CHAPTER II

THE ANTECEDENTS OF THE SECURITY SITUATION:

THE FIRST THREE YEARS OF THE REPUBLICAN-ROYALIST WAR

1962 - 1965
On 26 September, 1962, a military coup in Yemen overthrew Imam Muhammad al-Badr and established the YAR. The coup put an end to the Imamate after a rule little short of a millennium and many, both inside and out of the country, welcomed the revolt as a step towards a better future. The Hamid al-Din Imams, in their determination to hold on to power, had resisted modern ideas and thus kept the country largely isolated from the rest of the world. They kept their foreign relations to the minimum and only entered into diplomatic relations when the necessity arose. An American specialist defined the Imamate's foreign policy as being governed by the desire "to be left alone". Internally, the country was so backward that at the time of the revolution Yemen was said to be "dashing towards the fifteenth century." Although this was an exaggeration, the country was among the most backward in the world. In the political field there were no modern political institutions or government bureaucracies with delegated authority. As an autocrat, the Imam was personally the focus of all executive, administrative and judicial power, and all matters regardless of size were determined by his sole discretion. In the socio-economic field, a complete absence of modern services and unexploited resources coincided with an almost complete stagnation of the economic and social systems.

During the three years that preceded the revolution, Imam Ahmad faced the most sustained challenge to his rule. The anti-Imam factions, whose long-term aim had been to eliminate despotic and conservative monarchs, replacing them with reform-minded ones, had by the end of the 1950s begun to work towards the establishment of a republic. Simultaneously, the Imamate lost the loyalty of the army and the two main tribal Federations, the Hashid and the Bakil, on whom the Imamate depended for its existence. The revolt in 1959 of the Hashid and the
Bakil, traditionally known as the 'Wings of the Imamate', was followed by further unrest within the army. The army had played the main part in the revolts of 1948 and 1955 and continued to plot the assassination of Imam Ahmad. In March 1961, three officers made the most serious attempt on his life in which the Imam was wounded seriously. Ahmad tried to contain the uprising by a combination of promises of reform and cruel suppression of the opposition. On 19 September 1962, he died while the country was still in turmoil following a series of violent student demonstrations.

Many Yemenis were hopeful that Muhammad al-Badr, who succeeded his father on 20 September, 1962, would introduce the much needed changes. As a Crown Prince, al-Badr had given every indication of having liberal inclinations, but after assuming the throne he publicly stated that he intended to pursue the policies established by his father. This confirmed the suspicions of the officers who were already planning a coup, ever since they founded the Free Officers Organisation in December 1961. Upon learning that al-Badr had indeed resolved to suppress the opposition, the Free Officers decided to act. At 2300 hours on 26 September, 1962, a small column of tanks and armoured vehicles surrounded the al-Bashai'er Palace where al-Badr was attending a cabinet meeting. After failing to persuade al-Badr to surrender, the tanks shelled the palace. The next morning it was announced that the new Imam had been killed in the palace bombardment and a Republican régime had taken over.

It immediately became clear that the revolutionaries, who by then comprised not only the officers but also several civilian groups, were not aiming at a simple change of government but at a radical restructuring of the country's socio-economic and political system.
In the first policy statement broadcast on 27 September, it was announced that the principal aims of the Revolution were: to put an end to the absolute rule of the individual and to do away with foreign influence in Yemen and to replace the monarchy with a democratic, Islamic Republican régime based on social justice in a unified state, representing the people's will and realising their demands. Mainly because of the lack of sufficient resources and due to the preoccupation with the ensuing war, many of the stated objectives were not realised. Nevertheless, measures were taken in the following weeks which resulted in radical changes. Briefly summarised they were: the establishment of the Republic, the removal of the old ruling oligarchy, the end of large-scale landlordism, and the creation of a public sector in the national economy.

From the first moment of its inception, the Yemeni Republic was faced with difficulties emanating from both its complicated internal conditions and a largely hostile external reaction. As the first republic in the Arabian Peninsula, it was viewed with apprehension by the traditional theocratic and shaykhly-dominated régimes which still ruled the rest of Arabia. It also met with suspicion by both Britain and the USA, who were fearful of the effects the Yemeni revolution might have on their vital economic and strategic interests in the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf. Because of its increasing dependence on Middle East oil and its reliance on Aden as a military base and bunkering station, Britain had the greater cause for concern. In short, the YAR was widely perceived to be a threat to the status quo in the area, especially as it had the military aid of President Nasir. Saudi Arabia and Jordan were the first of its neighbours to react. On 1 October Saudi troops were deployed along
the borders with the YAR and both monarchies played a vital role in encouraging the counter-revolution within Yemen.

