

**UNITED STATES POLICY TOWARDS THE
CONFLICT IN YEMEN 1962-67 //**

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by
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PREFACE

The outbreak of a conflict in Yemen, the overthrow of the government led by the Imam, the establishment of a Republican government and the ensuing struggle between the two had serious implications for the US policy in the region. As the crisis moved from one stage to another, creating more complications resulting from the involvement of other regional powers, the US had to improvise policy to meet the requirements. What clues, if any, the US response to the crisis offers one to understand its policy in the region. An effort has been made in the following pages to describe the developments in Yemen and analyze the US policy. The United States, however, was not the only actor and as other countries became involved it was forced to be guided by its interest in those countries. It was called upon to reconcile its conflicting interest in these countries and it did so with some awkwardness. The study covers the administration of the two Presidents - John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson.

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CHAPTER - I
INTRODUCTION

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THE UNITED STATES AND THE MIDDLE EAST

The end of the Second World War marked the beginning of an active United States role in the Middle East. The United States had developed a big stake in the industry that was developing in the Persian Gulf during the inter-war period itself.¹ But in the period following the War, the US felt that the Arab-Israeli dispute, the weakening of the Anglo-French power in the area following the Suez Crisis, and the prospect of increasing Soviet influence in the region required to play a major role in this region. The US policy towards this area was, thus, influenced by the considerations of protecting and promoting economic, political and strategic interests in the region.

IMPORTANCE OF MIDDLE EAST

In the Middle East, the discovery and rapid exploitation of the oil reserves radically enhanced the political and economic importance of the region for the United States and the rest of the world.² Starting with a moderate production of less than 6 percent of the total world's oil in 1939, the Middle East enlarged its contribution to the extent of 35 percent of the world output total in 1971. In broad terms the estimates of known reserves in the Middle East ranged between two thirds and

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1. For a detailed study of the US oil policy in the Middle East in the 1940s see Halford L. Hoskins, Middle East Oil in the United States Foreign Policy (Connecticut, 1976), p.1.
 2. R.M. Burrell, The Persian Gulf (New York, 1972), p.1.

three-fourths of the world total. Though oil was first discovered in Iran as far back as 1908, the level of oil production in West Asia reached a high level only after the Second World War. In the early 1960s proven reserves of oil were estimated to be around 190 billion tons. Of these 37 billion tons were believed to have been found in Iran, an American ally, and 153 billion in other Arab countries. One estimate comparing the productivities of the Middle Eastern and American oil pointed out that whereas over 13000 barrels of oil had been proved per foot in the Middle East, 20 to 30 barrels were drilled in the United States. The average yield of a well in the Middle East was 5200 barrels a day in comparison with 11 to 13 barrels per day in the United States. The oil reserves of Kuwait alone were estimated at more than the known reserves of the entire Western Hemisphere.³ Thus, the most striking aspect of the Middle East oil was its enormous potential rather than its level of production.

Another important aspect about the Middle East oil was its lower cost of extraction. In concrete terms, the cost of producing crude in the Middle East during the 1950s was on an average of 16 cents per barrel. This was in sharp contrast to national averages of \$ 1.73 for the United States, \$ 3.10 for Canada and 82 cents for the Far East.⁴ In the Burgan field of

3. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), The Economic Development of Kuwait (Baltimore, 1965), p. 22.

4. United Nations: Development of Economic and Social Affairs, Economic Developments in the Middle East, 1951-1961 (New York, 1962), pp. 58-59.

Kuwait the cost incurred on the extraction of one barrel of crude oil was as low as 6 to 8 cents in 1961.⁵

WESTERN CORPORATE INTEREST AND MIDDLE EASTERN OIL

The high level of technological sophistication in exploration and extraction of oil achieved by the Western oil companies led to their acquiring complete monopoly over the oil fields. American and British companies controlled almost entire oil reserves in the Arab countries. Arabian American oil Company (ARAMCO), an American Oil Company, was originally the only concessionaire in Saudi Arabia. An American group had an equal share in Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) along with British Petroleum, Royal Dutchshell and others. An American company developed oil in Bahrain island also.⁶

The Western investment in the Middle East for the exploitation of Arab oil yielded immense profits to the US oil corporations. In the mid-1950s the Western World's total capital investment in oil operations was approximately \$ 63 billion. Profits of companies of the Middle East during the same period (1956-1960), amounted to 66 percent of the value of their Middle East investment. According to an OPEC estimate, the profit on investments in the Middle East was to the extent

5. IBRD, n.3, p. 24.

6. Nejla M. Abu Izzeddin, Nasser of the Arabs, (Beirut, 1975), p. 364.

of 64 percent per year.⁷ During 1945-1963, the Arabian Peninsula alone provided the United States and Britain with 1000 billion barrels of oil and contributed a billion dollars in revenues to their economy.⁸ Until 1950-51, when an even profit-sharing formula was introduced in Saudi Arabia and Iraq, this region was a free zone for the exploitation by the Western Oil Companies for a long period. The duration of the concessions of the Iraq Petroleum Company group and its subsidiaries. Mosul Petroleum Company and Basrah Petroleum Company was seventy-five years. The concession granted to ARAMCO was for 60 years.⁹

THE UNITED STATES' POLITICAL LEVERAGE

Apart from enjoying monopoly on oil-fields the Western nations had acquired sufficient political leverage in this area. They were in a position to act independently of the states where they were carrying out their operations. The ruling elites had become dependent on these corporations. Political authorities did not have the power to control or regulate the operations of these countries. Iraq was a British mandate and had no alternative to signing the contract on the terms offered. Otherwise, it could lose the support of the British in its dispute with Turkey over the Mosul province,

7. Kamal S. Sayegh, Oil and Arab Regional Development, (New York, 1968), p. 42.

8. Abid, A. Al-Maryati, "The Problem of Yemen", Foreign Affairs Reports (New Delhi), Vol. 14, December 1966, p. 157.

9. For a description of the concession agreements, see George Lenczowski, Oil and State in the Middle East (New York, 1960), pp. 63-87.

where the oil-fields were located.¹⁰ Likewise, Kuwait and some other Sheikhdoms, small but rich in oil, were the protectorates of Britain, an ally of the United States.

With the growing commercial and national consciousness of the Arab oil countries, a conflict between the Arab States and the oil companies on profit-sharing was inevitable. The American and the British political and security commitments to the Arab States could not ensure their freedom to exploit Arab oil on their own terms. Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), formed in 1960, came to command greater control over investors and has been in a position to strike tough bargains with the Western Oil Corporations. Thus, as the oil-producing countries started asserting themselves the United States along with the its allies, was faced with two sets of problems. While on the one hand, the United States had to protect the interest of its investors in the Arab countries, it had to ensure the continuance of oil supply from this region. One time the biggest producer of oil in the world, the United States in 1960s came to depend heavily on the Persian Gulf oil because its consumption rose in comparison with its own production.¹¹ Yet the American dependence on the Gulf sources did not exceed 25 percent of its total oil requirements.

10. Izzeddin, n.6, p. 370.

11. John Hagel, Alternative Energy Strategies, Constraints and opportunities (New York, 1976), p.3. Also see Mordechai Nahumi, "The United States and the Middle East", New Outlook (Tel Aviv), Vol.7, February 1969, pp. 25-33.

In comparison, Western European countries imported around 35 percent and Japan about 65 to 70 per cent of their oil requirement from the Gulf.¹² The United States, thus, acquired an interest in the maintenance of the flow of oil not only to itself but also to Western markets from the Middle Eastern oil fields. The US oil corporations had profitable investments in the region and the US government was aware of the value of these investments to its balance of payments. It, therefore, wanted to promote the interest of its companies. Above all, maintenance of the flow of oil was "vital to the security of the European component of the Atlantic Community".¹³

Continued access to oil from the region, therefore, became an important objective of US foreign policy. By implication, it became necessary for the United States to prevent the spread of Soviet influence in the region which could endanger oil supply from these sources.¹⁴

In addition to its oil resources, the Middle East area was important to the American economy in other ways also. It

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12. Oil in the Persian Gulf, World Today (London), Vol. 20, July 1964, pp. 305-313.
 13. William R. Polk, The United States and the Arab World (Cambridge, 1965), p.288. Also see Ze'ev Katz, "Kennedy and the Middle East", New Outlook, Vol.7, January 1964, pp.3-5.
 14. For the policy of the Soviet Union see John A. Berry, "Oil and Soviet Policy in the Middle East", Middle East Journal (Washington, D.C.), Vol. 26, Spring 1972, pp. 150-154. Also see Harry N. Howard, "The American tradition and US policy in the Middle East", Middle East Forum (Beirut), Vol.40, April 1964, pp. 17-22.

offered expanding markets for American goods and services and a "Political Climate generally receptive to American investments and expertise and a growing surplus of capital for investment and economic development throughout the region".¹⁵ In pursuance to this policy the United States reinforced its ties with Iran and Saudi Arabia along with other countries of the Middle East. Its cooperation with Saudi Arabia were in several ways. Among other things, it offered to the Saudis technical assistance for military modernization.¹⁶

The United States cooperated with the CENTO members for their combined forces and "development of economic projects".¹⁷ An analysis of the US government foreign grants and credits to the area reveals that for the entire post-Second World War period (1945-1977), the total for the region was \$ 33.099 billion.¹⁸ Included in this was an all time high of \$ 12.338 billion in the 1956 to 1965 period.¹⁹

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15. William P. Rogers, United States Foreign Policy, 1972: A Report of the Secretary of State (Washington, D.C. 1973), p. 383.
 16. Ibid., p. 386.
 17. See Communique after 13 session of CENTO Council of Ministers held in Teheran on 7 and 8 April 1965 documented in Richard P. Stebbins, ed., Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1965, (New York, 1966), pp. 108-109.
 18. John K. Cooley, "The United States Economic Role in the Middle East and Africa" in The US Role in a Changing World Political Economy: Major Issues for the 96th Congress. A compendium of Papers submitted to the Joint Economic Committee Congress of the United States (Washington, D.C. 1979) p.493.
 19. Ibid.

THE EVOLUTION OF U.S. SECURITY AND STRATEGIC INTEREST IN THE REGION

From massive economic involvement of the United States in the Middle East grew its security and strategic interest in the area. With the decline of British and French influence in the region after the Second World War, a power vacuum was being created. Consequently, both the United States and the Soviet Union staked their claims to fill in the vacuum. The United States took up the responsibility of safeguarding the western interests in the oil-rich region of the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula. Furthermore, with the intensification of the Cold War, both the Powers sought to carve out their respective areas of influence and the Middle East occupied a significant place in their priorities.

Immediately after the Second World War certain developments around the Middle East moved America closer to the region. The Soviet occupation forces foisted a secessionists' regime on the northern province of Iran and proclaimed the establishment of the autonomous Republic of Azerbaizan. Secondly, the Soviet Union entered into a dispute with Turkey over the Turkish strait of Dardanelles.²⁰ After the Second World War Turkey had rejected several Russian suggestions that a joint Russo-Turkish naval base

20. See George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs (Berkeley, 1952), p. 93.

should be established in Dardanelles. All this coupled with the Soviet-instigated Communist rebellion in Greece motivated the United States to realize that the Soviet Union was working assiduously to bring the region within its own sphere of influence.²¹

The United States, feared that the Soviet Union, taking advantage of its physical proximity to the area, might gain control of the oil fields and threaten the security interest of the United States and the very survival of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) partners.²² Another concern of the United States in the region was to safeguard a few nations of the Arab World which were under the conservative regimes and were on very good commercial terms with the United States, e.g. Iran, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Kuwait etc. Such countries could not stand the onslaught of modernisation in the wake of rapid economic development.

TRUMAN DOCTRINE

Thus, it was to save these countries from internal subversion and insulate this region from the influences of international communism backed by the Soviet Union that President Harry S. Truman, declared on 12 March 1947 that

21. Harry S. Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1953 (Sufflok, U.K., 1956), pp. 98-115.

22. John C. Campbell, "Middle East Oil : American Policy and Super Power Interaction", Survival (London), Vol. 15, September-October 1973, p. 217.

the foreign policy objectives of the United States could not be realized unless free peoples were not helped "to maintain their free institutions and national integrity against aggressive movements that seem to impose on them totalitarian regimes".²³ In a statement which came to be known as Truman doctrine, he warned that direct or indirect aggression undermined the foundations of international peace and hence "the security of the United States".²⁴ The essence of the Truman Doctrine was, thus, to contain the Soviet expansionism and to ensure protection of the Western economic and Strategic interests in the Middle East and elsewhere.²⁵ While the United States was still engaged in evolving a coherent policy to safeguard such interest, the emergence of Israel in the midst of Arab states created further problems for its policy makers. The United States helped the creation and was committed to the survival of Israel.²⁶ Thus, the United States sought the cooperation of France and Britain through Tripartite Declaration of 1950 to prevent violations

23. Department of State Bulletin (Washington, D.C.), Vol. 16, 23 March 1947, pp. 534-537.

24. Ibid.

25. See George F. Kennan, Memoirs 1925-1950 (Boston, 1967) pp. 313-324.

26. For a detailed description of this aspect see Nadav Safran, The United States and Israel (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), pp. 35-43.

of frontiers and armistice lines to maintain status quo in Palestine.²⁷

TOWARDS REGIONAL SECURITY SYSTEM

The excessive American commitment to Israel made other Arab countries like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Lybya fearful of the intentions of the western countries. It was partially because of this suspicion that a Regional Security System proposed by President Dwight Eisenhower did not find favour with the Arab leaders. However, Turkey, Iran and Pakistan - the "Northern Tier" countries - who were seriously concerned about the Soviet threat expressed preference for some kind of collective security system for the region.²⁸ But in early 1950s, Iran under Mohammed Mossadeq, a staunch nationalist Prime Minister, nationalised the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. The pursuit of an independent policy by him threatened the system of collective security envisaged by the Northern Tier Defence System until the Shah of Iran was restored to Power in August 1953. In April 1954 the United States and Iraq entered into a Mutual Security Pact followed by a similar US-Pakistan Pact.²⁹

On 24 February 1955, Iraq and Turkey signed a Pact of Mutual cooperation at Baghdad. Subsequently, by October, the

27. Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 22, 5 June 1950, p. 886.

29. Ibid., Vol. 28, 15 June 1953, pp. 831-5.

29. Ibid., Vol. 30, 17 May 1954, pp. 772-3 and 31 May 1954, pp. 580-1.

same year Britain, Pakistan and Iran joined what came to be described as Baghdad Pact.³⁰ In 1957, the United States, not formally acceding to the Pact, became member of the economic and military committees.³¹

In July 1956, following nationalization of the Suez Canal by Egypt, the forces of Britain, France and Israel had intervened militarily to gain control of the Canal.³² The United States realizing the unprecedented post-war crisis of international magnitude which could jeopardise its long-term interest in the region condemned the tripartite military aggression and asked the "interventionist forces" to withdraw. But contrary to the expectations of the United States, the victory of Egypt which also meant a triumph for the Soviet Union relegated the presence of the United States to the background.

EISENHOWER DOCTRINE

On realizing the negative repercussions of the growing influence of Egypt and the Soviet Union, President Eisenhower had to formulate a new policy with regard to the Middle East.

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30. Iraq after its revolution in July 1958, withdrew from the Pact in March 1959. On 21 August 1959, the Organisation was renamed as the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO) with its headquarters transferred from Baghdad to Ankara.
 31. For detail see John C. Campbell, Defence of the Middle East: Problems of American Policy (New York, 1958), pp. 39-48.
 32. For a comprehensive account of the Suez Crisis see Erskine B. Childers, The Road to Suez: A study of Western-Arab Relations (London, 1962), pp. 55-67.

On January 5, 1957, in a message which was later incorporated in a Congress resolution, President Eisenhower reaffirmed "the independence and integrity of the nations of the Middle East". The resolution empowered the President "to use armed forces" in the region "to assist such nations requesting assistance against armed aggression from any country controlled by international communism."³³

The Eisenhower doctrine was a manifestation of the US fear that the Anglo-French debacle in the Middle East might result in a power vacuum in the Middle East which could endanger the interest of the Western countries. The area could also be exposed to the communist influence, if the United States did not move in.³⁴ The "doctrine", perhaps the most remarkable policy statement after the Truman Doctrine, was an unequivocal warning to the Soviet Union and its allies that the United States could go to the extent of using its armed might if its interests were threatened in the region and the political independence and territorial integrity of its West Asian allies undermined.

US INTERVENTION IN INTRA-ARAB DISPUTES

The United States invoked the provisions of the Eisenhower

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33. "Joint Resolution to Promote Peace and Stability in the Middle East", Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 36, 25 March 1957, p. 481.
34. US Senate, 85 Cong., 1 Sess., Committee on Foreign Relations and Committee on the Armed Services, Hearings, The President's Proposal on the Middle East (Washington, D.C., 1957), Vol. I, pp. 76-77.

doctrine for the first time in Jordan in 1957. In Jordan, differences developed between the pro-Egypt Arab nationalist Prime Minister Suleiman Nebulsi and the pro-American ruler King Hussein which developed into a kind of civil war between the supporters of the Monarch and the Prime Minister King Hussein accused the Soviet Union and International Communism of instigating the troubles in Jordan and sought American help. Thus, the ground was prepared for the United States to intervene in the crisis which was by any reckoning an internal problem of Jordan.³⁵ The US decision was viewed with alarm by the Arab countries who did not support US policy for it raised the spectre of intervention in their own countries. This fear drove Syria into joining Egypt into a United Arab Republic.

The Jordanian crisis and the unification of Syria with Egypt had their impact on the nationalist movement brewing in Lebanon also. In May 1958, Lebanon was rocked by a fierce civil war between the pro-Nasser Nationalists and the supporters of the pro-west President Camille Chamoun.³⁶ The Lebanese Foreign Minister accused Egypt and Syria of providing

35. Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 36, 13 May 1957, p. 768.

36. See M.S. Agwani, "The Lebanese Crisis of 1958 in Retrospect". International Studies (New Delhi), Vol. 4, July 1962 April 1963, pp. 329-348.

massive moral and material support to the nationalists movement in that country. The State Department believed that the communists were "principally responsible" for the trouble and upheld Chamoun's action.³⁷ As the crisis deepened Washington concluded that the United States would have either to support the Chamoun's regime against subversion or to accept "a great Arab nation presided over by Nasser".³⁸ In the meanwhile, the Iraqi monarchy was overthrown on 14 July 1958 which threatened to upset the Western Alliance System. The Americans had regarded Iraq as a bulwark against the onslaught of instability in the region. The United States, thus fearing a take over the West Asia by Nasser's Egypt and Soviet Union decided to intervene militarily President Eisenhower ordered "the American troops to land into Labanon to assist the government in the preservation of Labanon's territorial integrity and independence" which he said were vital to the US interest and world peace.³⁹ The United States believed that the peace and stability in the region was seriously threatened by the Soviet Union and its friends like

37. Dwight D. Eisenhower, The White House Years : Waging Peace 1956-1961 (New York, 1965), p. 266.

38. Charles Thayer, Diplomat (New York, 1959) p. 8.

39. See "U.S. Despatches Troops to Labanon", Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 39, 4 August 1958, pp. 181-183.

