there is no evidence that this conference had any operational results, and the PDRY remained highly suspicious of western intentions in this arena. Although attempts to curb Soviet interests in the Red Sea region were not directed against the PDRY and did not immediately affect South Yemen, Aden regarded the Arab pro-western states' activities as dangerous developments that could harm its long range strategic interests — such as freedom of navigation in the Red Sea, naval contacts with Ethiopia,[2] and the free passage of ships to its ally, the Soviet Union.

South Yemen was also worried by Iran's growing power in the Gulf region. The Algiers Accord of March 1975 between Iran and Iraq gave Iran joint control of the Shatt al-Arab and stabilized Iraqi-Iranian relations until the Shah's downfall.[3] Iran had gained influence over southern parts of the Gulf, including Oman, where it retained (from 1975 to 1977) an army of over 3000 soldiers to aid Qabus. Aden viewed Iran's policy as a "Pax Persica" strategy, aimed at furthering Iran's imperial and pro-western interests and thereby containing, if not actively weakening South Yemen's power. Iran's presence in Oman was characterized as a "raid" or "invasion" (*ghazu*) which threatened to encroach upon PDRY territory. In December 1976 Aden announced that Iranian jets had flown from Oman over South Yemeni territory and that one Iranian aircraft had been shot down. The incident was portrayed by South Yemeni spokesmen as evidence of the danger inherent in Iran's presence in Oman.[4]

Another source of anxiety for the PDRY's future was the growing US presence in the Indian Ocean, triggered by Washington's concern for the highly important oil facilities in the Gulf. The MIDLINK naval maneuvers in the Indian Ocean in November 1974, the US leasing of the British airfield at Masira Island near Oman, and the decision by Congress in July 1975 to expand facilities on Diego Garcia Island in the Indian Ocean[5] — all

seemed in Aden to dovetail with a western strategy to surround the Peninsula from all sides, either through pro-western proxies in the Red Sea and the Gulf, or directly by the US in the Indian Ocean. In 1978 Aden termed this a "massive western scheme" against the pro-Soviet alignment from Afghanistan to Africa.[6]

The new strategic dangers further softened the perception that PDRY leaders had once held unanimously, that insurgency was the best means available for them to surmount regional threats. The rather remote setup of the pro-western alliances, and their economic and military might, precluded any possibility of effectively neutralizing these dangers through insurgency. More complex and versatile tactics had to be tried to reach distant territories and explore new opportunities to effect a long term military and economic buildup.

Judging by new directions in their politics, PDRY leaders were attempting to employ two main international tactics. First, they sought to develop a strategic client-patron relationship with the Soviet Union. By now Soviet relations with the PDRY exceeded their initial ideological basis, and relied on military and strategic cooperation, as the Soviet Union tried after 1976 to assert its strategic position in the region vis-a-vis the western offensive.

In Aden's view this Soviet policy had several advantages in countering the new dangers. For one, the Soviet Union provided ultimate security. As a Soviet client, the PDRY's 21,000 soldiers were armed with Soviet weapons worth $185 million in the mid-1970s — a figure that may have doubled by 1980. Soviet and other Eastern Bloc economic and technical aid was less impressive; it amounted to $20-$40 million per annum. According to data presented in recent research, total Soviet aid reached $205 million by 1981; this included only $15 million the Soviets had afforded in 1974; the Chinese provided aid worth $79 million until 1974. This aid was complemented by several hundred Soviet and Cuban advisors, who prepared the PDRY's second Five-Year Plan, set to begin in 1979. The Soviet imprint was also manifested in the naval and aviation rights it obtained. The PDRY provided fueling and anchorage facilities for Soviet vessels and aircraft.[7] The airfield of Khormaksar, east of Aden, was used both for Soviet reconnaissance flights over the Red Sea and the Peninsula, and for the provision of Soviet supplies to the PDRY.[8] In this sense, Soviet patronage over South Yemen

was aimed at providing Aden with a proper superpower defense, to match the US and western states' designs in the region.

Soviet patronage provided the PDRY with the additional advantage of cooperation and friendship with regional and extraregional states and organizations. Thus, in contrast to South Yemen's isolation in the early 1970s, its new role enabled the PDRY to enjoy the support of other countries in the Soviet orbit such as Cuba, Ethiopia, Libya and, to some extent, Iraq. Apparently the Cubans, whom the Soviet Union used as a mobile strike force in Angola, Somalia and Ethiopia, were instrumental in developing this new axis. Cuba's President Fidel Castro met Abd al-Fattah Ismail in Moscow in March 1976 and visited the capitals of Ethiopia, Somalia and the PDRY one year later, in an attempt to encourage cooperation among these states.[9] Although no formal agreements were signed at this stage, all parties involved expressed sympathy with one another and in 1977 identified themselves as part of the 'progressive' anti-western camp, dedicated to helping their fellow members guard their integrity and independence.[10]

From the early 1970s the government of Aden also participated in training pro-Soviet and leftist terrorist groups from all over the world. Training camps were set up near Aden, Mukalla, Hawf and al-Ghayda. Along with South Yemenis, in 1978 these camps were manned by about 1000 Cubans and Soviets as well as 100 East German instructors. Bader-Meinhoff members reportedly met with representatives of the Wadi Haddad faction in Aden in July 1977. The PDRY also provided both a safe haven and sophisticated training facilities for several PLO factions (notably the Popular Front and the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine) which, in their turn, used Aden as a base for training terrorists from Ireland, Iran, Turkey, South America, Japan, and elsewhere. A party official was designated to maintain contacts with these organizations.[11] These services comprised a potential basis for full-fledged cooperation with friendly pro-Soviet forces, that would counteract pro-western cooperation in the region.

A third advantage the NF leaders found in Soviet patronage was what they perceived as Moscow's relative flexibility. The Soviets were satisfied with Aden's growing application of Marxist practices in the country's economy and society, and with the NF's adherence to the Soviet Bloc. At the same time Moscow did not seem to object to — indeed, tacitly

encouraged — Aden's negotiations with Gulf states over cutting insurgency in Oman, and its attempts to settle its disputes with the YAR after October 1972. In other words, in the NF leadership's view, Soviet politics in the region allowed the PDRY sufficient flexibility to pursue a variety of ventures in foreign policy.

A second main tactic aimed at countering the new dangers was improving relations with the pro-western states in the region. The advantages of this tactic were twofold. For one, it allayed the fears of the pro-western states and thereby neutralized their opposition to the PDRY. In addition, this tactic facilitated financial aid to the PDRY, which the oil rich Gulf states proffered to Aden as part of their efforts to strengthen pro-western influence in the region.

The strategic realities of the new threats and opportunities facing the PDRY were presumably well understood by its diverse ruling factions. Yet the latter remained split over the issues of specific responses to these developments as well as their incorporation into one comprehensive strategy.

We have already noted that Ali Salim Rubay's and Ali Nasir's factions constituted the more pragmatic in PDRY politics. Ali Nasir's approach presumably derived from the development-geared atmosphere of his home area of Abyan which rendered him ideologically pragmatic, and politically flexible. Rubay's attitude probably originated from both the commercial orientation typical of Hadramawt, and from the evolution of Maoist ideas that NLF-Hadrami activists had adopted in the 1960s. In this sense, as the Peoples' Republic of China became less dogmatic in both foreign and internal politics, Rubay, as one of the few original 'Maoists' left in the NLF, presumably underwent a similar change. When necessary, as in 1972, Rubay adopted an inclination to the Soviet Union as the PDRY's superpower patron. But he was also the first PDRY leader to seek good relations with the Gulf states, and generally displayed a flexible approach to state affairs.

Both Rubay and Ali Nasir must have also been affected by the maturing process of serving in government. In the process of nation-building, government officials inevitably became acquainted with the daily problems of the PDRY, and learned to focus on these realities by seeking pragmatic solutions to burning issues, rather than relying on doctrinaire revolutionary theories. In the mid-1970s their faction was supported by Foreign Minister

Muhammad Salih Muti, whose origins from the Dali'i tribal region in the northeast rendered him particularly inclined to cooperate pragmatically with Arab states (which traditionally had a relatively strong impact on this region through the YAR).