Naturally, the Hamid al-Dins were eager to restore the monarchy in Yemen but it is generally acknowledged that without Saudi support the Yemeni Royalists would never have been able to initiate substantial resistance to the Republican government, let alone sustain it for more than seven years. However, upon hearing the news from Sana'a, Prince al-Hasan (al-Badr's uncle and the then Yemen's representative at the United Nations) was confident enough to claim the Imamate. On 28 September he left for Saudi Arabia claiming that the revolt had been carried out by a small army group with no popular support and vowing to crush it. However, before he left New York, Jordan had instructed its representative at the United Nations to convey its recognition of al-Hasan. On 30 September, al-Hasan arrived in Saudi Arabia and on 5 October, after obtaining the support of King Saud, he declared a Royalist Government-in-Exile. Without delay, he began sending the Hamid al-Din princes to the northern Yemeni tribes to offer gold and arms in exchange for their loyalty. At the beginning of October, Jordan sent a mission to Djedda to lend him military support.

The existence of the Royalist government and the military deployment within Yemen were portrayed as internal opposition to the régime in Sana'a and an indication of support for the Imam. This was not exactly the case. Except for some tribes in the north and east of the country, the Yemeni people had responded enthusiastically to the proclamation of the Republic, a fact reported even by Western media who were unsympathetic to the new régime in Sana'a. Among the tribes which later rallied to the Imam, only some Zaydi tribes in the
north-west region had followed him in his capacity as their religious leader. The loyalty of the rest of the tribes making up the main body of the Royalist army was neither based on firm commitment nor on political opposition to the Republic. This fact became clear to al-Badr himself who in fact had managed to escape from his besieged palace on the night of the coup and had taken refuge in the north. There he tried to rally the Zaydi tribes to march on Sana'a as his father had done in 1948; but none of these tribes was prepared to offer him protection, let alone fight for him. However, when he received cash from Saudi Arabia with which to pay them and after they had suffered mistreatment by the Republicans and their Egyptian allies which had created wide resentment, some of them agreed to join him.16

Despite all the challenges, internal and external, which the Yemeni revolution faced, its chances of success were greater than those of previous revolts. During the revolt of 1948 and the coup of 1955, the revolutionaries could not attract any support from the Arab states which were nearly all either still governed by monarchical régimes or had become conservative republics. However, in 1962 when the September revolution broke out, the idea of revolutionary Arabism was being officially promoted by the United Arab Republics (UAR) and there were already revolutionary governments in Iraq, Syria and Algeria. In anticipation of external intervention against the projected revolution, the Free Officers had, prior to the September coup, sought and received a promise from the Egyptian President Djamal Abd al-Nasir to come to their aid in case of foreign intervention.17 On 29 September, Colonel al-Sallal, Chairman of the Revolution Command Council (RCC), sent a telegram to Nasir in which he emphasised the revolutionary character of the coup and requested Egypt's help. In an immediate reply, Nasir expressed official UAR recognition of the YAR

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and pledged Egyptian support. Three days later a small contingent of Egyptian troops arrived in Yemen to underline the UAR commitment to the survival of the new régime in Sana'a. Almost all YAR leaders agreed that the subsequent UAR aid saved the Yemeni Republic from immediate collapse and gave it time to develop into a viable state. Nevertheless, the immediate outcome of the Egyptian help was a mixed blessing. Instead of serving as a deterrent, Egypt's "symbolic" military aid was subsequently used by Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Britain as a pretext for further intervention.

Implications Of The Response Of The Arab World

And The Wider International Response

At the time when the Yemeni Republic came into existence, the Arab world was sharply divided between a revolutionary bloc led by the UAR and a conservative camp led by Saudi Arabia. As early as the first day of its inception the new régime in Sana'a stated that it identified itself with the Arab revolutionary movement and requested Egypt's aid. This obviously alarmed not only the governments which opposed the YAR for one reason or another, but also the principal Western governments which were 'at odds' with President Djamal Abd al-Nasir. The position of these states was partly reflected in their stance regarding recognition of the YAR.

Intra-Arab response to the Yemeni revolution was varied, as were the Arab states in their ideological and political identification. The radical Arab régimes of Egypt, Iraq, Syria and Algeria enthusiastically welcomed the Yemeni Republic and recognised it within the first two weeks. On the other hand, the Arab monarchies of
Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Morocco and Libya opposed the YAR. The moderate Arab republics of Sudan, Lebanon and Tunisia recognised the new régime in Sana'a, although their subsequent relations with Sana'a remained restricted.

These initial responses were not to prove lasting. Within a year the monarchies of Morocco, Libya and Kuwait joined in recognising the YAR.²¹ Jordan, in the conciliatory atmosphere which followed the First Arab Summit Conference, announced its recognition of the Yemeni Republic on 22 July, 1964, leaving Saudi Arabia the only Arab state continuing to support the deposed Imam. On the other side, relations between Nasir and the governments of Iraq and Syria affected the latter's relations with the YAR.²² The Ba'athist government in Syria, which had persistent ideological differences with Nasir, resented his treatment of the Ba'ath followers in Yemen. Its relations with the President al-Sallal régime were, consequently, strained.²³