Egypt and Syria. The fear of Soviet expansionism threatening America's vital interest was great and provided motivation for its policy.

From American response to the crises of Jordan and Lebanon, it is clear that the United States attached tremendous importance to "Soviet expansionism" and "International Communism". Egypt under Nasser was seen as a Russian protege and his increasing influence was viewed with equal alarm. However, not all intra-Arab fights were due to the pro-Moscow communist though they stood to gain from such conflicts. Nor did Moscow play a direct role in instigating these conflicts. Many of them were liberal movements against old, conservative, monarchical regimes. The US intervention in the troubled spots of the Middle East would have further infuriated a section of the Arab World. Yet the United States was moved by its objective of the containment of the Soviet influence in this region and supported those who shared its concern.

The US policy towards the conflict in Yemen has to be seen in the context of its time, when the policy had reached a certain stage of development. The Kennedy administration coming into office in January 1961 wanted to break away with the past and yet continued to fight against "the threat of Soviet expansion" in the Middle East. The Johnson Administration moved along the same line. An effort will be made in the following pages to analyze the US policy to this cataclysmic development in Southern Arabia.

CHAPTER 4 II

KENNEDY ADMINISTRATION : EFFORTS AT MEDIATION

CHAPTER - II

KENNEDY ADMINISTRATION : EFFORTS AT MEDIATION

YEMEN : A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Republic of Yemen, situated in the South-Western corner of the Arabian Peninsula, is bounded on the north and east by Saudi Arabia and on the West by the Red Sea. On its south is situated the People's Democratic Republic of South Yemen, formerly known as South Arabian Federation. This Federation included the former British Colony of Aden, and the three states of the Eastern Aden Protectorate. The Eastern part of Yemen has a desert region known as Rub al-Khali (the Empty Quarter) and is still undemarcated. Its seacoast from the mouth of Wadi Maydi in north to the strait of Bab el Mandeb in south is about 80 miles long. Because of the undemarcated boundaries, the area of Yemen could not be precisely determined. Estimates, however, vary from 180,000 square kilometres, according to official British sources, to 200,000 square kilometres, a figure cited by the Central Government of Yemen.¹

Yemen has an estimated population of about four to five million among which there are said to be around 3,500 tribes and sub-tribes. The Yemenis are divided mainly into two Muslim groups, the Zaidi and the Shafi. The former is a sub-division

1. The Encyclopaedia Britannica (Chicago, 1977), Vol. 19, p. 1084.

of the Shia sect of the Muslims which believes that the Imamate or the Caliphate could be accorded only to the descendants of the prophet Mohammed.² This group mainly inhabits the northern and eastern parts of the country. The Shafi sect represents a school of law said to be founded by the Jurist, Mohammed el-shafi, in the ninth century. It is a school of thought within the Muslim sect of the Sunni. They believe that the Imamate could be accorded to a non-descendant of the Prophet. The Shafis are mainly found in the southern and south-western parts of Yemen.³

Yemen was part of the Ottoman Empire until the First World War.⁴ The Turks had occupied the territory in 1517 but their rule was opposed by the Yemenis. Turkey again gained control of the territory in 1872. But the revolts against the Turkish rule erupted in 1891, 1904 and again in 1911, when the Turks agreed to allow Imam Yahya to appoint provincial governors in the Zaidi districts of Yemen. With the withdrawal of Turkey in 1918, Yemen became completely independent under Imam Yahya.

In 1948, a popular discontent led to the assassination of the despotic and conservative Imam Yahya. But his son Ahmad, with the help of the pro-Imam tribes defeated the rebels and succeeded his father.

2. Robert W. Stookey, Yemen: The Politics of the Yemen Arab Republic (Boulder, 1978), p. 79.

3. Ibid.

4. For a detailed historical account see Eric Macro, Yemen and the Western World (London, 1968).

The new Imam Ahamad followed on the lines of his father and maintained traditional political, social and economic institutions. Although Ahmad had started developmental programmes with the aid of the Western powers, there was no radical change in the political system except for the setting up of a formal cabinet in 1955, that too after another unsuccessful coup. Even after the establishment of the cabinet, the Imams controlled all government posts and business. Imam Ahmad, who ruled Yemen from 1948 till his death on 19 September 1962, like his father, was a despot and a conservative and one who distrusted modernisation.⁵ With the regime of Al-Badr, the son of the Imam Ahmad, a new era of reforms began. On 21 September 1962, he reportedly took some liberal decisions like the suspension of some taxes, abolition of feudal mortgage loans, granting of amnesty for all political prisoners and freedom for hostages. But at the same time, he did not completely break with the past and reappointed his father's ministers.

After the Second World War, Yemen gave up its isolationist foreign policy and for the first time established diplomatic relations with countries including the United States, Britain and Egypt.⁶ In 1945 it joined the Arab League and in 1947, it

5. Walter Laqueur, ed., A Dictionary of Politics (New York, 1974), p. 553.

6. In January 1959, Yemen through an agreement, secured a grant of 15,000 tons of foodgrains from the United States to feed the victims of a severe drought and famine there. See Department of State Bulletin (Washington, D.C.) Vol., 40, 16 February 1959, p. 246.

was admitted to the United Nations, In 1950s Yemen joined the defence system sponsored by Egypt. This defence system was the outcome of the Baghdad Pact. Yemen joined Egypt in forming the United Arab States in 1958 and Hodeida was chosen as a permanent seat of the UAS.⁷ But the Union did not last long as the relations between Yemen and Egypt deteriorated. Gamel Abdel Nasser, President of Egypt, dissolved the federation and denounced the Imam as reactionary.⁸

Yemen, one of the few countries comparatively unknown to the outside world until the eruption of the conflict under study, had long been beset by political turbulence. A Muslim theocratic state, it had an absolute monarchical and autocratic rule. It was a backward country where slavery persisted and women were kept in seclusion.⁹ In the period following the Second World War even in a remote and backward country like Yemen, demand for change surfaced within the tiny ruling class. It cannot be denied that drastic changes in the social, economic and political institution were badly needed.

The elements in the ruling circle that were opposed to the Imam and who were looking for an opportunity carried out

7. Manfred W. Wenner, Modern Yemen : 1961-1966 (Baltimore, 1967), p. 132.

8. Robert, St. John, The Boss: The Story of Gamal Abdel Nasser (New York, 1960), p. 283.

9. Laqueur, n.5, p. 554.

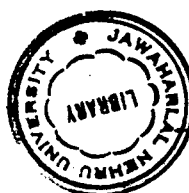
a coup d'etat on 27 November, 1968. The revolt was led by colonel Abdullah Al-Salal who had earlier been appointed chief of the army staff by the new Imam.

The revolt of 1962 in Yemen, which was an extension of the earlier coup attempts in 1948 and 1955, was interesting for various reasons. It threatened to adversely affect the position of other monarchies, the British position in Aden and other territories in the Arabian Peninsula. It contributed to the instability in the region accentuating further the ideological cleavage in the area. Due to the geopolitical importance of Yemen any conflict in the region was bound to attract the attention of the Super Powers.

The Coup in Yemen set in motion a prolonged conflict between the Royalists and the Republicans. An attempt has been made here to analyse the conflict and the attitude of external powers, particularly that of the United States towards the conflict.

IDEOLOGICAL AND MATERIAL AID TO THE REPUBLICANS

Following the successful coup on 27 September 1962, the feudal Arab Kingdom of Yemen proclaimed itself a "free republic" and its monarch, the 35-year old Imam Ahmad Badr was replaced by Colonel Abdullah Al-Salal as the head of the new Republican government. The dramatic transition from monarchical to the



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republican system of government followed the coup by the top military officers of Yemen against the Imam.¹⁰

The "Liberal Revolutionary Army" announced over the radio Sana,¹¹ that the royal place was destroyed by artillery fire and the Imam's body was buried under debris". It gave a call to the 4,500,000 Yemenis to rally behind the "revolution" which saved the country from "the bitterest enemies of the people, the staunchest foes of the worker, peasant, merchant, the dictatorial cruel one-man rule, the imamite monarchy."¹² The announcement further said that the revolt had spread from Sana and Taiz and that the three major provinces of Salaf, Ibb, Haila and the part of Hodeida had switched their loyalty to the new regime.

The Yemeni military leaders were very much influenced by the ideology of Gamel Abdel Nasser. His programme of "Pan-Arabism"¹³ and ideas about "Arab Socialism" were known to have the support of some military personnel in Yemen. The Yemeni army believed to be composed of 20,000 regulars was trained by

10. Time (Chicago), 5 October 1962, pp. 20-21.

11. Sana was one of the two capitals of Yemen, the other being Taiz.

12. New York Times, 28 September 1962, p. 1.

13. Nasser's original ideas of "First Circle", "Second Circle" and Third Circle from which his concept of "Pan-Arabism" has been derived are contained in Gamel Abdel Nasser, The Philosophy of Revolution (n.a.) pp. 62-63.

instructors from Communist bloc countries and Egypt. In an interview with the Middle East News Agency, Salal revealed that the groundwork for the military coup was laid in 1956, when Yemen signed an arms deal with the Soviet Union.¹⁴

Since 1956 the Yemeni army had been equipped with Soviet arms including T-34 tanks. The small airforce of Yemen consisted mainly of Soviet and Czechoslovak planes, including Yak fighters and 3 squadrons of Russian IL-10 attack bombers. The military aid was given during the regime of the Imam himself. The dethroned Imam, then the crown prince, had visited the Soviet Union, Communist China and East Germany and had brought Soviet technicians into Yemen. This was part of an overall effort on his part to modernize his country's army.¹⁵

Following the coup in Yemen, Egypt wanted the country to be left alone. Abdel Kader Hatem, the Minister of State in the Cabinet of Nasser warned Britain and Saudi Arabia not to use the turmoil as a pretext for "moving into Yemen".

Prince Saif al-Hassan, the uncle of Imam, who was then representing Yemen at the United Nations, declared that the

14. Max Frankel in New York Times, 7 October 1962, p.1.

15. Time, 26 October 1962, pp. 26-27.

royal family would regain the leadership of the country with the help of the loyal tribesmen.¹⁶ But Hassan was soon to realize that to put of country back under the Imam was not so easy. The coup, however, led a protracted fight between the Republicans and the Royalists.

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE REGION

The revolution promised to modernize the country. However, the outbreak of fighting opened the possibility of Yemen being sucked into the vortex of super power rivalry. The geographical position of Southern Arabia had long been of strategic importance. It is close to the world's major oil sources, it overlooks both the Indian ocean and Red Sea, whose southern entry it directly controls.¹⁷ Aden, in the south of Yemen was a British military base and an important port on the trade route to the east on the Red Sea. It had been under the British possession since 1839. It was administered as part of British India until 1937. The United Kingdom retained the right to manage colony's internal security when it was incorporated into the South Arabian Federation in 1963. Along with singapore, Aden ranked as Britain's biggest overseas base. It was one of the world's first five bunkering stations.

16. Newsweek (New York), 1 October 1962, p. 28.

17. A. Yodfat and M. Abir, In the Direction of the Persian Gulf (London, 1977), p. 103.

After the loss of the Suez Canal base, Aden acquired added importance in Great Britain's global strategy.¹⁸ It became the headquarters of the British Middle East Command. Apart from guarding oil installations in Iraq and Kuwait Aden would have helped Britain as the "Staging Area" for potential military operations.

Yemen had long been at logger heads with Britain over the status of Aden and disputed frontiers. Yemen had claimed the protectorate states as part of its Kingdom. Because of these claims, relations between Britain and Yemen ranged from "uneasy acceptance of the status quo to the skirmishes on the frontiers".¹⁹ The British government did not expect the new government in Yemen to give up the old frontier claims. Accordingly, in order to ensure wider acceptability of the Republican regime, Salal kept harping on the old territorial claims and threatened to wage war to get its claims accepted.

If Aden passed into the hands of Yemen, it could affect the position of other powers in and outside the region. A hostile Yemen, at the mouth of the Red Sea through which Israeli shipping lanes passed, could be potentially troublesome

18. Gillian King, Imperial Outpost-Aden, Its place in British Imperial Policy (London, 1964), pp. 67-68.

19. John Law in US News and World Report (Washington, D.C.), 15 October 1962, p. 90.

to the West. Israel was an American ally and opposed to Egypt and therefore, it constantly faced the threat of a Yemeni blockade against its shipping that could be easily done from the port of Hodeida that had been developed with the help of the Russians on the Western bank of Yemen. The United Kingdom and Israel in the sixties were close allies and worked in collaboration with the United States in this region. What hurt Britain, therefore, also affected the United States. The fate of the British Protectorate of Aden was thus important for the United States as well.

Jordan and Saudi Arabia feared the development in Yemen because they felt that their conservative monarchical systems would fall a prey to Nasser's pan-Arabism. The appeal of Nasser's Arab socialism cut across the intra-Arab boundaries. The followers of Nasser dreamt of one Arab land to be presided over by Nasser. In that situation a pro-Nasser government in Yemen could threaten the territorial integrity of Saudi Arabia. It may also prevent the Saudi monarch to gain control of the Arabian Peninsula. President Nasser had often denounced the Arab Kings, including the Imam of Yemen, as "reactionaries" and had successfully appealed to the Arab people directly. Therefore, after the over-throw of the Imam, it was natural for the powers nearer to Yemen to manoeuvre on and near the

Arabian Peninsula to influence the civil strife in Yemen.²⁰
A direct or indirect intervention by such countries as Egypt, Soviet Union, Saudi Arabia, Britain and Jordan appeared to be inevitable. The situation caused grave concern in the US State Department because its strategic and economic interests in Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf could be safeguarded only by ensuring the stability and integrity of Saudi Arabia under the monarch and that of the Protectorate of Aden under the British.²¹

The United States could have made its presence felt in the troubled area only by recognizing the new regime in Yemen. But conflicting analysis of the situation in the Administration and the difference of opinion with Britain delayed American recognition of the Republican regime in Yemen.²² One of the points of contention was the extent of the involvement of Egypt. Britain, with its vital oil interests in the area and sizable forces in the protectorate of Aden was inclined to favour a Royalist regime in Yemen. In the meanwhile, the revolutionary government was recognised by Syria, Algeria, Tunisia, the Soviet Union and a few other communist countries.

20. For a detailed study on the international reaction to the Yemeni coup see Robert Stephens, Nasser: A Political Biography (London, 1971), pp. 389-392.

21. Law, n.19.

22. Newsweek, 22 October 1962, p. 36.

Egypt had already accorded recognition to the Republican government of Yemen.²³ In view of this development any further delay in recognition of the new regime could have made it more dependent on the Communist bloc. At the State Department, therefore, the Middle Eastern experts urged the Administration to prevent further foreign intervention. They believed that the Republican government had a fair chance of survival.

The government of Yemen sought formal recognition of the new regime from the United States. The note submitted by Yemen claimed that the regime exercised effective control over the country and promised to comply with all previous obligations and international commitments.²⁴ These are the customary criteria for the recognition of a new government.

But the United States withheld recognition because of the strong pressure exerted by its close friends Britain and Saudi Arabia. The crown Prince Faisal, the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia, who was on a visit to the United States met President John F. Kennedy and "made a strong plea against recognition of the new Republican regime".²⁵

23. Peter Mansfield, Nasser (London, 1969), p. 130.

24. New York Times, 7 October 1962, p.1.

25. Ibid.

As the United States was weighing pros and cons of according recognition to the new regime, the State Department received the first indication of the extent of renewed involvement of Egypt in the conflict. An Egyptian ship containing "technical aid" and medical supply reached Hodeida. The Egyptian support to the revolution in Yemen were guided by two considerations.²⁶ First, Egypt was bound by the Jedda Pact²⁷ to aid and support Yemen and second, Egypt's concern for Arab unity. The Foreign Minister of Egypt Mohsen al-Ainy pleaded for renewing the Union between Yemen and Egypt.

However, the proposed long-term plan received a set back with the arrival of Prince Hassan in Nairan on the Saudi border to mobilize Yemeni tribesmen opposed to the Republicans. The Yemeni Prince's efforts were blessed by Saudi Arabia. With the help of the royal guard of the king Saud he attempted to lead the infiltrators to the northern Yemeni town of Sada.

26. UAR News (Press Bureau of the UAR Embassy, New Delhi), Vol. 4, 12 October 1962, p. 2.

27. The Jedda Pact, which was signed in 1956 by Nasser, King Saud and Imam Ahmad was a mutual defence agreement which stipulated among other things that aggression against any one of the three would be considered an attack on all and it was binding on any two to come to the aid of the third under attack. Syria which was part of the loose federation with Yemen and Egypt pulled out of it in 1961.

about fifty miles from Saudi Arabia's southern front. This resulted in a series of skirmishes in northern Yemen.²⁸

Alongside military skirmishes diplomatic efforts were also underway by both the Royalists and the Republicans to retain or regain recognition from the United States and the United Nations Organisation. On 7 October 1962, the Yemeni Deputy Premier, Baidani issued a warning to the United States that further delay in recognition of the new regime might jeopardise the American interests in Yemen and would "force the Yemeni government to reconsider agreements concluded between the former government and the American companies operating in Yemeni territory".²⁹ The main American operations in Yemen was a project under which a road was being constructed from the old port city of Mocha to Sana. The project was financed by the US government. Besides, a private oil exploration company from the United States was operating in Yemen since 1961.

While the United States, Britain and the United Nations were delaying the recognition of the new regime, the Egyptians were reported to have reached in Sana to help of Republicans repulse any attack from the Royalists. Thus, barely after eleven days of the coup Egypt entered the territory of Yemen.

28. New Republic (Washington, D.C.), 20 October 1962, p.7.

29. Quoted in New York Times, 8 October 1962, p. 8.

In an interview to Sam Pope Brewer of the New York Times, the Foreign Minister of the Republican Yemen, Mohsin Al-Aini, explained the Yemeni revolution and presented his country's case for recognition by the United States. Aini reaffirmed^m that his regime was democratic one. He said the September revolution was a culmination of the uprisings against the Imam in 1948, 1955, 1957 and 1960. He commended the recognition of the new regime by Egypt and "the Socialist Countries". But his further comments showed that his regime was not all happy with the communist countries. Aini stated:

Because of your hostility we might have to make ties we do not want. Delay in recognizing us encourages some of our neighbours to try to crush our new republic. We do not want communism but we must have friends.³⁰

Egypt, on its part, tried to coax the United States into recognizing the new regime in Yemen. A close aid of President Nasser, Anwar el-Sadat, who had recently returned from a two-day visit to Sana charged the United States with aiding the Royalists by not recognizing the new Yemeni Republican regime. He alleged that the United States was supplying Saudi Arabia arms to pass on to Prince Hassan.³¹ Pledging his support for the new revolutionary regime in Yemen. Sadat, however, made it clear that Cairo was not keen on forming the federation with Yemen again.