Judging by both their declarations and deeds, as early as the mid-1970s members of Rubay's faction were in favor of a major strategic shift in the PDRY's regional policy. While they continued to seek cooperation with the Soviet Union over long term strategic issues in order to assure Soviet strategic protection for the PDRY, they also sought to develop improved relations with the Gulf states, both in order to offset the strategic dangers they were posing to the PDRY, and to obtain financial assistance. They apparently believed that these strategies were feasible and compatible. Their negotiations with their Gulf counterparts over ceasing PDRY subversion in the Gulf presumably led them to believe that a rapprochement with the Gulf states was a valid option for the PDRY: it would lead to a flow of financial assistance from the Gulf to Aden, thereby substantially bolstering the PDRY's economy. The apparent flexibility that both Moscow and the Gulf capitals displayed toward South Yemen convinced Rubay's faction that this design was workable.

As part of this design, Rubay's faction was prepared to abandon the PDRY's initial regional strategy of insurgency. During talks he held with Egypt's President Anwar al-Sadat in September 1974, Rubay pledged that Aden would refrain from "exporting its revolution." In interviews given during 1975, Ali Nasir reiterated this policy, particularly concerning the Gulf and went on to stress Aden's support for the sovereignty of the Gulf states. Ali Nasir freely admitted that his country indeed expected financial aid from the Gulf states to build up its infrastructure, notably the port of Aden, which had declined since the British departure. The PDRY's minister of information of the day, Abdullah al-Khamiri (whose role caused him to moderate some of the hardline position he had held earlier) also stressed that his country regarded revolutions as "internal affairs" rather than objectives for PDRY instigation.[12] Hence in the mid-1970s Rubay's group was anxious to direct its foreign policy efforts toward improving the PDRY's economy and regional strategic setting, rather than prolonging the strategy of regional insurgency.

Abd al-Fattah Ismail's group had a different strategic grasp. It did not fail to appreciate the new opportunities for Aden in improved relations with

Gulf states. But it differed with Rubay's and Ali Nasir's factions regarding the overall strategic assessment. We have already noted that Ismail's opinions were shaped by his association with rabid intellectual Marxists such as Ali Abd al-Razik and Abu-Bakr ba-Dhib, by his ambition to carry out a social revolution in his home country, the YAR, and by his inclination to preserve a "purist" Marxist-Leninist regime through the UPONF framework, which remained untainted by the hardships Rubay and Ali Nasir encountered in the government.[13]

Hence Ismail refused to completely alter the insurgency-geared PDRY revolutionary strategy in favor of one that focused only on tackling future regional threats through long term military alliances and an economic buildup. The record of his activities shows that while Ismail did not object to a long term strategic buildup for the PDRY per se, at the same time he sought to maintain parallel tactics of promoting insurgency. These, he argued, would serve as leverage for bargaining with pro-western, non-revolutionary governments in the region; would manifest the PDRY's basic commitment to spread the Marxist revolutionary process; and would afford a vehicle to advance desirable political developments in other states, notably the YAR. In Ismail's view, Aden must continue to direct a revolutionary process in the YAR. This line satisfied Ismail's ambitions on two fronts: concerning the PDRY's raison-d'etre, and the desirable change in his homeland, the YAR. Moreover, by encouraging a revolutionary movement in the YAR, Ismail sought to establish a friendly force to defend his chosen state of residence, the PDRY, from Saudi and pro-Saudi influences. Hence, for Ismail the continuity of the PDRY's insurgency into neighboring states remained an indispensable part of any future long-term strategy.

Two practical policy preferences that stemmed from this perception illustrate Ismail's differences with Rubay's group. First, he insisted that Aden should remain a promoter of regional insurgency, particularly into the YAR. Secondly, while he did not oppose the long-term military and economic buildup, Ismail regarded Aden's contacts with Gulf states with apprehension: they were a means to obtain economic assistance for Aden, but they were secondary to its contacts with the Soviet Union, and should not deter Aden's efforts to revolutionize the YAR.

In view of these differing perceptions, how did a new PDRY regional strategy evolve? Three main stages mark its evolution.

From 1974 to mid-1976, Rubay was the architect. While Ismail was preoccupied with the formation of UPONF, Rubay tried to realize his twofold strategy. Starting with his aforementioned meeting with Sadat in September 1974, Rubay went on to visit the Gulf principalities in February and March 1975, and in July of that year attended the Islamic Conference at Jidda, Saudi Arabia. The rapprochement with the Gulf states peaked in March 1976, when Saudi Arabia and the PDRY agreed to establish diplomatic relations, following which Riyadh promised economic assistance to Aden.

During the following months the initial results of this accord became evident when Aden ceased its propaganda attacks against the Saudi royal family. Riyadh, in turn, now facilitated financial remittances by South Yemeni foreign workers in Saudi Arabia to the PDRY. The Saudis actually afforded Aden $50 million before relations between the states worsened again in late 1977.[14]

Meanwhile a visit by Soviet ships to Aden's port during summer 1976, visits by statesmen from pro-Soviet clients Somalia and Ethiopia that year, and two visits Ismail paid to Moscow — in March 1976 (to attend the GPSU's 25th Congress) and in July that year — all seemed designed to underline a PDRY intention of maintaining ongoing good relations with its Soviet patron.

Here, then, we encounter diverse yet still nebulous facets of a new strategy in the making. Diplomatic contacts aimed at producing long-term economic and military gains were growing — side by side with the ongoing instigation of insurgency. Initial economic results of the rapprochement with the Gulf states, manifested in Saudi aid, were keeping pace with growing military cooperation with the Soviet Union and pro-Soviet states — still not tested under crisis.

Events took a new turn after late 1976, and a new phase emerged that lasted until late 1977. The change resulted from new Soviet anxiety over the spreading influence of the pro-western states in the region: the latter had held successful contacts with Somalia and the YAR, the Saudis had launched overtures toward the PDRY, and their attempts to dominate the surrounding waterways were denounced by Soviet spokesmen as dangerous imperialist ventures.[15] The Soviets' consequent policy moves to bolster their strategic assets in the region now resulted in several developments: Soviet oil shipments totaling 10,000 barrels per day were designated for refining in

Aden's refineries as a means of boosting the PDRY economy and thereby counterbalancing Gulf states' assistance to the YAR; arms shipments were increased; and the leaders exchanged major visits, notably Muti's visit in March and Ali Nasir's in July 1977 in Moscow. Cuba's leader, Fidel Castro, visited Aden and Addis Abeba, the Ethiopian capital, in March 1977. During 1977 the Soviets provided considerably more arms than in 1976; their advisers, who numbered 200 in 1973-4, totaled 350 in 1977. There was growing cooperation among the PDRY and Soviet allies such as Cuba, who had 700 advisers in South Yemen in 1977, and Ethiopia.[16] By the end of 1977 South Yemen functioned as a major base for Soviet operations in aiding Mengistu's forces in their war against Somalia. In addition, Ismail's renewed encouragement to NDF insurgency in the YAR, notably after President Hamdi's assassination in April 1977, reinforced the PDRY's radical line.

Despite these developments Rubay still tried to maintain improved relations with the Gulf states. They agreed to refine crude oil in Aden (actually, their consent preceded and even promoted the Soviet refining initiatives), and to build a modern oil complex there. As noted earlier, the Saudis offered financial assistance to the PDRY. Rubay participated in the Ta'izz conference of April 1977, which had at least a tacit anti-Soviet connotation. And he met Saudi leaders once more in Riyadh, where further cooperation and further Saudi aid to Aden were discussed.[17]

The mam PDRY need that the Soviets could not satisfy was financial assistance. In Page's words, the Soviet performance in this sphere in 1977 was "receiving less than enthusiastic acclaim" in Aden.[18] Yet Rubay's attempt to compensate for this deficiency by maintaining contacts with the Gulf states did not in its turn become a tangible and integrative part of a new strategy. First, it was hardly possible to present the rapprochement with the Gulf states as a counterforce to Soviet clientelism. While Rubay and Ali Nasir were trying to balance visits to the capitals of one side with consecutive visits to those of the other— so as not to lose face with both — a close look indicates that Rubay and Muti fought a rearguard battle to maintain their contacts with the Gulf states, by allaying their fears and asking for their assistance in the face of Aden's growing pro-Soviet tendencies. Moreover, in contrast to what Rubay's group had originally thought, these tactics were not complementary. Rather, they were implemented in an atmosphere of rivalry and competition, often leading to

contradictory and unwanted results, such as the anti-Soviet undertone of the Ta'izz conference which embarrassed Aden in its dealings with Moscow.