In the wider context of the cold war, the Soviet Union declared its support of the Yemeni Republic, recognising that it had inaugurated the first anti-imperialist struggle in the Arabian Peninsula. On 28 September, 1962 Premier Khrushchev sent a cable to al-Sallal conveying Soviet recognition of the YAR and at the same time warning that it would "regard as inadmissible any foreign interferences in the domestic affairs of Yemen".²⁴ This early friendly Soviet gesture served to consolidate a relationship between the two countries which dated back to 1928. In March, 1964, a five-year Friendship Agreement was signed between the two countries. This resulted in more economic Soviet aid to the Yemen, although military aid continued to be channelled through the UAR.²⁵
By mid-October 1962, twenty-four countries had recognised the YAR; all except one were either third world countries or socialist states. The hesitation of the Western democracies, especially Britain and the USA, caused concern to the Yemeni revolutionaries because they felt the attitude of the rest of the members of the UN depended on the position of these two great powers. In addition, the reluctance of the West to grant recognition might give credence to the allegations that the Yemeni revolution had communist connections. The YAR Foreign Minister was sent to New York in the first week of October in an attempt to secure the recognition of the USA and admission to the UN at the same time. Earlier, on 2 October, he had stated that international recognition of the YAR was needed "not to consolidate the government in Yemen but to cut the routes to external intervention".

As suggested earlier, the West was generally unreceptive to the revolutionary régime in Sana'a because of the latter's association with President Nasir and because of potential implications for their own interests in the area. Britain and France invoked traditional criteria of international law in denying recognition. Their argument rested on the facts that ex-Imam al-Badr was still alive, and that he allegedly had a large amount of support in Yemen. This position was one of political expediency rather than adherence to legal criteria.

In October, 1962, West Germany became the first Western state to recognise the YAR, reportedly with the encouragement of other Western states which sought to balance the increasing Soviet influence in Sana'a.

For almost two months, the USA was in a dilemma as to whether to withhold recognition of the new government in Sana'a, as the British
had been urging, or to give its support to the YAR in order to balance and curtail the growth of Egyptian and Soviet influence over it. On 21 November the US Charge d'Affairs in Sana'a declared that the Republican government was in full control of the country, except for some remote areas. The Kennedy administration was increasingly aware of the need for YAR co-operation in its plans to prevent a further escalation of the conflict which could damage American interests in the area. On 19 December, 1962, the US Government announced its recognition of the YAR, citing the YAR's affirmation of its goodwill towards its neighbours as the reason for this decision.

This move on the part of the USA revealed the extent of its influence in the UN, for on the day that followed its recognition of the YAR the Credentials Committee of the UN General Assembly voted in favour of accepting the delegation of the YAR as the official delegation of Yemen in place of the Royalist representatives. The General Assembly accepted the Committee's recommendation with seventy-four in favour and four against, thus confirming the international legitimacy of the YAR.

This left Great Britain, Saudi Arabia and Jordan the only states in the world which still recognised the Imam's government. The two Arab monarchies made strenuous efforts to prevent the UN from accepting the YAR. During the UN General Assembly's debate on 20 December regarding Yemen's contested seat, they claimed that there were two authorities in Yemen, one the "legitimate government of the Imam" and the other "self-proclaimed" régime of the Republicans which would have no chance of survival without the presence of foreign troops.
The Arab League was slow to respond to the situation in Yemen. In October 1962 it received simultaneous requests from both the Royalist government in exile and the YAR, for a meeting of the Arab League Council to consider the situation in Yemen. Due to the fact that the members were at that time divided over the issue, the request was not put forward for consideration. When the League Council held its 38th Ordinary Session in March, 1963, the situation had changed in so far as the YAR had been recognised by most member states in the interim. The Council decided therefore, on 23 March, despite Saudi Arabian opposition, to admit the YAR to membership of the League.33

The British posture towards the Yemeni Republic was based on the assumption that the new Nasir-supported régime in Yemen might pursue Yemeni claims to the colony of Aden and the protectorates in Southern Arabia with renewed vigour. In the event of this being the case, the British feared that the Yemeni Republic would find wide support among the inhabitants of the colony, many of whom were of North Yemeni origin. Despite repeated assurances by the YAR leaders of their peaceful intentions, the British Government retained its deep suspicion of the new government in Sana'a. On 23 October, the British cabinet decided in principle to recognise the Yemeni Republic but subsequently retracted this decision under pressure from the powerful Royalists' lobby.34 In the first week of February 1963, Britain still insisted that the situation in Yemen "was not sufficiently clear to justify recognition", on the basis that a government is only recognised when it is in effective control of a country.35 On 10 February, 1963, the government in Sana'a gave Britain a week to recognise the new régime and when no favourable response was forthcoming, the British legation in Ta'iz was closed on 17 February.36
Predominance Of The UAR and Saudi Arabia

The most significant feature of the pre-1967 era was the extent of the influence which the UAR and Saudi Arabia exerted on the conflict in Yemen. Basically, the two Arab states viewed their support of the Yemeni warring factions as an extension of their ongoing rivalry. Until the Egyptian withdrawal from Yemen in 1967, each committed its prestige and resources to ensure the victory of its respective Yemeni allies. In short, these two powers played a primary role in deciding the way the war was to be settled.

