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From Tribal Rebellions to Revolution: British Counter-Insurgency Operations in Southwest Arabia 1955-67

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1. During the post-1945 era British political and military leaders switched their attention from the conduct of a total war to the prosecution of small wars in defence of imperial commitments around the world. The history of counter-insurgency campaigns in Malaya, Kenya and Cyprus provide evidence for the notion that British post-war leaders remained wedded to the global role despite the existence of new commitments on the continent of Europe. The purposes of Britains late colonial wars varied but as a minimum they had as their aim the establishment of sufficient order for the smooth hand-over of power to local elites sympathetic to western interests. By this criterion the least successful of all these small wars was fought in Southwest Arabia. In the town of Aden and the surrounding Protectorates British determination to maintain their interests came into conflict with the sudden emergence of an active independence movement fuelled by the post-Suez growth of Arab nationalism. During the course of the late 1950s and 1960s Aden became the site of a campaign of urban terrorism in which opposition groups fought with the British and each other. Outside the town in the Western Aden Protectorate (WAP) tribal rebellions began to take the form of nationalist uprisings. During 1967 Britains allies among the rulers of the WAP states found their positions usurped by the National Liberation Front (NLF), while the rulers of the Eastern Aden Protectorate (EAP), who had managed to keep their territories out of the worst of the conflict, were suddenly ejected by the militant nationalists. In Aden the NLF defeated the rival Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen (FLOSY) and declared the creation of a Marxist-oriented Peoples Republic of South Yemen. (1) The British conducted a reasonably orderly withdrawal but left behind a state of near anarchy. It is estimated that half a million people fled to Saudi Arabia, Yemen and East Africa while the new government conducted an extensive purge of its opponents. (2) Decolonisation in Southwest Arabia did not match the Whitehall ideal of an orderly hand over of power to responsible and pro-Western elements.

2. The aetiology of this disaster can be found in a complex web of local military and political developments, shifts in the regional balance of power in the Middle East, the rise of anti-colonial sentiment, both internationally and in the British metropolis, and the transformation of Southwest Arabia into a Cold War battleground. Of these factors the nature of British military operations in the region was particularly significant. The counter-insurgency campaigns conducted in the Western Aden Protectorate were often successful in the short term but had long-term consequences which weakened British influence. Three case studies of British military campaigns illustrate the counter-productive nature of the tactics employed. The frontier war with Yemen in 1958-59 demonstrates the willingness of the British to carry the war across the frontier into Yemen in an effort to end arms supplies to the insurgents. The bombing campaign conducted in the Upper Aulaqi Sheikdom in 1959-60 illustrates the role of aerial proscription and the gradual shift in British tactics towards larger scale land-air operations. Operation PARK in Dhala in 1965 may be regarded as the culmination of this tendency towards larger-scale combined arms operations. Although in each case the British achieved their immediate objectives, the victories chalked up in these campaigns had unfortunate consequences for the British and their regional allies. Attacks on the Imamate contributed to its overthrow and the emergence of an even more hostile regime aligned with Nasser, aerial proscription played a role in politicising tribes that had previously had little contact with British authority and the larger scale land-air proscription campaigns of the 1960s undermined the local federal leaders on whom the British relied to sustain their position. In none of these cases did military action address the grievances which were the source of the conflict.

3. The British government was aware that the conduct of these colonial campaigns appeared oddly anachronistic in the era of decolonisation but the various reappraisals of policy towards Aden and the Protectorates constantly turned on the overriding importance of oil to the British economy. Commercially viable oil deposits were not discovered in Southwest Arabia until 1984, two decades after the British departure, but during the 1950s the base at Aden was seen as the key to maintaining the supply of oil from the Persian Gulf which literally fuelled the expansion of western European economies during that decade. An inter-departmental committee examining the importance of Middle East oil reported to the Cabinet on 14 October 1955 that Middle East oil is vital to our economy. This is not a matter of priorities as between one area of the world and another in the cold war but an essential need. (3) For the British the key source of Middle East oil exports was Kuwait, which from 1958 was itself threatened by the irredentist claims of post-revolutionary Iraq. (4) In 1961 the British conducted a successful military intervention in Kuwait in response to heightened Iraqi threats to the Emirate. This operation appeared to justify the importance of maintaining a military presence in the Arabian peninsula and vindicate the strategy of utilising the Aden base for this purpose. (5) However, the defence of the base required in turn the defence of the Protectorate states which formed its hinterland. The whole of the region was claimed by the Yemeni Imam, Ahmed, and after the 1962 revolution by the Yemeni Republican government, which aligned itself with Nasser in demanding the removal of British influence from Arabia. Macmillan explained the situation to Kennedy in November 1962: If we lost the Protectorate we should be left with Aden. But Aden was not like Gibraltar, which could be defended If we lost the Protectorate and were in serious trouble in Aden, still worse if we lost Aden, we should be deprived of all means of defending our own and our clients in the Gulf. (6) In order to protect what was perhaps its most important overseas interest in Kuwait the British government found itself forced to conduct a series of military campaigns in Southwest Arabia.

4. British policy-makers in London were not, however, ideally placed to recognise the problems of clinging on to their remaining interests in Southwest Arabia and the strength of the emerging independence movement appears to have been underestimated. In retrospect the limited constitutional reforms offered to the nationalists were never likely to satisfy the aspirations of the local Arab population. The expansion of the Aden economy, constitutional reform and immigration from Yemen have been held responsible for what has been termed the first wave of civic activism in Southwest Arabia. (7) Although much of this activity was concentrated in Aden itself, revolutionary ideas had also spread to the protected states of the interior. In June 1963 the NLF was founded at a conference in Sana'a with the aim of liberating Occupied South Yemen from British control. It is becoming increasingly evident, however, that a form of political resistance to British imperial authority in the WAP predated the emergence of the NLF, which was itself a coalition of opposition groups, many of them from the interior. Carapico has pointed to the Yafi Reform Front as an important source of opposition to imperial authority in the Protectorate and in the subsequent case study of the Upper Aulaqi Sheikdom a similar trend will be examined. (8) The border conflict with Yemen and the politicisation of tribal dissidence during the 1950s constituted a smaller scale version of the better- documented conflict of the 1960s. British counter-insurgency operations against the Imam of Yemen and the tribes of the Protectorates led in the 1960s to the emergence of a broader coalition of forces opposed to the

imperial presence, consisting of nationalist politicians and labour leaders in Aden, dissident tribes in the Protectorates and the new Republican government across the frontier in Yemen. The NLF were able to take advantage of the local discontent stirred up by a series of British military interventions and of the weakness of the more moderate opposition groups, such as the South Arabian League (SAL), in order to bolster their own claims to provide an alternative to the continuation of colonial rule. (9)

5. The successes of the NLF forced the British to escalate their counter-insurgency operations. It is one of the many ironies of the Southwest Arabian episode that the offer by the last Conservative Colonial Secretary, Duncan Sandys, in 1964, of independence for Southwest Arabia, took place against the backdrop of an influx of British military forces and a new wave of military campaigns. From the British perspective, however, this escalation in the military campaign was essential. Political developments directly shaped military strategy. The scale of counter-insurgency operations increased towards the end of the period in a fruitless attempt to strengthen the position of Britain's allies in the region prior to independence. The three case studies explored in this paper provide evidence both for the close link between political developments and changes to military strategy and for the view that British military action was more destructive than is usually acknowledged. In each case political developments and the key changes to military strategy will be discussed in order to provide context for the accounts of military operations.