30. Quoted by Sam Pope Brewer in Ibid., 12 October 1962, p.2.

31. Ibid.

According to a Middle East News Agency report, the United States had agreed to supply to kind Saud with Hawk missiles.³² Such missiles were earlier sold to Israel. Though the report was later denied by the State Department Officials, Saudi Arabia might have placed the order in view of the escalation of the conflict. There were already reports of border fights with Saudi Arabians and Jordanians in the north and with the State of Beihan in the federation of South Arabia in the east.

APPEARANCE OF DEPOSED IMAM ON THE SCENE

The appearance of the Imam on the scene at this juncture introduced a new dimension to the problem. He was reported killed on the fateful day of 27 September 1962. Earlier the Middle East News Agency had reported that the Imam had reached the American base at Dhahran in Saudi Arabia and was hospitalized.³³ The Imam sent a message to Nasser charging interference by Cairo in Yemen's internal affairs. He also asked the Secretary General of the Arab League³⁴ to call an urgent meeting of the League to consider

32. Newsweek, 15 October 1962, p. 36.

33. New York Times, 16 October 1962, p. 17.

34. In Cairo in March 1945, seven Arab States, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, TransJordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Yemen formed a loose organisation called the Arab League. Although divided on many matters the League pledged resistance to Jews in Palestine. See Alexander Deconde, A History of American Foreign Policy (New York, 1978), p. 282.

Yemen's protest and take "decisive action" against Egypt. He asked King Hussain of Jordan to "make known to the whole world this serious interference by a brother Arab country to international law, the Covenant of Arab League, the charter of the United Nations and resolutions of the Bandung Conference".³⁵

Jordan was the first to respond to the request of Imam On 20 October 1962, its premeir Wasfi al-Tall stated that his country would be ready to consider any request by the Imam to help regain the control of his country. He declared that Jordan was bringing forth a supplementary military budget of almost \$ 3,00,000 to support the Yemeni Royalists.³⁶ Jordan's threat to intervene in Yemen brought the old feud between king Hussein and President Nasser to a flash point. Their quarrel since 1955 was a basic conflict between Arab tradition and Arab socialism which the two leaders represented. At another level, it was the result of the ambition of the two leaders to unite and revive an Arab Society that was emerging from centuries of Feudalism. The king considered himself as an embodiment of the old Arab national tradition. His great grand-father Sherif Hussein led the Arabs in a revolt for independence from the Turks during the First World War. Nasser, on the other hand, propounded a newer ideology of Arab nationalism. This aimed at overthrowing the traditional Arab

35. New York Times, 17 October 1962, p. 14.

36. Ibid, 21 October 1962, p. 12.

monarchies and breaking away from the influence of former colonial powers. He also harped on loosely defined concepts of "pan-Arabism" and "Arab Socialism". The conflict between King Hussein and President Nasser was, thus, a clash of two personalities with apparently different outlook. The United States and Britain had given large amount of money to Jordan. On many occasions they had succeeded in restraining the king from clashing with Egypt.

On 30 October 1962 Salal renewed his plea to the United States and the UK to recognize the new regime. In order to establish credibility he pledged to hold elections and set up a democratic parliamentary government. Furthermore, to remove the suspicion from the minds of the Western nations, he denied his communist leanings and declared that "the present state of Yemeni social life makes the introduction of communism here completely impossible".³⁷ The republican sources, however, warned that they would be left with no choice "but to deal with the communists"³⁸ if the Western nations persisted in their attitude.

But the United States and Britain ignored these gestures and made no move towards recognition. There were several reasons for it. Firstly, following the revolutionary regime's

37. Ibid., 31 October 1962, p. 4.

38. Newsweek, 26 November 1962, pp. 34-35.

threat to declare war on Saudi Arabia and Jordan if they gave air support to Yemen the tension in the region increased. Suspecting British plot against his regime, Salal had threatened to take over the protectorate of Aden. Secondly, for some time the USA and the UK believed with Saudi Arabia and Jordan that the Royalists would finally regain power in Yemen. Thirdly and most importantly, it was the ratification of the defence pact between Yemen and Egypt that persuaded these two powers not to recognize the new Government.³⁹

The Defence Pact, which was to last for five years, put the Egyptian expeditionary force in Yemen consisting of 5,000 to 10,000 solidiers. The pact further stipulated that aggression against either Yemen or Egypt would be considered aggression against both. In such an event the two countries were committed to mutual aid and "to take all measures and use all means, including armed force in the other's defence".⁴⁰ The pact provided for a Supreme Council and a War Council to deal with military and defence matters respectively. It was, however, not clear as to how defence and military affairs would be differentiated.

39. New York Times, 12 November 1962, p. 11.

40. UAR News, Vol. 4, 22 November 1962, p. 1.

To serve a warning to Nasser and others who were on the side of the Yemeni Republican Government, the United States undertook a flight of six US Air Force F-100 jets over Riyadh on 16 November 1962.⁴¹ The State Department called it a "routine flight". Robert Stookey, the US charge d' affaires in Yemen had assured the Yemeni Deputy Premier Baidani that the American planes in Saudi Arabia would not attack Yemeni forces and would remain neutral in the conflict. Yet the Arab experts took this "show of force" as a warning that should the Egyptian planes even attack Saudi Arabia "the US Air Force would head them off".⁴²

On 21 November, 1962, Stookey reported to Washington that the Republican regime was in full control of the country except in some border areas. This prompted the United States to seek some basis for mediation to end the civil war in Yemen. There were a number of other factors that led the US to undertake the mediatory efforts. Yemen's location on the Arabian Peninsula was of strategic importance to the US. During 1945 to 1963, the Peninsula provided the West with 1000 billion barrels of oil and in 1962 contributed a billion

41. Times, 23 November 1962, p. 25.

42. New York Times, 17 November 1962, p.5.

dollars in revenues to the UK and the United States.⁴³

A prolonged civil war in Yemen might have escalated into a "larger inter-Arab war" jeopardising the security of the American allies like Saudi Arabia and Jordan.⁴⁴

The American base at Dhahran in Saudi Arabia and the British base at Aden could also have been endangered.ⁿ

Furthermore, a prolonged civil war in Yemen and its deteriorating economy would have "provided further communist penetration through the Peninsula's back door".⁴⁵ The

Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China were already vying with each other to gain a foothold in Yemen.⁴⁶

One more consideration that weighed with the United States was that a permanent settlement could have formed the basis for the inevitable US recognition of the Republican regime.

The United States possibly wanted to show to the world that the West in general and the United States in particular were not always "identified with the reactionary regimes" while the Soviet Union was identified with the cause of progress in the Arab world.⁴⁷ Like the Americans the British were

also keen to dissociate themselves from the repressive regime

43. Abid., A. Al-Maryati, "The Problem of Yemen. Foreign Affairs Reports (New Delhi), Vol. 14, December 1966, p.157.

44. See Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., A. Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House (London, 1965), p. 494.

45. Maryati, n. 43.

46. US News and World Reports, 8 October 1962, p.6.

47. John S. Badeau, The American Approach to the Arab World (New York, 1968), p. 137.

of the Yemeni royal family. But they were influenced by their need to preserve Aden as a base.

The State Department was having difficulty in deciding whether the rebel government fulfilled the requisite criteria for recognition i.e. whether it controlled the territory of the country and enjoyed the support of the people. As things stood at this time the Royalists' progress had slowed, Saada and Haradh, the two places under the occupation of the Royalists were on the verge of being retrieved by the Republicans. The Republicans, thus appeared to be in full command. However, a few questions remained to be resolved by the American policy-makers. One was whether Salal would make Yemen independent of Nasser or whether Yemen would be converted into "a fief" in the domain of Egypt. The second question was the extent of Soviet Union's involvement in Yemen.

KENNEDY'S PEACE INITIATIVE

On 25 November 1962 John F. Kennedy, the President of the United States, sent letters to leaders in the Middle East proposing steps towards the settlement of the conflict in Yemen.⁴⁸ Apart from Nasser and Salal, the messages were sent to Crown Prince Faisal, Premier of Saudi Arabia and King Hussein of Jordan. In delivering the President's letter to Faisal in Riyadh, the US Ambassador to Saudi Arabia William Hart,

48. New York Times, 22 November 1962, p. 1.

understandably made the point that the extent of Soviet and Chinese communist aid to Yemen made it impossible for the United States to maintain its presence there.⁴⁹ In a letter written on 17 November 1962 to Nasser, President Kennedy proposed that Egyptian troops should withdraw from Yemen and Saudi Arabia and Jordan should, in return, stop providing material support to the Royalists.⁵⁰

President Kennedy's letter was bound to invite reactions from the concerned nations. The Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia called Kennedy's proposal "unacceptable". He argued that the Imam and his government enjoyed the support of the majority of the Yemeni people and therefore was still legal. The Republicans, whose actual control was confined only to the towns of Sana, Taiz, and Hodeida were sure to be defeated by the Royalists during the winter. Faisal also opposed the idea of the United States recognition to the Republican government in Sana before the withdrawal of all foreign elements. He feared that Nasser's real objective was to seek a foothold in the Arabian Peninsula, overthrow the monarchy in Saudi Arabia and then take control of the

49. Ibid.

50. For the text of Kennedy's letter to Nasser see Mohammed Hassanein Heikal, The Cairo Documents: The Inside Story of Nasser and his Relationship with World Leaders, Rebels and Statesmen (New York, 1973).

Saudi Arabian oil.⁵¹

David Ben-Gurion, the Israeli Prime Minister, called Kennedy 'naive' statesman who believed that the conflict in Yemen could be localised. He warned that Israel would not remain passive if Egypt repeated its intervention in a country closer to Israel.⁵²

Nasser responded to Kennedy's letter by making it clear that he did not intend to "occupy" Yemen.⁵³ Making a plea for the US recognition of the new regime in Yemen, Nasser expressed his willingness to bring the Egyptian expeditionary force home as soon as he was assured that the republican revolution was secure against outside attack. Nasser had three reasons for his conciliatory response. First, he probably believed that the US recognition would imply Washington's good faith and exclude any attempt at subversion. Secondly, it would indicate to King Saud, King Hussein and the British protected Sheiks in South Arabia that they should desist from helping the deposed Imam. In this way, the United States might help Salal to modernize his medieval

51. New York Times, 30 November, 1962, p. 11.

52. Ibid., 1 December 1962, p. 9.

53. Excerpts of Nasser's reply in Heikal, n. 50, p. 217.

country and to put Yemen on a firm financial foundation. Thirdly, and most importantly Egypt, perhaps, sought Western recognition of the Republican Yemen with a view to be relieved of what was the biggest foreign aid operation ever undertaken by an entirely Egyptian force.⁵⁴

US RECOGNIZES REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT.

On 19 December 1962, despite its knowledge of continued fighting on the northern and eastern edges of Yemen and contrary to the wishes of Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Yemeni Royalists, the US recognized the republican government. It moved its legation from royalist capital in Taiz to Sana and asked its charge d' affairs in Yemen, Robert Stookey, to present his credentials.⁵⁵ The United States, thus, gave a significant turn to the developments on Arabian Peninsula.

According to the State Department two developments hastened the process of recognition. First a declaration by the Salal government that it would honour previous international

54. According to a report Nasser's military involvement in Yemen amounted to three-quarters of the total military budget of aEgypt i.e. about \$ 17 million to \$ 18 million. The force included an airborne battalion and napalm carrying TU-16 bombers. Besides, several hundred technicians, including doctors, engineers, teachers and business administrators badly needed at home were in Yemen. See Newsweek, 31 December 1962, p. 25.

55. New York Times, 20 December 1962, p.1.

obligations, including the Treaty of Sana concluded with the British Government in 1934,⁵⁶ providing that neither party should intervene in the affairs of the other "across the existing international frontier dividing the Yemen from territory under British protection".⁵⁷ This was considered important because a number of Yemeni tribesmen live in the protectorate which surrounds the vital trans-shipment port of Aden. Yemen had been demanding parts of the territory of Aden and the pro-Yemeni people in Aden called it "South Yemen". Mostly pro-Nasser, these elements had set-up Front for Liberation of South Yemen and were creating problems for the British. The second reason for according recognition appeared to be a declaration by Egypt that it would withdraw the 12,000 Egyptian troops "gradually". It was believed that Jordan and Saudi Arabia, which had been supplying arms and money to the Royalist tribesmen would cease doing this after the withdrawal of the Egyptian troops.⁵⁸

The United States government officials said that the decision to recognize the Yemeni government was motivated by

56. Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 32, 7 January 1963, pp. 11-12.

57. Ibid.

58. Stephens, n. 20, pp. 394-5.

the feeling in the State Department that a wave of social change was sweeping the Arab world which had long been dominated by feudal customs and tribal loyalties. The United States policy in the area was, thus, based on the conviction that it was better for these Arabian countries "to ride the wave of change than to be submerged in the waters of civil war and rebellion".⁵⁹ The monarchies, therefore, should continue programmes of reform leading toward parliamentary government rather than cling to strict monarchical rule. This might subject them to insurrections similar to that in Yemen.

Whereas Cairo saw in the American action a vindication of its support, in the judgement of many in the United States, the American policy was "most controversial in Middle East after the Suez invasion in 1956".⁶⁰ The difference between the Suez and Yemeni crisis was that in 1956 Nasser was fighting a defensive war against the British-French-Israeli aggression and the entire world supported him. In contrast, this time a considerable part of the Arab world was against Nasser. The Suez operation could be regarded as the last gasp of British and French imperialism. Nasser's intervention in Yemen was considered the first military move in a campaign

59. Dana Adam Schmidt in New York Times, 24 December 1962, p. 3.

60. Ibid.

which aimed at something more than establishment of the Republican system in Yemen. It was speculated that Nasser's gamble was to overthrow monarchy in neighbouring Saudi Arabia and get control of its oil.

Jordanian Prime Minister Wasfi Al-Tel, who had given much support to the West called the American move as a "grave mistake". Saudi sources complained of the disadvantage of being too closely linked to the United States. Thinking that in future it may have to depend on Britain, Saudi Arabia moved to mend its fences with Britain. It moved towards resumption of diplomatic ties with Britain that had been broken in early 1950s over Burmini Oasis dispute.⁶¹

The American recognition of the Salal regime was attacked by the monarchist and leftist wings of the Arab-world who were anti-Nasser. Both the groups alleged that the American action implied support of Nasser. The reason for the support was explained according to the political slant of the group. The monarchists charged that Nasser had promised, in exchange for economic and political support, to keep hands off Israel and to halt anti-American propaganda. The leftists

61. Ibid.

expected a joint US-Nasserite imperialism in the Middle East. The Arab newspapers, however, hailed the US action as the creation of a "Pax Americana".⁶² Lebanon's independent daily Al-Hayat commented approvingly and said that the US policy in the Middle East was "to encourage stability and achieve peace".⁶³

In the United States, the recognition aroused mixed reaction. Supporting the move Time commented that but for the intervention by the United States, the Yemeni conflict might have almost certainly "exploded into a far wider struggle between Socialist Egypt and the Arab monarchies."⁶⁴ Aware of the fears that the Yemeni revolution would spark trouble in the neighbouring kingdom, the United States "gambled" that "the example of Yemen will prove a spur to reform rather than revolution in all the Middle Eastern Monarchies".⁶⁵ US News and World Report observed that in view of the vital American interest in the Middle East, the "US recognition came too soon".⁶⁶ The US move, in effect, "condoned the spread of Nasserism" to the Arabian Peninsula where US investments ran to \$ 1 billion and retained the right of using air bases in Saudi Arabia.

62. Time, 28 December 1962, p. 19.

63. Quoted in Ibid., 18 January 1963, p. 20.

64. Ibid.

65. Ibid.

66. US News and World Report, 15 July 1963, p. 62.

said Newsweek.⁶⁷ Even if it was true that the Republicans came to stay in the main part of the country, the move "seemed that in solving one diplomatic problem the US was likely to encounter others".⁶⁸ Furthermore, the US disregard of the wishes of Saudi Arabia and Jordan indicated indifference to its long-term interests in Saudi oil. In this 'miscalculated' recognition of the ^aSalal regime, the US ran the risk of easing grip on the oil monopoly.⁶⁹ It may perhaps be possible that the State Department wanted to demonstrate that oil could readily be purchased at a reasonable price without maintaining a colonial or semi-colonial relationship with the oil-producing nations.⁷⁰ In any case the decision to recognize Yemen Arab Republic was "too late to win friends and too early to be safe".⁷¹

Britain, which was an ally of the United States in this region, did not show haste in recognizing Salal's regime. As the British Foreign office saw it, the US recognition was not going to halt the war. Nor was it going to set the United States on any wave of the future. By its recognition

67. Newsweek, 31 December 1962, p. 25.

68. Ibid.

69. Macro, n.4, p. 130.

70. Jules Davids, The United States in World Affairs: 1964 (New York, 1965), p. 259.

71. Williams R. Polk, the United States and the Arab World (Cambridge, 1975), p. 392.

United States might have provided Nasser with a cover to help extricate himself from a difficult situation or it might have wished the monarchs to take lessons from developments in Yemen. Only the subsequent events could prove whether the recognition at that stage was a step in the right direction.

In the beginning of January 1963, Egypt was reported to have bombed and strafed a Saudi Arabian settlement. The aircrafts were reported to be Russian Ilyushin bombers piloted by Egyptian airmen. Disturbed by the attitude of Egypt, on 4 January 1963, the State Department sent a note to Cairo.⁷² deploring the attacks on the Oasis of Najran⁷³ in Saudi Arabia. The officials stated that the bombings would only persuade the Saudis to continue aiding the Royalists.

What the US desired at this stage was the setting up of some machinery for disengaging the outside Arab involvement. This could be done either through an international agency or through independent diplomatic initiative by a prominent leader.

72. New York Times, 7 January 1963, p. 1.

73. Najran, a few miles north of Yemen border in a Saudi Arabian territory was said to be an important transit point for Saudi arms supplies to Royalist tribesmen in Yemen.