Thus, due to PDRY inter-elite rivalry and Soviet apprehensions, improved relations with the Gulf states could not become a legitimate and acceptable part of a long-term PDRY strategy. In addition, and despite promising beginnings, the contacts with the Gulf states did not produce substantial economic assistance, and this triggered increased criticism of Rubay's tactics.

The third stage of the attempt to develop a new strategy evolved between late 1977 and April 1978. PDRY activities during this period were heavily influenced by the Soviet Union's specific interest in using South Yemen as a base for its support for Mengistu in the Ogaden war between Ethiopia and Somalia, and generally by attempts to strengthen the Soviet position in the region. These resulted in a stronger pro-Soviet PDRY policy and a strengthening of Ismail's position in the PDRY, culminating in his reign as president and party secretary-general after Rubay's execution in late June 1978. The strategic buildup during this period therefore reflected Ismail's perceptions and blended with Soviet interests.

Soviet patronage over the PDRY peaked during this period. For one, it involved growing arms shipments to the PDRY following each military event in the region — the Ogaden war and the inter-Yemeni war. Shipments reportedly included dozens of T-62 tanks, MiG-21 aircraft (in January 1979 there were even reports of the shipment of more advanced MiG-23s), and surface-to-air missiles, with quantities sometimes doubling each year. The shipments were part of a larger network of Soviet-PDRY military cooperation on a strategic level, affording pro-Soviet dominance on the Horn of Africa and in the Straits of Bab al-Mandab.

Aden's role as an active member in a Soviet regional strategy focused not only on guaranteeing its ultimate security, but also on performing as an active proxy to further Soviet regional strategic aims. This role was effective primarily with regard to the Horn of Africa. In November 1977, when Soviet involvement escalated on Ethiopia's side, the PDRY became a major staging point for Soviet air and naval operations into Ethiopia. For example, according to a Lebanese newspaper, in February 1978 50 Soviet airlifts were serviced at PDRY airfields.[19] Furthermore, in the first weeks of 1978 South Yemen itself dispatched about 2000 soldiers to fight alongside the Ethiopians — the largest foreign contingent in the war. There were also

about 1200 Cubans, Soviets and East Germans in Ethiopia, cementing a regional axis extending from Aden to Adis-Ababa and the Ogaden.[20]

In May 1978, during a visit to Aden by Admiral Gorchkov, commander of the Soviet Navy, plans were reportedly laid for the subsequent building of large and modernized air and naval bases near Aden, and of a radar network that would monitor military activities all over the region.[21] While these provisions indicated Moscow's growing commitment to the PDRY's defense, they also attest to the essential services the PDRY rendered the Soviet Union for its regional military-strategic activities.

Aden's loyalty appeared to pay off in terms of its security interests. In May and June 1978, in visits paid by Gorchkov to Aden and by PDRY Defense Minister Ali Antar to Moscow, a clandestine, 15-year defense pact was reportedly signed by the two countries. According to this agreement the Soviet Union would come to the PDRY's assistance in the event that it came under attack. In return for the use of naval bases and airfields for monitoring, storage, repairs, and communications, the Soviet Union also undertook to deliver to South Yemen more tanks and modern MiG aircraft (of an unspecified type), and to develop existing bases and build a new airfield in Hadramawt.[22] The peak of this dynamic was reached on October 25, 1979, during Ismail's visit to Moscow, when a comprehensive 20-year friendship agreement was signed between the two states. Apart from general provisions to cooperate in economic and technical fields, the agreement provided that neither-state would join a third party in harming the interests of one of the two co-signees, and that both states would coordinate their activities in case of a "threat to peace." They also undertook to consult one another on international issues.[23] The importance of the agreement lies in its strategic, long term and wide-range provisions; it was not designed to tackle any specific or immediate problems, but rather to cement general cooperation. In this respect the agreement well suited South Yemeni long term aims.

Ismail's success in establishing long term strategic cooperation with the Soviet Union could not conceal the failures the PDRY sustained in applying other aspects of the new strategy. First, the rapprochement with the Gulf states was rendered unworkable. Ismail's poor record with these states and the PDRY's continued insurgency into the YAR, amplified by new reports of the PFLC's reactivation,[24] prevented any meaningful breakthrough in this

direction. Due to Aden's cooperation with Moscow in the Ethiopian war, the Gulf states ceased their assistance to the PDRY. Rubay sought to no avail to maintain clandestine contacts with the West — he was reported to have been preparing for a visit by US congressmen just before his assassination.[25] Even Ismail tried to befriend these states: in September 1979 he met the Saudi Prince Abdullah, commander of the National Guard, and he sent Muti to visit the Gulf states in April 1980.[26] But his unwillingness to defer to any of the Gulf states' interests, and concomitant insistence on maintaining Aden's relations with these states merely as an economically beneficial appendage to his pro-USSR policies, rendered these attempts fruitless. Not unexpectedly, then, economic difficulties, such as food shortages, rising prices and trade deficits, developed in the PDRY in 1979.[27]

In addition, Ismail's insistence on an insurgency policy tended to foil all other tactics. Indeed, these activities were not only rejected by the Gulf states; Aden's insurgency tactic, leading to its military intervention in the YAR in February-March 1979, even obstructed the PDRY's cooperation with the Arab radical and pro-Soviet states just as it was crystallizing in response to the Egyptian-Israeli Camp David Accords. Iraq's and Syria's mediation between the two Yemeni states saved the integrity of the Arab Steadfastness Camp for the moment, but the PDRY's image as a troublemaker in this orbit was obvious. Moreover, PDRY insurgency found little favor with Moscow, which preferred cooperation between the two Yemeni states within a pro-Soviet sphere.[28] Insurgency therefore seemed to contradict a variety of aspects of the new strategy, and it was therefore a major reason for the growing opposition to Ismail, which led ultimately to his downfall.

Establishing the New Strategy, 1980-82

While the facets of the PDRY's strategy of active participation in a pro-Soviet bloc emerged in the mid-1970s, they were fully realized only during Ali Nasir's first years in power, when they finally replaced the decade-old strategy of insurgency.

Two paramount factors helped crystallize the new strategy. One was the rise of the new leader, Ali Nasir Muhammad, who came to hold all leading positions in the state. In particular, in May 1981 he maneuvered Ali Antar, a strong rival leader and his collaborator in ousting Ismail, from his position as minister of defense and appointed him minister of local affairs and deputy prime minister. Thus Ali Nasir could steer PDRY foreign policy in his own pragmatic way.

The other factor was the combined effect of the dangers and opportunities that the PDRY was facing during this period. In Aden's view, the strategic, long term threats that had been developing in the early and mid-1970s seemed to become more threatening during the late 1970s and early 1980s. The advent of the GCC was construed in Aden as a reinforcement of the pro-western presence in the region through cooperation and mutual protection.[29] The GCC's focus on internal anti-subversion measures, which in 1982 resulted in security treaties focusing on mutual extradition and frontier control among some of the GCC states,[30] was interpreted in Aden as being directed against the very leftist groups in the region that displayed sympathy for the PDRY.

Aden also developed major concerns over increasing US activity in the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea basin, which emanated from President Carter's new determination to defend western interests in the Gulf region.[31] PDRY leaders opposed the explicit anti-Soviet aims of the Garter Doctrine, and were obviously unhappy with security institutions and arrangements that developed with the aim of blocking any Soviet encroachment into the region. Aden further objected to US activities due to the direct reinforcement they offered for local pro-western states in the region. The buildup of the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) in 1980-81, ostensibly to defend Gulf states mostly against Soviet-inspired incursions, seemed to the PDRY a pretext for US intervention. The "Bright Star" maneuvers that were conducted both in 1981 and in 1982 by US forces in cooperation with Somalia, Sudan, Egypt, and the PDRY's main pro-western rival, Oman, were deemed a direct American threat to the PDRY. In December 1982 PDRY Foreign Minister Abd al-Aziz al-Dali described these maneuvers as "surprising and shocking for the PDRY."[32] Lastly, ongoing negotiations between the US and Gulf states to obtain American bases in the region were seen as a move to institutionalize an American presence in the Gulf, thereby posing a larger threat to Aden.