6. Punitive Action on the Frontier: The Conflict with Yemen 1955-59

During the 1950s British officials in Aden traced the source of insurgencies in the WAP to Yemen. The Yemeni Imams appeared determined to press their claims to jurisdiction over the whole of Southwest Arabia at the expense of those local rulers in the south who had entered treaty relations with the British. These claims dated back to the founding of the Imamate at the end of the 9th century, but only emerged as a threat to the British sphere of influence in the south after the withdrawal of the Turks from the region in the aftermath of the First World War. (10) The Ottoman empire had kept the Imams in check from the mid-19th century but with the collapse of Turkish authority in 1918 Imam Yahya and his traditional supporters among the Zeidi tribes swept down from the northern highlands to fill the vacuum resulting from Turkish military withdrawal. Rather than stopping at the frontier which the British and Turks had semi-demarcated, the Imam's forces occupied areas claimed by the rulers of the British protected states. In 1934 the British recognised the minor territorial gains the Imam had made around Beidha in return for an agreement to preserve the current *status quo* along the frontier. This truce held reasonably well until the assassination of Yahya in 1948 and the succession of his son, Ahmed. The new Imam was alarmed by the measures which the British took during the 1950s to consolidate their hold on the states of the Western Aden Protectorate and began supplying arms to various tribes opposed to the British forward policy. With assistance from Egypt, Ahmed scored a noticeable success in 1955 when the British abandoned their attempts to extend the authority of the Upper Aulaqi Sultan into Rabiz territory when the local Shams tribes forced the Government Guards to abandon Robot fort.

7. Clearly the existence of a long open frontier was of great advantage to the rebellious tribes in the WAP. Yemen provided a gateway through which they could receive assistance from opponents of British imperial influence, most notably Egypt. For the British it was a good deal harder to isolate insurgents in Southwest Arabia than on the Malay peninsula or the island of Cyprus, where the British military conducted similar kinds of operations in the 1950s. In this respect the situation in the Western Aden Protectorate paralleled on a smaller scale the later American experience in Indochina. In both instances the importance of isolating insurgents from their external supply sources was understood but hard to achieve given the existence of a neighbouring state willing to support guerrilla movements. In the case of Indochina, Chinese and Soviet supplies could be funnelled via the North Vietnamese government, while in Southwest Arabia, the Egyptians and Soviets had a ready outlet in Yemen. It was impossible to establish an effective military cordon along the long, inhospitable frontier with Yemen, so rather than seeking to intercept the military supplies as the French did in Algeria or the Americans in Indochina, the British hoped to deter the Imam of Yemen from supplying the rebels through punitive action intended to act as a deterrent.

8. At the start of the 1950s Yemeni intervention in the Protectorates was tolerable, if unwelcome, but by the end of the decade it was increasingly regarded as a major obstacle to British attempts to strengthen their hold on Southwest Arabia through a combination of judicious reform in Aden Colony and the extension of British influence in the Protectorates. Yemeni interference in the affairs of the Protectorates coincided with and was linked to the increasing importance that British policy-makers attached to defending their interests in Southwest Arabia. With the loss of the bases in Palestine and Suez and the emergence of anti-imperial movements which threatened British military interests in Cyprus and East Africa, the Aden base was increasingly seen as vital to the continuation of Britain's global role and in particular to the defence of oil interests in the Persian Gulf.

9. The Conservative governments of the 1950s were hostile to any discussion of independence for Aden on the grounds that they could not relinquish control of the base for strategic reasons. The Colonial Secretary, Alan Lennox-Boyd, informed the Cabinet in November 1955 that we should retain control of Aden Colony, recognising that it might make gradual progress toward internal self-government, but that it could not, at any rate in the foreseeable future achieve self-determination. (11) The importance of the Aden base to British policy-makers increased further during the second half of the 1950s. At the outset of his premiership Macmillan famously called for a review of the utility of Britain's remaining colonies, from which it emerged that continued control of Aden was vital to British military strategy in the aftermath of the Suez defeat. During the course of the review it was decided that the Colony should be allowed to make some progress towards internal self-government but that its strategic value precluded independence. Aden's defence facilities were essential to maintaining British interests in the rest of Arabia, the Persian Gulf and the Somaliland Protectorate and, in this respect, the creation of the Middle East air barrier only emphasised the need for a large base in Arabia. (12) Constitutional reform in Aden Colony was intended rather to strengthen than weaken British control. Although Aden was allowed a greater measure of self-government and an elected majority on the Legislative Council, the majority of the Arab population was excluded from the electoral register on the grounds that they were likely to be hostile to the continuation of the British presence. The increasing levels of protest generated by the continuing poor conditions of workers in Aden and their disenfranchisement began to radicalise the nascent Arab nationalist movement represented by the Aden Trade Union Congress (ATUC). As early as 1958 a number of grenade attacks took place against European targets. In response the governor, William Luce, declared a state of emergency and began deporting Yemeni workers. (13)

10. Despite these first hints of future trouble in the Colony, the disturbed conditions in the Western Aden Protectorate, which provided vital insulation for Aden, were a more pressing concern for the British at this time. The authorities in Aden believed that the best means of achieving the linked goals of economic development, tribal pacification and victory in the frontier war with Yemen was to establish a federation in the WAP. The influential Resident Adviser, Kennedy Trevaskis, was a particularly strong advocate of federation and had been pursuing the idea by fits and starts since 1952. In August 1955, the Governor, Tom Hickinbotham, suggested that it might be necessary to revive federation proposals in order to provide a stable political environment in which to counter both the threat from Yemen and the long-term danger of Arab nationalism. (14) However, Hickinbotham's proposals were greeted sceptically in the British Cabinet. Eden, Macmillan and Salisbury believed that federation would be a step towards independence and, as such, should not be pursued. (15) Hickinbotham was allowed to explore the issue in discussion with the rulers but his subsequent proposal that the putative federation should be regarded as a first step towards self-government and ultimately independence was rejected. (16) In 1958 this policy was reversed and the Cabinet approved a scheme for federation proposed by three of the Protectorate rulers. This decision reflected the deterioration in conditions in Southwest Arabia and amounted to a change of tactics rather than an acceptance of the idea of an independent federation. It was stressed during Cabinet discussions that it was essential to make it clear from the outset that, although the federation might hope for independence in due course, this did not imply that we are contemplating surrendering control over the defence policy and external relations of the States concerned at any time in the foreseeable future. (17)

11. The debate over federation took place against a background of turbulence among the tribes of the Protectorates which appeared to threaten their status

as a stable buffer zone for the Colony and the base. Hickinbotham, and later Luce, blamed the Imam for the disturbances and responded with tough military action against Yemen. Luce declared in March 1959 that so long as Yemeni subversion continues inside the Protectorate I am convinced that we must be quite ruthless about opposing the Yemenis wherever we can and avoid letting them get a toe-hold anywhere. (18) In the short term this policy was effective. Between 1955 and 1959 the British sponsored tribal disturbances in Yemen and took punitive action themselves along the frontier. Initially, Imam Ahmed responded with his own policy of increased support for tribal disturbances in the British sphere and protests to London and the United Nations. In January 1957 the Yemeni government complained to the UN Secretary-General about British attacks across the frontier. The protests were backed by the increasingly influential bloc of Afro-Asian states. (19) Although the Secretary-General was eager to avoid adding Yemen his list of responsibilities and the Imam did not press the matter, it was in this period that the continuing British presence in Southwest Arabia began to attract international attention.