The US Ambassador in Egypt, John S. Badeau, at the instruction of the State Department saw Ali Sabry, Chairman of the Executive Council and Zulfikar Sabry, Deputy Foreign Minister to discuss the State Department's concern over the bombings by Egypt. The talks revealed a stiffening attitude on the part of Egypt. Ali Sabry explained to Badeau that Egyptian planes in Yemen were repulsing large-scale infiltration from Nairan into the El-Akik valley inside Yemen. Later in a statement, published in Al-Ahram, Sabry accused that the American pilots employed by the Saudi government were flying military cargoes from northern Saudi Arabia to Nairan. The equipments allegedly included light-arms and anti-tank guns transported to Saudi Arabia from Pakistan. Ali Sabry said:

The United States was in the best position to know the nature of the Saudi's feverish preparation for aggressive conspiracy against the Yemeni revolution since because of its good relations with the Saudis, the United States had many means to learn the facts.⁷⁴

King Hussein of Jordan, on the other hand, did not fail in expressing his displeasure over the American policy towards the conflict in Yemen. In an interview to the New York Times in Amman, Hussain complained that the United States was undercutting its friends in the Middle East by pursuing such policies

74. Quoted in New York Times, 5 January 1963, p.1.

as the recognition of the Republican regime in Yemen. He said the United States had, in effect, joined hands with the Soviet Union and Egypt to over throw Yemen's legitimate government. This was according to him a strange alliance that "shocked, hurt and weakened" the friends of the United States in the Middle East.⁷⁵ He asked that the Yemenis be given the right to decide their own future. The majority of the Yemenis, he claimed, were clearly against Egyptian interference and opposed the regime which Egypt was trying to force on them.

Drawing a parallel between the US response to the Yemeni crisis and its actions in the Cuban missile crisis, Hussain remarked that in Cuba the United States took the stand of defending its and other's right to be safe against the presence of subversive and offensive weapons. But when a similar thing happened in the Middle East, "The United States and the rest of the free world looked the other way while Yemen is subverted from the outside and invaded with extreme brutality with the same type of weapon as in Cuba and from the same source i.e. the Soviet Russia", the King observed.⁷⁶

Responding to the continuing warfare, increasing Egyptian commitment to the Republicans and the ruffled feelings of the

75. Ibid., p.2.

76. Ibid.

American allies in the Middle East on 8 January 1963, President Kennedy publicly reaffirmed his support of the Royalist government of Saudi Arabia. Deploring the bombing and strafing of the oasis of Najran between 30 December 1962 and 1 January 1963, President Kennedy emphasized that the United States was committed to the "territorial integrity" of Saudi Arabia.⁷⁷ The statement further urged the "disengagement of foreign forces" in the Yemeni conflict. This move was a part of the American effort to prevent the Yemeni civil war from spreading to other parts of the Middle East. A State Department spokesman, however, said that the President's announcement did not imply any new commitment to Saudi Arabia nor did it imply withdrawal of recognition from the anti-royalist government of Yemen.⁷⁸ But it did imply reversal of the policy which was heralded by recognition. So far as the Saudi government was concerned it needed this public demonstration of support to show at home that the United States backed the Saudi Royal family despite its rejection of the Royal family in Yemen. In response to a Saudi request Washington sent a destroyer, "Forest Sherman", to Jidda.⁷⁹

77. Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 32, 21 January 1963, pp. 90-91.

78. The United States and Yemen agreed on 1 February 1963 to raise their diplomatic missions in Taiiz and Washington respectively from legation to embassy level. See Ibid., Vol. 32, 18 February 1963, p. 250.

79. Time, 18 January 1963, p. 20.

As Egypt showed no sign of relenting, it was Saudi Arabia which took initiative in proposing mediation. It proposed that it would cease assisting the Royalists if Egypt would withdraw all its forces. This announcement amounted to a late acceptance to Kennedy's mediation proposal for peace offered in November 1962. The Saudi Arabia announcement made the following proposals :

- i. Withdrawal of all foreign armed forces, of any nationality, from Yemen.
- ii. All external assistance for the purpose of war, direct and indirect, to be stopped after the withdrawal.
- iii. The Yemenis to be given the right to choose the type of regime they wanted,
- iv. A neutral supervisory commission to be formed to supervise the executive at each of the stages.⁸⁰

US EFFORT AT PEACE UNDER UN AUSPICES

Before the Saudi proposals could be considered by any concerned party, the United States took one more step in the direction of securing peace in the region by seeking the intervention of the United Nations. On 11 January 1963, U-Thant the Secretary General of the United Nations announced

80. New York Times, 9 January 1963, p. 1.

that he was 'involved' in the effort aimed at laying down ground rules acceptable to all parties for long-range mediation.⁸¹ The State Department Officials, however, did not envisage a United Nations police action along the border. The immediate objective of the United Nations was to find out a mediator acceptable to the four countries involved in the conflict, Yemen, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Jordan.⁸² Towards the beginning of March 1963, Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, UN Under-Secretary for special political Affairs, was deputed to try to arrange a pull-back of forces.⁸³ In the meanwhile the United States felt that if the United Nations mediation effort failed Nasser would be further tempted to carry the war more directly against Saudi Arabia. To avert such a possibility, Washington issued a warning to Egypt on 7 March 1963 saying that if Nasser followed up the air raids he would be putting himself on a "collision course" with the United States.⁸⁴ Apart from Nairan, Egyptian planes had further raided the port of Jijan, an air field near Kahmis Mishayt and the administrative centre of Abha, approximately 60 miles north of the Yemeni frontier.

81. UN Review (New York), Vol.10, February 1963, p. 19.

82. The UN officials were arranging for a mediation mission similar to that undertaken for the United Nations by Ellsworth T. Bunker, a retired US diplomat. Bunker helped arrange a settlement under United Nations auspices of the Netherlands-Indonesian dispute over West New Guinea.

83. See Time, 8 March 1963, pp. 20-22.

84. New York Times, 8 March 1963, p.1.

South Arabia had also charged the Egyptians with bombing the border town of Dahra. Another development which concerned the United States was the reported clash between Yemenis and the British forces near Hareb in South Yemen. The outbreak of fight had complicated Bunche's mediation efforts. The Bunche mission also suffered a setback at the hands of Saudi Arabia when it refused to discuss the Yemen situation with Bunche. The officials in Washington were, thus, concerned about four things, the bombing raids, the reported air drop of Egyptian military equipments in Yemen, the military clash between Britain and Yemeni forces along the Yemen-Aden border and the initial difficulties of the Bunche mission.

The stern warning issued by the United States seemed to have yielded quick results. Nasser agreed to stop the air and naval bombardments of the Saudi territories. In return, the United States promised to make every effort to persuade Faisal to cease aiding the Royalist forces. To persuade Saudi Arabia the United States sent Ellsworth T. Bunker, a former Ambassador, to the country.⁸⁵ The Bunker mission, undertaken at President Kennedy's personal direction was said to have three major purposes: firstly to give the Saudi government firm

85. Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 32, 25 March 1963, p. 437.

assurances of US support; secondly, to persuade it to agree to some reduction in the flow of arms and aid to the Royalists and thirdly, to urge Faisal to agree to a visit by Bunche who was trying to arrange a cease-fire in the Yemeni civil war.⁸⁶ At a news conference on 8 March 1963, the US Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, repeated assurances to Saudi Arabia and Jordan. He said, "We are very much interested in the independence of our friends in Jordan and Saudi Arabia and will be very much alert to any threats against them".⁸⁷

In troubled Yemen, there was no sign of abatement in preparations for war. Field Marshal Abdel Hakim Amer, Commander-in-Chief of all Egyptian armed forces, had established his headquarters in Sana. All Cairo-Soviet furnished MIG Jet-fighters and IL-28 light-bombers were based in Yemen. But the light-bombers operated from Egypt. The Egyptian forces had enabled the Republican regime to hold all the coastal lowlands, Sana and other principal towns. The Republicans also got control of Harib, once the Royalist-held town. The new regime also controlled the areas bordering

86. Middle East Mirror (Beirut), Vol. 15, 16 March 1963, pp. 17-18.

87. Department of State Bulletin, n. 85.

the strategic British-controlled Aden area and the South Arabian Federation. The Royalist strength, on the other hand, was concentrated in the north not too far from Sana, but it was scattered in the hills. The Royalist tribal forces were essentially guerrilla irregulars who controlled most of the rugged highlands. They were armed with conventional weapons like rifles and light-weapons with a few jeep-type vehicles. However, despite the technological disparities between the centuries old tribal forces and the modern equipments of the Egyptians, the Royalists had inflicted casualties on the Egyptians.⁸⁸ In backing the Royalists, Saudi Arabia had to face bombings by Egyptian planes. As a result, there were some casualties in Abha, the administrative capital of Asir province in Saudi Arabia. Though in addition to American F-100 jet fighters, about 100 American paratroopers from Germany were transported to Saudi Arabia with supplementary equipment in six C-130 aircrafts, Saudi Arabia was not effective in forestalling Egyptian air raids along its border. In the wake of the crisis, suggestions were made in the State Department circles to move some units of the Sixth Fleet into the Red Sea.⁸⁹ The move could test Nasser's intentions since the ships had to transit the Egyptian-controlled Suez Canal.

88. Hanson, W. Baldwin in New York Times, 9 March 1963, p. 6.

89. Ibid.

On 13 April 1963, a United Nations spokesman reported that Ellsworth Bunker had submitted a report to U-Thant which indicated that Egypt and Saudi Arabia had reached a tentative agreement to cease their interference on opposing sides in the civil war of Yemen.⁹⁰ The proposal agreed to by the concerned parties provided for Egypt to begin withdrawing its troops by 20 April 1963. Saudi Arabia would simultaneously halt aid to the Royalist forces. The agreement also allowed the United Nations observers in Yemen to "check" on the execution of its terms.⁹¹ Further, the agreement also stipulated for a 12-mile demilitarized zone along the Saudi-Yemen border with United Nations observers stationed along it to prevent arms supply from Saudi Arabia into Yemen. The Chief US delegate to the United Nations, Adlai E. Stevenson, met Secretary General Thant on 15 May 1963 and urged on him to expedite the establishment of a UN Presence in Yemen.

Responding to the US request, U-Thant instructed Major General Carlson Von Horn, the Chief of Staff at the United Nations Palestine Truce Supervision Organisation to make a trip to Yemen in early May 1963. But certain problems emerged

90. Ibid, 14 April 1963, p. 1.

91. US News and World Report, n. 66.

in the way of United Nations sending observers' mission to Yemen. Firstly, the Soviet Union objected to sending mission to any country without the approval of the Security Council because, in its opinion, outlays fixed for any peace-keeping operations would be illegal unless approved by the Council. Secondly, Egypt was not agreeing to pay its share of costs incurred on the mission. And thirdly, Faisal threatened to ignore disengagement accord unless Egypt halted aggression on the Royalists and started evacuating troops.

On 11 June 1963, the Security Council following a division of 10-0, approved the proposal of sending observer team to Yemen.⁹² The Security Council resolution took note of the situation in Yemen and authorised the Secretary General to establish the observation operation in Yemen. It also urged upon the parties involved "to observe the terms of disengagement" and asked the Secretary general to report the implementation of the decision to the Security Council.⁹³ The USSR abstained in the voting.

92. Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 49, 8 July 1963, p. 71.

93. Ibid.

On 29 June 1963, the first large unit of United Nations troops with Major General von Horn as its chief sailed from Port Said, Egypt to Yemen. The United States and Britain pledged support to the United Nations conciliation effort in the joint communique signed by President Kennedy and Prime Minister of Britain Harold Macmillan in Brighton at the end of the former's visit to England on 30 June 1963.⁹⁴

ESCALATION OF CONFLICT AND VIEWS OF SOME SENATORS

However, reports from the Royalist sources indicated no abatement in fighting. On 29 July the Royalists claimed to have downed three Egyptian bombers killing 63 soldiers. In retaliation, the Egyptian planes again undertook air raids of Najran village in Saudi Arabia. The uncompromising attitude of Nasser was severely assailed in the United States. The Administration had withstood the pressure of anti-Egypt Senators and Congressmen who wanted the United States to take a tough line towards Egypt.

Bushrod Howard Jr., an American national registered as an agent of the Royalists on the monthly pay of \$ 5,000, told the Senate Foreign Relations committee on 21 June, 1963, that the American foreign aid was supporting Egypt's "criminally vicious war" against the former kingdom and

94. New York Times, 1 July 1963, p. 10.

helping the revolutionary regime to continue in power. Testifying on the \$ 4,500,000 foreign aid authorization bill Howard asked the Congress to stop all aid to Egypt because a threat to cut off all aid was "the only way" by which Nasser could be forced to abide by his agreement to withdraw from Yemen.⁹⁵ Pointing out the failure on the part of the United States he charged that "the lower policy level of the State Department" had actively and consciously sabotaged the withdrawal agreement which was negotiated by the United States.

In the same hearing Senators Jacob K. Javits (R., N.Y.) and Kenneth B. Keating (R., N.Y.) urged the committee to refuse aid to Egypt and any other country that used the American assistance to divert its own resources for a military build up, subversion, or propaganada against another recipient of American aid. Senator Javits charged that Egypt was spending \$ 500,000 a day to maintain 28,000 troops in Yemen. This was, according to him, contrary to Nasser's withdrawal agreement given in exchange for the American recognition of the anti-Royalist regime. "At this rate", Senator Javits argued, "the UAR has spent in six months more than \$100,000,000 or practically as much as we give the UAR under our aid programme".⁹⁶ Senator Keating (R., N.Y.) contended that

95. Ibid, 22 June 1963, p. 20.

96. Ibid.

"Nasser will have spent over \$ 700,000,000 on Soviet bloc weapons from June 1955 through 1964". Therefore, the congress, according to Keating should "reduce any aid programmed for Nasser by at least the amount that Nasser feels able to splurge on Soviet equipments."⁹⁷

On the floor of the Senate too the United States policy towards the conflict came in for a sharp criticisms. On 31 July 1963, Bourke B. Hicken-Looper (R., Iowa) charged that there was "strong evidence that Egypt was using poisonous gas in Yemen and violating the disengagement agreement." In the Senate speech and later in a letter to Secretary of State Dean Rusk, the Senator suggested that the United States should consider withdrawing recognition from Yemen until the 28,000 Egyptian troops in Yemen had left.⁹⁸

Anticipating the attacks the State Department brought out a "position paper" justifying its policy in the troubled area. The paper concluded that the use of an assistance programme "as a bludgeon to force solution" would not work.⁹⁹ As regards withdrawal of recognition the State Department asserted that such hasty action would backfire. This kind of

97. Ibid.

98. For the "Gas warfare" Launched by Nasser see US News and World Report, 15 July 1963, pp. 62-63.

99. Ibid., 22 June 1963, p. 20.

action could benefit only the Soviet Union, which, according to the latest information, had sent 1000 technicians to work in Yemen.

Responding to the pressure built by the foes of Egypt in the Congress in a policy statement, the House Foreign Affairs Committee, while reporting on the \$ 4,087,075,000 foreign aid authorization bill, threatened to cut off all aid to Egypt unless Cairo recalled its troops from Yemen.¹⁰⁰ The House report also asked Egypt to end its belligerent attitude towards Israel and other countries of the Middle East.¹⁰¹

Meanwhile, United Nations effort at peace-keeping in Yemen suffered a further set back when General Von Horn, the Chief of the mission resigned on 27 August 1963.¹⁰² A United Nations source at Beirut observed that neither Egypt nor Saudi Arabia lived upto the agreement as the two-month-deadline came closer. The source further

100. Ibid., 10 August 1963, p. 1.

101. The same committee warned India and Pakistan of curtailing "drastically" the American aid unless more progress was made toward settling the Kashmir dispute.

102. For a first hand account of the mission's experience see Major-General Carl Von Horn, Soldiering for Peace (London, 1966).

confirmed that the Russian personnel were actively involved on behalf of the Republican regime.¹⁰³

Another spokesman of the State Department also held out little hope for the success of the mission as Egypt continued to send troops into Yemen.

US WARNING TO EGYPT

As a follow up of the recommendations of the House Foreign Affairs Committee the United States informed Nasser that the future American aid to Egypt depended on the progress of his troops withdrawals from Yemen. This message was conveyed to the Egyptian Minister of the Treasury and Economic Planning, Dr. Abdel Moneim Kaissouny who was on a visit to the United States. Earlier the Minister had asked the United States for financial assistance to meet the mounting foreign exchange problem. Washington reminded the Minister that the war in Yemen had been a drain on Cairo's finances. Senator Ernest Gruening (D., Alas.), who talked with the Egyptian Minister, put the Egyptian cost in the Yemen war at \$ 150 million per year. In the year 1962, the American economic aid to Egypt totalled \$ 186 million. More than \$ 125 million was in the form of surplus wheat and other farm surpluses. The Senator told the Minister in unequivocal terms that the United States

103. New York Times, 1 September 1963, p. 1.

could see no point in continuing heavy development aid to Egypt if its impact was dissipated by the expenses on the Yemeni campaign.¹⁰⁴ The US officials also reminded the Minister that Egypt had flouted its commitments to the United Nations to pull back its troops out of Yemen as Saudi Arabia had recently ended aid to Yemen.

In a renewed diplomatic efforts the US Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, William Hart, saw Faisal on 4 November 1963 and asked him to renew the disengagement pact. But Faisal refused to do it unconditionally. He wanted the Egyptian withdrawal from Yemen at once otherwise he threatened to resume aid to the Royalists. In the same meeting Faisal rejected the suggestion earlier made by U-Thant that the friends of Saudi Arabia and Egypt should try to form a coalition government consisting of the Royalists and the Republicans in Yemen. This would have amounted to legitimisation of the claims made by Saudi Arabia and Egypt and, perhaps, a resultant carving out of the respective areas of influence in Yemen.

UNITED STATES AT DIPLOMATIC CROSS ROADS

Faced with the developments in Yemen, the United States found itself at diplomatic cross roads. A permanent solution

104. Ibid., 18 October 1963, p. 7.

to the Yemeni problem would have required the United States to deal directly and more firmly with Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The United States could not have pressed its allies further in the area. Saudi Arabia and Jordan had already halted supply of arms to the Royalists at the instance of the United States. Britain, which had extended political support to Imam, perhaps, in deference to the wishes of the United States and the United Nations also refrained from helping the Royalists militarily. The United States could not have been harsh to Egypt either. It may be argued that Cairo could not have carried on the war without food aid and financial support of the United States. But Kennedy Administration believed that any rash action - either in the form of military or economic reprisals - would unite "a divided Arab World" more strongly behind Nasser.¹⁰⁵ Therefore, far from taking punitive measures, the United States gave recognition to the Republican regime which amounted to a political act of support to Egypt and the Soviet Union. Again, the United States also demonstrated its support for the Republicans and indirectly for Egypt by carrying on a significant road building project. The road had been completed from Mokka, on the coast through Taiz, and half way from Taiz to Sana. By January 1964 it was to

105. Davids, n. 70.

link Sana with a Chinese built road from the coast of Hodeida. This road greatly improved the mobility of the Republican army. However, it would be difficult to say that the Republicans without the aid of Egypt could not have established themselves. They could have accomplished the constructions without the aid of the United States also. Other countries were too willing to aid the Republicans in Yemen.¹⁰⁶ The Soviet Union was already busy building a big air field.¹⁰⁷ The West Germans were present in Yemen with an ambitious agricultural experiment programme. So were the Yegoslavs who had supplied the Rep-ublicans with credit for light industry Near home Kuwait had given a \$ 10 million grant for school construction¹⁰⁸ so on and so forth.