Another concern of Ali Nasir's regime was the PDRY's difficult economic situation. Due to tensions with the YAR, Aden's military expenses rose from 19 percent of total state expenditures prior to 1978, to 25 percent or more in 1978-80. No new development projects were undertaken during 1978-80. While the social services budget did not decline, development expenditure, which had reached 55 percent of the total in 1977, fell to 41 percent in 1979 and 44 percent in 1980.[33] Fierce floods that beset the PDRY in 1982 further aggravated its economic problems.

The intensification of these dangers notwithstanding, Ali Nasir also grasped the opportunities the new developments offered. First, Aden quickly became aware that the GCC states had been exploiting the stalemate in the Iran-Iraq War and the rough progress of the Egyptian-Israeli peace process to act as mediators in the Arab world. Rather than filling the role of ruthless pro-western agent, as the GCC was viewed in Aden upon its formation, it was befriending diverse Arab states, including those perceived as hostile. The Gulf states were wooing their potential enemies by allotting them financial assistance; this was highly valued by Ali Nasir's group, and its significance for relief operations grew particularly important after the floods of 1982,[34] Furthermore, Ali Nasir noted the GCC's deference to Soviet interests in its refusal to host US bases on its soil, along with Saudi Arabia's and Kuwait's renewed attempts to conduct correct, even cooperative relations with Moscow so as to dissuade the Soviets from subverting Gulf regimes.[35] These Gulf states' attempts at rapprochement with the Soviet Union and at improving relations with Arab client states of the Steadfastness Front seemed very promising to Ali Nasir. We have already noted that at about this time the Soviets also sought to improve relations with the Gulf states, and this gave Aden the hope that a strategy of improving relations with the Gulf states would not be seen as an irritant by Moscow.

In Ali Nasir's view, this policy line had to be balanced by the close patronship of the Soviet Union and the friendship of its regional allies. In the first weeks of his reign Ali Nasir developed two tactics in pursuance of this interest. First, during meetings in Moscow in the summer and fall of 1980 he obtained Soviet consent to continue providing the PDRY with the protection and arms that had been allotted during Ismail's reign, thereby

placing the USSR in the role of South Yemen's ultimate protector against what was perceived as a growing US threat.

The second means for Aden to define and reinforce its regional strategy were PDRY ties with other radical and pro-Soviet states in the region. By 1981 South Yemen's relations with Ethiopia were already on a firm basis. Now Ali Nasir's ascent helped improve relations with the Steadfastness states, which had soured during Ismail's day. Although the overall unity of this front was short-lived (mainly because of the effects of the Iran-Iraq War), South Yemen succeeded in developing better relations with Syria and Libya, and reinforced existing contacts with diverse PLO factions and with Arab communist parties, all of whom regarded Aden as a staunch radical bastion. The cooperation among these states provided South Yemen with a friendly framework for regional cooperation of a radical, revolutionary nature, while PDRY cooperation with pro-Soviet states and organizations in the region provided Aden with a regional platform to counterbalance the Gulf states' regional strength.

If the aim of safeguarding the PDRY was promoted through stronger radical alliances and reliance on the Soviet Union as the ultimate protector, Ali Nasir nevertheless tried to improve PDRY relations with surrounding states and portray a 'friendly neighbor' image in the hope that this would eliminate the reasons for an American presence and dissuade the Gulf states from military cooperation with the US.

Similarly, economic assistance was sought after both by embarking on a rapprochement with the Gulf states, and through continuous friendly relations with the Soviets — a combination that would provide financial aid from the former and technical assistance from the latter. To achieve this aim, Ali Nasir tried to exploit the 'detente' between these parties by positioning the i DRY in the role of go-between, and by acting as a goodwill proxy for Soviet pragmatic policies in the region.[36] Here the rationale was twofold: first, to obtain maximal returns for each of the PDRY's strategic aims from the Soviet Union, regional pro-Soviet states and the Gulf states; secondly, to link the interests of all sides to one another through Aden's good offices, thereby rendering the PDRY, under Ali Nasir's rule, indispensable for all parties concerned.

Thus, by 1981-82 the main aspects of All Nasir s strategy were becoming evident. The first was improving relations with the PDRY's neighbors by ceasing to carry out insurgency into their territory. Following the relaxation

which ensued between the PDRY and the YAR in May 1982, the two states resumed negotiations over unification. While this objective in reality offered little more than a framework for solving frontier issues — rather than compromising the sovereignty of either of the parties — it sufficed to establish a new atmosphere in the region. Cooperation over various technical issues ensued; free movement across borders for citizens of both states was declared in August 1982;[37] a draft constitution for the unified Yemen state was concluded in April 1984, and then referred for ratification to the parliaments of the two states.[38] Ali Nasir frequently met with his YAR counterpart, Ali Abdullah Salih, to solve current problems and project a relaxed atmosphere. In an interview given in February 1983 Ali Nasir termed the YAR's dispute with the NDF, "matters which have already been solved."[39] No further meaningful PDRY assistance to the NDF was reported.

Following years of animosity, in autumn 1982 a rapprochement between the PDRY and Oman was also effected. Kuwaiti and UAE mediation efforts that had begun in May 1982 succeeded in bringing about an agreement to normalize relations between the two states; it was signed by the two Yemeni foreign ministers in Kuwait in the last week of October. The agreement stipulated that both parties would abstain from engaging in hostile activities against one another and from mutual hostile propaganda.[40] Ali Nasir signaled his serious intentions by closing the PFLO's anti-Oman program on Radio Aden in early October 1982.[41] The agreement also addressed the question of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two states, though this was not achieved immediately.

The PDRY's improved relations with its immediate neighbors generated improved links with the Gulf states. PDRY officials paid several visits in 1983 and 1984 to GCC capitals, including Riyadh. In May 1983 diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia were upgraded to the ambassadorial level.[42] Ali Nasir and al-Dali frequently praised the GCC mediation efforts that had brought peace to the Peninsula.[43]

The second aspect of Ali Nasir's strategy was to cultivate close relations with the Soviet Union — as superpower friend, patron and defender. One result was that the PDRY became more of a Soviet strategic stronghold. While Aden apparently did not grant the Soviet Union full authority over local bases, in March and November 1981 Soviet experts were reportedly

developing the airfields at Soqotra and Bir Fadl (northwest of Aden), had obtained access to a new airfield in Hadramawt, and had placed antiaircraft missiles in the PDRY naval bases on the island of Perim and in the Mayun district. According to additional and unconfirmed reports, the Soviets also built a huge headquarters for all Soviet forces in the Middle East, and the PDRY Army was placed under joint local and Soviet command. For the most part, though, the Soviet role was reported to be only advisory.[44] During this period, new shipments of MiG aircraft, T-62 tanks and other weapons continued to flow from the Soviet Union to South Yemen.[45] The relationship with Moscow reached a peak in November 1982 when Ali Nasir visited the Soviet capital. By then Moscow had performed symbolic military acts that appeared to indicate a readiness to defend the PDRY: in an evident response to the establishment of the GGC, a group of Soviet warships demonstratively visited Aden; and in mid-June 1982, following a skirmish on the PDRY's frontier with Oman, Soviet First Deputy Defense Minister Marshall Sokolov visited Aden.

The third aspect of the PDRY's new strategy was aligning with states and organizations regarded as pro-Soviet and radical. Already in January 1981, in what might have been an attempt to dissuade Gulf states from concluding the GCC's formation, Ali Nasir called for a summit that would include both Gulf and Horn of Africa states, and would attempt to clear the region of "foreign" (which in PDRY rhetoric meant the US) bases.[46] When this scheme failed, Ali Nasir visited Ethiopia, Algeria, Libya, Syria and then Moscow in February 1981. Subsequently, on August 17, 1981, the leaders of Ethiopia, Libya and the PDRY signed in Aden a "tripartite alliance" for economic, military and political cooperation (no further details were disclosed).[47] Through this alliance the PDRY formalized its cooperation with a pro-Soviet regional setting, and gained assurances for its economy (Libya promised aid worth $400 million)[48] and its security vis-a-vis the GCC states. The alliance also granted Aden a strong regional role alongside Ethiopia as a joint 'guardian' of the Red Sea.