12. The initial clashes between 1955 and 1957 were relatively small in scale. One British officer described the exchange of fire along the Qataba section of the frontier in January 1957 as military tiddlywinks. (20) However, under Luce's direction, the scale of British activity escalated. The Aden authorities engaged in a quite deliberate campaign of provocation along the frontier in the knowledge that it would be difficult for the Yemenis to prove their involvement in frontier raiding and that they had the advantage of air supremacy. The objective was to cause sufficient chaos within Yemen to divert the attention of the Imam from supporting the rebellious tribes of the Protectorates. Trevaskis and Luce were personally responsible for organising these operations and the evidence suggests that on the majority of occasions it was the British who initiated the cycle of escalation and who were keenest on maintaining a state of tension along the frontier. They were eager for the Yemeni counter-attacks to continue, as each retaliatory incident provided an opportunity for bombing raids inside Yemen. In May 1958 Trevaskis gave an account of the state of special operations along the border: An Audhali force of about 130 men has been permanently employed on the Audhali frontier on Special Operations Military posts in and around Beidha have been frequently attacked; a pass on the road leading from Beidha to Sanaa has been destroyed twice and on the road from Am Soma to Beidha once; military convoys travelling from Beidha to Harib have been ambushed twice twenty miles from the Yemen frontier; and Yemeni troops and tribesmen have been engaged on several occasions in frontier clashes. The British distributed 208 rifles in support of these operations and the cost of subsidies amounted to 1,500. (21)

13. The frontier war reached a climax in the first two months of 1959 when British regular forces were drawn into the conflict. On 22 January Luce authorised a series of cross-border attacks by Britain's Audhali clients. Three days later the Audhalis attacked Beidha. The Yemenis retaliated with an incursion of their own in the Martaa area which drew British troops into the fighting. There ensued a further series of tit-for-tat raids which culminated with an RAF attack on the Yemeni village of Am Soma on 3 February. The village was temporarily occupied and a British intelligence source reported that the bombing of Am Soma had left the residents of the neighbouring Yemeni town of Beidha very frightened. (22) The extent of the damage may be judged from the fact that a year later the British authorities had to intervene to prevent the Audhalis from looting the wrecked village. (23)

14. The attack on Am Soma constituted a turning point in the frontier war. Subsequent intelligence reports indicated that the Yemenis were adopting a defensive stance. Luce hoped to lure them forward in order to deliver a new aerial assault on a Yemeni arsenal outside Beidha, which was allegedly being used as a source of supply by Protectorate dissidents. This was authorised by the Colonial Office, on condition that the bombing raid take the form of a tit-for-tat action in response to a Yemeni raid. Trevaskis gave the Audhalis instructions to tickle up Beidha in order to provoke the required Yemeni attack. Following the Am Soma experience the Yemenis proved curiously unresponsive and their refusal to counter-attack was a serious obstacle in terms of justifying an air strike against the arsenal. On 2 April Luce was informed during a meeting with Trevaskis and the Commanding Officer in Aden that there was not likely to be an opportunity for an air strike since the Yemenis did not appear to be reacting as usual to the present phase of special operations. The most that could be expected in the immediate future was firing from the Yemeni side across the border this would not provide us with the situation to enable us to destroy the building from the air. The failure to achieve the requisite provocation and the imminence of Ramadhan prompted Luce to call a temporary halt to the cross-border raids. (24) By this stage the frontier war had escalated to a point that threatened the survival of the Imam and between 1959 and 1962 Ahmed's support for the insurgency was much reduced in scale. The need for further special operations was obviated following the outbreak of internal disturbances within Yemen that left Ahmed and his son Badr in such a weakened position that they gradually withdrew support for dissident tribes in the Protectorates.

15. The punitive action which the British took along the frontier in order to cut supplies to insurgents within the Protectorate achieved its short-term objectives. Three points are, however, worth considering in order to put this achievement in to context. Firstly, to achieve their goals it was necessary for the British to resort to subversive methods. As outlined above the nature of British actions drew Yemeni protests and, while both sides in the frontier war were guilty of sharp practice, international attention inevitably focused on the activities of the imperial power. The frontier war marked the point at which Britain's presence in Southwest Arabia became an international issue and the interest shown by the United Nations would be to the detriment of the British presence. Secondly, the British were forced to return to the tactics of cross-border subversion after the toppling of the Imamate in 1962. British involvement in stirring up tribal disturbances was counter-productive in the sense that nationalist forces challenging Ahmed's particular brand of Yemeni particularism were much more dangerous to the British presence in Arabia. The revolution in Yemen produced a surge of enthusiasm for unity which never entirely dissipated, despite the discrediting of the Republican regime during the subsequent civil war. The new Republican regime initially backed the NLF and resumed the policy of subversion in the south. The British had to face once more the problem of a porous frontier and again resorted to their own policy of special operations across the frontier in an attempt to stop the flow of arms to the south. The extent to which Britain intervened in the Yemeni civil war in order to undermine the Republicans remains an extremely controversial issue but it is clear that the Labour and Conservative governments of the 1960s were engaged in subverting the Republic under an operation code-named RANCOUR. (25) Thirdly, and perhaps most significantly, the reduced flow of cross-border arms supplies in the 1959-62 period did not end the rebellions in the Protectorate states. The tribal revolts had causes entirely independent of Yemeni sponsorship, as will be evident from the next case study. Between 1959 and 1962 change in British counter-insurgency strategy was evident. Attention was redirected from the frontier regions to the source of the rebellions in the interior.

16. Constitutional Problems and the Persistence of Tribal Warfare 1959-62

British success in the conflict with Yemen appeared to pave the way for the pacification of the Protectorates. However, it was not merely the problem of cutting off supplies from across the long frontier that differentiated operations in Southwest Arabia from those in Malaya, Cyprus and Kenya. To a greater or lesser extent the enemy in those cases was readily identifiable, in the sense that the insurgents had a common ideological position or distinctive ethnic identity. Essentially what the British faced in Southwest Arabia was a series of traditional tribal rebellions across a wide geographical area. This resistance to the extension of government into the interior began to take a more radical form as the propaganda work of nationalist groups took effect. The South Arabian League attempted to fulfil this function in the 1950s and the NLF did so more successfully in the 1960s. In addition to supplying arms to the tribes, the NLF offered a means of articulating tribal grievances in the broader context of Southwest Arabian politics. It had the further advantage of a decentralised, almost anarchic, organisational structure, which made it difficult for the British to target a particular leader, as they did with Kenyatta or Makarios elsewhere.