Thus, the only course available to the United States was to leave the responsibility of mediation to the United Nations. The "deepest concern" of the State Department in this phase was "to get the countries of the Middle East to disengage themselves and to leave the Yemenis alone to work out their own solution."¹⁰⁹ But there were discouraging reports from

106. Newsweek, 5 August 1963, p. 38.

107. Time, 13 September 1963, p. 27.

108. New York Times, n. 106.

109. Dean Rusk's statement in Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 32, 1 April 1963, p. 475.

everywhere so far as mediation and disengagement effort in Yemen was concerned. However, President Kennedy was still hopeful of "a peaceful bilateral negotiated settlement".¹¹⁰ At a press conference in the Washington he stated that Saudi Arabia and Egypt would come to the conclusion "either bilaterally" or under the auspices of the Secretary General, maintain cease-fire and "expand the limited withdrawal".¹¹¹

Despite full knowledge of the explosive situation in Yemen, the United States came to maintain a low profile in the area for certain reasons. Firstly, because of the tragic death of President Kennedy and induction of Lyndon B. Johnson into the White House and secondly because the United States practically shifted its responsibility of mediation to the United Nations and wanted the job of peace keeping and disengagement to be done by it. Possibly, another reason was that during the term of Johnson such conflicts around the Arabian Peninsula as one in Yemen appeared to have received scant attention by the policy framers in the State Department particularly where it was the question of mediation. The Kennedy Administration had experienced that many a time the

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110. Richard P. Stebbins, ed., Documents on American Foreign Relations 1963 (New York, 1964), p. 266.
111. For full transcript of Kennedy's interview See New York Times, 1 November 1963, p. 6.

United States was ignored by the parties involved in the conflict because the Arab leaders, by temperament, did not like a non-Arab and a non-Muslim country to meddle in their affairs. But even the peripheral involvement of the United States in the conflict tested the American diplomatic capabilities.

CHAPTER - III

JOHNSON ADMINISTRATION : ON THE SIDELINES

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JOHNSON ADMINISTRATION : ON THE SIDE LINES

The beginning of the year 1964 marked a shift in the attitude of the two major parties involved in the conflict, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.¹ As a result of the joint effort of President Ahmed Ben-Bella of Algeria and President Abdel Salam Arif of Iraq, the representatives of Saudi Arabia and Egypt signed a joint-communique in Riyadh on 3 March 1964. The purpose was to consolidate the Arab military power behind the Arab League against Israel. In the communique the two countries also called for "the independence of Yemen and the freedom of the Yemeni people".² They further agreed to resume their diplomatic relations that had been severed at the outbreak of Yemeni civil war. They also decided to hold further talks on Yemen in Cairo by the end of April.

Eucouraged by this report the United States expressed hope that the improvement of relations between Egypt and Saudi Arabia would in turn "improve the prospects for a solution of the Yemeni problems".³ In a statement the Secretary of State, Dean Rusk admired the "Statesmanlike efforts" of the Presidents of Algeria and Iraq.

1. UAR News (New Delhi), Vol. 6, 23 January 1964, p.1.

2. New York Times, 4 March 1964, p. 15.

3. Department of State Bulletin (Washington, D.C.), Vol. 50, 23 March 1964, p. 439.

Whereas the two parties indirectly involved in the Yemeni conflict were trying to mend their fences, Salal was steadily consolidating the position of the Republicans in Yemen. He constituted under his own leadership a Politburo for political and legislative affairs and a National Security Council for a military and civil defence.⁴ On 21 March 1964, Salal signed a five-year treaty of friendship with President Leonid I. Brezhnev in Moscow. In the treaty Moscow "confirmed its recognition of the full and absolute independence of the Yemen Arab Republic and its sovereignty over Yemeni territory".⁵ According to the treaty the Russians were to build a hospital and three schools in Yemen. A Yemeni-Soviet joint-communique released at the end of Salal's visit said that Moscow had agreed to give increased economic and technical assistance to Yemen.

On 23 April 1964, Nasser went on a surprise visit to Yemen. His visit lent itself to several interpretations in the diplomatic circles. The purpose could be to show his solidarity with Salal and his Republican government. Nasser's presence in Yemen was also seen as a move to strengthen the morale of the Egyptian troops in Yemen and to please higher

4. New York Times, 8 January 1964, p. 5.

5. Ibid., 25 March, 1964, p. 3.

military echelons at home who had strafed indicating their disapproval of what they termed as Nasser's costly and fruitless venture.⁶ During his visit to Yemen, Nasser tried to win over Saudi Arabia and vehemently assailed the British. He alleged that the British had replaced Saudi Arabia in smuggling arms to the Royalists. He declared that the Egyptian troops would leave only after Yemen was secure.⁷ This revealed Nasser's intentions. Many Americans believed that Nasser's role in a way reflected his great ambitions in the Middle East. Having won the Suez Canal, Nasser perhaps further wanted to eliminate the British hold on Aden, which controlled the southern outlet of the Red Sea. If that aim could be achieved, the whole British protected Federation of South Arabia with its dozen sheikdoms and emirates would collapse, opening the way to Oman and even to Kuwait. Such a success would cement Nasser's hold on Yemen and force Saudi Arabia to come to terms with him. Nasser's purpose of the unification of the Arab States in an empire under his domination would be advanced. Thus, the success of Nasser's Yemeni expedition would have given him a springboard to the Arabian Peninsula south to British Aden, east to Arabian oil and north to Israel. Nasser was obviously interested in not only backing up the Yemeni Republican regime against the

6. Newsweek (New York), 11 May 1964, p. 38.

7. A decision to this effect was contained in the joint-communique signed by Nasser and Salal on 28 April 1964. See UAR News, Vol. 6, Special Document, April 1964.

Royalists but to make Yemen a base against Britain. It may also be noted here that he himself was making repeated air attacks and staging guerrilla warfare against Aden and the South Arabian Federation. Nasser was in a unique position of being able to obtain the support of all the anti-colonial forces. On 9 April 1964, Nasser succeeded in getting Britain reprimanded by the UN Security Council for attacking the Yemeni fort at Herib.⁸

The United States and Britain were naturally disturbed by what they took to be the "grand design" of Nasser. Therefore, the British Foreign Secretary Arthur Butler, then on a visit to Washington, urged American pressure on Nasser including threats to cut off economic aid.⁹ However, the West knew that any stern action either in the form of military action or economic sanctions would only unite a divided Arab world behind Nasser who had by then become a formidable leader of the Arab world.¹⁰ Such action would have driven the entire bloc in the Soviet's orbit of influence.¹¹ Therefore, the best the Americans and the British

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8. UN Monthly Chronicle (New York) Vol. 1, May 1964, p.14.
 9. New York Times, 30 April 1964, p. 7.
 10. See Joachim Joestin, Nasser, The Rise to Power (London, 1960) pp. 193-196.
 11. Jules Davids, The United States in World Affairs 1964, (New York, 1965), p. 262.

could have done was to adopt a flexible policy with a firm defense of the Federations' frontiers. Britain had relinquished its base in Aden and had granted independence to the South Arabian Federation. At this juncture, therefore, both the United States and Britain desired to have normal relations with the new Republican government of Yemen and an effective use of the United Nations machinery to prevent the escalation of the local conflict into a major conflict of the area.

Ever since the agreement reached at Riyadh in early March, there was a marked increase in the ferocity of shelling on the northern front of Yemen. The scene of fighting had, in stead, shifted to the south on Yemen's border with Aden. With the help of pro-Nasser dissident tribesmen who indulged in anti-British activities under an organisation called Front for the Liberation of South Yemen (F.L.O.S.Y.), the Republican Yemen had several border fights with the British. The growing British concern at such outbreaks of fighting was apparent from the Prime Minister's speech in the House of Commons on 4 May 1964. Placing the figure of the Egyptian troops in Yemen at 40,000, Sir Douglas-Home assailed Egypt for supporting the dissident tribesmen in Aden. He hinted that Great Britain might abandon the policy of non-intervention in the Yemeni conflict if Republicans

continued with their "infiltration" into South Arabian Federation.

In the midst of this tense climate U-Thant reported to the Security Council on 2 September that the UN Yemen Observation Mission (UNYOM) was to be "terminated" on 4 September 1964.¹² U-Thant, possibly, expected the two sides to reach an accord at the forthcoming conference of the Arab League in Alexandria. The immediate reason, however, was the enormous financial resources required for the maintenance of the mission in Yemen. It had to depend on support by the two principal contestants in the area. The actual total cost amounted to \$ 2 million by September 1965. Saudi Arabia and Egypt had each contributed \$ 800,000.¹³ The function of the UNYOM was limited to the terms of disengagement as accepted by the parties. Its function as discussed in the preceding chapter included observation, certifying and reporting on withdrawal of Egyptian troops and also on the cessation of aid to Royalists by Saudi Arabia.

EVALUATION OF UN EFFORT

Ever since Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker negotiated disengagement in April and the United Nations Mission became

12. UN Monthly Chronicle, Vol. 1, October 1964, p. .

13. Abid, A. Al-Maryati, "The Problem of Yemen", Foreign Affairs Reports (New Delhi), Vol. 16, February 1967, p. 19.

operational on 4 July 1963, the time gap between conclusion of the arrangement and its operation was responsible for much of the ineffectiveness of the mission. If a decision were to be taken in Washington for despatching military units to a country, this could be implemented within a few hours or days as in the cases of Lebanon (1958) and the Dominican Republic (1965). But the Secretary General who is the Chief Administrative Officer of the UN Secretariat could not function without prior authorization and provisions. Again, the restrictive mandate set forth in the agreement, as well as the limited resources, made it impossible for the mission to act as an observer satisfactory to both the parties. The mission encountered considerable hardships, difficulties in receiving fresh rations, severe physical conditions and rugged terrains.¹⁴ Its personnel were subjected to gunfire and were very often in danger.¹⁵ Heavy fighting made it at times impossible to engage in observation. A thorough control system was, thus, a task beyond the capabilities of the machinery provided. The observation mission was withdrawn at a time when the overall role of the United Nations was on decline.¹⁶

14. Time (Chicago), 13 September 1963, p. 27.

15. See Secretary General's Report on UNYOM presented to the Security Council on 4 May 1964, UN Monthly Chronicle, Vol. 1, June 1964, pp. 51-53.

16. Just three months before, the UN mission was withdrawn from Congo which plunged it into a Civil War. Lack of fund put the UN force in Cyprus also in jeopardy.

However, taking into account the limitations of the United Nations and much more that of the Secretariat it can be said that it carried out its mandate within a reasonable period of time. Since UNYOM was not a peace keeping operation, it was more restricted in its activities than the UN Truce Supervision Organisation for Palestine and the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) in the Middle East. Moreover, the problem in Yemen was a political one and, therefore, it required a political solution. In the absence of such a solution, charges and counter-charges by the involved parties were bound to render any observation process ineffective.¹⁷

MEDIATION BY ARAB LEAGUE AT ALEXANDRIA SUMMIT

When the efforts by the United Nations and other Western diplomats failed to restore peace in Yemen, the mediatory role was undertaken by the members of the Arab League. Under the good offices of the Presidents of Algeria and Iraq, the leaders of Saudi Arabia and Egypt signed a communique on 14 September 1964 at the conclusion of Arab League conference in Alexandria. The two sides resolved to undertake necessary contacts with parties involved for peaceful settlement and "help the people of Yemen towards stability, security and freedom".¹⁸

17. Maryati, n. 13, p. 20.

18. A.I. Dawisha, Egypt in the Arab World: The Elements of Foreign Policy (London, 1976), p. 44.

According to diplomatic sources the agreement provided for a seven month armistice in the Yemeni civil war. During this period Faisal was to stop all support to the Royalist tribesmen fighting against the government of Yemen.¹⁹ Nasser, on his part, pledged to begin withdrawing the Egyptian forces. Again, Faisal and Nasser agreed to replace the leaders of the opposing Yemeni factions. Implied in this understanding was Nasser's intention to change the leadership of the Republican government in Yemen. He, however, was opposed to the inclusion of any member of the Royal family in a future Yemeni government. The two sides also agreed on a joint force to police the borders between Saudi Arabia and Yemen. The agreement reached between Nasser and Faisal did not mention about Yemen's recognition by Saudi Arabia.

The Arab World hailed the outcome of the Alexandria Summit Conference, Washington too called it a "Statesmanlike action" and "major step toward eventual peaceful settlement of the long civil war".²⁰ According to one analyst the United States had reasons to be greatly relieved by the reported agreement between the two sides.²¹ The presence of

19. In a dramatic reversal of policy Jordan recognised the Republican regime in July 1964. At the conference King Hussein indicated support for Nasser and persuaded King Faisal to drop opposition to Yemeni Arab Republic, see Time, 14 August 1964, p. 25.

20. Quoted in Time, 25 September 1964, p. 22.

21. Hedrick Smith in New York Times, 16 September 1964, p. 2.

the Egyptian troops in Yemen had strained the Johnson Administration's relations not only with Saudi Arabia but also with a group in the Congress. These congressmen believed that Nasser's involvement in Yemen represented "the first overt military expression of Egyptian expansionism",²² Therefore, they wanted the Administration to take a tough line against Cairo. At one stage, Saudi Arabia and Jordan felt so much let down by the United States that they believed the US policy towards the conflict was one of indirectly aiding Nasser. Even after conceding early recognition to the Republican regime, the United States revealed its inability to secure Egypt's promised withdrawal. On the other hand, America threatened Jordan with stopping assistance and protection if it aided the Royalists. The United States also served similar notice on Saudi Arabia. It threatened Saudi Arabia with the removal of the US military defence mission stationed there.

While the United States was, thus, so harsh on its allies, it did not put pressure on Nasser when he, according to another author, openly displayed belligerency.²³ In the "Philosophy of the Revolution", Nasser vowed to put all Arab

22. Ibid.

23. C.L. Sulzberger in Ibid., 11 November 1964, p. 30.

petroleum under a unified state. Secondly, Nasser expected Yemen to take the place of Syria, in the United Arab Republic vacated two years ago. The United States had been thinking of stopping economic aid and food shipments to Egypt but such concrete steps were never taken. On the contrary, the United States and its allies knew to their dismay that Cairo could get help from the East and the West alike. In the given situation, therefore, it did not appear possible for the State Department to ensure regional stability which alone could protect the interests of the United States and its NATO allies in this region. Oil, an open Suez Canal, the territorial integrity of Jordan and Saudi Arabia, and security of Israel were some of the things in which the United States had great stakes. For ensuring all these objectives, it was imperative for the United States to halt outside interference and foster progressive, indigenous non-communist governments in the region.

What was, therefore, good about the Alexandria agreement was that both Nasser and Faisal met and arrived at an agreement by themselves. Each made a concession to the other. Their joint agreement impliedly recognised the fact that both had stakes in the restoration of peace in Yemen, the prime objective of the United States. Earlier both the parties had stubbornly taken irreconcilable positions. Faisal had insisted

that he would not accept any Egyptian influence, on the Arabian Peninsula and Nasser had argued that his forces would not leave Yemen until the Republican regime could stand on its own. But each now seemed willing to accept peace without an unconditional victory. The Saudis implicitly conceded that Yemen's monarchy was dead²⁴ for ever and the Egyptians agreed that the Sheiks who supported the Imam and were sympathetic to the Saudis must have an important role in any future Yemen government. From the Arab viewpoint the agreement marked a reconciliation between the leading supporters of Arab revolution and Arab monarchy.

There were, however, doubts about the successful implementation of the agreement.²⁵ It remained to be seen how many soldiers Nasser was willing to pull out and how soon. The diplomats based in Sana doubted that the Republican regime could survive at all if the Egyptian forces backing it were pulled out. There were already reports that the Republican leaders were in panic and charged Nasser with a "sellout".²⁶ The Republican regime itself became divided over the Nasser-Faisal agreement. Salal did not like the

24. Nejla M. Abu Izzeddin, Nasser of the Arabs (Beirut, 1975), p. 277.

25. Newsweek, 14 September 1964, p. 3.

26. New York Times, 27 September 1964, p. 13.

agreement and was afraid that he might be replaced by Premier Jaifi who would be more amenable to the Egyptian wishes. The old feud between Zaidi and Shafi sects of religious tribes also became more intense following the agreement and complicated the situation.²⁷

FOLLOW UP OF ALEXANDRIA SUMMIT

Despite varying responses to the government, it was implemented at a meeting in Erkowitz, Sudan where the representatives of the Royalists and the Republicans formally agreed to a truce.²⁸ In this conference the representatives of Egypt and Saudi Arabia also participated as observers. The two sides agreed to set up a "national conference" to decide the form of future government.²⁹ This conference could lead to a coalition government to act during the Egyptian withdrawal. The Royalists agreed to a proposed constitution that would restore the monarchy to the Imam. But he was to be a figurehead with "religious prerogatives" and perform ceremonial political functions. These two sides also agreed to hold a plebiscite on the "future regime". But the two central issues namely the Saudi

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27. For a discussion on the interplay of the two tribes see William R. Brown, "The Yemeni Dilemma", The Middle East Journal (Washington, D.C.), Vol.17, Autumn 1963, p.366.
28. New York Times, 6 November 1964, p.8.
29. Robert Stephens, Nasser : A Political Biography (London, 1971), p. 414.

recognition of the Republican regime and the exact time limit for the completion of the Egyptian military withdrawal were not sorted out.