The New Strategy on Trial

Thus were laid the foundations of the PDRY strategy in the region. To what extent was it effective? For one, Aden's security was apparently enhanced. Generally speaking, Soviet protection, fostered by the presence of Cuban and East German experts and by the use of Soviet tanks and airplanes in the PDRY Army, featured in Aden's rhetoric as a guarantee against the dangers emanating from "American plots" in the region.[49] When put to the test, the Soviets performed symbolic acts of commitment to this role. Thus, when several ships were hit by mines in the Red Sea in August 1984 and the US and Britain sent minesweepers to the area, Aden viewed the move as an attempt by the West to lay siege to its shores. PDRY Minister of Defense Muslih Qasim met his Soviet counterpart, Marshal Ustinov, who agreed to send two of the Soviet Union's own minesweepers to the region and to reinforce the PDRY Navy.[50] This was a clear indication that in times of need the PDRY could indeed rely on the Kremlin for its ultimate protection. The relaxation with the PDRY's neighbors was also effective inasmuch as no further GCC plans to curb Aden's regime or recruit a regional alliance against the PDRY were registered. The Marxist regime in the PDRY seemed to gain in recognition and legitimacy in the eyes of Aden's neighbors.

The assurance of an effective defense for the PDRY during Ali Nasir's regime lay also in the renewed period of good relations between the Soviet Union and the Gulf states in the region, which enabled both parties to refrain from using aggressive and expansionist tactics toward one another's interests. This situation in itself enhanced the PDRY's security, thereby rendering superfluous the military essence of the Tripartite alliance. With few exceptions, this constellation remained effective over the ensuing years.

Military cooperation with pro-Soviet states was less effective. While the PDRY maintained cordial bilateral relations with Ethiopia, Libya's support for Muslih Qasim's effort to activate the NDF in 1982 seriously frustrated relations between Aden and Tripoli, and prevented effective cooperation between them. Subsequently Libya's intervention ceased and its relations with Aden improved once more, but they did not develop into an open military alignment. Still, cooperation with pro-Soviet states allowed Aden to pursue limited radical revolutionary goals in the Arab world and to maintain a stream of revolutionary rhetoric. As such, this was an entirely new avenue: it made it possible for the PDRY to maintain a revolutionary

aura in its foreign policy during a period when it actually sought regional accommodation.

Indeed, Ali Nasir pursued a genuinely radical revolutionary policy only in connection with the Steadfastness Front and, notably, with regard to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). There were two reasons for this. First, the remoteness of the Arab-Israel conflict from Aden's primary concerns and the overall support the PLO enjoyed in the Arab world meant that Ali Nasir's policy on this issue was not disputed by the internal opposition, the Soviet Union or the Gulf states; it was therefore both 'legitimate' and 'revolutionary' at one and the same time. Secondly, issues concerning the Steadfastness Front had no direct bearing upon the PDRY's security, and therefore support for the PLO presented no dangerous implications for the PDRY. Third, such a course of action was acceptable to Moscow and complemented its own policies in the region, so that the PDRY was encouraged in this regard by its superpower patron.

Ali Nasir embarked on two principal activities with regard to the PLO. First, logistics and liaison: he allowed the PLO to develop three main training camps (in the Dali'i mountains, at Naqub north of Aden, and at Shiqwa in the Bay of Aden); and he provided training facilities to, and maintained close contacts with PLO leaders, notably his allies who had their origins in the ANM — the Popular Front and Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP and PDFLP).[51]

Secondly, by taking advantage of the rifts within the Steadfastness Front, Ali Nasir sought to play the role of the Front's new coordinator. His main efforts focused on PLO reunification after it split in spring 1983, following the attempt of PLO leader Yasir Arafat to coordinate policies with King Hussein of Jordan over a settlement with Israel. Ali Nasir visited Damascus in September 1983, and during the following months sent envoys to coordinate positions in Damascus, Tripoli and Algiers. He believed that reconciliation of PLO factions, followed by renewed cooperation between Arafat and the leaders of Syria and Libya, Hafiz al-Asad and Moammar Qadhafi, would facilitate the reestablishment of the Front. To achieve this aim, he had to bring Asad and Qadhafi to acknowledge Arafat's leadership over the entire PLO and to influence the seceding PLO factions to reunite with Arafat's supporters. At the same time, Ali Nasir had to persuade Arafat to abandon cooperation with King Hussein and return fully to the rejectionist position of the Steadfastness Front.

Ali Nasir's main success was to persuade several PLO factions (including the PFLP and PDFLP as well as the Palestinian Communist Party, based in Lebanon) to cooperate. With Algeria's assistance, representatives of these factions met with Arafat's representatives in June 1984 in Aden and signed the "Aden agreement."[52] This achievement paved the way for the convening of the PLO's National Council in November 1984 in Amman. However this was to prove a short-term achievement. Arafat's agreement with Hussein of February 11, 1985 — to cooperate in advancing the peace process — exacerbated beyond repair the rift within the PLO as well as the dispute between Arafat and the leaders of Syria and Libya. Ali Nasir's wish to reunite the Steadfastness Front around an Arafat-led unified PLO had failed. Hence his visit to the capitals of the Steadfastness states in March 1985 achieved very little. Upon his return, he declared that "an agreement has been reached for uniting all [Steadfastness] efforts to cancel the Amman agreement."[53] But this achievement of activating the Steadfastness states against Arafat's policy paled in comparison with the original aim of revitalizing the entire Steadfastness Front.

As for Ali Nasir's success in achieving his financial aims, the results were mixed. Data regarding financial assistance provided by Gulf states is not sufficient. From what is known, it seems clear that such assistance kept flowing to the PDRY and was guaranteed at least until the end of 1985.[54] However, the scope of assistance was constrained due to the economic recession in the Gulf economies generated by declining oil exports, and because South Yemen never responded to GCC assistance — insubstantial as it was — by breaking with the Soviet Union as Gulf leaders might have sought. Gulf assistance was sporadic; it was usually given for specific projects, such as the development of a transportation and energy infrastructure, relief operations after floods, and the establishment of schools and hospitals. In April 1984 the Saudis were reported to have promised $60 million; but no indications that the Saudis indeed fulfilled this pledge were reported. As noted earlier, despite the relative improvement in the PDRY's economy during Ali Nasir's regime, the irregular and insufficient assistance given by the Gulf states prompted opposition groups to criticize Ali Nasir for pursuing an unproductive 'capitalist' policy. This criticism in turn triggered occasional additional economic demands by Ali Nasir's men to the GCC,[55] which strained relations between the parties.

On a parallel, disillusionment with Soviet technical and financial aid was also evident in Aden. Only a few new projects stemming from Soviet sources and no major technical aid agreements were reported at this stage. The collapse of East European and Soviet-built dams that led to the flooding of 1982 exacerbated the sense of disappointment in Aden.