17. During the 1959-62 period British victory in the frontier war with Yemen was offset by the rise of Arab nationalism in Aden Colony and the persistence of tribal revolts in the interior. It was evident that the revolt against the extension of imperial authority in the WAP had the potential to merge with the rising independence movement in Aden to form a powerful nationalist coalition. These factors led to a rethink about the long-term future of the region. The eventual decision to hand over greater authority to the Federation and promote its merger with Aden had significant consequences for the military strategy

adopted. The possibility of merging the Colony with the Federation in order to ensure that Britain's allies among the rulers were placed in a position of authority over the disruptive elements in Aden had been discussed in the late 1950s. In June 1958 it was noted that if the Colony is eventually absorbed into the federation there is a reasonable prospect of HMG being able to retain facilities there by means of treaty arrangements whereas this will certainly be impossible if HMG is driven out of Aden by increased subversion and nationalist pressure directed from Cairo. If independence was to be granted Lennox-Boyd made clear that the y should aim for a friendly autocracy rather than a parliamentary democracy. (26)

18. Two options for confronting the issue of rising Arab nationalism were discussed by the British Cabinet. The first, which was favoured by policy-makers in Aden and the more liberal members of the Conservative administration, was to accept that independence for the whole of Southwest Arabia was inevitable and to construct a system in which Britain's allies in the Federation would have effective authority in this new state. This required the consolidation of the power of the pro-British rulers in the Protectorates and their forcible merger with the Colony. In short, it necessitated active intervention to manipulate the politics of the region in such a way that the traditional rulers would have the upper hand over the claims of the nascent nationalist movement. This reasoning failed to convince the conservative imperialists within the British government who argued in favour of a second option, which was to keep intervention to a minimum on the grounds that any measure of constitutional advance would be a step towards independence, and that once independence had been granted it would be impossible to guarantee continued access to the base, whatever measures had been put into place beforehand to secure the dominance of Britain's allies. Advocates of this laissez-faire approach were aware that it would require the active suppression of nationalist dissent in the Colony. However, as long as Britain retained sovereignty over Aden itself the future of the Federation was less important than for those who were backing the rulers to uphold Britain's interests. Paradoxically, the victory of the liberal advocates of independence over the partisan imperialists actually required an intensification of punitive military action within the Protectorates in order to guarantee the supremacy of the friendly rulers before independence.

19. Although there was now some support among Conservative ministers for the idea of self-government and even independence for South Arabia, there continued to be a great emphasis in all British planning for Aden on the need to retain access to the base. In October 1960 the government began a review of policy towards Aden on the understanding that the protection of British interests requires the retention of our base. Initially, the Colonial Secretary, Iain MacLeod, was unable to bring forward any specific proposals for constitutional advance. (27) When he did they caused controversy. The new Governor in Aden, Charles Johnston, was convinced of the need to merge the Colony and the Federation. He believed that the federal rulers would never allow Aden to gain self-government without having some say in its affairs. (28) In line with his recommendations, MacLeod told the Cabinet on 30 May 1961 that he wished to achieve both a measure of self-government for Aden and its merger with the Federation. He made clear that the primary objective of these proposals was to secure the use of the defence facilities in the Colony and Protectorate of Aden for as long as possible during this decade. However, there was opposition to the notion of a merger from a faction, led by the Secretary of State for Air, Julian Amery, which believed any form of constitutional development would have the effect of expediting independence and that the best option was to grimly cling on to the Colony in order to maintain our title to Aden colony for a very long time ahead. The Cabinet rejected this analysis and endorsed MacLeod's merger proposals. (29) The victory for the advocates of a merger did not, however, mean that the government was set on a policy of early independence or that the issue of the base had been resolved. Continuing access to the facilities in Aden was still an essential element of British defence policy. When the federal and Aden ministers were persuaded to set aside their many differences and attend a conference on merger in London in July 1962, the British government succeeded in inserting clauses into the final agreement which not only allowed the High Commissioner to retain control of defence and foreign policy but which also gave the British authorities the right to withdraw any territory required for defence purposes from the expanded Federation. (30)

20. These debates had an important influence on the policy adopted towards the continuing insurrection in the interior. In order to stabilise the Federation prior to merger it appeared essential to overcome those tribal elements opposed to the extension of the Protectorate rulers' powers. Between 1959 and 1962 it became obvious that the Yemenis were not the most significant factor in initiating tribal revolts. The Imam's decision to stop supplying the insurgents with food and arms did not produce any noticeable decrease in tribal disturbances. The focus of British military activity therefore shifted from the border with Yemen to the conduct of counter-insurgency campaigns within the WAP. It was those mountainous regions that had previously remained impervious to any form of colonial control that bore the brunt of the British campaign to overcome tribal opposition to the Federation. Upper Aulaqi, Yafa and Dathina all witnessed extensive counter-insurgency campaigns. In these cases intervention seemed justified because the newly established Federation, on which policy-makers in London were placing their hopes of retaining access to the base, could not long survive if its constituent states fell into the hands of anti-British dissidents. Indeed, this is precisely what caused its collapse in 1967.

21. As usual the optimistic calculations of policy-makers in London created difficulties for the men on the spot in Aden. The task of policing thousands of square miles of Federation territory was a formidable one and the insurgents were usually concentrated in the most inaccessible regions of the country. In order to deal with these problems the British resorted to a policy of proscription. There were two methods of enforcing proscription in a given area: aerial bombardment, which was cheap but ineffective, and joint land/air operations which were more expensive but could be effective in the short term. Although the scale of the operations varied over time and place the basic method of proscription was the same. A particular region was singled out as a centre of dissident activity and the population warned by the dropping of leaflets that they must evacuate. Additional warnings were usually given prior to the launch of air attacks or an assault by ground forces within the proscribed area.

22. Punitive air action was the more attractive option because it was much cheaper and easier to organise than a ground campaign and had been in use in South Arabia since the 1920s. The initial target of British bombing campaigns had been Imam Yahya but once British officials set themselves the task of pacifying the interior it was increasingly used against tribes in the British protected areas. Lord Belhaven, who was the first British Political Officer to travel extensively in the Western Aden Protectorate, gives a number of examples of his employment of the technique during the 1930s. (31) He generally resorted to air action in order to suppress the banditry which threatened communications through the WAP, rather than with the aim of extending governmental control. Robin Bidwell, who was of a later generation of British officials to serve in the region, has argued that proscription was for decades the best method of control for there was very rarely loss of life, houses were easily rebuilt and no one had valuable property to lose. Local populations were given ample warning of the impending attack and were sufficiently familiar with the procedure to evacuate in good time. Furthermore, aerial proscription provided local insurgents with a face-saving device which avoided the need for bloody conflict on the ground. The impossibility of putting up resistance to an assault from the air relieved them of the responsibility to resist and prevented the additional bloodshed that would result if they were engaged on their own terms. Aerial proscription was therefore peculiarly suited to Arab psychology as it allowed the rebel leaders to submit to overwhelmingly superior odds without losing face. (32)