The agreement arrived at was much the same plan as had been suggested by the United States immediately after the overthrow of Imam.³⁰ The proposed cease-fire now was seen in the American circles, as a triumph for Faisal because firstly, Nasser had to give de facto recognition to the Royalists and secondly Faisal made Nasser acknowledge the fact that the Egyptian mercenary soldiers could not subdue the Royalists. But so long as external forces continued to remain in Yemen the agreements remained only " a piece of paper and a lot of promises".³¹

BOMBINGS OF ROYALIST POSITIONS RESUMED

The peace proved illusory as it lasted hardly a month. On 3 December 1964 the cease fire broke down when Egyptian planes started bombing and strafing royalist position.³² In retaliation the Royalists bottled up 200 Republican soldiers in Razih mountains. Among the Republicans there was a powerful group which resented the continued military presence

30. New York Times, 10 November 1964, p. 46.

31. Time, n. 21.

32. New York Times, 4 December 1964, p. 15.

of Egypt. There ministers belonging to this group resigned from the cabinet creating a crisis. They were Ahmed Mohammed Noman, head of the Consultative Council and two Deputy Premiers Qadi Zubeiry and Abdul Rahman al-Iryani. The resignation was considered as an expression of growing resentment in Sana against Salal and presence in the country of more than 40,000 Egyptian troops.³³ The crisis further deepened when six more ministers of Salal's cabinet resigned on 26 December 1964. The spate of resignations drove Salal to Cairo for consultations. On return, Salal imposed a state of Emergency on the country and replaced Premier Jaifi by Vice-President Amri. Amri gave orders for the creation of the National Security Council to halt the collapse of the regime.³⁴

As Salal regime was fighting for survival the Royalist forces retrieved the Razah fort from the Republicans and the Egyptian troops.³⁵ The Royalist Deputy Premier Abdul Rahman Yahia declared that the whole of North-West of Yemen was under the Royalists' control. In order to improve the bargaining position of their side Yahia released the text of a "national charter" in which the Imam Badr agreed, "to submit

33. Newsweek, 18 January 1965, p. 35.

34. New York Times, 7 January 1965, p. 5.

35. Ibid., 23 January 1965, p. 3.

to the authority of the Legislative Assembly" provided the Egyptians left the country.³⁶

ALTERED FRAMEWORK OF US RECOGNITION

In the midst of renewed fighting between the Royalists and the Republicans, the United States in a policy shift, established unofficial links with the Royalists. In what was described by observers as an "altered framework of recognition of Republican regime", the United States decided to ship food to the territory under the Royalist control. A state Department Official explained, "In principle where there is hunger and where we can alleviate hunger we would favour such a program".³⁷ This statement was interpreted in some Arab quarters as extending to King Faisal at least tacit approval of the policy of continued support for the Royalist forces. The statement was also aimed at softening the Congressional opposition to continuing food shipments to the Nasser regime under Public Law - 480. Recently, Senator Kenneth B. Keating had asked the Administration to give a virtual ultimatum to Nasser. In a campaign speech, obviously

36. In abid to widen the split in the Republican ranks the Imam announced amnesty to all non-Royalists, He also promised "a constitutionally democratic system" and a "National Assembly" to be elected by the people. See Time, 29 January 1965, p. 22.

37. New York Times, 8 March 1965, p. 1.

to win over the Jewish voters, he demanded that all American aid to Egypt, including "surplus food" should be cut off from 1 January 1965, unless Nasser's troops were pulled out of Yemen and unless his military forces were, "sealed down to domestic needs". Only this measure, he said, "would guarantee peace in the Middle East."³⁸

Thus, by shipping food into the Royalists-held territory, the administration was in a better position to argue that on humanitarian grounds food shipments should also continue to Egypt. By deciding to send food shipments to the Royalists, the State Department implicitly recognized that the Royalists continued to control part of the territory of Yemen and a civil war situation obtained in Yemen. It also seemed to have noted that Egypt with its 50,000 troops pressed into service and despite several offensives had not been able to cut off the Royalist supply-lines into Saudi Arabia.

The shift in policy, however, meant no modification in US recognition. John W. Finney, the State Department spokesman on the Middle East, clarified that the United States did not "contemplate establishing any relations with the Royalist forces". He emphasized that shipments of food were to be carried out by "independent voluntary agencies",

38. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 6 October 1964, p. 30.

and hence had no political implications. According to Bushrod Howard, who was instrumental in negotiating the deal, the only diplomatic condition imposed by the State Department, was that the United States would not pay the costs of transporting the food overland from the Saudi Arabian port of Jidda on the Red Sea to the territory under the Royalists.³⁹

The United States, perhaps, rightly decided not to upset its relationship with the Republican regime in Yemen because, barring a few perip^heral places bordering Saudi Arabia in North-West and South American Federation, the Republicans were, by and large, in full control. Moreover, the Republicans were being sustained not only by Egypt but also by several other Western countries. According to one commentator, the Republic of Yemen was "in the enviable position of being able to play off not only the East against the West but also the East against the East".⁴⁰ For example, the Chinese communists scrambled to offset the Russians. Even before the revolution of September 1962, the Soviet Union and China invested in this strategically important land whereas the United States built a road from the port of

39. Ibid., 10 March 1965, p. 10.

40. Dana Adams Schmidt in Ibid., 23 October 1964, p. 18.

Mocha through Taiz to Sana.⁴¹ But more than this the United States received credit for recognizing the Republican government in Yemen when Britain refused to do so.

In contrast, the Royalists had no source of aid whatsoever except Saudi Arabia. However, Saudi Arabia's aid was in no comparison with the aid given to the Republicans by a number of countries. Militarily, Saudi Arabia had helped the Royalists - till the UN cease-fire - with a large number of rifles and a few machine guns, mortars and bazookas. Since then the Royalists had obtained a few recoiller-guns and ammunitions from some western commercial sources. On the other hand, the Republicans received from Egypt alone heavy tanks, armoured cars, heavy artillery and rocket launchers. Egypt's airforce in Yemen was large enough to fly an average of fifty air sorties a day, mainly against Royalist villages and military targets. Russia had already technicians and a military mission in Yemen for assisting Egypt in training army and airforce, and the construction of a military airfield. On

41. The 250-mile-long road involving an investment of around \$ 19.5 million was the largest and most-significant economic enterprise of the United States in Yemen. In addition to this, the United States undertook to complete the \$ 4.2 million Kennedy Memorial water works in Taiz by the end of 1965.

top of it came the news of chemical gas warfare against the Royalists by the Egyptian forces. On 22 March 1965, the State Department spokesman, John W. Finney, confirmed the charge levelled earlier by the Royalist government that the Egyptian air force was using "chemical gas" against isolated villages.⁴²

ESCALATION OF CONFLICT

In April 1965, Cairo reported that its planes had attacked Gizan, one of ports of Saudi Arabia. The planes also flew over the border town of Najran. In response, Saudi Arabia moved its troops towards the border and accused the Soviet Union of flying Russian planes over of Saudi territory. The Soviet Union, however, denied the charge and maintained that their pilots in Yemen were solely for instruction purposes and were directed not to fly combat mission.⁴³ In the midst of sporadic fighting, Salal on the domestic front, relieved Premier Amri and appointed Ahmad Mohammad Noman in his place to form a new government. Noman had quit the Republican government in December 1964 in protest against the strong Egyptian hand in Yemeni affairs.⁴⁴ Noman worked hard

42. New York Times, 23 March 1965, p.3.

43. Ibid., 6 April 1965, p. 5.

44. Time, 7 May 1965, p. 28.

towards this end and in order to bring the Royalists and the Republicans to a negotiated settlement, arranged for a peace-conference at Khamir. But he failed to make them agree.⁴⁵ In the meanwhile the Royalists launched a new attack on Haradh and Hazan areas that were under the control of the Republicans. Alarmed by the Royalist offensive and the increasing independent stand taken by the Yemeni cabinet under Noman, Cairo wanted to bring down the government of Noman. At Nasser's prompting Salal set up an armed forces council with himself as the head without consulting the cabinet. This led to the resignation of Noman and his cabinet. Salal then formed a new cabinet and nominated himself as the Premier.⁴⁶ Later on, it transpired that Noman's formula of replacing 50,000 Egyptian force by a joint Republican-Royalists peace force was opposed by the Nasserites.⁴⁷ As the intra-Republican struggle continued in Yemen, Nasser probably realizing the futility of the war, sent out a feeler to Saudi Arabia about his willingness to withdraw his troops from Yemen in six months provided Saudi Arabia ended all aid to the Royalist.⁴⁸ But the speech of the Egyptian Vice-President Marshal Abdel Hakim Amer at the

45. See John Law, "Forgotten war in the Desert", US News and World Report, 24 May 1965, pp. 67-69.

46. New York Times, 2 July 1965, p.7.

47. Time, 16 July 1965, p. 25.

48. New York Times, 23 July 1965, p. 27.

celebration of the Thirteenth Anniversary of the Egyptian revolution, suggested the reconciliation was nowhere in sight.⁴⁹ He charged the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO) with aiding and training the Royalists.⁵⁰

Side by side, however, the representative of the Royalists and the Republicans were negotiating in Taif, Saudi Arabia for an eventual and lasting peace-settlement.

JIDDA AGREEMENT

On 24 September 1965, following three days of extensive negotiations in Jidda (Saudi Arabia) between Nasser and Faisal the two leaders signed a new agreement, popularly known as Jidda Pact, to work for peace in Yemen.⁵¹ The agreement provided for an immediate ceasefire, the end of Saudi aid to the Yemeni Royalists and the withdrawal of Egyptian troops from Yemen. The agreement also called for a joint Saudi and Egyptian peace committee to supervise military disengagement in Yemen. Observer teams of Republicans and Royalists were to supervise the withdrawal of all outside military forces.⁵² A coalition government was to be

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50. In the Military parade on the occasion Egypt displayed its HA-300 supersonic jet-fighter and nearly 200 Soviet-supplied fighters, bombers, helicopters and transport planes.
51. The members of the CENTO were Iran, Pakistan, Turkey and Britain. The United States was a member of its military committee.
52. Robert Stephens, Nasser: A Political Biography (London, 1971), p. 419.

selected by a fifty man conference of tribal leaders of both sides. Both Salal and the Imam were to be excluded from the transitional government. Further, the accord was to be carried out in three stages. First, a new caretaker government was to be set up within three months. Second, all Egyptian troops, estimate to total 60,000 were to be withdrawn phasewise in ten months. Third, a national plebiscite was to be held in Yemen within fifteen months to determine the type of government Yemeni people would like to have permanently.⁵³

REACTION ON JIDDA PACT

The Republicans in Yemen after an initial period of surprise and dismay, praised the peace pact. The United States and the United Nations who had frequently tried to mediate but had failed to resolve the crisis in Yemen, welcomed this development. In a message sent to the two leaders of the Arab, the UN Secretary General expressed his "pleasure and satisfaction" at the agreement of peace.⁵⁴ Lyndon B. Johnson, the US President, was of the view that the agreement offered great promise of a peaceful settlement in Yemen. At a news conference in Texas he briefly touched

53. New York Times, 25 August 1965, p.1.

54. US Monthly Chronicle, Vol. 2, August-September 1965, p. 26.

upon the Yemeni crisis and the Peace Agreement and said:

In the Middle East, we are happy to see the statesmanlike agreement between king Faisal of Saudi Arabia and President Nasser of Egypt, which seems to offer great promise of a peaceful settlement in Yemen. This crisis has long been a disruptive element in the relations between our two friends. We share their confidence that this long-festering issue is on the road to settlement by negotiation rather than force.⁵⁵

Indeed the arch-rivals of the Arab world, Faisal and Nasser for the third time announced to end their "war by proxy" in Yemen. Twice before they had agreed to terminate what a French writer termed as a kind of "Spanish Civil War of the Arab World."⁵⁶ And thrice both Egypt and Saudi Arabia were led by consideration of prestige to break the truce, the immediate truce and the longer-range political settlement offered greater chances of success. In the past Nasser had insisted that the Republican government of Yemen should be on the Egyptian model. Now, he agreed that the Yemenis themselves should choose their own form of government by a national referendum in November 1966. In the meantime he agreed to the formation of an interim regime consisting of the Royalists as well as the Republicans. Although yet

55. Quoted in Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 53, 20 September 1965, p. 476.

56. Jean Lacouture, Nasser, Daniel Hofstadter, Trans. (London, 1973), p. 204.

another breakdown was possible but the conclusion of the agreement was itself an important landmark in the history perhaps as important as the Syrian secession from the United Arab Republic in 1961. The agreement implied that Nasser now conceded that in Yemen as in Syria it was futile and too costly for Egypt to try to maintain a Nasserite Republic. Thus, Cairo gave signal that it had given up the idea of shaping all other Arab countries on its own model.⁵⁷ On the other hand, the Jidda Pact won king Faisal new image in the Arab World. He seemed to have strengthened the hands of other Arab monarchs and their allies in the region. During the last three years, the Egyptian campaign not only antagonised Saudi Arabia but also brought Nasser to the point of being alienated from Britain and the United States. In 1963 the United States even threatened Egypt with cutting off the American aid. Nasser's new policy, therefore, was aimed to relieve some of the tensions in the Arab world. He was to visit the Soviet Union in September. The purpose was partially to regain the lost prestige.

HARADH MEETING

The crucial test in Yemen was to come in November 1965 when a Congress of 50 Yemeni leaders was scheduled to install

57. See Newsweek, 6 September 1965, p. 29.

a transitional government and 60,000 Egyptian troops were to begin their withdrawal from Yemen. To work towards that end a conference of the Royalists and the Republicans was arranged in Haradh, Saudi Arabia on 23 November 1965.⁵⁸ No sooner had the conference started, it bogged down in the controversy over the designation of the new transitional government.⁵⁹ Whereas the Royalists and the Saudi Arabians insisted on "the State of Yemen" only the Republicans were adamant on retaining the name as "the Republic of Yemen".⁶⁰ The stalemate was sought to be resolved by inviting about a hundred tribal sheiks and the representatives of Egypt and Saudi Arabia to join the conference but there seemed to be no improvement in the situation.

On 20 December 1965 the Royalist sources stated that the peace talks, sponsored by Nasser and Faisal had failed. The peace-efforts received a further set back when in a sudden volte-face Nasser scored Faisal's interpretation of the August Peace Pact.⁶¹ He said that withdrawal of the Egyptian troops was contingent upon the settlement of all

58. Newsweek, 6 September 1965, p. 29.

59. New York Times, 24 November 1965, p.2.

60. For a detailed description of Haradh meeting see Stanko Guldesan, "Yemen: The war and the Haradh Conference", Review of Politics (Notre Dame), Vol.28, July 1966, 329-331.

61. Middle East Mirror (Beirut), 26 February 1966, p.8.

issues and the formation of a coalition government that was able to conduct the plebiscite. According to Faisal no plebiscite could be fair with the presence of 70,000 Egyptian troops in Yemen.⁶² Following a break down of the peace-negotiations, the Egyptian and Republican forces were reported to have attacked Beni Hashid tribe, the supporters of the Royalists, near Sana.

NASSER'S FUTURE PLANS

Nasser's future plans were contained in his threat to keep the Egyptian forces in Yemen "until Britain granted independence to South Arabia in 1968".⁶³ Nasser's policy-shift came in the wake of the major policy announcement by Britain on 22 February 1965 that, after a fifteen month defence review, it had decided to abandon the Aden base in 1968 which was the last remaining large British military base in the Middle East. While its overseas forces were to be reduced by a third in the next four years, Britain was to continue to play a military role in the east of Suez.⁶⁴

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62. Putting this pre-condition to a referendum the Imam had once observed, "No Yemeni can speak his will with a gun at his head, the MIG's and Ilyushins in the skies overhead". See Newsweek, 21 December 1964, p. 37.
63. New York Times, 23 February 1966, p. 1.
64. The same British policy announcement included a proposal of buying 50 American F-111A's, "the revolutionary swing-wing intercontinental fighter bombers".

THREE-PRONGED POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES

After the British departure from the region, the US could depend only on itself to protect its interests and those of its allies. Aden, the strategic British base at the mouth of the Red Sea, not only guarded British life-line to the Far East but through its air bases in the Aden area protected its vital oil supplies in the Persian Gulf. The fuel requirements of the NATO allies was supposed to be a matter of major concern to the Americans. They believed that the disappearance of a British base would place Nasser in a position to mount an offensive against the South Arabian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Israel. To add to the American fears came in Nasser's speech of 22 February 1966 in which he accused the United States and its allies of instigating a "conservative coalition" in the Middle East to oppose Arab revolutionaries. He alleged that Washington and London fostered plans for a conservative Islamic grouping in the Middle East led by King Faisal and the Shah of Iran. In what was characterized as "his harshest speech" against the United States in recent months, Nasser, threatened to wage a "preventive war".⁶⁵

In the changed circumstances, therefore, the United States pursued a three-pronged policy to post a substitute

65. New York Times, 23 February 1966, p.1.

for Britain in the area; to contain Nasser's belligerency, and to find a way out of the Yemeni imbroglio. As a first step, the United States sought to groom Saudi Arabia further to fill in the void created by Britain since no outsider could afford to move in. The United States sent a squadron of F-100 fighter planes for a month-long "joint training exercise" with the Saudi Air Force. The United States and Britain agreed to sell Saudi Arabia \$ 300 million worth of Supersonic fighters and anti-aircraft missiles and \$ 100 million worth of lightening jets, training planes, ground radars and electronic systems.⁶⁶ Saudi Arabia also contracted with a British firm to build an airfield within five miles of Yemen border where the Egyptian troops were stationed. Britain also sold 12 Hawker Hunter jet fighters to Saudi Arabia. Apart from Saudi Arabia other countries whom the United States was aiding to work as bulwark against Nasser's Egypt were Israel and Iran. It was reported in the Egyptian press that the United States had sold 200 Patton tanks to Israel.

As a second step, the United States imposed temporary

66. John W. Finney in Ibid., 25 February 1966, p.1.

economic sanction against Egypt.⁶⁷ It deferred negotiations on the Egyptian request for \$ 150 million worth of food. The current \$ 55 million worth of the US aid programme was to end on 30 June 1966. At this time Egypt's economy was in a bad shape. Its foreign exchange reserves were touching a very low point of \$ 10 million. Its heavy expenditure on fancy projects like developing rockets, jet aircrafts and maintenance of force level of 70,000 in Yemen was draining off its resources. Its expenditure in Yemen alone was estimated to be costing nearly \$ 40 million. Egypt, therefore, was intensely vulnerable to American pressure.

As a third step, the Johnson Administration resumed diplomatic effort at peace-making and sent Assistant Secretary of State, Roymond A. Hare, to Riyadh and Cairo to discuss the deadlock over the Yemeni problem. The conflict by this time had become a part of a wider conflict over South Arabia between Cairo and the Soviet bloc on the one hand and Britain, Saudi

67. In his autobiography President Johnson says: For a time, in the early 1960s, we hoped that he (Nasser) was beginning to concentrate instead on improving the lot of his own people. On this assumption we gave substantial aid to Egypt, mainly wheat to feed the people in its teeming cities. In the end Nasser persisted in his imperial dream. While his strained economy slowed down, he sent troops into Yemen to support revolutionaries trying to take over that country. To support his ambitions, he became increasingly dependent on Soviet arms. Nasser's attitude towards the United States grew more and more hostile and his speeches more inflammatory. It became impossible to maintain Congressional support for even token assistance to Egypt. See Lyndon Bains Johnson, The Vantage Point: Perspectives of the Presidency 1963-69 (Delhi, 1972), p. 290.

Arabia and the American bloc on the other. Nasser, by keeping up pressure from Yemen, wanted to make sure that the new regime in South Arabia would not be anti-Cairo. According to one view Nasser desired to withdraw from Yemen but deferred the idea because he did not want to leave behind an anti-Egyptian government in Yemen.⁶⁸ According to another view Nasser had genuine fear that Britain before making a final departure from the region would like Saudi Arabia, a pro-western country to fill in the vacuum. It was for these reasons that Nasser decided to stay on in Yemen even against the wishes of his Republican allies.