This was because, of all the states involved, Egypt and Saudi Arabia perceived the Yemeni revolution as closest to their own interests and they moved accordingly. President Nasir decided to support the Yemeni Republic mainly in order to reaffirm Egypt's role in promoting a pan-Arab revolution. Thereby he hoped to secure a foothold in the western corner of the Arabian Peninsula from where he could spread his revolutionary ideas and Egyptian influence throughout the rest of Arabia. Soon this support developed into a significant military involvement. A small contingent of Egyptian troops, about 100 strong, arrived in the Yemeni port of Hudaydah on 5 October, 1962 in what was believed to be a token demonstration of the UAR commitment to the survival of the YAR. However, steady reinforcement in reply to the escalating number of Royalist attacks on the Yemeni Republic meant that by August 1965 the force was 70,000 strong.

Saudi Arabia, already considerably alarmed by the success of the Republican coup in Sana'a, became even more concerned by the Egyptian military intervention. The Egyptian propaganda which accompanied the dispatch of the troops, combined with the ideological-political
rivalry which then existed between Cairo and Riyadh, led the Saudis to believe the ultimate objective of the Egyptian intervention in Yemen was the destabilisation of their own monarchy. As a result, the Saudis redefined their objectives in Yemen with the ejection of the Egyptian forces becoming the top priority. They believed the withdrawal of the UAR from Yemen would not only remove the Egyptian military threat from the Saudi borders but would in effect substantially improve the chances of the Royalist takeover. While the Republicans would be left without the Egyptian support, the argument went, the Royalists would continue to receive clandestine aid across the borders.

During the initial phase of the ensuing war between the Republicans, backed by the UAR, and the Royalists, supported by Saudi Arabia, which extended from October, 1962 to mid-1963, each side sought a military victory. Basically Nasir decided to intervene militarily in Yemen on the false belief that the Royalists were weak and that the Republican government would need only limited Egyptian assistance to overcome the opposition speedily and decisively. The truth of the matter was that the Royalists had early on captured several strategic positions in the north and east and established supply routes up to Nadjran in Saudi Arabia and through Harib to Bayhan inside the South Arabian Federation. As a result, the strength of their position, combined with the guerrilla type of warfare they followed over notoriously difficult terrain, made it almost impossible for the Republican side to achieve a victory over them, speedily or otherwise.

By the first week of December 1962, Royalist attacks had escalated to the point that the Egyptians had not only substantially increased their troops from the original 100 to around 15,000, but had also
decided to take over the responsibility for the military confrontation with the Royalists from the Republican army.\textsuperscript{41} The legal basis for joint military operations between the Egyptians and the Republican forces had already been established on 10 November, 1962 when the YAR and the UAR had signed a five-year military pact which obliged each to come to the aid of the other in case of external aggression.\textsuperscript{42}

Because of their military weakness and political vulnerability at the time, the Saudis adopted a defensive strategy, avoiding in the process any direct involvement in the fighting in Yemen. Instead they provided the Yemeni Royalists with large-scale financial and military aid, enabling them to engage the Republicans and the Egyptian troops themselves. King Faysal believed that by intervening in Yemen, Nasir had involved himself in a quagmire and that the continued financial and military drain would sooner or later force the Egyptians out of Yemen.\textsuperscript{43} This threat to UAR involvement became more real as the Royalists began to receive help from a variety of sources including Britain, France, and Iran.\textsuperscript{44}

In November 1963, President Nasir, having become aware of the potential consequences for Egypt of a prolonged military involvement in Yemen, prepared to launch two major military offensives aimed at the decisive defeat of the Royalists. The first was made in February 1963 and the other followed in June 1964. Both these operations did indeed cause major setbacks to the Royalists, dislodging them from the strategic positions they controlled and cutting their supply routes, especially through Harib and Marib. But these defeats did not finish them off. Due to the difficult terrain of the northern and eastern parts of the country and the unfailing supply of foreign aid, the Royalists were not only able to survive but to reply with counter-
attacks. In a major counter-offensive beginning in December 1964 and continuing sporadically until July 1965, they were able to regain control of areas they had been evicted from in the 1963 Republican offensive and by August 1965 the military situation had returned almost to what it was at the beginning of 1963.\textsuperscript{45}

\textbf{Attempts at Settlement}

Failure to settle the conflict militarily stimulated efforts to find a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The fact that these efforts were either made by, or addressed to, Saudi Arabia and the UAR indicates the degree to which the importance of these two powers was paramount.

The first peace initiative was taken by the US administration; it was not aimed at securing a peaceful resolution to the war but was an attempt to contain it within Yemen itself. Following aerial attacks by the Egyptians on Royalist targets inside Saudi Arabia in November 1962 and January 1963, the Kennedy administration feared that an escalation of tension might lead to direct confrontation between Saudi Arabia and Egypt, and that this would threaten both the stability of the Saudi monarchy and the US strategic and oil interests in the Arabian Peninsula.\textsuperscript{46} On 1 March the UN, under pressure from the US, sent the Under-Secretary, General Ralph Bunche, to visit Yemen on a fact-finding mission. About the same time the US special envoy, Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker, made several visits to the UAR and Saudi Arabia. The underlying purpose was the same as that of the Bunche mission, but the American diplomat met with greater success and later negotiated an agreement for a simultaneous disengagement by the two states from Yemen.
Inevitably, Nasir showed more interest in negotiating an agreement that would consolidate the military successes achieved by the Republican side during the military offensive of February 1963. The then Saudi Premier Faysal was less enthusiastic to conclude a deal under these circumstances but was in no position to stand up to the UAR military challenge. Consequently, both leaders signed a disengagement agreement the details of which were disclosed by the UN Secretary General on 29 April, 1963. Under the terms of the agreement, Saudi Arabia undertook to terminate all aid to the Royalists and prohibit the use of its territory by them, while the UAR promised to begin a phased withdrawal of its troops from Yemen without taking any punitive actions against the Royalists.