23. These arguments are questionable. Although they could be effective in dealing with minor inter-tribal feuding, bombing campaigns in themselves tended to be quite ineffective if the tribes were determined to resist the extension of British authority. In the long term, the causes of tribal discontent were not addressed by military campaigns and the tribes were frequently in revolt once more within a few years. British air supremacy had proved ineffective against the Rabiz dissidents in the Sultanate during 1955, while in neighbouring Oman air proscription failed to subdue the rebels in the Jebel Akhdar during 1958. (33) In those cases where the tribes put up serious opposition to the extension of British control bombing was usually far more extensive and destructive than has been suggested. Kennedy Trevaskis gave an account of contemporary air proscription campaigns in 1964. He suggested that aerial bombardment was necessary because ground action was too humane. In his view Arab troops tended to pull their punches and disliked taking punitive action in cold blood. Consequently, results tend to come slowly and only by persistence and they usually have to withdraw before the job has been completed. The object of air

proscription, on Trevaskiss account, was to destroy livestock, which were the only economic assets, possessed by the tribes. He goes on to claim that only a few head were usually killed and that proscribed villages were not generally damaged by the few bursts which were sometimes required to secure their evacuation. (34) As we shall see operations such as this could be counter-productive as they frequently served to entrench the dissident tribes in their opposition to British rule.

24. The case of the Upper Aulaqi Sheikhdom illustrates the problems with aerial proscription. Upper Aulaqi was traditionally one of the most unruly regions of the interior and may be taken as a useful case study of the effects of Britains forward policy. Here, as elsewhere, British intervention caused turbulence. The territory was divided between a Sultanate and a Sheikhdom. The British attempted to pacify the former region in 1955 but suffered an embarrassing defeat at the hands of Rabiz insurgents. (35) In the Sheikhdom a pro-British ruler was elected in 1958 but at the expense of alienating rival claimants from the Ahl Bubakr faction who were backed by the SAL. (36) The new Sheikh became one of the original signatories to the Federation but faced stiff opposition from the Ahl Bubakr at home. In April 1959 Luce intervened to support the Sheikh and authorised an operation to capture the leaders of the Ahl Bubakr clan.

25. In response to these moves the Ahl Bubakr began to self-consciously transform themselves into a Liberation Army. They increasingly saw themselves as one element in a broader coalition of forces opposed to British rule. Contemporary leaflets written by the Ahl Bubakr leadership under the heading of the Aulaqi Liberation Army link their struggle to that of the south in general. One states: The 24 April was a victorious day for the South in general and for you Aulaqis in particular. It was the day when the English and their slaves arranged a conspiracy and an attack on the leaders of the Peaceful resistance It was a victorious day because the peaceful resistance has turned into actual resistance Be united and work together and beware the traitors and we warn them to leave the country immediately. (37) The reference to the English and their slaves is also significant as it suggests that the dispute over the succession was now being characterised as a conflict between an indigenous revolutionary movement on the one hand and imperial clients on the other.

26. The attempt to capture the Ahl Bubakr leadership merely served to intensify hostilities. In order to suppress the rebels the British authorities proscribed the Ahl Bubakr stronghold of Messeina and began a long campaign of aerial bombardment in the region. (38) This was becoming standard procedure when confronted with tribal dissidence despite the demonstrable fact that air supremacy was no substitute for action on the ground in the highlands. Ignoring the precedents set by the Rabiz and Oman operations, the Aden authorities responded to the failure of their Messeina air campaign by resorting to larger scale air attacks. In April 1960 they called on the assistance of aircraft from the carrier HMS Centaur, which was conveniently deployed in Aden harbour at the time, to conduct an intensive round the clock bombardment against the Ahl Bubakr. (39) The results were embarrassing. It was impossible to pinpoint the location of such a small number of rebels and the dissident tribesmen fled to a neighbouring valley after suffering only two minor casualties, including a slight wound from a rock splinter to one of their leaders. The Ahl Bubakr responded with a series of counter-attacks against the Federal Guards that killed three and wounded four. (40)

27. The irony of employing an aircraft carrier in an unsuccessful attack on around 60 rebel tribesmen ought not however to distract attention from the impact that a year of air attacks, culminating with an intensive bombardment, must have had on the local population. Indeed, when Luce suggested a further escalation of the military campaign, one Colonial Office official was driven to express reservations about the use of full scale military operations against tribes of British Protected Persons and these are reinforced in a case where the objective must as far as I can judge be to exterminate them. Few shared these doubts and, as in Oman, the failure of air operations led to a punitive expedition into the proscribed area by ground forces, in this case, the Aden Protectorate Levies. In what was probably the largest single land/air operation ever staged in the Protectorates up to that date, the insurgents, and anyone suspected of supporting them, were driven from a series of mountainous hideaways until the remaining 26 fled to Yemen. (41)

28. As in the case of the frontier conflict the success of British counter-insurgency strategy in this case was transitory. The Upper Aulaqi Sheikh initially strengthened his position and for a short period the Sheikhdom became one of the more peaceful regions of the WAP. However with the other states falling to the NLF during 1967 Mohammed Ahl Bubakr had his opportunity. During the 1960s the Ahl Bubakr had aligned themselves increasingly with the NLF. It seemed for a time that the NLF would be kept out of the Upper Aulaqi Sheikhdom by an alliance of convenience between FLOSY and the local ruler. (42) By late 1967 however, opponents of radical nationalism were disheartened by a string of defeats and Mohammed Ahl Bubakr seized power in the Sheikhdom under an NLF banner. (43) Although this case could be regarded as an example of a traditional dispute between rival clans with a thin ideological veneer provided by the NLF, in practical terms it provides strong evidence for the view that proscription campaigns played an important role in cementing the emerging alliance between radical nationalists and tribal dissidents. The British attempt to stabilise the Federation as a guarantor of their continued influence in Southwest Arabia thus had the unintended consequence of consolidating opposition to the British and the rulers. The next section will focus on the manner in which the continuation and extension of these tactics prior to independence, followed by the sudden decision of the Labour government to abandon the base further strained relations both between the tribes and the rulers and the rulers and the British.

29. The Era of Proscription: Prelude to Withdrawal 1962-67

The 1962 Yemeni revolution had a substantial impact both on the tactics adopted by the British in their counter-insurgency campaigns and the political strategy they formulated in order to retain their hold on the Aden base. The result was a new round of proscription, this time with a greater emphasis on the use of ground forces. Military campaigns resumed on a larger scale than in the 1950s. As well as resurrecting the Imams policy of supplying arms to the insurgents, the Yemeni Republicans were, at least initially, able to offer nationalists in the south a more attractive alternative to continued British rule than incorporation into Imam Ahmeds autocracy. Although the Egyptian presence was resented in the north, for southern insurgents the arrival of the Egyptian army on their doorstep was extremely useful. Ultimately Nasser was unable to maintain control of the events that he set in train, and his *protégés* in FLOSY were finally outmanoeuvred by the NLF, but in the immediate post-revolutionary era of Yemeni politics, Cairo was generally able to provide greater coordination for the nationalist movement in the south. To counter this better armed and better coordinated campaign the British resorted to larger scale military operations that required an influx of British regular troops. Their deployment and the increasingly punitive tactics adopted to defeat the insurgents in turn stirred resentment against the British presence in the WAP and against those rulers who were regarded as their clients.