Faisal, on the other hand, believed that Yemen was developing into the "Cuba of the Middle East".⁶⁹ His belief was based on the information that the Soviet Union and Communist China were establishing a base in Yemen for subversion in Middle East and Africa. In a message delivered through his Defence Minister Prince Sultan Aziz to President Johnson, Faisal maintained that the communists were using the small mountainous country on the south-western corner of

68. John W. Finney in New York Times, 23 September 1966, p. 2.

69. See A. Yodfat and M. Abir, In the Direction of the Persian Gulf (London, 1977), pp. 101-103.

Arabian Peninsula to support subversive activities. For this, the two-and-a-half mile long air-strip constructed with the Soviet assistance near Sana could be helpful to the Soviet to funnel their arms down to dissidents in Africa. Egypt had recently concluded a pact with Russia involving \$ 200 million in arms.⁷⁰ In order to create problems for Nasser, Faisal sent money and material to anti-Nasser groups in Aden and tried to spread influence among the rich sheikdoms along the Persian Gulf. This competition could help the indirect conflict already underway in South Arabia and the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman develop into a war by proxy as in Yemen.⁷¹

EGYPT BOMBARDS SAUDI ARABIAN TOWNS AGAIN

The unceremonious dismissal of Amri's government by Salal at the instance of Nasser intensified the civil war in Yemen and further sharpened the cleavage between the pro and anti-Nasser Republicans.⁷² The crisis in the area was further aggravated by the bombing of Nairan oasis by Egyptian planes after a gap of nearly three years.⁷³ The resumed air

70. Middle East Mirror, 21 May 1966, pp.2-3.

71. Thomas, F. Brady in New York Times, 1 October 1966, p.7.

72. Time, 4 November 1966, p. 26.

73. New York Times, 7 November 1966, p.8.

attack by Egypt provoked a widerange of reactions from both the Arab and non-Arab nations. Jordan and Tunisia went to the extent of withdrawing their recognition to the Republican government of Yemen. In a letter addressed to Nasser the Jordanian King Hussein charged that the communists, who were bcking Nasser, were responsible for the disunity in the Arab World, the collapse of Arab summit meeting and the continuing drain of the civil war in Yemen. Pointing to Russia King Hussein said in an interview:

There is sufficient evidence of new Soviet plan for this area. This was the result of setbacks the Communists have suffered at several points around the world in Asia and Africa. If they are able to win control of this area, with its oil resources and its hold on strategic goods that pass through this region, it would have a great bearing on the destiny of so many people in this world.⁷⁴

King Hussein accused the Soviet Union of whipping up tensions in the Middle East including recent riots and demonstrations in Jordan. He observed that Middle East was on the brink of an explosion more dangerous to world peace than the Suez crisis of 1956.

The United States noted "with concern" the report from the Saudi Arabian Defence Ministry that Nairan and the Royalist village of Ketaf had been attacked by a

74. Quoted in Ibid., 30 November 1966, p.1.

squadron of Egyptian Ilyushin. The American officials found no provocation by Saudi Arabia. The US embassies in Cairo and Riyadh were informed to be "in active diplomatic contact" with both Egypt and the Saudi government to persuade them to exercise restraint to avoid any further escalation of conflict along the frontiers.⁷⁵

THE US AND YEMEN REPUBLIC ON A COLLISION COURSE

While efforts were being made by the United States to help the two sides to find some way to resolve the crisis it itself got embroiled with the Salal government in a dispute. Things reached a flash point when a rioting mob stoned and attacked the United States aid mission in Yemen and several American aid officials were taken into custody. There were about sixty aid employees and dependents and an American consul and staff in Taiz. Giving the reason for the arrest Salal accused the US aid mission of under-cover operations, of collecting information through its employees to undermine the authority of Yemen's leaders.⁷⁶ On 8 February 1967, when Salal was inaugurating a new Russian School in Taiz, a bazooka was fired at the building out of nineteen persons arrested ten had connections with the American aid mission.

75. Ibid., 29 January 1967, p.11.

76. Ibid., 19 March 1967, p. 21.

Following the reports of the incidents Lucius D. Battle, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, summoned Abdel-Azia Al-Futaih the Yemeni Ambassador in Washington and handed over to him a protest note demanding compensation for damages and an explanation of the arrests. Al-Ahram, an Egyptian daily and a sounding board for Nasser, reported that an ultimatum with a 24 hour deadline had been delivered to the Yemeni official by the US Charge d' affaires in Sana, Lee Dansmore.⁷⁷ The ultimatum contained the threat to withdraw recognition of the Yemeni government if American aid officials were not released. On receiving the ultimatum, the Yemeni National Defence Council, presided over by Salal, decided to ban United States aid activities. But it was not indicated as to when and how the US aid programme, which was largely in the form of road building and water supply projects, was to be ended. But it declared that Yemen would expel "dangerous elements of the aid Mission" and abrogate the aid agreement which was concluded in 1959. There was, however, no suggestion that diplomatic relations with the United States, which maintained an embassy in Sana with a branch in Taiz, would be affected. The US State Department spokesman also confirmed that there had been no

77. Ibid., 28 April 1976, p.1.

official word from the Republican government asking the United States to close the mission. The spokesman denied any involvement of the mission in the sabotage and observed that the Yemeni government did not abide by the recognized "minimum diplomatic standards". The State Department warned that the United States would hold the authorities in Yemen full responsible for the safety of all American personnel. The crisis had taken such a serious turn that the further relations between the two countries depended on its outcome.

Behind the arrests and harassments of American officials lay the Republican government's dissatisfaction with the low level of economic aid for more than a year. The US aid to Yemen currently amounted to only \$ 2.5 million a year.⁷⁸ Yemen had asked Washington for more food aid. The Yemeni officials were also critical of the US offers to provide emergency food supplies to both the Republican government and its Royalist opposition. According to Richard C. Hamer, head of the US Agency for International Development in Yemen, the increasing anti-American sentiment

78. Middle East Mirror, 28 May 1967, p.9.

in Yemen was due to the special ties of the United States with Saudi Arabia.⁷⁹ Some western diplomats believed that Egypt did not want a US mission in Taiq, a provincial city in Southern Yemen, which was used as headquarters for the radical Arab nationalists operating a terrorist campaign against the British and the conservative Arab rulers in Aden and the Federation of South Arabia. The US mission could have worked as window on Yemen to facilitate espionage by Saudi Arabia and the West. Again, fearful that the United States might sabotage Egyptian plans to establish dominance over the strategic sheikdoms of South Arabia after British forces had left Aden, Nasser must have instigated Salal to take punitive action against the United States, which had done "little to bolster Egypt's faltering economy".⁸⁰

As could be anticipated the arrest of American employees of mission resulted in a sharp decline in American-Yemeni relations. This would have prevented the United States from playing any role in the conflict between the Arab radicals and conservatives on the Arabian Peninsula. The conservatives were apparently concerned at the growing communist presence in the area. The Soviet Union, Communist China and several East European countries had sizable missions,

79. New York Times, 4 May 1967, p.7.

80. Newsweek, 15 May 1967, p. 32.

in Yemen whereas the United States and Italy were the only two major western powers which had diplomatic ties with Yemen.⁸¹

In response to the development, the US announced the closure of its aid mission on 28 April 1967, and its members left for Ethiopia. To negotiate a smooth withdrawal of the aid mission the United States dispatched two of its officials to negotiate with the Yemeni authorities. The United States also sought the mediation of Egypt to get back its property worth \$ 1 million that was seized by Yemen and to secure the release of the two aid employees but with no success.⁸²

Yemen which had historic claims to much of South Arabia was a key element in Nasser's expansionist plans. Instead of helping out the United States, he seemed prepared to go to any length against the West to ensure that he did not lose control of the Yemen government. By eliminating the American influence in Yemen, therefore, Nasser had "destroyed last chance of any compromise settlement of the internecine quarrels currently wrecking

81. See John Law, "Journey into a forgotten war", US News and World Report, 3 April 1967, pp. 58-60.

82. Hedrick Smith, in New York Times, 12 May 1967, p. 14.

South Arabia".⁸³ That would certainly enhance Egypt's chance of ultimately emerging as the master of the Arab world.

RESUMPTION OF POISON GAS WARFARE

On 10 May 1967 Egyptian planes shelled and strafed the tribal villages in the Royalist-held areas of Yemen. This was followed by three raids on the Saudi Arabian border town of Najran which caused many death.⁸⁴ The Royalist Minister Al-Shami asked the International Red Cross (IRC) which had sent its team to Yemen to ascertain whether Egypt had actually used poison gas. In a report made public on 27 July 1967, the IRC confirmed that it had found evidence to show that such gas had been used in air attacks on the Royalist villages.⁸⁵ Disturbed by such reports the State Department called for international action to stop such bombings.⁸⁶ For the first time, the State Department directly accused Egypt. Its spokesman Robert J. McCloskey said:

We continue to be deeply disturbed by the many reports concerning the use of poison gas against civilians in Yemen. This government condemns such action as inhuman and entirely contrary to

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83. Newsweek, n. 80.
84. New York Times, 13 May 1967, p. 19.
85. For full text of the report on the findings of the International Red Cross see US News and World Report, 3 July 1967, p.60.
86. The Geneva International Convention of 1925 forbids the use of poison gas in warfare.

the laws of nations, the US government would support international action to deal with this problem.⁸⁷

The intensified use of the poison gas by Egypt was the part of a general thrust against the Royalists who were mounting their pressure on Sana and Taiz following the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli war on 5 June 1967. Since Nasser urgently needed solidiers for the war on that front, he immediately withdrew 10,000 men from Yemen. When the Egyptian troops were being taken down the road from Hijia to the port of Hodeida on the Red Sea, the evacuation point from Egypt, they were attacked by the anti-Egyptian tribesmen. As a result the Egyptain troops left a lot of equipments in Hijia. The Egyptian soldiers were attacked most heavily in the area of Rada, about 80 miles south-east of Sana. They had already evacuated the key township of Marbb, 80 miles east of Sana. Thus, by 12 June 1967, 15,000 troops, some heavy artilleries and about 50 tanks had already left Yemen. Now only a total of ground 30,000 solidiers were stationed in Yemeni territories.⁸⁸

In a fit of nervousness, therefore, Egypt undertook further air raids of poisonous gas-bombs. Several villages

87. John W. Finney quotes in New York Times, 28 July 1967, p. 1.

88. Ibid., 17 June 1967, p.9.

near Khulan were raided on 2 and 3 July 1967 with about 50 killed. On 23 July the villages of El-urr and Al-Hamran were attacked. Despite these authentic informations about the use of poison gas, the State Department did not take the lead in any action against Egypt because it feared any such initiative would be assailed as a pro-Israel step. This could be a rallying point for the otherwise divided Arab world to unite against the United States. So much so that even the Saudi Ambassador to the United Nations, Jamil M. Baroody did not press for action against Egypt.⁸⁹

However, resentment was there in the United States and Britain against the use of poison gas by Egypt. Congressman Lester L. Wolff (D., N.Y.) wrote to the State Department as to why it had not taken any action on the reported use of poison gas in Yemen. The State Department responded by making public a letter from Arthur J. Goldberg, the US representative at the United Nations, who had expressed the American concern over the growing number of instances of the use of gas by Egypt.

On 5 June 1967 Israel launched an attack against Egypt and occupied the east bank. On the conclusion of what was

89. Ibid., 30 July 1967, p. 6.

popularly known as "Six-day War", Egypt yielded Gaza strip and Sinai Peninsula to Israel.⁹⁰ The disaster of this war brought about a fundamental change in the situation that forced Nasser to have a second thought about his involvement in Yemen.⁹¹ Economically, he could not bear the enormous burden of the maintenance of his 20,000 troops in Yemen. Already strains had developed between Salal and Nasser following the Egypt's threat to withdraw most of the troops if the Yemeni government did not pay "higher share of cost".⁹² Militarily, Egypt was hardly capable of waging wars on two fronts. Nasser also seemed to have lost the command on the liberation armies also. On 5 August 1967, Egypt controlled South Arabian Nationalists Liberation Army based near Taiz mutinied. The Army refused Egyptian order to dig trenches to protect camp against attack by the anti-Egypt tribesmen.⁹³

KHARTOUM CONFERENCE

Realizing its weak position in the region, Egypt formally proposed to reactivate the Jidda Pact of 1965. At an Arab Foreign Minister Conference in Khartoum the Egyptian

90. For the first hand impression of the US attitude towards the Six-Day Arab-Israeli war see Johnson, n. 67, pp. 287-304.

91. Col. B.K. Narayan, Anwar El-Sadat: Man with a Mission (New Delhi, 1977) p. 68.

92. New York Times, 31 July 1967, p.7.

93. Ibid., 6 August 1967, p. 47.

Foreign Minister Mahmoud Riad outlined the conference the details regarding implementation of a ceasefire agreement between Nasser and Faisal. He proposed that apart from the observance of the provisions of Jidda agreement, the ceasefire would be "policed",⁹⁴ by three other Arab nations one each to be chosen by Egypt and Saudi Arabia and one by the 13-nation Conference presently in session. The Khartoum meeting, thus paved the way for an Arab summit meeting to be held towards the end of August 1967. It was to be the first gathering of the Arab Leaders since the 1965 meeting in Casablanca and the purpose of this summit was to close ranks and to map out a joint strategy in the wake of the Israeli victory.

In accordance with the understanding reaches, the leaders of the two countries reached an accord in Sudan on 30 August 1967. Mohammed Ahmad Mahgoub, the Foreign Minister of Sudan served as the mediator. The accord provided for a commission consisting of representatives of Morocco, Iraq and Sudan was to supervise the execution of peace plan. The accord called for the withdrawal of the estimated 25,000 Egyptian troops from Yemen. Saudi Arabia was to

94. Stephens, n. 29, p. 428.

cease all aid to the Royalist forces. The three nation commission was to work to enable Yemenis to consolidate their position and achieve stability in accordance with the wishes of the people. Further, the commission was to do its best to realize full Yemeni sovereignty and independence. A significant omission from the accord, however, was the proposed "plebiscite" according to the agreement reached at the Arab Foreign Ministers' Conference. Plebiscite was stipulated as the means by which Yemenis would choose their own form of government.

The Khartoum agreement, the most recent of such attempts by Egypt and Saudi Arabia to settle the Yemeni problem had a salutary effect on the Arab world. It cleared the way for Egypt to bring home the remaining 20,000 troops in Yemen to buttress its defence against Israel. The rapprochement also meant that the Saudis would provide the Egyptians with much needed financial support.⁹⁵ But the agreement, nevertheless, represented an acknowledgement of defeat and a serious loss of face for Nasser as it came on the heels of the worst defeat in the war with Israel. Nasser was, perhaps, forced to realize

95. In September 1967, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Libya set up Arab Economic Development Fund (A.E.D.F.) which agreed to advance an annual grant of \$ 280 million to Egypt and \$ 100 million to Jordan to compensate them for the loss of land and revenue as a result of the June war of 1967, See Dawisha, n. 18, p. 53.

that Yemen, which was referred to in some quarters as "Nasser's Vietnam", was not worth what he was putting into it.⁹⁶ The inevitable result was that the Egyptian influence was sharply reduced in the Peninsula.

The Khartoum Conference, thus marked "Egypt's readoption of the objective of 'Arab Solidarity' within the Arab core of the Middle Eastern System".⁹⁷ Nasser no longer possessed the capacity or the motivation to pursue a revolutionary policy in the Arab world. Egypt appeared to have been relegated to the background in the Arab world because of preoccupation with Israel, pressing domestic problems and economic dependence on other Arab States.

The prospects of the implementation of the Pact were rather dim for two reasons. Firstly, Salal did not appear to be in favour of the Nasser-Faisal Pact. He repudiated the Pact as Nasser's "sale out" to king Faisal.⁹⁸ Therefore, growing tensions between Salal and Nasser could jeopardise the settlement. Secondly, following the Egyptian retreat, the Royalists could mount their offensive to rehabilitate the Imam. These doubts apart, the agreement brought one distinct possibility into sight i.e. with the disappearance

96. See Jon Kimche, "Yemen : Nasser's Vietnam" Midstream (New York), Vol. 12, April 1966, pp. 34-42.

97. Dawisha, n. 18, p. 53.

98. Newsweek, 20 November 1967, p. 49.

of outside intervention the two rival sides in Yemen could move to a reconciliation.

EGYPT'S RAPPROCHMENT WITH BRITAIN

After making peace with Saudi Arabia, Egypt sought to mend fence with Britain. The two countries decided to restore their diplomatic relations, which were broken off in 1965. The decision was arrived at a meeting between Nasser and Sir Harold Beeley, special envoy of the British Foreign Minister, George Brown in Cairo. There were strong reasons on both the sides to have a friendly relation with each other. Britain's primary motive was to somehow persuade Nasser to agree to reopen the Suez Canal. The British economy was suffering large financial losses because Britain had been denied the facility of shipping through the canal since the Arab-Israeli war of June 1967. Secondly, Britain was pressing Nasser for the formation of a coalition of nationalist groups to form a caretaker government in Aden till the British granted independence in January 1968. Another British interest was to secure the release of four vessels and crews since the war in Bitter Lake area of the Suez Canal. An American vessel was also in the lake. Egypt in turn, hoped to use Britain as an effective diplomatic

channel to the United Nations and the United States.⁹⁹ Nasser had perhaps realized that without powerful support from Britain and the United States there could be no settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Therefore, he sought to link this issue to the proposal for reopening the Suez Canal. Another trump-card in Nasser's hand was still the evacuation of Egyptian forces from Yemen. The Egypt-British rapprochement, thus, would have been a first step towards the restoration of relations between Cairo and Washington which was broken off on 6 June 1967. Nasser was seeking an active American participation in the search of a political settlement in the Middle East.

Two key developments in the region helped the two sides come to a settlement. The first was the decision of Egypt to withdraw all troops from Yemen by the middle of December 1967. The second development was the announcement in Cairo on 1 November 1967 that the rival nationalist groups in South Arabia namely the Nationalist Liberation Front and the Egypt-backed Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen, had

99. See Robert W. Stookey, Yemen: The Politics of the Yemen Arab Republic (Colorado, 1978), p. 248, Stookey says that the Soviet Union, Syria and Algeria stepped into fill "the arms and money gap" in the Yemen Arab Republic.

reached a tentative agreement, Britain had been approaching Nasser and the leaders of these two groups for the formation of a coalition at the time of transition.¹⁰⁰

OVERTHROW OF SALAL'S REGIME BY DISSIDENT REPUBLICANS

The crisis in Yemen entered a new phase when all other external parties involved tried to take their hands off and in the midst of such efforts, the regime of Salal was suddenly overthrown.¹⁰¹ The army led by the dissident Republicans seized power. Their leader Iryani was one of the opponents of Salal's excessive dependence on Egypt and was subsequently put under house arrest in Cairo by the Egyptian force. On being inaugurated on 6 November 1967, the new government reiterated its policy of holding talks with the Royalists and tribal Sheiks to end the civil war. In a policy statement the government upheld the Republican system, ruled out any power for the deposed Imam Badr, opposed the Royalist desire for a plebiscite on the form of government and hoped for a good neighbourly relations with Saudi Arabia.