Hence, unlike Ah Nasir's success in accomplishing the PDRY's defense aims, he clearly did not recruit the substantial economic assistance — from either side or both — needed to salvage the PDRY's economy. In this regard the passive detente that was manifested in the relative non-action of pro-Soviet and pro-western actors in the region did not suffice to attract active contributions by both to the PDRY economy. Several factors account for this. First, Aden failed to become a vital liaison between the camps. Ali Nasir tried to perform this role in several spheres, but with limited success. His participation in the Islamic Conference at Ta'if in February 1981 presumably helped to tone down the conference's anti-Soviet resolutions. He succeeded in obtaining both Kuwaiti and Soviet support — generating a convergence of interests for both — for the relaxation of relations between the PDRY and the YAR in 1981-82. To establish a common denominator between Moscow and the Gulf capitals, Ali Nasir consistently opposed any foreign military presence in the region. He also vainly sought to obtain both Gulf state and Soviet support for holding an international conference to declare the Gulf, the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea "zones of peace" that should be vacant of any foreign military presence.[56]

With the possible exception of short-term convergences of interests — for example, the PDRY's improved relations with Oman might have helped to bring about the establishment of diplomatic relations between that staunch pro-western Gulf state and the Soviet Union in autumn 1985 — and the projection of a relaxed relationship, the PDRY's experience indicates that it did not develop lasting strategic cooperation between the parties, and never assumed the role of regional coordinator between the Gulf states and the Soviet Union. Indeed, in striving to coordinate the parties, the PDRY's activities actually exceeded the trust the Gulf states and the Soviet Union were prepared to place in Aden — frequently to their considerable pique. The Soviets were critical of Ali Nasir's granting of a concession to the Italian oil company Agip to search for oil in Hadramawt; of his decision to refine Gulf oil in Aden; of his abstention from a full commitment to grant Moscow permanent bases in South Yemen; and of his internal policy of

liberalizing the local economy. No overt Soviet criticism was reported; but Moscow's covert dissatisfaction with Ali Nasir's policy strengthened internal opposition to his rule. For their part the Gulf leaders were alienated by Ali Nasir's basic ongoing inclination to remain in a pro-Soviet orbit, in spite of his rapprochement with them.[57]

To summarize, All Nasir's eagerness to bolster the PDRY's economy led him to over-exploit his regional maneuverability, and thus prevented him from achieving his goal. Just as Aden failed to act as a 'positive neutralist,' so its strategic setbacks and vacillations ensured that neither the Soviets nor the Gulf states would offer sufficient 'positive sanctions' to elevate its economy. This, combined with Ali Nasir's monopolization of power and his preferences for technocrats and Abyan natives, which his critics called a "deviation from socialist values,"[58] precipitated his downfall.

Conclusion

The transformation of the PDRY's strategic focus from insurgency to bloc politics attests to a certain maturization in South Yemen's strategic policymaking. This process marked Aden's evolution from an initial strategy, shaped before independence, that was based on tribal practices and on the relative isolation of the Arabian Peninsula from great power influence, to a strategy suitable to both the Peninsula's growing involvement in world affairs in the late 1970s and to the PDRY's internal political and economic development.

A similar process has charactenzed other states geared to revolutionary strategy, such as Nasser's Egypt or Castro's Cuba. Like the PDRY, these were states of limited international stature (Egypt was relatively more prominent than Cuba and the PDRY), that sought to play a pioneering role of 'exporting' their revolutions throughout an entire region. After an initial stage of engagement in active insurgency, these states were faced both with growing domestic economic difficulties and mounting resistance, if not retaliation, from neighboring states. These compelled them to modify their revolutionary tactics to a more subtle, pro-Soviet and regionally acceptable policy. In fact, both Egypt by the late 1960s and Cuba in the 1980s limited their employment of insurgency in their immediate environment (while maintaining more distant military expeditions) to the training of foreign insurgents and to revolutionary parlance and propaganda — a model the PDRY also seemed to follow.[1]

In the PDRY this change of strategies was made possible through a process of intra-elite struggle. Each faction in the elite manifested different perceptions of nation-building and foreign policy that were anchored in the preconceptions typical of its region of origin. Hence, in spite of their overall adherence to Marxism, these factions perceived differently regional and internal developments. During their tenure in government, faction leaders maintained continuous contacts with their regional constituencies, sought their support, and remained receptive to regional inclinations.

The responsibilities of office also caused South Yemeni leaders to develop specific perceptions corresponding with the challenges of the job. While the leading NF group was united in its inclination to adopt

insurgency as a state strategy in 1970, from 1974 on two factions apparently emerged, each of which responded differently to domestic and regional developments.

Geostrategic changes significantly affected the Peninsula during the period under review and, in their turn, constituted an influence on the PDRY's revolutionary strategy. Until the post-1973 war period, the political and strategic problems in the region were typical of the traditional geostrategic conditions: intrusions were instigated by tribal feuds or were state-initiated operations launched into the peripheral zones of surrounding countries. There were also attempts by outside powers (e.g., Britain, Egypt) to establish regional client states.

After 1974 new factors emerged and altered the region's geostrategic setting. There was a rise in the importance of oil and thus of the Gulf and Red Sea waterways through which the oil was shipped. The area also witnessed the consolidation and strengthening of two principal blocs: the Marxist regimes of Ethiopia and South Yemen on the one hand, and the monarchical pro-western Gulf states on the other. After 1979 the Islamic Republic of Iran emerged as a third, Islamic-revolutionary type of regional power. The great powers, too, developed direct interests in the region, strengthened their client states, and reinforced their own military presence there.

Consequently, new political characteristics emerged in the Peninsula. First, conflicts grew to involve diverse regional states and even superpowers, acquiring extended regional and global dimensions. Secondly, due to the assistance afforded by the superpowers and financial powers like the Gulf states, local governments consolidated their control over their frontier areas, and territorial integration of regional states became more evident. At the same time, superpower spheres of influence were delineated. Under these circumstances the intrusive nature of inter-state relations in the region weakened. Insurgency became increasingly unworkable, and prospective regional powers preferred to pursue their interests by embarking on long-term military buildups, inter-state alliances and financial aid.

From the PDRY's viewpoint, this situation posed both new dangers of a regional-strategic nature, and new opportunities to improve South Yemen's financial situation and regional stature. Simultaneously, territorial integration enabled PDRY leaders to engage in internal party consolidation

and attempts at economic recovery. Hence influences emanating both from internal state-building processes and from the external strategic setting shaped the PDRY's elite structure and outlook on internal and foreign affairs.

The changing nature of these internal and external influences led, in turn, to changes in the PDRY's revolutionary strategy. Three main periods can be discerned. First, between 1970 and 1974 the impact of initial internal consolidation under a leftist leadership, coupled with early attempts by superpowers like the PRC to fill what appeared to be a regional political power vacuum in the Peninsula, led Aden to embark on an insurgency campaign against the Gulf regimes. Secondly, between 1974 and 1980 growing domestic economic difficulties, institutionalization of a Marxist regime, and mounting attempts by regional and world powers to dominate the Peninsula, were manifested in fluctuations between regional detente and escalation, and led to a split between elite factions over both internal and foreign policies. This division, in its turn, produced a continuum of insurgency (first in Oman and the Gulf and then in the YAR), along with initial attempts at building a new, long-term strategy of participating in a Soviet Bloc. Third, during the period from 1980 to 1985 pressing domestic economic difficulties, combined with a renewed regional strategic relaxation, enabled Ali Nasir Muhammad's leading faction to withdraw from the strategy of insurgency in favor of a full-fledged but flexible strategy of active participation in the Soviet Bloc.

It was Abd al-Fattah Ismail's faction that, beginning in the mid-1970s, sought to maintain for Aden a continuous revolutionary profile through insurgency, while at the same time building up the PDRY's defenses through long-term cooperation with the Soviet Union; according to his design, only limited economic contacts should have been maintained with the pro-western Gulf states in the region. Yet at the same time the combined factions of Ali Salim Rubay and Ali Nasir sought to minimize, if not abandon, insurgency in favor of a long term strategy to secure the PDRY's defenses and improve its economy. They thought to accomplish this aim through a patron-client relationship with the Soviets, as well as through rapprochement with the Gulf states. While Aden oscillated between insurgency and the bloc strategy during the 1970s, Ali Nasir's regime in the 1980s marked the triumph of the strategy he and Rubay had been advocating since 1974.

Rubay mainly focused on trying to improve relations with Gulf states, simply by adding this measure to the agenda alongside Ismail's insurgency in the YAR. Rubay's tactics failed both because they clashed with Ismail's insistence on regional insurgency and because no balanced coexistence was devised between the rapprochement with pro-western states and the equally important reliance on and cooperation with the Soviet Union, This cooperation, as it peaked during the Soviet-Cuban operations in Ethiopia,[2] foiled the rapprochement with the West and precipitated Rubay's downfall.

All Nasir tned this combination once more, by attempting to turn the PDRY into a vital link between the Gulf states and the Soviet Union. He hoped that such a position would render the PDRY indispensable for both parties and would secure its strategy. Ali Nasir apparently succeeded in improving the PDRY's security situation, but not in recruiting financial assistance. This partial success derived mainly from the continued interest of the Soviet Union and the Gulf states in embarking on a renewed detente in the region. But Ali Nasir attempted to turn this relative relaxation into a more active cooperation between the Gulf states and the Soviet Union, in which both parties would then remunerate the PDRY for its services. In so doing he over-exploited the regional detente and somewhat discredited himself in the eyes of both sides, as well as of the radical opposition in the PDRY.