In accordance with the agreement, a UN observation team (UNYOM) arrived in Yemen on 13 June, although it was not until 4 July that they began their task. They were deployed in Sana'a, Hudaydah, Sada, Nadjran and Djizan, where they were presumably intended to monitor the implementation of the agreement. Both the inadequacy of the facilities put at the disposal of the mission and a shortage of supplies limited the effectiveness of its operations right from the start. Moreover, the Royalists, who were not recognised as a party to the conflict, were determined to undermine the efforts of the UN, and, with the help of Britain across the borders, they continued the fighting. This ultimately led to the Egyptians ceasing their withdrawal.

Notwithstanding the lack of progress, Saudi Arabia and the UAR continued the extension and financing of the UNYOM on a two-monthly basis while the Secretary-General continued to submit pessimistic reports to the Security Council. In the spring of 1964 the fighting
increased and as a result the mission was finally terminated on September 4 of that year.\textsuperscript{50}

The first attempt to end the war was in Yemen was made in the calmer atmosphere of the intra-Arab detente which followed the First Arab Summit Conference held in Cairo in January 1964. Amid the spirit of reconciliation which was reflected in the resumption of relations between Cairo and Riyadh, Faysal and Nasir responded positively to the mediation efforts initiated by the Algerian and the Iraqi presidents to settle their differences over Yemen. Positive ideas for a settlement were worked out by the officials of the two countries during the first half of 1964 and a final formula was reached in September. At the conclusion of the Second Arab Summit in Alexandria (September 1964) President Nasir and King Faysal held talks on the Yemeni problem. After these talks which lasted from September 11 to 14, the two leaders issued a joint communiqué which became known as the "Alexandria Agreement". By this accord, Saudi Arabia and the UAR undertook to "make the necessary contacts with the parties involved for a peaceful settlement".\textsuperscript{51}

Peace talks were subsequently held between Republican and Royalist delegations at Erkuwit in southern Sudan on 1-3 November, 1964, with Muhammad al-Zubayri leading the Republican side and Ahmad al-Shami heading the Royalists. An agreement was soon reached, and it was announced that a cease-fire would become effective on 8 November, 1964. It was also agreed that a National Congress, consisting of 63 tribal leaders and an 18-member preparatory committee, was to meet in a Yemeni town on the 23 November to formulate terms for settling existing differences. Also Saudi Arabia and the UAR were to be asked to implement the Congress decisions.\textsuperscript{52}
The planned congress was never held. First it was announced on 20 November that it was to be postponed indefinitely. Despite the initial goodwill shown by President Nasir and King Faysal, it became evident that neither was ready to force concessions on his Yemeni ally. The only outcome of this attempt was the fact that it helped to crystallise the differences between the two Yemeni sides. It was announced that the proposed congress was postponed because of disagreements over where it should take place and the numerical allocation of delegates. However, the fact was that the two sides disagreed on the more substantive aspects. The Republicans would not agree on any alterations to the Republican régime while the Royalists insisted that it was up to the proposed Congress to decide on the nature of the future régime. On another point, the Republicans would not countenance the immediate withdrawal of the Egyptian forces while the Royalists demanded a guarantee that the Egyptian forces would leave the country before any plebiscite on the future government.

Contrary to the Alexandria Agreement, the second attempt at a peaceful settlement was fraught with considerable tension between the UAR and Saudi Arabia. In the summer of 1965, Nasir, concerned at the mounting cost of the war and impatient with the Republican bickering, took the initiative in another attempt at finding a peaceful resolution to the conflict. As the Royalist forces were on the offensive at that time, King Faysal was not as anxious as Nasir to come to an agreement, and responded only after Nasir threatened to put a decisive end to the conflict one way or another. In July 1965 communications between the two leaders were resumed. These resulted in a meeting between them which took place in Djedda on 23–24 August. After the meeting a new agreement to settle the conflict in Yemen was announced. The main conditions of the accord, which came to be known as the Djedda
Agreement, were an immediate ceasefire, the withdrawal of the Egyptian forces from Yemen by September, 1966, the ending of Saudi military aid to the Royalists, the setting up of a provisional Yemeni government, the holding of a plebiscite in November 1966 and the formation of an interim conference consisting of all Yemeni factions. The conference was to meet in the northern city of Haradh on 23 November to form a provisional government, make arrangements for the transitional period and organise the plebiscite.