30. In political terms the Yemeni revolution made Britains position in Southwest Arabia untenable. This much is clear with hindsight but even at the time the more perceptive commentators were aware that it would have important repercussions for the continuation of direct control. (44) In November 1962 the Governor of Aden, Charles Johnston, explained that, in light of the revolution in Yemen, British control over the Federation appeared increasingly anomalous. He advised: We shall now need to think and act in a very different way to get the Federation to assume adult responsibilities as quickly as possible and to move rapidly away from the present system of controls and supervision to one of aid and co-operation. His goal was to complete the merger between the Colony and the Federation as rapidly as possible and then transfer responsibility for policing the new union to the federal forces. (45)

31. Johnstons policy meant handing over power to an independent South Arabian Federation who could take on the role of protecting the British base. However, there was still some resistance to this notion in Whitehall. The Conservative Colonial Secretary, Duncan Sandys, was obsessed by the need to guarantee access to the military facilities at Aden. As an alternative to more far-reaching constitutional advance he devised a variety of schemes designed to place Britains relationship with Aden state on the same advisory basis as that of the other federal states. These modest reforms failed to impress either his Cabinet colleagues or the leading politicians in Southwest Arabia and the situation deteriorated. (46) Finally, at a constitutional conference in July 1964 Federal and Aden ministers agreed on various reforms which ended the colonial status of Aden. In order to secure this compromise, Sandys offered the

prospect of independence by 1968, on condition that all parties accepted a defence agreement guaranteeing continued British access to the base. (47)

32. The slow progress of constitutional reform dictated by British strategic requirements led to a violent reaction from the nationalists and aggravated the local security situation. Denied the opportunity of an electoral path, the opposition turned to violence, including an attempt to assassinate Trevaskis at the civil airport in December 1963. (48) The postponement of the Colony elections scheduled for December 1963 and resentment at the forcible merger with the Federation combined with widespread support within Aden for the Yemeni Republicans meant that, even under the restricted franchise imposed by the British, the nationalist Peoples Socialist Party (PSP) would be the likely victors in any popular election. After tinkering with the franchise in order to reduce the size of the electorate to a mere 8,000, (49) the Aden state elections of October 1964 resulted in an even balance of support in the Legislative Council between the favoured candidate of the British, the current Chief Minister, Baharoon, and the imprisoned nationalist and NLF sympathiser, Abdullah Hassan Khalifa, who had been charged with responsibility for the airport attack. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Trevaskis reappointed Baharoon. (50)

33. The new Labour government was initially sceptical of the methods employed by their predecessors. Greenwood, who replaced Sandys as Colonial Secretary, set himself the task of winning over the progressive elements in Aden. However, the situation had deteriorated to such an extent that it was difficult to reverse course. Greenwood's attempt to woo nationalist moderates came at a time when few moderates remained. He promised independence by 1968 and, on this basis, finally managed in July 1965 to get all the parties, except the NLF, to agree to a working party to prepare for a constitutional conference. However, this initiative was scuppered by the refusal of the FLOSY leaders to accept anything other than an immediate British withdrawal. (51) A campaign of violent opposition by the nationalists led to the suspension of the constitution in September 1965. The new High Commissioner, Richard Turnbull's insistence that Baharoon's replacement as Chief Minister, Makkawi, was abetting the terrorists persuaded the Labour government to abandon the limited constitutional advances of the previous decade and impose direct British rule on Aden. (52)

34. With the collapse of any attempt to reach a compromise with the nationalists in Aden, the British were more dependent than ever on the federal rulers as agents of continuing British influence. In order to prepare the way for independence it seemed essential to defeat the insurgencies that were endangering their position. The authorities in Aden had always regarded the Sheikhs, Sultans and Amirs of the WAP as the most reliable guarantors of continued British influence. In October 1964 Trevaskis explained that it would be folly to imagine that the federal rulers and tribal leaders are likely to be submerged by urban nationalists in Aden for the foreseeable future. (53) When Wilson questioned whether the Federation was a sacred cow he was informed that it was essential not just to British policy in Southwest Arabia but also to the maintenance of Britain's crucial interests in the Persian Gulf. (54) British concern for the welfare of the Federation lasted for just the first year of the Wilson government. Nevertheless, in the 1963 to 1965 period the coincidence of an increase in tribal disturbances in the interior with British attempts to establish a stable political environment in which the federation could flourish, led to an escalation in the military campaigns. This in turn produced an even more divisive and embittered political environment within Southwest Arabia and left the rulers vulnerable to the insurgents after the British government reversed policy and decided they could manage without the base and the Federation.

35. The increase in tribal disturbances in the aftermath of the Yemeni revolution led Trevaskis to call for a series of measures to recover the situation including covert action against Britain's opponents in the Federation and Yemen and the revival of air proscription of the kind employed in Upper Aulaqi in 1960. Authority was given for a new campaign of air proscription in the Radfan on 8 May 1964. (55) The Radfan campaign received substantial coverage in the British press and has been extensively studied since. (56) It is perhaps more useful to examine a less well-documented case: the 1965 campaign against dissidents along the Yemen frontier, codenamed Operation PARK. Unlike the Radfan campaign the press were deliberately excluded from covering this operation and it appears to have been entirely wiped from the record of Britain's campaigns in Southwest Arabia.

36. The aim of Operation PARK was to end the attacks which the Shairi tribes had been conducting on British and Federal forces in the frontier region between Dhala and Yemen and, as in the Radfan, the method was to drive the tribes people from their homes through a combination of infantry assaults or, where necessary, aerial attacks on villages. In order to prevent the villagers returning to cultivate their land, the RAF were given liberty to target any persons found within the proscribed area. The political directive that accompanied the operation makes clear the punitive nature of the operation. It stated that the effectiveness of the campaign would depend on the firmness with which it was conducted and that the troops involved should aim to take punitive measures thus leaving behind them memories that will not quickly fade. Once an area was proscribed all movement of any kind (ie. human and animal) should be treated as hostile and engaged, although deliberate casualties to women and children should be avoided if possible. In those villages that were evacuated in line with the warnings given all livestock was to be destroyed; those villages which were still populated and continued to refuse to evacuate were to be assaulted if possible. Clearly assaults on occupied villages using artillery would inevitably produce civilian casualties and the directive states quite openly: Casualties to women and children must be accepted. Not surprisingly, Turnbull was anxious that publicity for this campaign should be avoided and ordered restrictions on the distribution of the directive. (57) Nevertheless, it is quite clear that Labour ministers were aware of the operation. Greenwood authorised it on 11 March 1965 and the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee were informed. (58) Although it is doubtful whether ministers examined the detailed plans, the Defence Secretary, Denis Healey, visited the battlefield during his trip to South Arabia in June 1965.