Interestingly, the Soviet Union allowed a 'long leash' of maneuverability to Ali Nasir, in the hope that the PDRY would serve as both a firm pro-Soviet base and an influence broker for Moscow among Gulf states. However, Ali Nasir's "over-competitive" policies vis-a-vis Moscow (to paraphrase Michael Handel's approach to the autonomous attitude of a client state toward its patron state),[3] could not have been tolerated over a long period. Moscow's attempts to balance Ali Nasir's strategy by bringing Ismail 'back from the cold' marked the beginning of Ali Nasir's demise.

At this point, the only revolutionary tactics that Ali Nasir's regime continued to exercise were the attempts to reconcile and coordinate the groups of the Arab Steadfastness Front. This policy apparently was the only one that suited the parameters of Ali Nasir's overall strategy. It allowed Aden to participate in a radical Arab and pro-Soviet bloc, pursue standard revolutionary goals and maintain a revolutionary jargon. But in practice Ali Nasir could hardly surmount growing inter-Arab divisions and coordinate

this front as he had hoped. This was a far cry from Aden's insurgency pretensions of 1970.

How effective and beneficial was the PDRY's conduct of its diverse strategies? Insurgency proved feasible only within the parameters of the tribal-intrusive system, and only as long as this system lasted. In this regard the PDRY's strategy of insurgency of the early 1970s registered several achievements. It succeeded in neutralizing the immediate dangers to South Yemen, mainly emanating from the YAR, that followed South Yemen's independence. It also generated a regional leftist-revolutionary wave that has survived ever since in the southern Peninsula and the Gulf. Tactically, the PDRY succeeded in establishing supply lines and training facilities for the groups they sponsored, and in promoting the ideological indoctrination of their elites. PDRY leaders were also able to adapt insurgency tactics to the geopolitical circumstances prevalant in the different arenas of their principal concern: note the differences between the Maoist guerrilla model in Dhofar and the foco-like system in the YAR.[4]

Yet in other respects the PDRY's insurgency strategy failed, Aden was unable to turn the revolutionary wave it had promoted into new institutionalized regimes in the Peninsula. Indeed, no other regime fell into its hands. Its insurgency remained isolated and usually even provoked a fierce and effective reaction. Moreover, economic constraints limited the PDRY's ability to exercise continuous, long term and wide-range insurgency; after a certain period of initial operations, this weakness was inevitably exposed and used against Aden. As such, insurgency proved an unsuitable strategy for tackling either domestic or external challenges. In turn, this problem aggravated another one — that of a divided leadership in the PDRY, which disrupted the determination and uniformity of the vanguard that was supposed to initiate and direct insurgency.

Tactically, the PDRY had difficulty directing the insurgent bodies that it controlled into the second and third phases of a successful insurgency operation. This problem of transition from one revolutionary phase to another, which has beset guerrilla organizations all over the world, proved insurmountable both in Oman and the YAR. Thus Aden had difficulty facilitating operations such as expansion into remote arenas, mass recruitment, and the establishment of organized regular units. Another tactical problem was a lack of charismatic and ideological leadership capable of raising the insurgents' morale and confidence in periods of crisis.

In contrast to the Nasserist or Cuban elites, no legendary 'people's hero' of regional caliber rose among the PDRY leaders and no original document on guerrilla theory appeared.[5]

The strategy of integration into a pro-Soviet bloc better suited emerging domestic and regional changes, and provided a relevant infrastructure for the PDRY's regional role. Yet by the end of the period under review the PDRY was still searching for the appropriate means of fully achieving this strategy.

Ali Nasir's success may have been limited; and his strategy may have hinged on circumstantial conditions deriving from different powers' relationships in the region. But this did not render his strategy obsolete. His successors, who belonged to Ismail's opposition group, expected to radicalize PDRY policy toward the Gulf states and reinstate insurgency. Yet regional realities and domestic economic difficulties continued to favor Ali Nasir's regional strategy. Moreover, the two-week civil war in Aden in January 1986 resulted in severe damages, including destruction of the city's housing and transportation infrastructure and decimation of many army units. The economic recession that followed was reflected in a drastic reduction in foreign exchange and in internal market activities. The YSP's cohesion was badly shattered; regional and parochial attitudes had reached a peak when diverse tribes, army units and regionally-bound political cadres bitterly fought each other in the war. The new leaders chose to prolong Ali Nasir's strategy of regional relaxation in the hope that this would prevent PDRY factions from fighting among themselves. They also hoped to obtain financial assistance from the Gulf states.

They did, however, continue to entrust the Soviet Union with the PDRY's ultimate defense. During the upheaval in Aden, the Soviet Union did not intervene; but it warned other states against interfering, thereby facilitating the triumph of the new elite. Moscow then remained the provider for the PDRY's armed forces, military and economic buildup. The new leaders also carried on their collaboration with other radical actors in the region, notably the PLO, Algeria and Ethiopia.

Under Mikhail Gorbachev's leadership, Moscow seemed content with South Yemen's moderate regional revolutionary strategy. The USSR came to view the PDRY as a major regional stronghold whose main advantage lay in the military facilities it provided, and in Aden's basic friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union and its allies in the region. Moscow's

coordination with Aden grew particularly close when a western or pro-western state made a move that threatened the interests of Soviet bloc states in the region. Thus, for example, the US initiative of June 1987 to send an armada to the Gulf to protect Kuwaiti shipping reinforced both Moscow's role as the ultimate protector of its allies there, and the PDRY's role as an effective base for the Soviets.

Beyond this, the Soviet Union under Gorbachev abandoned the drive to use the PDRY as an insurgent against Gulf states. As Moscow's policies became relatively friendly and cooperative, the PDRY became a quiet, unprovocative force in the Arabian Peninsula.

Notes

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Chapter 1

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[16] Ibid, pp. 20-41; Helen Lackner, P.D.R. Yemen (London: Ithaca, 1985), pp. 51-80.

[17] In June 1978, as Ismail acted to depose Rubay and execute him, Ali Nasir complied with reatpolitic and abandoned Rubay. But his alliance with Rubay was based on common strategic, ideological and economic perceptions and lasted until then. See The Guardian. January 20, 1986; see also the long discussion by Helen Lackner, P.D.R. Yemen. 103-205.

[18] Lackner, P.D.R. Yemen, pp. 70-80.

[19] Bidwell, The Two Yemens. pp. 324-325.

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[22] Al-Yawm al-Sabi (Paris), January 20, 1986; NYT, January 18, 1986; al-Majalla (London), January 22, 1986.

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[52] Economist, January 16, 1982; al-Hawadith. March 9, 1982.

[53] Economist, April 26, 1980; NZZ, May 9, 1980.

[54] Defense Nationale, March 1982, in JPRS, May 11, 1982.

[55] Ibid; Economist, January 16, 1982.

[56] Al-Nahar, March 6, 1979; al-Safir. July 4, 1979; al-Hadaf. August 10, 1979.

[57] Al-Siyasa, February 9, 1980.

[58] Al-Hurriyya, March 24, 1980.

[59] Al-Safir, November 8 and 30, 1980; al-Hadaf, November 15, and 13 December 1980.

[60] Al-Maialla, April 4, 1982, Fourteenth October, October 30, 1982.

[61] R Damascus, November 26, SWB, November 27, 1981; Burrows, Yemen Arab Republic, covers YAR government-NDF relations meticulously.

[62] R San'a, December 3, SWB, December 5, 1981.

[63] FT, January 27, 1982.

[64] Al-Nahar al-Arabi wa-al-Dawli, Beirut, September 21, 1981; Al-Shat'q al-Awsat (London); March 31, 1982; al-Shira (East Jerusalem), April 26, 1982.

[65] Al-Wahda (Abu Dhabi), February 15, 1982. Muhsin al-Sharjabi, hitherto head of the security apparatus, was the most prominent figure dismissed by AIi Nasir.