Salal's ouster was the result of a combination of factors operating in the Middle East. The economy of Egypt

100. After the withdrawal, the British military presence in Arabia was to consist of two battalions and two fighter squadrons divided between the island of Bahrain and the recently developed base at Sherga. Sherga is one of the Sheikdoms facing the Persian Gulf.

101. New York Times, 5 November 1967, p. 14.

was crippled owing to the closure of Suez Canal and the war with Israel. It was all set to withdraw its army from Yemen. In the absence of the Egyptian aid Salal could not have sustained the Republican regime. Secondly there had been clear marks of strains in the relationship between Salal and Nasser due to former's denunciation of Egypt's move to make peace with Saudi Arabia. Nasser needed the Saudi financial subsidies to overcome his country's financial crisis. And last but not the least significant fact was Salal's increasing postures independent of Egypt. He had recently begun to establish direct bilateral relations with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union was apparently prepared to supplement the aid given by Egypt to Yemen. In August 1967, during the visit of Salal's Deputy Premier Abdullah Guezilan to Moscow, the USSR had reportedly offered a direct military aid in exchange for permission to establish military base at the Janad airport, fourteen miles east of Sana.¹⁰² This plan, if implemented, could have given Russia first foothold in the Arabian Peninsula. Nasser could have hardly welcomed the idea that Salal should succeed in getting Soviet military and economic support to replace the aid being withdrawn by Cairo. A strong and independent Yemeni Republic could have been a threat both to Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

102. Ibid., 8 August 1967, p. 1.

RENEWED ROYALIST THRUST

In the meanwhile, the Royalist launched a new thrust to which the Republicans appeared vulnerable. On 27 November, 1967, the Royalist source reported that Sana International Airport was threatened by the army of the Prince Mohammed, a member of the Royal family. The immediate provocation for the Royalists was the refusal of the Republican regime to negotiate with the Arab Mediation Commission constituted under the Khartoum agreement.¹⁰³ Though the Royalists had made it clear that they no more wanted the restoration of the theocratic Imamate as it existed before 1961 yet they insisted on a National Conference that would appoint an interim regime to hold a plebiscite on the future form of government. They were, perhaps, convinced that the tribesmen who were in majority wanted an Imamate of some kind, even though it was constitutional and limited.

SOUTH YEMEN GETS FREEDOM

As the Royalists pressure was mounting on the Iryani's government, a significant development took place on the south western flank of the Arabian Peninsula. Qahtan al-Shaabi, a leader of the National Liberation Front who fought the British

103. About a week later, the State Department of the United States announced recognition of the new republic "following the end of British rule". The Mission in Aden was raised to Embassy status and William L. Eagleton Jr., Consul General was instructed to act as charge d' affaires ad interim. See Department of State Bulletin, Vol. 17, 25 December 1967, p. 861.

as an underground terrorist leader for four years declared South Yemen as "an independent sovereign state from the first moment of 30 November 1967". Shaabi who had just returned from negotiations with the British in Geneva, was proclaimed as President of the "People's Republic of South Yemen (P.R.S.Y.)".

As a part of its pull-out from the region, Britain also allotted the former British-ruled islands off the coast of Southern Arabia to South Yemen and Oman.¹⁰⁴ Making announcement to this effect Lord Cardon, the British delegate at the United Nations, declared that in accordance with the wishes of the inhabitants of the islands of Perim, Kamaran and Socotra were to go to South Yemen and the Kuria Muria islands to Oman.¹⁰⁵

The tide of change in the south west of the Peninsula had almost no impact on the continuing conflict between the Royalists and the Republicans in Yemen.¹⁰⁶ In the current phase of renewed fighting heavy casualties were inflicted

104. New York Times, 6 December 1967, p. 24.

105. Perim, an island at the entrance of the Red Sea and the island of Kamaran, off the coast of Yemen, were part of Aden colony. Socotra, off the northeast horn of Africa, was part of the sultanate of Siqhn and Socotra now incorporated in the new Republic. The Kuria Muria islands, off the coast of Oman, was an independent sultanate and not part of the new Republic of South Yemen. The islands had a population of 78 and an area of 28 square miles. They were, however, part of the former British Aden Colony.

106. Newsweek, 18 December 1967, p. 33.

on the Republicans including shooting down of a military plane reported to be piloted by a Russian. The situation became so tense that the government of the USSR advised its mission to leave Sana.¹⁰⁷ It was believed that a Royalist victory would mean a victory of the Saudi monarchy. In other words, it would amount to a victory of all the traditional forces of the Peninsula over the Nasser-inspired revolutionaries. Further, the Western observers hoped that a comeback of the Royalists would "obviate" the possibility of the Republican Yemen turning into something like a "Cuba in the Middle East".¹⁰⁸ It was sure to have a destabilising effect on the neighbouring South Yemen. The Western Oil Companies in the Arabian Peninsula, the British in the Persian Gulf and perhaps the United States could also breathe a little more easily.

It was possibly to ward off this eventuality that the USSR reportedly carried out arms airlift to Yemen. According to one estimate the Soviet transports, reaching Yemen after flights over Egypt, ferried about 10,000 tons of equipments to Yemen. Around 75 to 100 flights of Soviet AN-12 transports and Ilyushin-28 bombers serving as transport planes, carried MIG

107. New York Times, 8 December 1967, p. 3.

108. Ibid., 10 December 1967, Sec., 4, p. 4.

fighters crews, technicians, bombs and other munitions and ground equipments. The Soviet supply of arms also included the use of Soviet Air Force pilots for bombing and strafing the Royalist Positions.¹⁰⁹

The United States and Britain were apparently puzzled by Moscow's eagerness to replace Cairo as the political patron of the Yemeni Republic. The American officials feared that Russians, if successful in their efforts to save the Republican regime, would use Yemen as a base for mounting subversion in East Africa and other parts of the Arabian Peninsula.¹¹⁰

On realizing the extent of Russian involvement, the State Department spokesman, Robert J. McCloskey warned that the Soviet military support for the Republican regime was "only likely to increase tension in the regime".¹¹¹ But the United States obviously did nothing except to supply a limited quantity of arms through Saudi Arabia and other agencies to the Royalists and indulging in indirect diplomacy to help the warring sides come to some solution.

109. Ibid., 15 December 1967, p.5.

110. Somalia and Ethiopia lay only 50 miles across the Red Sea from Yemen.

111. New York Times, 14 December 1967, p.18.

As in the past, a serious fighting between the two rival factions on the Peninsula induced some Arab countries to play a mediatory role. This time Iraq took the initiative. A meeting of the Arab Commission on Yemen was proposed by the Iraqi Minister Khairallah. But Saudi Arabia did not show any inclination to comply with the Iraqi summons. Faisal perhaps thought the Royalists move was going to be successful in ousting the Republicans from power. The bargaining position of Saudi Arabia and the Royalist Leaders got further strengthened when Iryani who was also chairman of the Presidential Council of the Republic of Yemen expressed a desire to meet King Faisal "to settle differences and to establish a strong relationship based on mutual respect and amity".¹¹² Saudi Arabia could have further ignored the offer but the very fact that Sana did not fall made it realize that the Republicans had come to stay. And with them stayed the Russians whose timely support sustained the Republicans in the absence of the Egyptian aid. The peripheral interest of the United States in the events of the Peninsula and the departure of Britain from the region left Saudi Arabia with the only alternative of negotiating the terms of reconciliation with the Republicans. A watershed in the series of events between

112. Iryani's communication quoted in Ibid.,
28 November 1967, p. 3.

Saudi Arabia and the Yemeni Republic came when in April 1970, the Saudi Kingdom extended diplomatic recognition¹¹³ to the Republican regime of Yemen. It also advanced Yemen a handsome aid of \$ 20 million.¹¹⁴ In return for this gesture, Al-Ainy gave representation to the Royalists in the Presidential Council as also in the National Assembly. The United Kingdom followed suit and in July 1970 recognized the Republic of Yemen.

113. For Saudi's recognition of the Yemen Arab Republic See Stephens, n. 29, p. 430.

114. New York Times, 15 April 1970, p. 11.

CHAPTER - IV

CONCLUSIONS

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Yemen is a very small country, equivalent in size to South Dakota, with hardly five million inhabitants in 1960s.¹ Apparently it did not occupy a very high place in the priorities of American foreign policy. But its strategic location and a combination of circumstances made it difficult for the United States to be indifferent to the civil war which broke out therein.

In April 1961 Saudi Arabia, a close friend of the United States, asked it to move its military units out of its Dahrhan airfield and the United States quickly complied with it. In June in the same year, General Qasim of Iraq proclaimed hegemony over Kuwait and the Americans watched with dismay their ally the United Kingdom bowing out of Kuwait and its forces being replaced by a mixed Arab contingent.² When in 1962 the union between Egypt and Syria broke down and an anti-Nasser government came into existence, the United States promptly recognized it and thereby earned the displeasure of Egypt.³ The weakening of the British and the French power in the region made the United States much more

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1. US News and World Report (Washington, D.C.), 15 July 1963, p.62.
 2. William R. Polk, The United States and The Arab World. (Cambridge, 1975), p. 388.
 3. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House (London, 1965), p. 494.

favourably inclined to act on its own with a view to protect what it considered to be its vital interest in the region.

The conflict between tradition and modernity which had been present in the Arab world since long was erupting into a violent warfare in one country after another. But this warfare could not be carried out in isolation. The regional powers like Egypt and Saudi Arabia representing these forces decided to intervene and take sides. The conflict in Yemen was one such crisis. The Super Powers could not leave the conflict alone to follow its own course. They too became involved in the conflict.

In the United States President Kennedy had begun a new administration in January 1961 which was searching for a new way of dealing with the threat to the power and influence of the United States. It was conscious that moralistic and simplistic formula would not work. It tried to contain the Soviet power and yet tried to find ways to work with it. This was equally true of its policy in the Middle East. It viewed Egypt under Nasser to be leaning towards the Soviet Union and therefore viewed with concern a dramatic increase in its power. At the same time, it was giving economic aid to Egypt. It wanted to contain Egypt and also cooperate with it. On the other hand, Saudi Arabia ruled by a family, was its

ally. The United States shared its foreign policy objectives of containing Nasser brand of nationalism.⁴ The US policy thus sought contradictory aims. It could not push for one without losing the other.

When the war broke out in Yemen and the Republicans succeeded in establishing their control over a very large part of the country the United States took the decision to accord recognition to the Salal government much against the wishes of its allies in the region, notably Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel and the British protectorate of Aden. The motive behind this step were several. First, the United States was afraid that the civil war if not brought to an end could get enlarged into a war between Egypt and Saudi Arabia.⁵ And because such a war would have threatened the oil interests, it could have sucked in the United States and Britain. Second, the Soviet Union could use the possibilities opened by the war to establish a bridgehead from where, by using the good offices of Egypt and Yemen, it could have spread its influence further.

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4. For a detailed discussion on the strategic dimension of the US relations with Saudi Arabia see Emile A. Nakhleh, The United States and Saudi Arabia: A Policy Analysis (Washington, 1975), pp. 61-63.
 5. Kennedy had formed a task force in the White House under Robert Komer, a former intelligence Officer, to handle the Yemeni situation. The Yemeni conflict rapidly became known as "Komer's war" in the White House circles. It was Komer who secured the American fighter squadron as protection for Saudi Arabia. See Mohammed Hassenin Heikal, The Cairo Document: The Inside Story of Nasser and his Relationship with World Leaders Rebels and Statesman (New York, 1973), p. 217.

With the control of Yemen the Soviet Union could out-flank the oil fields in Saudi Arabia. It could also provide a base of operation near Aden and was just across East Africa.⁶

The United States, therefore, undertook mediatory role with the hope that "it could stabilize the situation in Yemen and begin the job of modernizing that 15-century country".⁷ In fact the United States did not like to be identified with the conservative regimes of the Arab world^{and} therefore had no intention of supporting the regime of Imam. But at the same time, it could not be completely indifferent to the wishes of its allies Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Britain. Kennedy hoped to persuade Nasser to withdraw his troops from Yemen and thereby reassure Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Britain. It was believed that probably the United States would be able to persuade the Egyptian leader to devote attention to the domestic economic front. With this objective in view Kennedy advanced PL 480 and stabilization loan to Egypt in 1962.

For Egypt the stakes in Yemen were very high. After Nasser had successfully defied the Anglo-French Powers in 1956 over Suez his stock had gone up in the Arab world. He had become

6. US News and World Report, 31 December 1962, p. 48.

7. Schlesinger Jr., n. 3.

more than the leader of a nation - an embodiment of spirit of Arab nationalism. A vision of Arab unity under his leadership seemed possible of realization. The republican victory achieved through the support of Egypt could establish his leadership beyond any doubt. Therefore, Nasser extended military aid to Yemen crossing the Red Sea, a distance of 2,300 kilometers.⁸ Nasser, therefore, could not make a sudden volte face and withdraw his troops and support from the side of the Republicans. The Egyptian troops located close to the Saudi Arabia borders could not be ignored by the Saudis who were active on the side of the Royalists.

The active involvement of Egypt and Saudi Arabia in the conflict in Yemen left United States with a difficult choice. While helping Saudi Arabia, it wanted to maintain the modus vivendi with Egypt. Therefore, it did not yield to the pressure of Jewish lobby in the United States to cut off all aid to Egypt.

For the United States, an alternative to recognition and mediation would have been a policy of active support for the Royalists. This policy could have led to the direct American involvement in the conflict and could have injured American interest in the Arab world. Another course could have been an attitude of neutrality in the conflict but that could result in

8. Nejla M. Abu Izzeddin, Nasser of the Arabs (Beirut, 1975), p. 274.

the drastic reduction in American influence in the region particularly in Yemen.⁹ Therefore, the United States decided to recognize and maintain some influence in Yemen.

Having failed in objective to contain the crisis by first recognizing the Republic and then by undertaking a mediatory role, the United States then tried to favour its allies. It supplied Saudi Arabia with fighter squadrons and other defence equipments. It has been supplying arms to Israel, with stood in opposition to Egypt. In June 1963, it supplied Israel with missiles "to maintain the necessary defensive postures for the country involved".¹⁰ In the absence of available evidence, it is not possible to determine the exact quantity and quality of weapons the United States supplied to its allies. However, the Egyptian supplies of men and materials to the Republicans far outweighed the US known supplies.

Had the war in Yemen taken a decisive turn either in favour of the Republicans or the Royalists, it could have called for a different policy. But the parties in the conflict could not obtain a decisive outcome. Therefore, the United States sought military disengagement and diffusion of the crisis. In

9. Abid., A. Al-Maryati, "The Problem of Yemen", Foreign Affairs Reports (New Delhi), Vol. 14, December 1966, p. 157.

10. Richard Nixon, the a former Vice-President cited in Middle East Mirror (Beirut), Vol.15, 29 June 1963, p. 19.

the United Nations, the United States saw an instrument for achieving this end. President Kennedy, therefore, favoured UN action in Yemen and was willing to give it every support including military transport.¹¹ Kennedy was conscious of the failure of the United States to resolve the crisis and this further reinforced his desire to seek the participation of the United Nations. On 8 November 1963, only a few days before his death, he expressed the helplessness of the major powers in the crisis.¹² He said:

the parties to these dispute have more in common ethnically and ideologically than do the Soviet Union and the United States - yet they seem less able and less willing to get together and negotiate..their continuing conflict invites outside intervention and threatens world-wide escalation - yet the major powers are hard put to limit events in these areas.¹³

A few months earlier, Dean Rusk, Secretary of State had similarly proposed a formula in March 1963 which would include leaving the Yemenis "to work out their own solution in their own country".¹⁴

11. Theodore C. Sorensen, Kennedy (London, 1965), p. 523.
12. While referring to the conflict in Yemen, Kennedy mentioned other hostilities which in his view were independent of the struggle between communists and "the free world" e.g. disputes between Africans and Europeans in Angola, North African neighbours in the Mahgreb, India and Pakistan, Indonesia and Malaysia, Cambodia and Vietnam, Ethiopia and Somalia etc.
13. Allen Nevins ed., The Burden and the Glory (New York, 1964), p. 143.
14. Interview of Dean Rusk in Department of State Bulletin (Washington, D.C.), Vol. 32, 1 April 1963, p. 475.

But even when the UN efforts to resolve the crisis failed the United States decided to extend its moral support to the efforts of the two major participants in the war — Egypt and Saudi Arabia — to arrive at a settlement. The agreements between the two and their violations became so frequent that the State Department did not even consider it necessary to comment each time when these agreements were made or violations occurred. The diminishing interest of the United States is demonstrated by the fact that only after the Riyadh Agreement of March 1964 and the Jidda Pact of August 1965 had been concluded the State Department cared to make any observation. The US peace keeping efforts had moved to the side-lines.

Neither Egypt nor Saudi Arabia was able to win the war decisively. With their realization that it was a futile war, the crisis in Yemen showed signs of abatement. Militarily, it was a failure for Egypt. It ate up a large part of Egypt's resources. The Yemeni expedition "used up a large portion of Egypt's hard foreign currency reserves".¹⁵ However, it was doubtful whether without Egyptian military and economic aid, the revolution could have survived in Yemen.¹⁶ In Saudi Arabia

15. Anwar El-Sadat, In Search of Identity (London, 1978) p. 162.

16. Izzeddin, n. 8, p. 275.

also with Faisal's succession to the throne after replacing King Saud, the attitude towards the Republicans changed fundamentally. Faisal considered the cause of the Royalists as a lost one. Against this background Israel invaded Egyptian territory in June 1967 making it impossible for Egypt to continue with its military adventure. Nothing could indicate a dramatic change in the situation more than the large economic assistance advanced by the government of Saudi Arabia to Egypt. Even earlier the United States did not push Egypt hard by stopping all aid out of fear that such a step would push Egypt, already leaning towards the Soviet Union, into embracing it altogether. With Saudi Arabia now supporting Egypt such a policy was even more improbable.

The objectives of US policies in this area, therefore, remained firstly to ensure continuation of the flow of oil on acceptable terms to Europe, military overflight rights and to prevent the overflow of Soviet influence into the Middle East and the Mediterranean areas.¹⁷ In order to achieve these objectives, the American government began to emphasise the economic aspects of its aid programmes in its relations with

17. Polk, n. 2, p. 387.

radical Arab countries, notably Egypt and to put pressure on other conservative regimes in the region to push reforms in their countries. As for the management of conflict situations, the prevention of a local dispute from escalating into a larger inter-Arab war remained the cornerstone of the American foreign policy.

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