37. The conduct of a punitive campaign of this kind alarmed the local ruler, the Amir of Dhala. The operation began on 21 March 1965 and during the next two months 2,000 people were ejected from their homes. At the start of June the Amir requested an end to the operation on the grounds that it was alienating the tribes and leading to a dangerous situation within his country. The Amir's pleas were ignored and instead the campaign escalated. In the aftermath of Healey's visit to Dhala, the Resident Adviser, Robin Young, recorded: Mr. Healey himself has said that top priority must be given to defeating this offensive and, if in the course of doing so we have to continue our somewhat unpleasant measures as far as the locals are concerned, then I doubt there will be any strong reactions from London. (59) The following month, at the insistence of the Amir, the British drew up surrender terms. These established a British right to take reprisals against any village which harboured dissidents in the future. The local village headmen, or *aqils*, proved unreceptive to these terms. They particularly objected to a war guilt clause which stated that they had been responsible for the conflict. In the shame culture of the Arabs this was difficult to accept; to the British the refusal of the tribes to agree to the terms merely provided demonstrable evidence of their irrationality. (60)

38. In response to the continued recalcitrance of the villagers the British intensified the campaign during August. The areas under proscription were extended and the Federal Regular Army, which had been reluctant to take punitive measures, was encouraged to apply the political directive rigorously. In order to deter women and children from returning to the proscribed areas to graze their animals the Arab Federal Army was instructed by its British officers to fire in the general direction of the women and children, though not directly at them. The Arab troops were reluctant to implement this measure and the resort to such tactics convinced the local political officer of the need to finally end the stalemate over surrender terms. The war guilt clause was excised in September and one by one the *aqils* accepted the new terms. (61) In the aftermath of the campaign the local political officer attempted to engage in some development work as a means of pacifying the region but he struggled to get an agreement to rebuild the two Shairi villages that had been levelled by the RAF during the course of the campaign. (62)

39. In November 1965 the Labour government decided as part of its first defence review that the maintenance of a base at Aden was not essential to Britain's interests in the Middle East. This decision destroyed the rationale behind the Aden policy pursued for the previous decade and left the goal of British policy as a smooth hand over of power. (63) In February 1966 the Defence White Paper made public the fact that the Aden base was no longer essential and that full independence would be granted in 1968. (64) The Under-Secretary of State at the Colonial Office, Lord Beswick, was given the difficult task of explaining to the rulers that the treaties of protection did not require Britain's actual physical presence in Southwest Arabia. The decision was portrayed as a betrayal by

the Conservative opposition and has been a subject for intense criticism ever since. (65) By early 1967 the situation had deteriorated to such an extent that the date for the evacuation had to be brought forward to November 1967 and George Thomson was given responsibility for justifying this new policy to the leaders of the Federation. (66) The decision of the British government that the South Arabian commitment could not be sustained resulted in a sudden end to counter-insurgency operations and exposed the vulnerability of the federal rulers. Unable to fend for themselves against the opposition stirred up by past British policies, the Federation collapsed with dramatic suddenness before the British exit in November. The last counter-insurgency campaigns in the Protectorates did little to stem the advance of the NLF and may actually have contributed to the early demise of some of the rulers. The Amir of Dhala, who witnessed both the Radfan and Shairi operations, complained that British military campaigns made him unpopular. In May 1966 he explained by increasing military action against the people of Dhala and by disrupting their lives we would not defeat the dissidents but instead drive the people to support them. (67) Unfortunately for the Amir, this analysis proved prescient and just over a year later he was among the first of the federal rulers to be swept from power.

40. Conclusions

There were no easy options for the British in Southwest Arabia. As long as military strategists in Whitehall insisted on guaranteed and unconditional access to the base facilities at Aden in order to protect Persian Gulf oil supplies it was necessary to resist the rising tide of nationalism. However, in a pattern familiar from other colonies, this resistance merely hastened the move towards independence. In the case of Southwest Arabia the outcome was uniquely depressing and this was at least partly the consequence of the radicalisation of the politics of the Protected states of the interior. The extent of British military intervention in the Protectorates in the 1950s and 1960s was unprecedented in the history of the region. It challenged the traditional claims of the Yemeni Imams who found themselves in the unlikely position of sponsoring the nationalist opposition to the British in alliance with Egypt and the Soviet Union. The existence of a long porous frontier was a significant problem for British counter-insurgency strategy but the punitive action taken along the frontier proved counter-productive. After a brief lull after 1959, in 1962 the Egyptian-backed Yemeni Republic emerged as an even more significant and effective supplier of the insurgents. However, it was British intervention in the ongoing feuds of the WAP which provided the Yemenis with the opportunity to intervene. Tribal revolts were a traditional part of the South Arabian scene and by extending their influence the British gave themselves more onerous policing duties. The case of the Ahl Bubakr rebellion illustrates the manner in which British attempts at pacifying the whole of Southwest Arabia, accompanied by the arrival of nationalist propaganda, had the effect of transforming traditional tribal conflicts into ideological struggles between imperialism and a naive form of anti-colonial radicalism. By the mid-1960s the NLF were beginning to use tribal revolts to further their cause. The British response was to conduct larger scale proscription operations and the policy of more of the same produced similar results: tactical victories which in political terms proved beneficial to the radical opponents of British influence. From the perspective of Britain's allies the decision of the Labour government that the costs of the military commitment were greater than the benefits was disastrous, as it left them to fend for themselves against an invigorated nationalist movement. The rulers were unable to resist the rising tide of radicalism and in 1967 the Federation on which a generation of British policy-makers had built their hopes collapsed.

41. While the Aden base remained essential to British military planning counter-insurgency campaigns in the WAP could be justified in terms of the requirements of British global strategy. Once this strategy changed the increasingly costly commitment in Southwest Arabia was terminated. However, the British left behind them a society divided along new lines of conflict. The old tribal divisions in the interior had certainly not been erased but a new variable was introduced to the equation by the intervention of the British. In the north of the region, the British policy of undermining the Imamate proved useful to the indigenous Republican movement, who were able to take advantage of the crumbling authority of the Imams and then once in power turn their attention towards removing the colonial presence in Aden. In the south, the peoples of the Protectorates were forced to choose between collaborating with the British and resisting their advance. Those who resisted sought both physical support from outside in the form of arms and supplies and also an ideology that would articulate their grievances against the colonial power. The NLF provided both and reaped the benefits. The radicalisation of Southwest Arabian politics can therefore be traced to the conflicts of the late colonial era and, more particularly, to British counter-insurgency campaigns of the 1950s and 1960s.