[66] WA, May 27, 1982; Guardian. May 4, 1982; Burrows, Yemen Arab Republic. pp. 119-122.

Chapter 4

[1] The issue of alliances and bloc formations is discussed by Cantori and Spiegel, Politics of Regimes, pp. 1-41; R.L. Rothstein, Alliances and Small Powers (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), pp. 237-234; the issues of rigidity and flexibility within an alliance are discussed by G. Lishka, Nations in Alliance (Baltimore, 1968).

[2] The Middle East. April 1977; R San'a, March 23, SWB, March 25, 1977; al-Jumhurriyya (Cairo), May 12, 1977; see also H. Erlich, Struggle over Eritrea, pp. 79-84.

[3] See I. Mylroie, Politics, pp 43-48.

[4] The Middle East, Nov. 1976; al-Hurriyya. December 13, 1976; al-Sayyad. February 2, 1978.

[5] Cordesman, The Gulf, p. 157; Page, The Soviet Union, p. 55.

[6] Al-Hurriyya, July 31; Fourteenth October. November 30, 1978.

[7] Page, The Soviet Union, pp. 60, 61, 76; Katz, Russia and Arabia, pp. 83-87.

[8] Arabia and the Gulf. January 27, 1978; al-Hawadith. March, 18, 1978; April 9, 1978; September 1, 1979; and DT, October 23, 1978.

[9] FR, March 17, 1976.

[10] Al-Hawadith. October 15, 1976; al-Hurriyya. September 25 and December 25, 1977.

[11] S. Elad end A. Merari, The Soviet Bloc and World Terrorism, paper No. 26 of the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel-Aviv University, August 1984, p. 17; Fourteenth October. November 4, 1980.

[12] Food shortages were reported by the DT, June 7, 1974; see interviews in al-Sayyad (Beirut), February 27, 1975; and Economist, July 12, 1975.

[13] At-Hadaf, June 23, 1979, presents Ismail's opinions.

[14] Safran, Saudi Arabia, pp. 285-86; al-Siyasa, March 13, 1976; FT, March 25, 1976; R Aden, August 12, quoted by DR, August 15, 1977.

[15] For expressions of Soviet concern see N. Novik, On the Shores of Bab al-Handab: Soviet Diplomacy and Regional Dynamics, Monograph no. 16, Foreign Policy Research Institute (Philadelphia, 1979), pp. 13-14.

[16] Katz, Russia and Arabia, pp. 83-87; Page, The Soviet Union, pp. 63-64.

[17] Page, The Soviet Union, p. 68.

[18] Ibid., pp. 67-68; al-Yaqza (Kuwait), July 11, 1977.

[19] RA, November 9, 1982.

[20] Al-Sayyad. February 22, 1978.

[21] At-Yaqza, January 23; Times, February 4, 1978; Page, The Soviet Union, pp. 74-75.

[22] Page, The Soviet Union, pp. 74-75.

[23] IHT, October 29, 1979; RA, October 30, 1979; UA, December 3, 1979; al-Thawri, November 3, 1979.

[24] IHT, June 6, 1978; The Middle East. July 1977; al-Hurriyya, September 5, 1977; Page, The Soviet Union, pp. 65-76.

[25] Fourteenth October, June 4, 1978, and June 8, 1978 discussed the difficulties of resuming the struggle: see also al-Thawri, September 29, 1979.

[26] Page, The Soviet Union, p. 96. See also FT, April 22, 1980, which claims that Ismail did not go so far as to accept a Saudi proposal to visit the Kingdom.

[27] Le Monde, February 28, 1979.

[28] IHT, January 17, 1980; April 24, 1980; al-Mustaqbal. April 26, 1980; al-Kifah al-Arabi, April 28, 1980; June 2, 1980; Economist, April 26, 1980; see also Page, The Soviet Union; Shahram Chubin, The Role of Outside Powers, no. 4 of Security in the Persian Gulf, issued by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (London, 1982), pp. 126-127.

[29] Ali Nasir in an interview to al-Watan. July 18, 1981.

[30] J. Kostiner, "The Gulf States."

[31] Cordesman, The Gulf, p. 274; for a discussion on Aden's perception of US Middle Eastern Policy see al-Thawri, January 5, 1980.

[32] Al-Dali's interview with at-Siyasa. December 12, 1978.

[33] Lackner, P.D.R. Yemen, p. 156, quotes data from the World Bank.

[34] Al-Hahar Arab Report and Memo, April 12, 1982.

[35] See Katz's analysis, Russia and Arabia, pp. 157-171.

[36] On Ali Nasir's attitude toward the Gulf states and concerning the PDRY's regional role see RA, November 13, 1982; Ali Nasir's interview with al-Siyasa, December 30, 1982; Times. February 11, 1986; Page, The Soviet Union, p. 104.

[37] R Aden. August 20, SUB. August 22, 1986; al-Thawri. April 3, 1982.

[38] On the improved relations between the two Yemens see chapters on the PDRY and the YAR in volumes 7, 8, 9 and 10 of MECS; see also al-Thawri, August 27, 1983.

[39] Al-Hawadith. February 4, 1983; see also al-Thawri, August 27, 1983.

[40] RA, November 9, 1982; in 1980 Ali Nasir stilt expressed pro-PFLO sentiments; see Fourteenth October, April 25, 1980.

[41] Note by FB1S DR, November 9, 1982.

[42] Al-Sivasa, May 14, 1983.

[43] For instance, R Manama, March 5, FBIS DR, March 7, 1983.

[44] Far Eastern Economic Review, March 20, 1981; November 6, 1981; al-Hawaith, December 11, 1981; DT, December 7, 1981.

[45] See for example, Page, The Soviet Union, p. 110.

[46] PDRY Foreign Minister Salim Salih, in an interview to al-Wahda (Abu Dhabi), February 9, 1981; on Aden's developing ties with Ethiopia see al-Thawri. May 5, 1979; December 1, 1979; January 19, 1980.

[47] Al-Hadaf. August 22, 1981; al-Hurriyya. August 24, 1981.

[48] The Middle East, August 1982.

[49] Iraqi News Agency, August 9, FBIS DR, August 9, 1985; al-Thawri, March 26, 1973, August 25, 1984.

[50] Al-Thawri, July 9, 1983; Fourteenth October, September 9, November 11, 1984, Daily Telegraph, March 29, 1982; Akhir Sa'a, May 12, 1982; see also N. Cigar, "South Yemen and the USSR: Prospects for the Relationship," Middle East Journal 39, No. 4, Autumn 1985, pp. 775-795.

[51] FR, 24 March 1983; al-Hurriyya, January 1, 1984; al-Yaqza, June 24, 1985; On the PDRY's initial policy of unifying the Steadfastness states see al-Thawri, April 12, 1980; Fourteenth October, February 3, 4, 6, 8, 1982.

[52] WA, April 13; R Aden. April 24, SWB, April 27, 1984.

[53] R Aden, March 7, FBIS DR, March 8, 1985.

[54] Quarterly Economic Review, No. 1, 1985.

[55] Al-Bavrak (Beirut), January 14, 1982; Economis,. January 16, 1982; al-hawadith, March 19, 1982.

[56] FR, June 13, 1985; Fourteen57h October, January 58; June 21, 1984.

[57] FR, May 16, 1985.

[58] Times. February 11, 1986.

Conclusion

[1] Compare with M.H, Kerr, The Arab Cold Mar (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971); W. Grabendorff, "The Internationalization of the Central American Crisis," and C.A. Robbins "The Cuban Threat in Central America" in W. Grabendorff, H.W. Krurowiede and J. Todt, Political Change in Central America (Boulder: Westview, 1984), pp. 155-171; 216-227.

[2] See the examples given by G.K. Tanham, Communist Revolutionary Warfare (Mew York: Praeger, 1967); and R. Clutterbuck, Guerrillas and Terrorists (London: Faber & Faber, 1977).

[3] Some examples of the theory and practice of major revolutionary leaders can be found in Miles Martic, Insurrection (New York, 1975).

[4] See for example, C. Legum and T. Hodges, After Angola: The War Over South Africa (New York: African Pub. Corporation, 1976).

[5] M. Handel. Weak States in the International System (London: Frank Cass, 1981), p. 171.

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