In order to rebut any criticism from his Yemeni allies for his part in the agreement, Nasir arranged a meeting in Alexandria with the leaders of the two Republican factions, the moderates and the radicals. At the meeting, which took place on 19 August, Nasir explained his ideas in general terms to the Republicans. The Republicans were ambivalent towards Nasir's efforts and when the terms of the Djedda Agreement were announced they were far from satisfied, believing that Nasir's eagerness to withdraw from Yemen had made him offer too many concessions to the Royalists' side. On 21 September, 1965, the YAR Presidential Council and the Cabinet issued a joint statement in which they welcomed the reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and the UAR but made a point of affirming their commitment to the Republican system. The Republicans, especially the hard-liners, had no wish to take part in the proposed conference and agreed only when they received Nasir's assurances that the Republican system would not be jeopardised.

The conference commenced in Haradh on 23 November as scheduled with equal representation on each side. The meeting was scarcely underway before sharp differences began to emerge as each side tried to interpret the Djedda Agreement to its own advantage. The main bone of contention was the nature of the provisional government: the
Republicans insisted on the continuation of the Republic administration while the Royalists insisted on a neutral "Islamic state". A recess was called and, because of failure to resolve the disputed issues, the conference was never resumed.\textsuperscript{58}

Although some suggested that the Yemenis were responsible for the failure of the conference, it was clear that King Faysal and President Nasir were also not keen on its success. By December, the king had received new military equipment which increased his confidence and made him feel less vulnerable to a possible Egyptian attack. Nasir, for his part, became suspicious of the Saudi moves, especially King Faysal's attempt to promote an Islamic alliance, and began to prepare for a new round of confrontation.

**Intra-Republican Differences**

A crucial element in the political situation in the YAR was the intra-Republican discord which created instability within the system and at the same time contributed to the lack of coherent policies. Most of the differences whether on a personal level or in the wider political arena, sprang from the divergent backgrounds and political views of the post-revolutionary élites. Many of the differences that began to emerge in the weeks following the revolution were of a personal nature. For instance, Abd al-Rahman al-Baydani, who became Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs in the 31 October 1962 cabinet, was opposed by many covetous of the leadership. There were similar rivalries among senior officers in the army.\textsuperscript{59} These did not inflict any lasting damage on the stability of the régime and were kept largely under control by the occasional intervention of the
More fundamental differences also began to develop in the early days after the revolution. In the first stages of the war, the three veteran leaders, Ahmad Muhammad Nu'man, Kadi Abd al-Rahman al-Iryani and Kadi Muhammad al-Zubayri, were reported to have expressed doubts about the inflexible policy against the pro-Royalist tribes pursued by the Egyptians and supported by al-Sallal. These moderates advocated conciliation and benevolence towards the disaffected tribes - Ahmad Nu'man recommended conclusion of a series of agreements with local shaykhs to win them one by one from the Imam's side, and so gradually extend the influence to the Republican government. These views, however, were kept within the government and were not expressed publicly, partly because the moderate leaders wanted to avoid anything that would alienate the Egyptians at a time when no other alternative to the military confrontation was available.

The first time intra-Republican differences surfaced was at a popular conference held in September 1963. The conference was convened in Amran, to the north of Sana'a, with the stated purpose of finding ways and means of consolidating the régime. At the end of its deliberations it adopted resolutions which concentrated on internal affairs and were, in general, supportive of the government's policies vis-à-vis the Royalists. These resolutions involved measures designed to eliminate corruption, rationalise internal policies and introduce reforms, specifically a constitution and a freely elected parliament. However, during the deliberations it became clear that the most fundamental differences within the Republican ranks revolved around the best way to deal with the ongoing conflict with the Royalists. In effect, there were two factions advocating opposing policies. The radicals, represented by the majority of the intellectuals, the senior officers and the followers of various
political organisations, called for firmness and determination as the best way to defend the Republic and secure the régime. The moderates, represented by what was left of the old Free Yemeni Movement, the tribal Shaykhs and most of the junior officers, advocated, on the other hand, reconciliation with the Royalists (with the exception of members of the Hamid al-Din family) and called for a policy that would win over the rebellious tribes. These differences were of no immediate political relevance because of the priority given to the war with the Royalists and because the régime of al-Sallal would not permit the moderates to dictate policies.63

The failure of the Erkuwit Peace Conference (November 1964) brought, *inter alia*, the differences among members of the governing élite into the open. On 2 December, 1964, the two vice-Premiers, al-Zubayri and al-Iryani, together with Nu'man, Chairman of the Consultative Council, resigned from their respective posts in protest against al-Sallal's policies. In their letters of resignation they accused al-Sallal's régime of alienating popular support through its corruption and incompetence, and proposed that the president's powers should be transferred to a five-man Council of Sovereignty for an interim period of five years.64