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Notes for Article 5

1. The NLF changed this designation to the more familiar Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen in 1970. [Back](#)
2. Sheila Carapico, *Civil Society in Yemen* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p.40. [Back](#)
3. Public Record Office [Henceforward PRO]: CAB 129/78, CC(55)152, 14 October 1955. [Back](#)
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13. PRO: CO 1015/2088, Aden (Luce) to Secretary of State, 2 May 1958, Lennox-Boyd to Prime Minister, 2 May 1958. On the deportation of Yemenis see India Office Records [Henceforward IOR]: R/20/B/3002, Simmonds to Chief Secretary, 8 November 1958. [Back](#)
14. PRO: CO 1015/1211, Hickinbotham to Morgan, 6 August 1955. [Back](#)
15. PRO: CO 1015/1212, Macmillan to Lennox-Boyd, 14 October 1955; CAB 134/1201, CA(55)6th mtg., minute 3, 24 November 1953, CA(56)1 st mtg., minute 2 4 January 1956; CAB 134/1202, CA(56)1, 2 January 1956 [Back](#)
16. PRO: CO 1015/1212, Hickinbotham to Secretary of State, 8 February 1956. Secretary of State to Aden, 6 March 1956; CAB 134/1201, CA(56)13 th mtg., 12

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17. PRO: CAB 128/32, CC(58)50th mtg., 26 June 1958, minute 6; CAB 129/93, C(58)131. It should be remembered that what was being discussed here was the future of the protected states which were already nominally independent and not the Colony which remained under direct rule. [Back](#)
18. PRO: CO 1015/1261, Luce to Morgan, 11 March 1959. [Back](#)
- 19PRO: FO 371/127038, EM 1041/19, New York (UK delegation to the UN) to FO, 19 January 1957; FO 371/127039, EM 1051/11, New York (UK delegation to the UN) to FO, 15 January 1957. [Back](#)
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21. IOR:R/20/B/3265, Trevaskis to Chief Secretary (Aden), 20 May 1958, R/20/B/3311, Chief Intelligence Officer (Aden) to Chief Secretary 22 May 1958. [Back](#)
22. IOR: R/20/B/3318, Phillips to Assistant Chief Secretary, 22 January 1959, Chief Intelligence Officer (Aden) to Chief Secretary, 22 January 1959. [Back](#)
23. PRO: CO1015/2157, Luce (Aden) to Secretary of State, 1 June 1960. [Back](#)
24. IOR:R/20/B/3318, LIC memo on The Threat to the Protectorate from the Yemeni Centres on the Border, 4 March 1959, Phillips memo, 18 February 1959, Phillips memo, 12 March 1959 and Phillips memo, 2 April 1959; PRO: PREM 11/2755, Luce to Secretary of State, 12 March 1959, Luce to Secretary of State, 17 March 1959, Secretary of State to Luce, 26 March 1959. [Back](#)
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39. PRO: CO 1015/2158, HQBFAP to Ministry of Defence, 7 April 1960, Ministry of Defence to HQBFAP, 8 April 1960; IOR: R/20/B/3219, Minutes of WAP Security Committee. [Back](#)
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52. PRO: PREM 13/113, Aden (Turnbull) to Secretary of State, 16 September 1965, Commander in Chief (Middle East) to MoD, 21 September 1965, Secretary of State to Aden, 23 September 1965; CAB 148/18, OPD(65) 41st mtg., minute 1, 23 September 1965, OPD(65)133, 22 September 1965; Harold Wilson, *The Labour Government 1964-70: A Personal Record* (London: Penguin edition, 1974; originally published, 1971), p.186. Wilson tried to reassure Greenwood in private while also complaining about his desire to avoid an early declaration on suspending the constitution. See PRO: PREM 13/113, Greenwood to Wilson, 24 September 1965 and Richard Crossman, *The Diaries of a Cabinet Minister: Vol. 1 1964-66* (London: Book Club Associates, 1975), p.334. [Back](#)
53. PRO: CO 1055/195, Trevaskis to Secretary of State, 28 October 1964. [Back](#)
54. PRO: PREM 13/113, Aden(Turnbull) to Secretary of State, 16 September 1965 with Wilson minute (ud). Wright to McIndoe, 21 September 1965; CAB 148/22, OPD(65)133, 22 September 1965. [Back](#)
55. PRO: CO1055/194, Trevaskis to Sandys, 20 April 1964, Trevaskis to Secretary of State for Colonies, 5 May 1964, Secretary of State for Colonies to Aden (Trevaskis), 8 May 1964, Secretary of State for Colonies to Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Defence, 11 May 1964, Prime Minister to Secretary of State for Colonies, 12 May 1964, Ministry of Defence to Commander-in-Chief (Middle East), 15 May 1964. [Back](#)
56. Stephen Harper, *Last Sunset* (London: Collins, 1978), ch.5; Brian Lapping, *End of Empire* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1985), ch. 6; Julian Paget, *Last Post: Aden 1964-67* (London: Faber and Faber, 1969), chs 3-11; Pieragostini, op. cit., pp. 73-5; Ledger, op. cit., pp. 48-9. [Back](#)
57. IOR: R/20/D/158, Chaplin to Commander, Federal Regular Army and Commandant, Federal Guard, 15 March 1965, including Annex A, Political Directive, Baillie to Young, 17 March 1965. [Back](#)
58. PRO: CAB 148/18, OPD(65)17th mtg., minute 3, 24 March 1965; CO1055/202, Aden (Turnbull) to Secretary of State for Colonies, 11 March 1965, Secretary of State for Colonies to Aden (Turnbull), 11 March 1965. [Back](#)
59. IOR: R.20/C/2437, Young to Somerfield, 5 June 1965, Somerfield to Young, 15 June 1965, Young to Somerfield, 24 June 1965; R/20/D/158, High Commissioner to Secretary of State, 4 June 1965. Healeys own account of his trip to Southwest Arabia makes no mention of the campaign in Dhala. See Denis Healey, *The Time of My Life* (London: Penguin, 1990; first edition 1989), pp.283-4. [Back](#)
60. IOR: R/20/C/2437, Young note for the file, 30 June 1965, Somerfield to Assistant High Commissioner, 6 July 1965, Somerfield to Hinchcliffe, 7 July 1965. On the issue of shame culture and conflict resolution see Paul Salem, A Critique of Western Conflict Resolution from a Non-Western Perspective in P. Salem (ed.), *Conflict Resolution in the Arab World: Selected Essays* (American University of Beirut, 1997), pp. 11-27. For a broader discussion of The Language of Honour within Southwest Arabia, see Dresch, op. cit., ch. 3. [Back](#)
61. IOR: R/20/C/2437, Hinchcliffe to Somerfield, 15 August 1965, Somerfield to Assistant High Commissioner, 20 September 1965. [Back](#)
62. IOR: R/20/C/2437, Somerfield to Young, 15 December 1965, Young to Somerfield, 29 December 1965. [Back](#)
63. PRO: CAB 148/18, OPD(65)52nd, minute 1, 24 November 1965. [Back](#)
- 64 Wilson, op. cit., p.277. [Back](#)
65. Wilson, op. cit., pp.301-2; Pieragostini, op. cit., ch.8; Kostiner, op cit., p. 128-9. Critics of the decision have their say in Michael Crouch, *An Element of Luck: To South Arabia and Beyond* (London: Radcliffe Press, 1993), p.184; Lee, op. cit., pp.227-8; Trevaskis, op. cit., pp.237-8; Harper, op. cit., pp.61 and 70-4. [Back](#)
66. Wilson, op. cit., p.488; Barbara Castle, *The Castle Diaries 1964-70* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1984), p. 235. [Back](#)
67. IOL: R/20/C/2442, Minutes of Dhala Security Meeting, 5 May 1966. [Back](#)

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