A political crisis ensued when all cabinet members except one also resigned in solidarity with the three leaders. Within one month a new government was formed by General Hassan al-Amri. In the new cabinet announced on 5 January, 1965, only half the members of the previous government were included. Furthermore, a state of emergency was declared in Sana'a, and a tribunal was established to try several former ministers and dissident Republican leaders.65
During 1964 the Egyptian presence had become increasingly the focus of criticism, especially by those who blamed the Egyptians for both the prolongation of the war and the impotence of the government. In the aftermath of the December 1964 crisis, a group of Yemenis who became known as the "Third Force" went to Beirut and Saudi Arabia in protest against the situation in Yemen. Their demands, which became the basis of the political manifesto of the "Union of Popular Forces", were briefly: the end of foreign intervention in Yemen, meaning the withdrawal of Egyptian forces from Yemen and the simultaneous termination of Saudi aid to the Royalists; the convening of an intra-Yemeni popular congress in order to form a provisional government; the holding of free elections with a view to choosing a Constituent Assembly to decide the country's form of government.66

No longer held in check, as hitherto in 1963, the intra-Republican differences developed into a struggle for power between the two factions, namely the moderates and al-Sallal's government, and ultimately affected YAR policies. Following the December 1964 rift, Kadi al-Zubayri moved to Barat where, on 16 February, he founded an opposition party called Hizb Allah (Party of God). It had the objective of establishing an "Islamic RepublicanConsultative Rule" for Yemen and called for a peaceful settlement and the withdrawal of the Egyptian forces.67 Al-Zubayri's posture reflected the growing schism within the Republican leadership. There was not only friction over the issue of the settlement of the war but also over the nature of relations with the UAR. Most of the radicals, including al-Sallal, lent their unreserved support to the Egyptian presence in Yemen and were happy to rely entirely on it.68 On the other hand, the moderates, including the three leaders, Nu'man, al-Zubayri and al-Iryani, adopted an altogether more guarded approach. While they
wholeheartedly welcomed the UAR military role in defence of the Republic, they sought to limit the degree of Egyptian involvement in the formulation of YAR policies and particularly advocated self-reliance in finding a solution to the conflict. On 1 April, 1965 al-Zubayri was killed in obscure circumstances, but his death led to popular indignation and brought about the moderates rise to power. Under pressure, al-Sallal was forced to ask Ahmad Nu'man, al-Zubayri's colleague, to form a new government with the freedom to initiate reforms. The cabinet he assembled on 20 April accordingly represented the Republican moderates in both its composition and policies.

Nu'man's cabinet set as a priority the convening of a peace conference that would include all Yemeni factions, Republican and Royalist. Although the Royalists refused to take part, the conference was held in Khamir, to the north of Sana'a, from 2-5 May 1965. Most of its resolutions were dedicated to the peaceful settlement of the conflict. They included one to send delegations to Arab countries to seek cooperation in ending the war, and another to appoint a committee to make contact with the Royalists for the same purpose. It was also decided that a Yemeni "people's army", about 11,000 strong, should be formed which would gradually relieve the Egyptian forces. The conference also called on the government to amend the constitution.

The Khamir conference gave a popular mandate to the moderates who had clearly won that round in the political struggle with their radical rivals. On 8 May, al-Sallal was obliged to approve an interim constitution and two days later Nu'man sent a telegram to King Faysal requesting his cooperation in resolving the war. In the second half of June a delegation visited several Arab capitals to implement the Khamir resolutions.
Neither al-Sallal nor the UAR were pleased by Nu'man's policies. The first resented the measures taken to limit his powers while the Egyptians did not like Nu'man's independent stance. On 28 May, 1965 al-Sallal precipitated a political crisis by forming a Supreme Council of the Armed Forces without consulting the Prime Minister. Nu'man considered the action unconstitutional and on 1 July resigned his post in protest. This action brought the power struggle between the moderates and radicals to a head. On 14 July, General al-Amri, who was in favour of a hard-line approach, formed a nineteen-member cabinet which included only three ministers from the previous government. Al-Amri's cabinet lost no time in reversing the policies of his predecessor. The policy statement of the new cabinet emphasised the need to uphold the Republican system, to debar the Hamid al-Din family from any part in government and to eliminate rebellion, dissension and reaction.72

The moderate leaders had been widely supported by the tribes and the expulsion of the al-Nu'man government meant more dissension from within the Republican ranks. On 20 July 1965, nearly 250 Republican shaykhs arrived in South Yemen from where they sent telegrams to the Arab League and the UN demanding the reinstatement of the Nu'man government and the implementation of the Khamir resolutions.73 Afterwards they left for Saudi Arabia where they met King Faysal and under his auspices held talks with the Royalists and the popular forces on ways in which the war could be settled. From this two-week conference, which was held at Ta'if, Saudi Arabia from 1-31 August, a four-step settlement plan emerged. The sine qua non of the plan was the establishment of an Islamic state in Yemen with a provisional government to arrange for a plebiscite on the future form of government.74
As an attempt at settlement the Ta'if Agreement had no real chance of success for it reflected the Saudi views too closely. It pin-pointed the basic difference between the Republicans, radicals and moderates who on one hand insisted on the Republic and on the other the popular forces who sought to abandon the Republic in favour of an Islamic state.\textsuperscript{75} The Ta'if Agreement was immediately rejected by both the YAR government and the moderate Republicans. In a statement on 18 August, General al-Amri's cabinet rejected the Ta'if Agreement and denounced the conference as "merely a continuation of Saudi acts of aggression and sabotage" against the YAR.\textsuperscript{76} For his part, al-Iryani categorically rejected the Ta'if Agreement, insisting that any accord must include two basic terms: the maintenance of the Republic and the permanent removal of the Imam and his family.\textsuperscript{77}

Conclusion

The war which broke out after the overthrow of the Imamate on 26 September, 1962 increased the polarisation of forces in the Arab world and involved great power rivalry as well. The intervention by the UAR and Saudi Arabia in Yemen was perceived mainly within their ongoing rivalry but also invited indirect involvement of the other powers which had a vested interest in the Arabian Peninsula, notably Britain, USA, and USSR. This engulfed the YAR in wider regional conflict and confronted the Yemeni Republic with many challenges. The revolutionary character of the Yemeni revolution and its association with President Nasir's Egypt were at the root of the problems the YAR faced in the pre-1976 era. Many states denied recognition to it partly because of its association with the UAR and revolutionary policies. Increasing involvement by the UAR and Saudi Arabia led to
loss of control by the YAR of the conflict which became linked with relations between the two Arab states. In its domestic politics too, the increasing involvement of the UAR in the war led to increasing influence over the Republic's own policies. No less a threat were the sharp differences which developed among the two Republican factions, the radicals and the moderates, over the extent of the Egyptian influence and the strategies of settling the war.
1. In numerical terms, the Mutawakkilat Kingdom had fairly wide diplomatic relations, but these were only meant to enhance the international legitimacy of the regime and reflected no real activity. At the time of the 26 September Revolution, Yemen had diplomatic relations with 22 states, Arab and non-Arab. But while Yemen established permanent representation in 18 of these states, it was a host to only nine embassies, see A. H. Sharafaddin, *Daily American Commercial Printing Section*, Rome, Italy, 1961, p.70.


4. An examination of the pre-September economic conditions is to be found in the book by Muhammad al-Attar *al-Takhalluf al-Iktisadi wal-Idjtima'i fil Yaman* and Muhammad Ana'm's work entitled *Government Organization as a Barrier to Economic Development in Yemen*, see bibliography.


7. The original account of the coup as narrated by the "Free Officers" themselves is to be found in al-Thawrah al-Yamaniyyah: Asrar wa Watha'iq, Markaz al-Dirasat wal Buhuth al-Yamani (Sana'a) Kuwait, Matab'i al-Riyadi, 1978, pp.141-180.

8. ibid., pp.181-182.


18. For texts of telegrams, see *al-Hayat*, 30 September, 1962.


20. The UAR was the first Arab state to recognise the YAR on September 29, and was followed by Syria and Tunisia (October 1). Algeria and Sudan followed suit on 8 October, and Lebanon accorded recognition a week later. (Source *al-Hayat*, Beirut). Apart from the revolutionary Arab governments, Kuwait was the only Arab government providing economic aid to the YAR during the war period.

22. The Economist, 22 October, 1962. In his book al-Tarikh al-Sirri lil-Thawrah al-Yamaniyyah, pp.142-143 Djuzaylan mentioned that he was told by the Iraqi ambassador that the Iraqi President General Kasim thought President Nasir was behind the Yemeni Revolution. In their declaration of recognition of the YAR, both the Syrian Foreign Minister and Iraqi President General Kasim implicitly criticised the UAR intervention in Yemen. (see texts in al-Hayat, 2, 10, October, 1962).

23. When relations between the Ba'athist Government in Syria and President Nasir deteriorated following the failure of the unity talks of 1963, the former came openly in support of the Yemeni moderate republicans who opposed al-Sallal and criticized some of the UAR policies in Yemen. In 1965, the Syrian Government strongly supported the Nu'man Government and denounced the Djedda Agreement (August 1964). See ME/1948/A/5 and ME/1902/A/4-5.


35. George Haddad, "Revolutions and Military Role in the Middle East", op. cit., p.263.


40. Salah al-Hadidi, op. cit., p.44; This Egyptian view was shared by the YAR leadership. See replies of Ali Kasim al-Muaiyyad in Thawrat, 26 September, Vol. I, op. cit., p.183.


56. SWB, ME/1953/A/I.


59. Yemeni sources reveal that personal animosities among senior officers, especially al-Sallal, al-Djaifi and Djuzyalan began to surface as early as the end of October 1962. (See Djuzyalan's book *al-Tarikh al-Sirri lil Thawrah al-Yamaniyyah*, pp.140-142 and al-Baydani's *Azmat al-Ummah al-Arabiyyah...*, pp.436-441). Sources consulted by the writer suggest that personal ambitions for leadership were the underlying causes.

60. In their efforts to ensure cohesion of the régime, President Nasir had intervened personally (and sometimes upon the request of the YAR leaders themselves) to mediate in their differences (see Yusuf pp.356-357). As many opposed al-Baydani, the Egyptian President withdrew the former to Cairo in January 1963 and later convinced al-Sallal to ask Hamud al-Djaifi to form a new cabinet with wider participation.


63. ibid., pp.131-132.


67. For the first of these demands see Nagi al-Ashwal, *al-Djaish wal Harakah al-Wataniyyah fil Yaman*, op. cit., p.276.


70. Ibid., p.291.


